

MEDIEVAL PROJÉT'S PROCEDURES. THE CORDOBAN CASE BASED ON ITS CHURCHES

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The use of typologies and models has been common practice in the History of Architecture. This work studies them for a group of medieval buildings, that appeared after the Castilian conquest of the city of Cordoba in 1236. The main objective is to establish the keys to the plan design of a part of these buildings: the churches that have been conserved to present. Such an study can only be accomplished within the Middle Ages epistemological context, from which 'Villard's Sketchbook' is an splendid exponent.

With this aim, a study of 'Villard's Sketchbook' has been undertaken, with emphasis on a drawing on page 14v. A series of considerations can be derived from the drawing, that are useful to approach the study of the contemporary Cordoban churches.

Measurement of different parameters applying the deduced criteria, has revealed a considerable degree of affinity among these medieval churches.

The general plan of most of them has been explained using simple multiples of the 'yardstick from Burgos'. The measured parameters can be totally or partially interpreted for many of the buildings.

Several consequences can be derived from the results obtained: firstly, aspects related to the fundamental lines to be used for the plan design, and probably, its construction; secondly, the quantification of the modules forming the grid, by using the numbers 3, 4, 5, and in some cases, the irrational $\sqrt{2}$. In addition, the relation of these technical parameters with the known historical and artistic data of these buildings, allow the corroboration of some issues from a new point of view.

All in all, this study describes how the use of a simple model has allowed the generation of a group of buildings. They structured the city and, at the same time, they defined its image, that remains until present.

ON INTERPRETING WORKS OF ART. WHAT, WHY AND HOW

Ernst H. Gombrich

Sir Ernst Hans Gombrich, born in 1909, passed away in London in November 2001. Just days before we had sent him the following article for approval. Its publication now constitutes a tribute to the last of a great generation of scholars of art and architecture that includes the likes of Erwin Panofsky, Rudolf Wittkower, and Nikolaus Pevsner.

The text, heretofore unpublished, is a transcription of the speech Professor Gombrich delivered in the Faculty of Philosophy and Letters of the Universidad Complutense de Madrid on January 30, 1992, the eve of his appointment as a Doctor Honoris Causa. His talk wrapped up a seminar on his work and ideas that Professor Valeriano Bozal had organized, and which several specialists in Art historiography and Gombrich's oeuvre had taken part in.

Gombrich began his speech by explaining how from the very start of his career he was firmly committed to the search for rationality, and how this meant finding clear and precise answers to certain questions that intrigued him. In his view, the mission of art historians has always been to address the great questions that generate art works in the first place, which can be summed in the following: what, why, and how.

The what is the first question that historians try to tackle. What is this work? What do we know about its author? What does it mean? After two centuries of study we can largely count on the judgment of experts and connoisseurs, but Gombrich reckons that we can hardly be sure our answers are altogether correct, for there will always be a margin of error. A date can be wrong, as can an attribution to this or that artist. The weakness of an answer stems from the fact that most of the time it depends on the authority, knowledge, and integrity of the historian or expert supplying it. After all, in so many cases, nobody is witness to the how, when, and for whom of a work. Moreover, many questions will always remain unanswered, or admit answers that are mere hypotheses or conjectures of little scientific value.

Gombrich thus affirms that art history is not a science, not in the way physics and biology are. In fact the work of great historians like Erwin Panofsky and other colleagues of the Warburg Institute have made him very skeptical about the objectivity of answers to questions concerning works of art.

He then goes on to say that the bulk of his work has revolved around why. His objective has always been to explain, and to do this he has always proceeded according to the ideas of his friend Karl Popper, who said that the important thing is to work ourselves gradually toward the truth, however unreachable it is. All we can really do is subject previous explanations to criticism, discard false interpretations, and try to

come up with better answers to questions that intrigue us —answers that in turn must lend themselves to be placed under critical scrutiny and contrasted.

So it is that a large part of Gombrich's task has been to unmask theories that have offered uncontrastable answers. To be sure, whenever a theory tries to give a global explanation for an artistic phenomenon, the answer it puts forward is necessarily false, because explanations can only be partial. To defend his arguments, Gombrich comments on questions he has tried to answer in his major books, including *The History of Art*, *Art and Illusion*, and *Sense of Order*.

The how is the task of critics, whose mission it is to assess the value we attach to art works. There is no chance of objectivity here either, for several reasons. First is the critic's subjectivity and the changing tastes of every epoch. Second, it is impossible to express in words what cannot be described fully, with all its nuances and qualities. One can never describe the beauty of a verse or the sweetness of a melody. Finally, reason has its limits, and in the case of art appreciation our opinions just have to be subject to a certain faith in tradition and its values, which guide us in matters like what works to admire and why.

THE CRITICAL PICTURESQUE

Richard Ingersoll

The image of celestial sprawl after the explosion of "little boy", the great mushroom-shaped cloud hovering over Hiroshima, was my first introduction as a little boy to the sublime. Throughout the 1950s the icon of the tumescent, god-like formation filled me with awe, a mixture of fear and fascination. I don't recall feeling compassion for 60,000 Japanese corpses, or indignation about the mercilessly leveled buildings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, sentiments that would probably be the first to come to mind today. Rather I indulged in a strange erotic reverie conditioned by the pure power of the phallic success of the bomb, a vision that carried a subliminal message of a collective death wish.

I think it is safe to say that since 1945 the potential for planetary annihilation through atomic weapons created the first, and that is military, condition for what is currently understood as globalization. But more than this vague remark about a political and economic phenomenon, I cannot, and probably should not say more. Rather I want to pursue a presentiment inspired by this global understanding of risk that seems to be at the core of an aesthetic attitude in current architecture culture that I will call the "Critical Picturesque".

The first atomic bombs and the potential for nuclear overkill that followed provided the foundation for a new ecological consciousness generated by the palpable fear that the biosphere was in mortal danger. A fear that on the one hand has led to activism, and on the other to artistic acts of redemption. 1945: the Atomic bomb; 1962: Rachel Carson's *Silent Spring*; 1973: the first oil embargo/energy crisis; 1985: the verification of the Ozone hole(s) —these dates can serve as tide marks in the cycles of environmental consciousness that have accompanied a slow process of assimilating ecology as a theoretical ingredient of cultural production. That said, I am not about to claim that any of the works produced in such a theoretical frame function in a sustainable manner or do anything practical to reverse ecological degradation— like all works at a certain level, their principal function is critical, that is to provide catharsis, not necessarily the path to remission.

If we consider at a few projects that I think approach the trend of Critical Picturesque some characteristics emerge:

- To adjust to site conditions (design with the *genius loci*): such as Peter Zumthor's thermal baths at Vals (1998), a labyrinthine complex of top-lit chambers for different thermal experiences embedded into the slope of a mountain. The grass covered roof blends in with the surrounding fields but the regular scoring of its flat surface with narrow skylights poses a material contradiction in this harmonious adjustment to nature.

- To simulate or integrate with natural forms (mimesis and camouflage): seen in Alexandre Chemetov and Renzo Piano's recuperation of an industrial site for the Schulmberger offices in Paris (1983), where an artificial hill housing three parking levels becomes a planted landscape feature in a garden full of fountains and planted allées. The teflon covered tents that abruptly span a cleft in this hill contradict its imitation of nature.

- To resist axiality and bilateral symmetry: seeking a labyrinthine effect as seen in the Ecole Internationale in Lyon by Jourda and Peraudin (1985). A sod covered roof spirals up to a six storey block of classrooms blending in with the curves of the riverbank. The lower parts of the roof are suspended from stainless steel poles resulting

in a paradoxical combination of high-tech engineering and vernacular methods of insulation.

- To sequence discrete events that unfold within the same design: like Frank Gehry's Guggenheim Museum in Bilbao (1997), which follows a pinwheel pattern and steps up the riverbank like a mutating maritime creature. The shape of the building can never be understood from a single point of view, nor does the unfolding interior allow one to have a comprehensive spatial experience.

- To integrate the awkwardness of infrastructure into the randomness of nature: such as the terracing around the Cinturon ring road in Barcelona that serves for Miralles and Pinon's archery dressing rooms project in Val d'Hebron, Barcelona (1992). The molded concrete walls cascade toward the playing fields like exposed geological strata.

The Critical Picturesque that I recognize in these works is not a recognized movement among architects nor is it necessarily confined to North America, in fact I purposely have given only European examples. Its theoretical center, however, seems to derive from American art, and the idea struck me while considering the best current American architecture of the last two decades. I doubt if any of the architects who I am going to identify as practitioners would sign a manifesto endorsing a movement with the word "picturesque" in it, nor would all of their works necessarily qualify as belonging to it. There is something embarrassing about the word "picturesque": it is a mouldy and sneezy sort of word, and it summons the worst sort of populist connotations in the arts. This tendency in architecture, however, should not be misconstrued as "the picturesque" in the historic sense of the term, but as a new picturesque that derives its edge from the avant garde attitudes of Land Art and finds its ideological vitality in a latent ecological millennialism.

What supplies a cohesive platform for this new version of the picturesque, despite widely different stylistic outcomes, is the effort to conceive of architecture as an overall work of landscape. Buildings are treated as subordinate pieces of a greater environment in which the ultimate order is determined not by architecture as an object but by an architecture that subsumed by the natural or naturalized elements of the surroundings.

There are of course significant precedents in the distant and near past, but I doubt if there has ever been a moment like ours when works have been designed with such an acute sense of impending ecological exhaustion or catastrophe, not at least since the time of the Black Death. The advent of the Critical Picturesque seems to have accompanied the verification of a Green Apocalypse in the mid-1980s: Chernobyl, the documentation of the Ozone Holes, and the escalation of entropy that accompanied universal urbanization (which rose from 30% in 1970 to over 50% in 2000). The recourse to landscape is not necessarily a celebration of nature but more an acknowledgment of the permanent loss of the "natural".

An erroneous assessment of the works of Critical Picturesque might thus see their role as being "naturalistic", returning to nature by imitating natural forms or integrating with them. Through certain alienating devices, however, this new picturesque leads elsewhere, beyond the representation of nature to questions about the state of nature. The overall goal in affecting a new landscape unity serves to dissimulate the consequences of urbanization, to create an environment that remains an alternative to both the congestion of the city and the scatterness of the suburbs.

The word "picturesque" immediately creates problems because of its historical meaning and its current understanding. One can trace its first usage to a taste developed in late-17th and 18th-century English literary circles, among exponents of the Whiggish theory of natural man. William Gilpin in the 1790s defines it: "That peculiar kind of beauty which is agreeable in a picture". And the pictures that he and others before him specifically intended were the serpentine compositions of the landscape paintings of Claude Lorrain. So strongly was this painter associated with the taste, that those (mostly British) seeking to recapture the picturesque experience would travel to sites of natural beauty and observe them in a special convex mirror, what was marketed as a "Claude Glass", not unlike the modern tourist relies upon a Kodak for remembering it in pictures.

Fortunately the historical picturesque is much more complicated than this pictorial reference because of the inclusion of non-Western and sublime ingredients within its scope. William Temple in 1685 coined the expression *Sharawadgi*, in his effort to demonstrate an alternative to the Western notion of classical beauty. His understanding of Chinese aesthetics, derived from descriptions by the missionary Father Ricci and from scroll paintings, held that in *sharawadgi*: "Beauty shall be great and strike the Eye, but without any order or disposition of parts..." Battey Langley in his 1728 treatise on the picturesque formulated a similar notion: "The pleasure of a Garden depends on the variety of its Parts. Hence one should make a garden a continued series of harmonious objects with new and delightful scenes at every step. This, regu-

lar gardens are incapable of doing". A visit to the great scholars' gardens in Suchow, with their meandering sequences of obliquely approached settings, immediately confirms Temple's presentiment of purposeful irregularity. When I was in China trying to explain the principle of picturesque sequencing to my translator, she said "oh yes, that's like the Chinese say *yi bu huan xing*: with every step a different point of view". I don't know if my understanding of Chinese design methods remain as mystifying as Temple's *sharawadgi*, but I offer "*yibuhuanxing*" as an important component of the new picturesque.

There has always been the possibility of the coexistence of a sort of picturesque before the fact as a dialectical counterpart to the Western aesthetic system based on axiomaticity, symmetry, and the harmonious relations of the parts to the whole. The irregular combination of the regularly composed pieces at Hadrian's Villa, for instance, not to say the sublime state of its ruin, fired Giovan Battista Piranesi's critical imagination. He studied the Villa from 1747 until 1781, and on the one hand took great efforts to reconstruct it in precise plan in order to catalogue its highly irregular fit, while on the other he lovingly portrayed its terrific state of decomposition in perspective *vedute*. At the same time Edmund Burke was theorizing on the sublime in England, Piranesi succinctly explained "out of terror pleasure springs". Landscapes that are beyond human control, like the Alps or underground caverns, and negative effects such as ruins, determined a new category of aesthetic appreciation known as the sublime.

Even before Piranesi one finds the willful inclusion of disorder as a necessary counterpart to the renaissance endeavor to return to classical order. The enigmatic novel *Hypnerotomachia Poliphili*, published in 1500, recently reinterpreted by Liane Lefaivre, shows the protagonist's encounter with the disorder of nature as a necessary stage of his successful progress through culture toward erotic fulfillment.

The Italian renaissance garden was usually equipped with a naturalized grotto, which often served as the site of erotic dalliance. The grotto represented a return to natural architecture before the laws of geometry and symmetry came to bare. The garden of Villa Lante at Bagnaia was composed as a narrative in two parts: the relative disorder of the natural world of the Golden Age, presented as a proto-picturesque woods. Its winding paths are juxtaposed to the new axial world of culture after the "universal flood" seen in the formal gardens, which are linked by a watery axis that descends to the perfect geometry of the parterres and fountains between the two pavilions at the base. The garden of Bomarzo winds through its valley site using the local stones that were carved out of the rocks *in situ*, a proto-sublime collection of monsters and aberrations such as the leaning house. The indirect sequencing of Bomarzo constitutes a renaissance version of *yibuhuanxing*, where episodes show changing points of view.

Such a dialectic between formal order and the proto-picturesque need for nature to represent disorder comes to a climactic statement in the Trevi Fountain in Rome, which at first glance appears to be a grand triumphal arch for Oceanus and water sprites. If we peek at the right hand corner of the fountain, however, we notice a sculpted intimation of the revenge of nature and the overwhelming power of its disorder as the stones of the pilasters are pushed out of place by an invasion of carved weeds. It is an ironic acknowledgment of the *Epicureanmors immortalis*, the triumph of entropy over this temporary setting of order.

What gave the English formulation of the picturesque a dynamic role as an aesthetic movement was its ideological milieu. The political liberal meeting in the literary cafes and writing in the first critical journals such as the *Spectator* found aesthetic sustenance in the concept of the different approach to order in the picturesque. Alexander Pope alludes to the political parallel: "Nature like liberty is but restrained/ By the same laws which first herself ordained". His own garden at Twickenham 1719-1725, despite its many geometric elements, was among the first attempts in England to incorporate the irregular into its fabric.

Nikolaus Pevsner has observed that the English alternative to the formal geometric gardens on the continent was a byproduct of a liberal mindset, as almost all of the major exponents of the Picturesque were politically active as Whigs. The waterfalls, chasms, natural grottoes, mountain peaks were icons of the freedom of nature, analogues of human liberty, that could be represented in the private park. Stowe and Stourhead give the best realization of the picturesque movement's "naturalization" of nature. The view to a landscape that focuses on a ruin or *tempietto* surrounded by irregular planting, the episodic discovery along the path of new icons or natural marvels as with *yibuhuanxing*, and the confrontation with terrifying sublime elements, grottoes and waterfalls, contributed to the complex experience of the picturesque. At Stourhead in particular one walks winding paths and sees distant follies but has no foreknowledge of how to reach them. The joy of discovery at different scales—the tension between near and the far—lead to a parallax effect, a process that involves constant shifts of perspective.

Picturesque taste was transmitted to American culture within the politically liberal milieu of the transcendentalists such as Emerson and Thoreau, and the advocates for urban parks and national parks, in particular Frederick Law Olmsted. Not only was he an urban reformer and campaigner for public hygiene, education, and emancipation, Olmsted was also a proto-ecologist and observer of wilderness. The famous "Green necklace" of parks he designed for Boston's Backbay Fens, aside from conforming to the irregular layout of Picturesque taste provided an important green continuum for wildlife passageways. How easily one can get lost in Central Park is testimony of Olmsted's ability to create a landscape that can help one transcend the unrelenting orthogonal order of the Manhattan. Disturbed by the speculative drive of urban real estate, Olmsted argued in a whiggish fashion that gracious landscape, such as his plan for Central Park (designed with Calvert Vaux, 1850-60s), possesses "the extraordinary attraction it has for people who are not deeply absorbed in the mere pursuit of wealth".

Why the new picturesque I am trying to identify is not the same as the old one of Olmsted has to do with the influence the avant garde in 20th-century art theory as well as with the radical change in the definition of nature. Yve-Alain Bois addressed the first condition when he explains how the sculptor Robert Smithson could refer to the pure geometric works of his contemporary Richard Serra with such an apparently anomalous term as "picturesque". For Smithson there was the quaint, painterly picturesque and then there was the sequential picturesque experience in which the content of design is perceived through parallax. To properly understand a Serra sculpture, such as the erstwhile "Tilted Arc", one must circulate around it to discover that it is full of variety and cannot be seen as an entirety but only experienced as one. Smithson related his formulation of an avant garde picturesque that negated the possibility of the picture to his appreciation of Olmsted. He wrote "Central Park is a ground work of necessity and chance, a range of contrasting viewpoints that are forever fluctuating, yet solidly based in the earth".

Smithson likewise seems to be the most receptive art theorist in terms of the "end of nature" as Bill McGibben will later call it, during the first phase of ecology activism. In his entropic worldview, the natural world has been transformed through industrialism into a new nature completely conditioned by human interventions. As much as the chief spokesman of Land Art reviled the political correctness of ecology activists, referring to their dogmatic demand for conservationism as an expression of an "Ecological Oedipus Complex", such a Freudian moniker could well apply to an entire generation, including Smithson himself. His own works of Land Art, such as the "Spiral Jetty" (1970) in the Great Salt Lake, are justified as recycling "sites that have been disrupted by industry, reckless urbanization, or nature's own devastation".

In Smithson's ground breaking article, "The Monuments of Passaic" published in 1967, he describes a visit as a tourist to his home town suburb of New York City, photographing with an instamatic a picturesque sequence of anomalous sites: the "monuments" include an iron bridge, concrete embankments for the new freeway, drainage pipes from a pumping station, and the compelling emptiness of downtown parking lots. In his parody of the grand tour, in which he asks "Has Passaic replaced Rome as The Eternal City?" he categorized these devastating works of infrastructure "ruins in reverse". Like Marcel Duchamp's "readymades" he found monuments by looking at them.

Smithson's theory of art, what he sometimes referred to as Entropology, was closely linked to a recognition of a nature that was no longer natural. And in his observations and successive work he attempted to capture the process of change from order to disorder. The Spiral Jetty remains for me his most compelling work. It takes its spiral shape not from a predetermined formalism but from an intuition generated by the site and from observing the microscopic spiral formations of salt crystals that encrust on the rocks of the shore. That the work was destined two years later to be engulfed by the rising waters of the lake was its ultimate indulgence of entropy —the work was meant to survive only in the sequences of a film. But since 1993 the waters have subsided and the spiral periodically resurfaces like a memory from the past. It is not the contemplation of the object he produced but rather what happens to it that made the work.

In most of the urban projects of the Modern Movement in 20th-Century architecture the picturesque played a constant, if little acknowledged, role as the alternative landscape solution to Beaux-Arts composition. Le Corbusier's green spaces in the Ville Radieuse are left for casual landscapes with winding paths. The major works of Gropius, Aalto, Neutra, Niemeyer, and even Mies van der Rohe, were for the most part set in picturesque landscapes. Frank Lloyd Wright's "organic" theory of architecture was derived directly from picturesque precedents. Works such as Taliesin West in Scottsdale, Arizona, (begun in 1938) are rooted in the soil and evocative of natural formations, studiously integrated with the character of the landscape. The 2nd Jacobs

House, 1948, still the model of passive solar efficiency positioned a solar hemicycle submerged in an artificial hill to create a modern cave dwelling with excellent thermal mass.

Perhaps the most modern looking version of this Modernist picturesque were the environments created by Mexican architect Luis Barragán, who after 1942 claimed to have abandoned the profession of architecture to work in real estate while devoting his creative energy to making gardens. A work such as the San Cristobal horse ranch (designed with Andrés Casillas, 1968), is based on a staggered sequencing of discreet orthogonal spaces bound by asymmetrically arranged colored planes. Barragán desired that there be an enigmatic suggestions, like a treetop viewed an enclosure, to attract one to look behind the next wall.

The modern picturesque becomes specifically allied with ecology after 1962. With the production of the vacation homes at Sea Ranch in 1965, which followed Lawrence Halprin's ecological cluster site planning, we have a politically driven demonstration of a tangible quest for a more environmentally responsible approach to land use. A similar sense of ecological scruples was behind Roche Dinkeloo's design for the Oakland Museum (1968) with landscape architect Dan Kiley —a building that virtually disappeared under its thickly planted rooftop gardens.

Halprin's masterpiece in this period of early ecology consciousness was the Freeway Park in Seattle (1976), where the advent of the freeway into the central city was engulfed by an immense hanging garden, planted with a labyrinth of redwoods and furnished with gushing waterfalls —Freeway Park supplies adequate white noise to neutralize the sound of traffic, and its abundant greenery dissimulates the congestion of the city with an artificially sustained natural chaos. It spreads a picturesque blanket over traffic.

With the controversial installation of Maya Lin's Vietnam Veterans Memorial on the Washington Mall in 1982, the critical functions of Land Art began to enter into architectural discourse. Deceptively simple, the two obliquely opened arms of black polished granite gather the surrounding landscape, pointing to the Washington Monument in one direction and the Lincoln Memorial on the other. An anti-monument, low, sunk into the site, and dark, as one descends toward its vortex the Vietnam Memorial subverts one's expectation: instead of the apparant openness that it projects from afar, the visitor is engulfed by the highly reflective surfaces and engrossed by the mass of names of the dead, listed by the chronological date of their death. For its conservative critics Maya Lin's walls failed to represent, eventually leading to the addition of sculptures of three realistic soldiers placed nearby. There is no doubt, however, considering the continued popularity of this anti-monument and the invention of rituals it has engendered, such as name rubbing, that the negativity of the memorial has succeeded in communicating beyond its intentions.

Where avant garde art began to affect the picturesque approach to architecture lies in particular with Frank Gehry, and to some extent with Peter Eisenman. Gehry's collaborations with artists such as Robert Irwin and Claes Oldenberg are legendary. His own house in Santa Monica (1978) represents an important theoretical breakthrough, where sequences of pedestrian materials, such as corrugated metal, asphalt paving, and cyclone fence were misappropriated and assembled incongruously as fragments, piece to piece, rather than as parts of a coherent whole. The neighbors, in objecting to this apparently chaotic house renovation, asked the same questions about propriety that most modern artists have attempted to inspire with their works. With the conceptual sculptor Robert Irwin Gehry produced the entry to the Temporary Contemporary Museum in downtown Los Angeles (1983), a rational grid of steel girders, set like a tall pergola and planted down the center with bamboo. The frame serves as an orienting device that is periodically dissolved in a mist that playfully disorients the visitor. The freshness of the mist offers an attack on the smog hanging over downtown Los Angeles.

Peter Eisenman's prolonged meditations on the grid during the 1960s and 70s were closer to the formal research of artists like Sol Lewitt and Donald Judd than to the problems of making architecture. When his House VI (Frank House) was unveiled in 1975 it caused as strong concerns for propriety as Gehry's house, but this time within the culture of architecture. In this challenge to whether it qualified as architecture or not, House VI achieved a critical dimension that transcended its egregious technical flaws as a real building. With the completion of the Wexner Center for the Visual Arts in Columbus, Ohio in 1989, Eisenman brought to maturity a new geographical conception for design that approximated the capacity of works of Land Art, like Walter de Maria's "Lightning Field", to bring a sense of a greater connection to the world by the strategic placement of infinitesimal grids and shifting planes.

Now if I can return to my thesis: what makes the new picturesque critical is the spirit of negativity derived from the 20th century avant garde. If one is induced to inquire whether the work in question is art, or for that matter architecture, then it has suc-

ceeded in transcending its primary function as an object of vision to become one of experience. If one has to ask where does it begin and where does it end—even better. In works that aspire to be a landscape the radical use of parallax, the uncanny juxtaposition of unconventional materials and techniques, and the encounter with intimations of the end of nature contribute a high degree of criticality to the notion of the picturesque. At the same time they toy with the dialogue between advanced entropy and mandates for sustainability.

In the five American examples I have chosen to illustrate the Critical Picturesque, I have no doubt that each designer brought an underriding idea of sustainability to their initial consideration of site and program, the trace of what Smithson identified as an Ecological Oedipus Complex. This pragmatic attitude, however, was then counteracted by the negative capacity of the works to generate an allegorical experience of landscape that transcends their environmental performance.

At Thompson and Rose's, Atlantic Center for the Arts, New Smyrna Beach, Florida (1997) the architects chose to distribute a series of seven artists studio pavilions and a library attached to a raised deck into a spiral composition which mimics the spiral growth patterns of local mangrove swamps. The parking lot is also organized as spiral in emulation of the swirling natural order. The buildings are small parallelepipeds each oriented obliquely to the next so that no single building can be seen by itself nor be aligned with a neighboring structure. All the pavilions are rendered in cedar slats and operable louvers, and their roofs are made of lead coated copper, each poised at a single pitch but slanted at a different angle from the next, creating a syncopated effect. Inspired by the parallax of Richard Serra's "Torqued Ellipses" the architects have created an uncanny sense of spatial variety through the oblique orientations of simple, nearly uniform elements. The elevated boardwalk, two feet above grade, provides the complex a sense of community while also suggesting preparations for the rising waters in the age of Global Warming.

If the Atlantic Center for the Arts responds to the *genius loci* in its plan and then creates parallax and rhythmic contrasts as it rises in three dimensions, the Patkau Partners' Seabird Island School one hour from Vancouver (1989) presents a more literal imitation of nature in its massing. Built with a Native American community, the enormous roof of the building is totemic, like a colossal carp. The fluctuating contours of the roof also echo the shapes of the surrounding mountains. The complex roof provides a variety of drainage solutions in a climate where it rains more days than it does not. On the broad front of the school, the rain showers down a gutterless ridge to be collected in a thin strip of river stones. On the other side of the building the roof angles converge into a great syphon, forming and impressive rush of water that plunges into huge concrete tub. In the great hall of the school the roof is supported by a set of wooden columns with flaring branch-like struts that receive the loads in the upper ranges. On one of the side elevations, the great roof, dips down and tucks in upon itself like the protraction of the shell of a crustacean. It seems to anticipate the need for even greater from climate due to the profusion of greenhouse gases.

Neither of the previous two projects are arranged in symmetry nor are they axial. They share a quality of labyrinthine order that is characteristic of all of my examples. Steven Holl's St. Ignatius Church in Seattle (1997) would appear much more rationally organized—a rectangular, concrete box, on top of which rise seven differently shaped light scoops. The organization of the interior, however, completely upsets one's expectations. The well-lit narthex is fed by two light scoops divided by a vaulted strip. The progression past the baptismal font turns at a right angle into the rounded nave, spanned by a vault that expands toward the altar. Behind the altar daylight is filtered through yellow glazing and reflected off of blue colored light baffles. To the right of the altar is a room for confessions that is fully illuminated by its own light scoop and entered through a wooden panel that hinges into the corner. A special chapel in the far corner has walls coated with scented bees wax and is dimly lit with diffused red and green light that dramatically illuminates an enigmatic tree trunk suspended in chains. The incomprehensible shapes of the vaulted hoods contributes to a picturesque spatial flow in which one is easily disoriented.

Of all the projects featured, the Neurosciences Institute by Tod Williams and Billie Tsien at University of California at San Diego, La Jolla, California (1992-98) was commissioned specifically according to picturesque criteria. The client asked for a place where the view would change with each step, paraphrasing *yibuhuanxing*. Planned in reaction to Louis I. Kahn's Salk Institute (1959-65), which is monumental, axially organized, and poses a clear separation of building from land, the architects attempted to create a terracing sequence as landscape that integrates nature and architecture into discrete events. Stepping up a hill, seven paths cross the site, going under over, and through the three buildings. The buildings, a rectangular auditorium, a cantilevered stack of offices, and a glazed exedra for the laboratories, are casually organized, leaving many interstitial gathering spaces. The inclined glass sheltering the

laboratories undergoes a conversion as it extends above the roofline, from window to parapet, from the passive function of being held in place as a window to the active one of supporting. One discovers this paradox while walking around on the roof.

The final example, Will Bruder's Rock Art Museum, on the outskirts of Phoenix, Arizona (1994) integrates the ugliness infrastructure into the randomness of nature. Built at the base of a dam, the small building appears to be rectangular from a distance but on closer inspection is pinched like a bow tie or like two funnels that been placed tip to tip. The tilt-up concrete walls have been cast with a bizarre surface made of the slag from a copper mine. This grimey material creates a bizarre fuzzy skin that both blends well with the tones of the desert environment but also makes a disturbing surface when seen up close. Out on the surrounding site tubes of rusted iron have been set up for viewing the choicest petroglyphs. Like Smithson's sense of recycling the effects of entropy, the Rock Art Center confronts a threatened natural site with the exhausted byproducts of industrialism.

While the Critical Picturesque has its ideological origins in the apocalyptic atmosphere of Global Warming, it is not really about finding benign solutions to a nagging problem. All of the examples serve in some practical ways toward a new architecture of sustainability, but none of them can be considered paragons of a new ecological functionalism. In their recourse to the spirit of Land Art they provide cases of an allegorical landscape that responds to the fears and desires of a world that has been heavily influenced by theories of ecology but needs the negativity of the avant garde to confront the situation of the present.

LESS IS MISERY: NOTES ON LATIN AMERICAN RECEPTION OF MIES VAN DER ROHE'S ARCHITECTURE

Jorge Francisco Liernur

Unlike the other masters and great architects of the 20th century, who dedicated their careers to finding the best solutions to specific programs in the conditions imposed by modernity, Mies van der Rohe's was a reflection on the limits of the very existence of architecture in such conditions. The impossible problem that he took it upon himself to address consisted of creating solutions that were modern but still belonged to the "ancient" world of architecture.

Mies based his belief in the capacity to permanence on two factors: extreme technical precision, and the formulation of a minimum of structure-promoting elements and simple formal matrices capable of resisting the tendency toward 'Formermüdung'. The results achieved by Mies thus constitute a paradox. Perfectly able to accommodate fleeting demands, they are also perfect matrices of repetition, but when reproduced, they become banal objects. Mies' approach is therefore at once an opening and a closing.

The hypothesis guiding these reflections is as follows. One of the more radical operations effectuated by Mies was that which involved eliminating all features of characterization. Of the two great components of classical design, he managed to reduce his architecture exclusively to that having to do with composition. In Latin American conditions, modernity is by definition manifested in terms of "adaptation" or "otherness." The architecture of Latin American modernity is therefore "marked" and condemned to different forms of characterization.

There is another inconvenience: the Miesian paradigm of habitability is the simplest or the most primitive or colonial hut that was most polemically expressed in the Farnsworth House. The paradox is that to return to warm zones, the paradigm must be stripped of glass surfaces. Or, if there have to be glass surfaces, they should be protected by other devices, with the result that the original synthetic solution disappears.

Indeed, Mies' Latin American disciples did not always develop the concepts they had learned in Illinois in an incisive, profound way. Most of the time they simply designed "the Mies way" for a time, giving rise to some works we can consider significant on account of that sheer effort of design and linguistic inflection.

During the second biennial of São Paulo, Oscar Niemeyer's House in La Gavea made him the recipient—first from Max Bill, and later from other European and North American critics—of a barrage of aggressions that was also directed at the Gropius who would drift to the historicism of the University of Baghdad, at the Le Corbusier who had astounded with the formalism of Ronchamp, at the Giedion who had vindicated the need for greater aesthetic concerns and a "New Monumentality," and at the "Italians" who were beginning to disturb the serenity of rationalism with all kinds of formalisms and historicisms.

On the other hand, Williams' perfect answers to the programs of his time (housing, offices, the factory, the concert hall, etc.) still contained the characterization—func-

tional in this case—that rendered his investigations more “ancient” than those carried out by Mies.

Lina Bo's first impactful work in São Paulo after returning from Italy was the so-called “Glass House.” Lina's journey ended where Mies's had started: in the “primitive” hut. But whereas the primitivism of the structures taken as a model in the Berlin conferences endeavored to serve as basis for a universal model, here the intention was the exact opposite. So it is that Mies' operation was inverted and his interest in “repetition” and “composition without character” gave way to “character without composition”. That is, the absolute claim of “difference”.

In contemporary architecture, the “Mies” of Paulo Mendes is no longer the same “Mies” of Oscar, Amancio, or Lina, but a figure reconsidered in the light of the tradition of Paulist concretism and the subsequent international expansion of the minimalist ideas of which the German master is a principal reference. Not “historical” but “archaic,” the works of Mendes address the problem of duration in Miesian terms, implicit in the postulate of an austere use of resources. On the side opposed to the examples of the first group, what's interesting is the way its author “betrays” Mies. His architecture accepts the mark of characterization, and unlike Mies', is minimal in a strictly moral sense.

THE HISTORY OF URBAN PLANNING AS A HISTORICAL PROJECT

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The very definition of just what constitutes the history of urban planning is not as straightforward as it may seem. Let us begin with the term history itself. Originally the narration of some momentary event or chance incident, it has come to encompass the process and context of all occurrences that can be defined in terms of time and place. Cicero described history as the “witness of time, light of truth, light of memory, teacher of life, harbinger of antiquity”. The Prussian historian Johann Gustav Droysen described it as “knowledge of the self”. And Theodor Lessing saw it as nothing more than “lending meaning to the meaningless”.

Historical awareness is given when a question regarding the past can be posed from the standpoint of the present and answered scientifically, that is to say with methodical accuracy. To this end, the question must first of all be posed precisely and on the basis of a theory that can be either confirmed or refuted; then the sources must be collated — i.e. the remains from which knowledge can be gained of past events—and painstakingly examined, and finally the analysis and criticism of these sources must lead to historical awareness.

Let us try to define our terms more precisely. History, as we have already noted, is the explanatory and evaluatory narration of that which has happened in the past. Theory, etymologically “contemplation”, is the system of statements on the hypothetical structure of a certain epistemological or objective field. Finally, criticism encompasses all manner of addressing and examining actions, their norms and aims, in the form of objectifying, evaluating, judging, questioning and even negating.

Within this academic triad there are several interdependent factors. History is closely linked with theory, because it is not possible to address the issue of urban planning without including the principles according to which a city is made. On the other hand, theory is closely linked with history because the principles that determine urban planning are derived for the most part from the historical development of the city. Finally, criticism depends as much on history as it does on theory, given that the evaluation and judgement of urban planning depend upon the very parameters established by its history of the city and by the laws it chooses or develops itself.

So much, then, for the term “history”, which even a cursory glance shows to be distinctly complex and many faceted. This would certainly suggest that the terms “city” and “urban planning” are no different.

THE CITY AND URBAN PLANNING: ATTEMPTING A DEFINITION

The Middle High German word “stat”, meaning a town or settlement, is to be found in medieval documents; and was originally used to designate a place or site in much the same way as the related English word “stead” (as in “homestead” or “farmstead”). From the early twelfth century onwards, it gradually replaced the word for a castle or a stronghold, which had previously been used to designate a settlement. The notion of civic rights emerged around the same time. This would suggest that there is some connection between the concept of the city and the concept of civic rights (fig. 1).

Yet even in the Middle Ages, not all places designated as cities would qualify as such in today's sense of the word. They were often sparsely inhabited and distinctly rural. Yet making the existence of civic rights the precondition for acknowledging the

status of a city would negate that status in the case of all earlier urban forms; with the sole exception of the Greek polis (or more precisely, *astí*) and the Roman *civitas*.

Max Weber's definition of the city as a place linking economic and political functions would appear to be more appropriate. According to this German sociologist, the city is a place in which “the local population satisfies an economically essential portion of its everyday needs on the local markets, predominantly through goods produced by the local and nearby population for sale on the market and otherwise procured”. Weber distinguishes here between the consumer city and the producer city. In the producer city, products are manufactured and marketed by traders. In the consumer city, on the other hand, government, administration and landowners create the demand for products that can be produced either in the city itself or in the surrounding area.

At times, this definition does not apply either, for not all major market places were in fact cities. Attempts to derive the concept of the city from religious or military functions have also proved unsatisfactory, for, in actual fact, very few early sacred places or strongholds actually developed into cities.

An acceptable definition of the city is necessarily as complex as the subject to which it refers. It has to take a number of factors into account. Accordingly, the city may be defined as a large-scale concentration of population, consisting of a topographically coherent territory with a uniform and central administration. It is the focal point of its surrounding area and maintains trade relations with distant places. Its social fabric is complex and determined by the division of labour. It possesses a permanent architectural environment with recognisable functions.

ON ARCHITECTURE AND LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE

Distinguishing between urban planning and architecture is no easy task. Any building located in a city is bound to take on an urban planning aspect simply by dint of the fact that it responds in some way or other to its existing neighbour. It is also bound to influence and shape the public space, the street or the square on which it is situated. Sometimes a certain type of building becomes an integral part of an urban plan, developed specifically with the respective development requirements in mind — a case in point being the bourgeois apartment buildings erected in the redevelopment of Paris under Napoleon III (figs. 2 and 3). Sometimes a single building constitutes an urban planning element. This is true, for example, of Ferdinando Fuga's three monumental edifices in Mexico —the Albergo de Poveri, the Granili and the Cimitero delle 366 fosse —just as it applies to the architecturally sculptured *objets trouvés* of the Governor's Palace, the Parliament, the Secretariat and the Upper Courthouse designed by Le Corbusier for the capitol of Chandigarh. Sometimes individual buildings are designed as self-contained small towns, like the Albergo dei Poveri, a thoroughly rational monolithic housing quarter for eight thousand people, or Le Corbusier's Unité d'habitation, which he himself described as a “ville verte verticale”. In a few rather curious cases one can even find a single building that has mutated into an urban district in the course of time, such as the Diocletian Palace in Split, (figs. 4 and 5) into which an entire quarter complete with housing, workshops, stores and shops nestled in mediaeval times, or the Roman amphitheatre in Lucca, which became an integral part of the mediaeval urban fabric and whose arena was redeveloped in the 19th century by Lorenzo Nottolini to create a unique and distinctive urban space (figs. 6 and 7).

If there is one thing that is even more difficult than distinguishing urban planning from architecture, then it is distinguishing urban planning from landscape architecture. Cities and gardens have always been closely related as two complementary forms of expression of an artificially formed human environment. Their material means are different and even contradictory, but their aims and often their methods are the same. The ideas of the Enlightenment declared Nature the model for Reason; making it the instrument of legitimation for the emergent rule of the bourgeoisie. Before it was transposed to the city, this same analogy materialised in the invention of the landscape garden, the earliest examples of which are to be found in early eighteenth century England. In his “Essai sur l'architecture” of 1753 Marc-Antoine Laugier explicitly called for city green spaces to be planned according to the model of the (baroque) park. Since then, it has become the rule rather than the exception for the park to reflect the city and the city to reflect the park.

WHAT SHAPES A CITY: FROM SETTING TO SENSE OF PLACE

Yet even if we succeed in making the extremely difficult distinction between urban planning, architecture and landscape architecture (which should never involve a dismissal of architecture or even landscape architecture), urban planning still remains an extraordinarily complex subject. The development of a city depends on so many

determining factors. It depends on the topography, on the soil, on the material available in the surrounding area, on the climate and, last but not least, on the culture of the place with all the traditions, history and customs that are a more or less explicit part of the make-up of each and every city.

These factors have to be examined in order to understand why a city has taken one specific form rather than another. After all, a city does not simply grow, but is shaped by human hand. And what people do with a city is never arbitrary, but always has its reasons, however odd or irrational they may seem at times.

Let us begin with the question of topography. The place where a city is established is never arbitrary and never indifferent. Cities were often founded on rivers, where they guarded a ford and used it for economic or military purposes. Or they were built on an elevation, dominating the surrounding countryside and providing easier defence. This led to specific urban forms adapted to the respective geographic situation. Even major infrastructural elements can generate urban development, with entire cities—and not just villages—developing alongside roads or railway junctions. Las Vegas is an example of a modern roadside city, Euralille an example of a railway city.

The type of soil also has a bearing on the form a city takes. Venice, for example, built on marshy islands in a lagoon, is extremely densely developed in order to exploit the available ground to the maximum, with houses specifically built to adapt to subsidence and the effects of salt water. Berlin, built on sandy soil, is an almost entirely low-rise city, covering a very large area. In Manhattan, the high-rises are built where there is granite just below the sandy surface soil—Downtown and Midtown—and its skyline has become famous (figs. 8 and 9).

Between these two areas, in Greenwich Village and Soho for example, but also Uptown in particular, the geometric grid structure is filled almost entirely with low-rise buildings, which require no complex foundations.

Cities built on earthquake zones are a spectacular exception. The urban heart of Lisbon, for example, was rebuilt after the earthquake of 1755 on an orthogonal new plan, whose rectangular sites were meant to permit the construction of particularly robust houses, with a specially developed wooden framework intended to safeguard them in case of a further catastrophe. The entire city of Tokyo is distinguished by its structure of individual buildings which, though close together, do not actually touch, but maintain a specifically regulated safety margin.

The materials available in the area around a city also influence its architectural development. The city of Bath is built almost entirely of sandstone quarried only a few miles from the town. Santiago de Compostela is built of granite, which is available in large quantity in the mountains of Galicia. Ferrara is a city built of brick because no suitable stone is available in the immediate area, though there is an abundance of clay that lends itself to the production of bricks.

The climate also plays a role. Southern cities tend to be more dense and closed, with narrow alleyways that are cool and shady, and introverted houses that offer protection from the heat. In the north, on the other hand, streets, squares and houses open out to capture the last ray of sunshine even in winter. Specific climate-related strategies are also developed.

In Bologna, for example, where it can be very hot in summer, but very rainy in winter, there are almost 38 kilometres of arcades allowing people to stroll about the city comfortably whatever the weather (fig. 10). And in Houston, Texas, where summertime temperatures soar, with high relative humidity, a (privately financed) subterranean system of passageways has been constructed since 1947, providing a function similar to the arcades of Bologna in that it allows people to reach various parts of the city on foot via cooled (or, in winter, heated) linkways. Montreal has a similar network covering more than 10 kilometres, and Calgary, Alberta, has an even longer air-conditioned skywalk on two levels (fig. 11).

Finally, cities are shaped by local culture, by the customs and traditions that determine the lives of those who live there. Though these depend in the first place on other determining factors such as climate, in the course of history they take on an independent significance. This gives rise to urban elements that are not an absolute prerogative of a specific city, but undoubtedly characteristic of it. The squares of London spring to mind, or the glass-roofed arcades of Paris (figs. 12 and 13).

URBAN INFLUENCES: FROM PHILOSOPHY TO PAINTING

There are further determining factors still. There are philosophical influences: Plato's *Politeia*, his great treatise on the state, in whose structure man recognises himself, was to be the model for countless later utopian visions of the state, but also for ideal urban types such as Thuriol near Sybaris (from 444 BC).

There are religious influences: the redevelopment of Rome undertaken by Domenico Fontana (from 1585) onwards at the request of Pope Sixtus V was intended first and foremost "to pave the way for those who are moved by faith or oath to

visit repeatedly the most sacred places of the city of Rome, in particular its seven churches, so famed for their dispensation and relics" and the result was indeed, in the words of Fontana, "extremely spacious, straight streets" (fig. 14).

There are ideological influences: the seven magnificent high-rises planned and built at focal points of Moscow during the Stalin area were intended not only to create a new and profoundly "Russian" skyline, but also and above all to herald the triumph of Socialism with a trenchant and widely visible architectural gesture (fig. 15).

There are political influences: the Grands Travaux implemented by the prefect Georges-Eugene Haussmann in Paris from 1853 to 1868 were intended primarily to support the regime of the Second Empire. After all, the massive redevelopment of Paris constituted real estate speculation on a huge scale, pandering to the landowning bourgeoisie, and was at the same time a job creation measure aimed at appeasing at least part of the proletariat. Finally, it also had an important urban military function, permitting rapid deployment of imperial troops from one arrondissement to another thanks to broad and straight streets, and allowing, if necessary, the use of artillery in barricade fighting.

There are social influences: Idefonso Cerda y Suner a progressive engineer, presented an even and differentiated grid concept for the expansion of Barcelona in 1859 (in contrast to the radial plan drawn up by his counterpart Antonio Rovira y Trias) intended to transform the city gradually into an egalitarian structure for an egalitarian society (fig. 16).

There are economic influences: the invisible pattern of private property boundaries on the outskirts of London were rendered visible by the construction of squares in the late 18th and early 19th century and even the plan developed by John Nash in 1812 to 1814 for Regents Park precisely follows the boundaries of the royal property leased by the Prince Regent primarily for the purpose of speculation.

There are technical influences: the reconstruction of the centre of Catania after the disastrous earthquake of 1693 followed a relatively elementary geometric grid pattern with more or less uniform construction in order to allow the use of as many standardised building components as possible, which could be produced rationally. But for Elisha Graves Otis, who invented the first safety elevator, and presented it in 1853 at a spectacular public event in New York's Crystal Palace, Chicago and New York would never have become the high rise cities that were to inspire the collective imagination of Europe and become the leitbild of modern urban planning.

Finally, there are cultural influences: the Sacro Bosco created by Vicino Orsini in Bomarzo near Rome from 1552 onwards, is a loyal and detailed reiteration of the dream journey described by Francesco Colonna more than a quarter of a century previously in his widely acclaimed book *"Hypnerotomachia Poliphili"* (1499) (figs. 17 and 18). The English landscape gardens of the 18th century frequently cite motifs from paintings by Nicolas Poussin or Claude Lorrain: Tony Garnier's *Cité industrielle* (1899-1917) is directly influenced by La Crecherie, the ideal city of liberated labour conjured up by Garnier's favourite writer, Emile Zola, in his novel *"Travail"* (1901); and numerous architectural and urban planning schemes of the Novecento Italiano (and Italian fascist architecture) leaned heavily on the *Pittura metafisica* of Giorgio de Chirico and Carlo Carrà (figs. 19 and 20).

If we are to reach an understanding of urban history, we must embrace other disciplines as well: geography, geology, meteorology, sociology and cultural history. The history of philosophy, of ideology, of politics, of religion, of society, of economy, of law, technology, literature, painting, sculpture, theatre, films and photography. In short, the history of urban architecture is inextricably linked with the history of society as a whole, its ideological superstructure, its power relationships, its economic laws, its functional structures, its production techniques and its culture.

Admittedly, these disciplines have to be examined only in so far as they serve to explain the form of the city. They should not function as one-sided or even exclusive explanatory instruments, but should be applied together with other determinants in order to achieve a many faceted pattern of interpretation. The city is a complex structure that cannot be reduced to the lowest common denominator.

BETWEEN DEPENDENCE AND AUTONOMY: A METAPHYSICAL MIRROR OF REALITY

It would therefore be wrong to fall into the trap of unimaginative determinism, insisting that certain forms derive necessarily from certain preconditions. Such a simple approach cannot be applied in a field as complex as urban planning. It would, for example, be wrong to believe that the form of a city and its social structure might possess a comparable structure. Historical facts give the lie to such a simplistic assertion. The early democratic communities of the Periclean age, the Ancient Roman military occupation, the medieval corporative communities and the bourgeois societies of the 19th century, irrespective of their social differences, all settled time and time again in cities based on grid structures of remarkable similarity.

In this respect, urban planning may be no sovereign art (or, as has been asserted since the mid-19th century, no sovereign science). Nor is it the direct and linear product of social situations and developments, shaped by them as by a stamp or die. It is a thoroughly independent and clearly delineated discipline which may be described in the same words Primo Levi used to describe literature: a metaphysical mirror of reality. Urban planning is an autonomous form of expression not bound to the slavery of fact, but at the same time a reservoir of knowledge and human life. It follows its own laws, but is constantly influenced by what happens around it. It is this dialectical relationship or, to put it more precisely, this equilibrium, we wish to examine.

That is no easy task. After all, the conditions that have shaped the city in history are distinctive and fickle. Sometimes it is a philosophical or religious principle that spawns a certain urban form, at other times it is a social situation that leads to a fundamental renewal of the urban fabric. Sometimes ownership, the mechanisms of real estate economy, and the legal instruments governing real estate, can lead to a *forma urbis*, and at other times the conditions of technical production shape the face of the city. Sometimes the city is the materialisation of an intellectual, literary or artistic vision. And yet, almost invariably, all these conditions work simultaneously, albeit with varying effect and varying transparency.

NARRATIVES AND DISCOURSES

These histories have to be told. They are to be narrated the way good stories have always been narrated, with a beginning and an end, dense and clear and concentrated and precise as possible, yet vibrant, with a clearly defined plot, but still permitting detours where these seem necessary and important—detours into the world of philosophy, politics, religious history, sociology, economy and the history of technology, but also into the world of literature, in painting, theatre, film and photography (fig. 21). Did not Piero della Francesca or the unknown artist of the three *tavolette* presumably created as a theatre backdrop capture the essence of the Italian Renaissance city with astonishing precision? Did not Honoré de Balzac sketch a peerlessly precise and varied portrait of mid-19th century Paris in his "La Comédie humaine"? Did not Jean Luc Godard present a lovingly critical lecture on the Villes Nouvelles in his wonderful film *Deux ou trois choses que je sais d'elle*?

Such detours (if they can be described as such) are necessary. Without them, a profound and genuine understanding of urban planning is not possible. Yet they should not distort our view of the true subject matter in question, which is the city in its specific three dimensional form: a human artefact of stone, mortar, wood, brick, iron, glass and asphalt. And, above all, the people who inhabit that artefact.

BUILDINGS AND IMAGES

Is this really the sole subject matter of our reflections? As a rule, the city as an artificial product is materialised. The history of urban planning deals first and foremost with this materialisation. Behind that, however, there are countless plans, plans that have formed the basis for the realisation of the city as a whole or in part, and plans outlining variations and alternatives never implemented for frequently trivial reasons. These variations and alternatives often merit as much attention as what can be observed *in natura*. Consider, for example, the housing block with its large garden courtyard open on two sides, designed by Cerda for his expansion of Barcelona, and steamrollered by the force of real estate speculation.

At times, entire cities have been planned on the drawing board but never built. To dismiss them from the history of urban planning would be to miss out on some of the most brilliant highlights in the history of ideas, subjecting them with misconstrued pragmatism to the force of circumstance with its coincidental constellations of power and economics. Tony Garnier's Cité industrielle, that great imaginary city that formulated the most important urban planning principles of our century's modernism in Arcadian-Mediterranean form just before the turn of the century, would have no place in such a history. It exists only in a series of plans and magnificently coloured perspectival views and what Garnier was able to realise in Lyon is merely related to it, no more (fig. 22). The Futurist city, too, would be omitted, for Antonio Sant'Elia only sketched and drew his Città Nuova.

A history of urban planning must therefore be a history of urban planning drafts as well. Such drafts do not depict reality, but create an urban architecture. Often, they are bold projections of utopian vision, unfettered by the restrictions involved in realisation. Visions unadulterated by compromise can develop freely. Apparently emancipated from reality, their inspirational vitality can contribute decisively towards changing it (fig. 23).

THE HISTORIAN AS SHERLOCK HOLMES

Let us recall the definition already proposed earlier: historical awareness is given when a question regarding the past can be posed from the standpoint of the present and answered scientifically. This begins, both metaphorically and literally, with the question. The formulation of the question already bears within it the succinctness (or insubstantiality) of the answer.

In any detective story worth its salt, especially one by Edgar Allan Poe, the detective initially posits a hypothesis which he then verifies by means of the available evidence. While the police rush around like headless chickens, pursuing coincidental links between the bits of evidence they have found, the detective constructs a logical hypothesis on the basis of his theoretical knowledge of the great criminalistic paradigms, and weighs this hypothesis against the evidence only once an adequate degree of probability has been achieved. In other words, the sleuth pursues the idea, while the police officers pursue the facts. It is the idea that allows him to solve the case by means of evaluating and structuring a confusion of inadequate or unreliable data.

In order to succeed, the historian must adopt the same approach as Auguste Dupin, Sherlock Holmes, Arsène Lupin, Hercule Poirot, Nero Wolfe or Lord Peter Wimsey. Before entering the labyrinth of facts, he must spin the Ariadne thread of his hypothesis. He must pose a precise question on the basis of a universal theory. But which theory?

First of all, his own. Like the good detective, the good historian must construct a hypothesis that allows him to structure his sources without losing his way in them. And like the detective, the historian needs a theory based on a knowledge of the great paradigms of history—in our case that means, of course, the history of urban planning. This theory allows the historian to grasp another theory which he may not necessarily agree with, but which he has to examine—that is the theory held by the author in question responsible for the plans being analysed historically.

If we are to understand a city properly, we cannot ignore the ideas, concepts, hopes, dreams and illusions on which it is based. We must make the effort to understand its authors. We have to evaluate the project from within, as it were, in order to do it justice. It is not conducive to a proper understanding if we approach an urban structure with a misplaced sense of scientific innocence and impartiality. Nor can a proper understanding be achieved by a misguided effort to take a stance, thereby imposing personal views and values on everything that is to be analysed. Still less constructive is the application of theoretical parameters that have nothing to do with the project. What would be the point, for example, in analysing Ebenezer Howard's intimately small-scale garden city from the point of view of, say, the urban theory posited by Georg Simmel, who hailed the anonymity, coldness and "extreme uncoseness" of the metropolis as the prerequisite for individual freedom? What possible epistemological advantage could be gained from applying the concept of the openly structured city (subject of the influential book by Johannes Goderitz, Roland Rainer and Hubert Hoffman published in 1957) in analysing the cleverly densely-packed development of the New York Rockefeller Centre by the group of architects around Harvey Wiley Corbett, Raymond Mathewson Hood and Wallace Kirkman Harrison? Such an approach would be like judging apples according to the criteria of pears. At best, the result would be superficial. At worst it would lead to a seemingly indisputable judgement and rejection.

First of all, the rules of the game inherent in the project have to be discovered, analysed and then applied to the project itself. Do they possess an inner logic? Do they correspond to the conditions of their time? Are they convincing when applied? Only then can they be judged from today's point of view. For even if the historian should take care not to pass judgement too hastily, he cannot and should not ignore his own historicity.

FACT AND FABRICATION

This does not, however, release him from his obligation of care and precision. Let us recall that historical awareness requires the collation and examination of sources once the question has been posed. The history of urban planning has access to many diverse sources. The most important and most reliable of these is the city itself in its built, inhabited and vital form. This must be the primary subject of study. Not second-hand, through plans, drawings and photographs, but at first hand, in the original. In other words, the real, spatial, living city should be observed, analysed and critically evaluated.

This is not always possible. Many cities are far too difficult to reach, and others have changed so much that the state to be examined is barely recognisable, while still others have been entirely destroyed and exist no longer. In such cases, reference must be made to photographs, models, plans, drawings and texts. Films, paintings

and literary references are also useful. Their importance for urban research has already been indicated. Even when the city still exists physically, such documents are indispensable, even if, as is so often the case, they are incorrect, altered or even falsified. No document can replace the sensual experience of seeing, hearing, smelling and feeling a city. Yet the knowledge that a document provides can facilitate such sensual exploration by underpinning what we see and feel with facts, drawing attention to the most important aspects, and thereby whetting our powers of perception and emotion.

Facts, as a police officer mutters in one of Dorothy Sayers' novels, are like cattle: look them in the eyes long enough and they'll go away. This, of course, is slightly exaggerated. And the history of urban planning depends on the precise collation of facts just as much as any other history or academic discipline does. All the more so because it cannot fall back upon any truly rigorous tradition for the 20th century. The pioneering "livres à thèse" such as Lewis Mumford's great work "The Culture of Cities", published in 1938, demand more than respect and admiration. They themselves have become a part of our own tradition. Yet we now have the task of supplying contributions, alongside the manifestos, distinguished primarily by the most accurate possible observance of the historian's duty to work with painstaking care. In our discipline, as in architectural design, attention to detail is of the utmost importance. That includes the detail of dating. And our discipline, too, must constantly seek to expand its own horizons in order to counter the linear and deterministic approach to history by offering more diverse, rich and admittedly more complex and contradictory models.

FOR AN EXPLICIT AND COMPREHENSIBLE STATEMENT OF OPINION

This brings us to the third and undoubtedly most decisive step in the process of historical cognition. The question has been posed, the sources collated and examined. Now these sources remain to be critically evaluated and analysed in order to find the answer or, more probably, the answers. In doing so, the historian cannot avoid taking a stance. Only those who have an opinion can analyse and, above all, criticise. And those who are not afraid to state that opinion clearly. The historian can no more deny a personal attitude (nor should he) than ignore his own historicity.

This is justifiable as long as the personal slant is explicit and comprehensible in the statement. In other words, the subjective aspect must be set apart as clearly as possible from the objective aspect, and the opinion of the narrator must be clearly separate from the facts that are reported, correlated and evaluated. The basis on which this objective approach is built and the steps that led to it must be presented so precisely and so transparently that another person can also come to a different conclusion by another way.

Important as this is in any context, it is all the more important in a school. Students should not simply be crammed with facts, data and knowledge. They should be taught to use this knowledge, these data and these facts. Without the firm foundations of a basic knowledge that can only be imparted through education, there can be no worthwhile analysis. Yet the teacher's interpretation should not be adopted without reflection or continued stereotypically. It should inspire other, divergent and even contradictory interpretations. Only in this way can there be progress in research and vitality in theory.

In this respect, the history of urban planning must also defend itself against dogmatism. It must encourage the exploding of myths and the breaking of spells, perhaps the most noble and lasting heritage of the Enlightenment. Above all, however, it must turn against the worst dogmatism of our time, the dogmatism of relativism, which declares all things relative except relativity, and all things replaceable except the perfidious myth of replaceability, narrow-mindedly denying all permanence and values.

SOCIAL ART AND EMANCIPATION

Finally, not even the most impartial, unprejudiced and independent history of urban planning can avoid the questions that must be asked of every urban settlement: does it accommodate the needs of the people who live there? Urban planning is the persistent and never-ending attempt to unite that which cannot be united: artificiality and nature, concentration and sprawl, the private and the public, law and freedom. Its history brings no definitive solution, no single truth. Yet important and unimportant episodes can be identified, the good, the brilliant, and the exemplary, but also the dark, the dreary and the despicable. A scale does exist that permits such distinctions and evaluations. That scale is humankind. The scale is applied by asking whether the urban model in question constitutes an improvement for the inhabitants. Whether it contributes as social art to improving society and the life of the individual. Whether it serves the emancipation of the individual.

There is no single, universal and definitive answer to such questions. For this reason, they have to be posed anew time and time again, showing up the cheap certainties of the technocrats, the bureaucrats and the business world. Showing up the self-styled specialists, the unimaginative functionalists, the dyed-in-the-wool ideologists, the narrow-minded dogmatists. Showing up the self-satisfied, philistine moralists. This, too, must be taught and learned: mistrust of all too easily available and one-dimensional "truths", confidence in the humanist values that can counteract inhuman indifference, patience to seek them in the labyrinths of history and the intellectual capacity to test them time and time again at risk of refuting oneself.

The urban planning history project which I have attempted to outline here is intended to contribute to this. It is intended to impart knowledge, which has always been the most effective instrument against the errors of ignorance. Its aim is to achieve a self-critical, independent and discriminating approach to knowledge. Its aim is also to use that knowledge and that approach to open people's eyes to the problems of our cities as well as to their benefits, making them aware of poverty as well as the opportunities of combating that poverty, and letting them see the ugliness of our cities as well as their sensual, heart-warming, encouraging and quite incredible beauty.

THE ORIGINS OF THE MODERN HISTORY OF ARCHITECTURE ON THE CENTENARY OF RUDOLF WITTKOWER (1901-1971)

Carlos Montes Serrano

Last year was the centenary of Rudolf Wittkower, the most influential art historian in the Modern History of architecture. An entire generation of English architects came under the spell of his teachings, whether firsthand in British universities or through publications. This essay is a recollection of Wittkower's work and its place in the development of the historiography of architecture. It also mentions Wittkower's importance in some episodes of English architecture of the fifties.

Through an examination of his major publications, we verified that the method Wittkower used to analyze mannerist and baroque Italian architecture was a synthesis of what he learned from his masters. Adolf Goldschmidt, his thesis mentor, infused him with scientific rigor and objectivity in the use of sources. From Heinrich Wölfflin he learned what is called formal analysis, which, avoiding psychological approaches, leads to a "history of art as solution to problems".

After moving to London and joining the Warburg Institute, Wittkower attached much importance to the study of the symbolic meanings and values of architecture, which he analyzed on the basis of the concept of typology. At the same time, a study of *Architectural Principles in the Age of Humanism*, his major work, reveals the influence of Emil Kaufmann, particularly in the interpretation of past architecture in terms of aesthetic principles of contemporary architecture. This analytical method would be further developed by his disciple, the architect and historian Colin Rowe. Given all this, and because of the special attention he gave architecture, Rudolf Wittkower could be considered the first historian of architecture ever.

Lastly, the article discusses Wittkower's bearing on the architectural debate of the fifties. Reyner Banham once pointed out how important Wittkower's work was in England's architectural movements, which first crystallized in the friendly formalism of the early fifties —so characteristic of London architecture in the 1951 Festival of Britain— to later give way to brutalism.

The publication of *Architectural Principles in the Age of Humanism* —which upheld the symbolic and aesthetic value of harmonious Renaissance proportion as a guarantee of good form— coincided with the publication of Le Corbusier's *Modulor*. This aroused an unexpected interest in the book in architectural circles. Such attention would wane in the second half of the decade, in the course of which interest in modulation and regular schemes gave way to concern for the expressionist and sculptural character of architectural form.

ENGLISHNESS VERSUS MODERNNESS. MODERN HOUSING IN 1930s ENGLAND

Juan Miguel Otxotorena

This study endeavors to be a first step toward the revision of the modern works carried out in 1930s England in the field of housing, both private and collective. As we know, the interwar period marked the arrival in London of the ideals and methods of the Modern Movement. In a way, it delimited the space of its validity, ever uncertain and subject to debate, precarious and relatively marginal.

The article is a concise run-through of some of the significant aspects of England's modern experience in the residential field, and it ventures some clarifications concerning the panorama of its objectives and challenges, ambitions and efforts. The essay zooms in more directly on the field of private housing, this in line with an analysis of some of the more outstanding projects of the likes of Lescaze, Conell, Ward & Lucas, Yorke, Fry, Goldfinger, Chermayeff, Lasdun, Coates, Lubetkin, and the Tecton team. The presentation of these projects is often supported by a re-drawing of the designs. Nevertheless the article ends by giving due attention to some of the more ambitious experiments of young modern London architects, especially Lubetkin and Coates, in the field of mass housing.

The making of this paper has involved the compiling of disperse information from a wealth of books and magazines, not to mention the graphic documentation required for analysis, and we must acknowledge its contribution to a fuller picture of the confusing but interesting phenomenon of the advent of modern architecture in England of the 1930s. What comes to the fore, without a doubt, is the complexity and frequent superficiality of the vision that the Modern Movement's first British followers had of its ideals, all in an atmosphere that was markedly reticent and dominated by historicist attitudes and styles.

THE ALTARPIECE: ICON OF THE TEMPLE

José Manuel Pozo

On the whole it seems undeniable, from a liturgical and pastoral viewpoint, that both religious architecture and religious art of the second half of the 20th century have been unsatisfactory. In the final analysis, this denotes a failure of art and architecture.

A book entitled *The Spirit of the Liturgy* has recently been translated to the Spanish. The title evokes that of a celebrated work by Guardini and the text served, in the early 1900s, to start up a liturgical renewal movement that would have a lot of influence on religious art and architecture. The author, J. Ratzinger, puts forward a hypothesis that comes in handy both to explain said failure and point out ways of correcting mistakes.

This article sums up some of the philosophical and theological explanations for the crisis of religious architecture, and analyzes some of the issues addressed by Ratzinger, especially those having to do with the use and role of images in church design. For reference he uses two temples built in Spain in the second half of the 20th century, namely the sanctuary of Torreciudad, in Huesca, a work of Heliodoro Dolz that was inaugurated in 1975, and the Virgen del Camino, in Leon, a work of the friar Coello de Portugal that was completed in 1961. Both gave a leading role to the altar-piece in the conception of the space and in the final arrangement of the church.

DESIGNS OF A MEDIEVAL ARCHITECT. MONTEAS OF SEVILLE CATHEDRAL

José Antonio Ruiz de la Rosa
Juan Clemente Rodríguez Estévez

In recent years, some designs on the Gothic walls of the Cathedral of Seville have been discovered. Their research becomes one more step to the better knowledge of the building and guarantee its possibilities as a restoration tool.

Since the end of 1995, some work on a great number of incisions on the ceramic flooring that cover the aisle vaults and chapels of the south-southwest area of the Cathedral has been done. We suspect that they could be architectural designs. In that case, they are ones called monteas and these designs have an unquestionable value as they constitute the final stage of the roof design, a job that needs a high grade of accuracy. What is represented on the roof are the different forms and rooms which were placed at that same level: flying buttresses, pinnacles, buttresses, windows, balustrades, cornices and mouldings.

The loss and lack of definition in the designs, due to their damage, raise a serious problem of formal identification and comprehension of the graphic procedure in a research which is still going on. However, at this point in time we consider the conclusions we reached to be significant:

- In the Cathedral of Seville, extensive graphicwork related to the building construction on a real scale was carried out, taking advantage of the proportions of the big horizontal surfaces that their flat roofs represented. So they carried out the necessary performance plans to build a great part of the necessary formal catalogues for the roofs. The use of these monteas is a centuries-old tradition.

- The graphicwork was done using measuring rods, rulers, pieces of string, and metal punches to design on the ceramic surface, which is just as appropriate a surface as one from the tracing house.

- From its observation, it is possible to deduce the existence of a perpendicular weft with different measure relations between its parallel lines of both directions, that can go from one flat roof to another (at least some of its lines). This weft seems to be a previous element to the execution of the other designs. That can make you think of a reference system for the designs and could also offer preestablished measures for the execution of some elements or operations.

- Some designs, sometimes simple outlines of straight and curve forms (always circumference arches), were done on the weft. Out of all of them we have identified some elements that are clearly those of a Gothic building: a flying buttress, a pointed window, blocks of stone and cornices sizes, and perhaps a rose window. These elements cost very little in terms of effort and materials to design, on a 1 to 1 scale and directly related to all that had been constructed in the setting, whose dimensions coincide precisely.

- The group of designs, neither as a whole nor in the weft, seems to relate to a designed organization as a whole from the beginning. The weft and designs increase in number as they become necessary. They were even superposed as there was a lack of space. Nowadays, that superposition looks like a mess but in the past, the surface was reusable subject to a colouring processing.

- The research hint at a period between 1478 and 1496, although the future identifications will contribute to determine the exact date.

In short, this article is about the process used to carry out this piece of research.

A "DISCOURS AUX ARCHITECTES"?

Romy Golan

Like Fernand Leger at the 1933 CIAM IV, I find myself invited to this conference as an interloper: not as a painter, but as an art historian among architects, to deliver, like Leger, a "*Discours aux architectes*". A few years ago I published a book that tried to present an overview of anti-modernism in France between the two world wars. My argument was —succinctly put— that reactionary issues such as the return to the soil, anti-urbanism, the questioning of technology and their ideological corollaries— agrarianism, regionalism, Corporatism— had a profound impact not only on mainstream French culture but on French modernism in the aftermath of World War I. This was the country that although victorious had been destroyed was thus psychologically and historically most inclined to try to restore its *patrimoine*. The Great Depression had only intensified the French disenchantment with industrialization. The "rural" came to occupy a crucial place in the French imagination in the 1930s. All these tendencies, I argued, slid imperceptibly, into the Fascist ideology of Vichy. The one other European country that played a role in my account was Spain. Spain, I claimed, functioned for the French as a purer, benign, less-industrialized, alter-ego in the 1930s, and indeed in the "imaginaire" of both the political Left and Right. Spain was the antithesis to the overly industrialized and commodified society of the United States.

I would like to take this address as an occasion to revisit my argument in a more systematic way, think a little bit more about architecture, and take the question of regionalism into its later permutation, which I call the vernacular, during the post-WWII decade. In a recent review of a book on Modern art in Eastern Europe written for the American journal *Art Bulletin*, the art historian James Elkins made a set of distinctions that made me want to rethink things I had written in my own book. He pointed to the need to refine the concept of regionalism. He thus outlined what he called three slightly but crucially different options.

"Regionalism", he wrote, is a term to be applied specifically to cases when an artist or architect knows what is happening in some other region, but decides to continue making a work that is particular to his own culture, or turf. It is a totally arbitrary choice, a worldview, an ideology in which the center decides to take the margin, the local styles of individual regions, as its model. "Parochialism" is a better word to describe the case of an artist or architect who knows something is happening in some other region but is afraid to find out too much. It is also a choice but one made from the margins rather than from the center. Here the imbalance of power between the center and the periphery comes into play. "Provincialism" applies to an artist or architect who wants to know about what is taking place in some other region but is prevented from doing so for political or economic reasons. In this last case issues of political power and the center/periphery question become paramount.

It would seem that in interwar France, unless one looks at minor architects practicing in small towns, say in Saint-Brieuc in Brittany, only regionalism as understood in the first instance applies (fig. 1). Brittany might have still seemed somewhat remote from Paris in the 20s and 30s but everyone had access to magazine culture, especially architects, and clearly what we have here is the desire to spell out an ideological doctrine—that of Brittany as a separatist region—as much as carrying on building “as usual” in the local style. The same category of regionalism in the first, ideological, sense applies to France, even during the years of the regime of Vichy.

How should we think however of this distinction between regionalism, parochialism, and provincialism under stricter dictatorships as those that took hold in Italy during the Fascist *ventennio* and in Germany during the Nazi regime? There again, regionalism as an ideology seems to me to be the dominant trend. But what do these distinctions mean for Spain, a country positioned, to some degree, at the margin of Europe especially from 1939 to the seventies when it found itself isolated from international developments in art and architecture during the years of Franco?

In many ways the 1920s provided a simpler picture than the 1930s. For at that point, the divide between the rearguard and what is now known as the first historical avant-garde in architecture, as it was established by Le Corbusier and Walter Gropius, was clear. It is during the thirties that things become more complicated. In France regionalism emerged not only a discourse of the traditionalists but, with some modifications, as that of the avant-garde as well. One witnessed in France a *rapprochement* between conservatives like Leandre Viallat, the man who had been responsible for the triumph of Regionalism as the “correct” (and infinitely more onerous) mode of reconstruction after WWI and Le Corbusier. One now heard Viallat calling in the 1930s for a ‘regionalisme moderne’ and a ‘rationalisme régional’ and Le Corbusier waxing lyrical on the rocky mountain peaks of the Alps, the pre-historical Breton rock formations, the softly sweeping meanders of Mediterranean beaches and the primitive dwellings of fisherman in villages like his beloved Arcachon. If world fairs are any measure of a country’s state of mind, then one could assert that it is in France that the regional carried most weight both in the 1920s and in the 1930s (fig. 2). This was the case, I think, not only because of regionalism’s capacity to domesticate the modern, but also because it presented itself as a benign, non-aggressive architecture, an architecture of pacifism in an increasingly convulsed Europe.

Regionalism did not affect the Italian or the German imaginary to the extent that it did the French. The propagandistic nature of their ideologies led both Fascist Italy and Nazi Germany to endorse a multiplicity of styles in a totally instrumental manner. In Italy variants of modernism, neo-classicism, and regionalism were allowed to compete, along with the concepts of *Latinità*, *Romanità*, *Mediterraneità*, and *Italianità*, for the label of “home style”. Regionalism ended up playing second fiddle to Fascist architecture. In Italy, in contrast to France or in Germany, regionalism was almost entirely absorbed into the modernist, that is the Rationalist architects’ camp. Ambitious series of articles such as Giovanni Michelucci’s “Contatti fr architetture antiche e moderne” and Fonti della moderna architettura Italiana” which appeared in *Domus* in 1932, were intended to demonstrate that the traditional forms and functional logic of Italian vernacular architecture provided the true basis for Italian Rationalist architecture. The unadorned blank walls, the straight awnings, even the quasi-flat roofs, were not Northern, foreign, Bauhaus features but Mediterranean autochthonous ones. In other words, the Rationalists claimed, in one of those uniquely Italian rhetorical *jours-de-force*, even high modernism *à la Mies* (minus metal and glass!) is in fact ours... Giuseppe Pagano could thus point, to striking effect, to the similarity between the irregular scheme and the combination of frame and loggia in Giuseppe Terragni’s Casa del Fascio in Como and the loggia of a rural *cascina* photographed in a Casabella article by Pagano in 1937. And one could claim, in the same vein, an affinity between the crisscross pattern of the facades of Adalberto Libera & Mario de Renzi’s Post office in the quartiere Aventino in Rome, 1933 and the motif of the wooden balustrades of a *loggiato* at Cascina Pezzoli, Trevignano in a photograph also shot by Pagano (figs. 3 and 4). The same attempt to absorb the regional into a modernist idiom took place in the paintings and murals of Secondo Futurismo’s *Aeropittura*. Thus the tension between the ideologies of *Strapaese* and *Stracittà* (countryside vs. metropolis) evident in the 1920s in Mario Sironi’s gloomy and ominous depictions of the Milan *periferia* and Carlo Carrà’s semi-deserted Tuscan villages, the works of two painters who had been ardent Futurists before World War I, was elided in the later Futurism of the 1930s. In the spectacular aerial views painted by second-generation Futurists Gerardo Dottori and Alessandro Bruschetti, even the godly detachment of the bird’s-eye survey of the Italian landscape from miles above cannot resist the earthy pull of regionalism. The tiled rooftops nested around the bell-towers of Umbrian towns and villages harmoniously negotiate their way among the torpedoes of the Futuristic force-lines (fig. 5). That these views are often seen as if through the cockpit of fighter planes, bombers such as the ones that were being currently used in the

Abyssinian War in North Africa, adds a disturbing dimension to these paintings: for they conjure preservation and destruction at once.

In Nazi Germany the *Kampfbund* or battle over different styles in architecture, was as much about power struggles in matters of personal tastes among individuals at the top as it was about Germany’s architectural legacy. Hitler, Goebbels, Goering each had their favorite architecture ideologues—Alfred Rosenberg, Paul Schultze-Naumburg, Albert Speer, etc. All styles could be applied as long as the buildings were believed to instill a sense of community (*Gemeinschaft*) in the German people. They ended up being applied in the most *sächlich* or cold, objective fashion, each to a different building type. So we have an inflated, Teutonic, martial, neo-Romanesque for the WWI death memorials and the hunting lodges of party leaders; gargantuan neo-classicism for Hitler’s government buildings in Berlin; and a whole gamut of *Völkisch* variants for party leaders’ country retreats, hostels and summer camps of the Hitler Youth. *Völkisch* was best for photo-opportunities. Domestic architecture, including the highly uniform row houses ‘*Siedlung-style*’ in the industrial suburbs of large cities invariably featured the two clichés of the regional: sloping timber or half-timber roofs and irregular massing of window patterns and quaint wood shutters (fig. 6). Meanwhile, *sub-rosa*, since it went counter to *Heimat* ideology, functionalist modernism continued to be applied for what turns out to have been the bulk of the building ventures of the Nationalist Socialists: architecture geared towards industry and war. No such opportunism was allowed however in the non-functional media of painting and sculpture. By the time of the *Entartete Kunst* exhibition of 1937 what made good Nazi painting and sculpture as opposed to ‘degenerate art’ was perfectly clear. Except for the extreme sharpness of focus which reveals the specter of photography behind so many Nazi oil paintings, the return to figuration and to old master pictorial techniques was absolute (fig. 7).

But there are further complications particular to regionalism. The fact that regionalism was predicated on the concept of authenticity made it the most susceptible of all architectural modes to the prefixes ‘neo-,’ ‘pseudo-,’ and ‘faux-.’ And this all the more so in a period that invested enormous credence and funds in an endless series of national and international fairs. For in fairs everything appears perforce at a 2nd or 3rd remove from the world at large. Fairs always have what Roland Barthes has called an *effet derealisant*. The way to counteract this was to make sure to produce what Barthes again called a ‘reality effect’: an overabundance of details, down for instance to the every single piece of furniture, useless to the overall narrative except for saying to the viewer: “we are the real” (fig. 8). In a recent study entitled *France on Display* historian Shanny Peer explores in extensive detail the countless folkloristic dance performances, *tableaux vivants* of potters, weavers, and other artisanal activities planned for the 1937 fair. And yet the public was meant, surely, to notice the difference between the quaint reproduction of a French village in the section “La vieille France” in the *Parc d’attraction*, an area meant to be used by families as a fairground at the 1937 exposition (fig. 9) and the ‘truth function’ of the Centre Regional as a blueprint for architecture (fig. 2). It was meant to recognize, that is, different degrees of simulacra within the exposition itself.

Whereas the regionalism of the 1920s in France veered towards pastiche, the thirties took a more eclectic approach: a combination neo-classical Beaux Arts symmetry in the ground plans with a mixture of Art deco and picturesque elevations. Architects could leaf through and select bits and pieces from the “Bible” of regionalism, Charles Letrosne’s voluminous compendium *Murs et toits de chez nous*. In an article published in 1933 in *L’Architecture* critic René Clozier was not afraid to call for “habillements à la Française”, mere regionalist revetments, for modern architecture. Recent analyses of world fairs have been infatuated with the concepts of “collage” and “hybridity”. Yet one may wonder whether these buildings are truly hybrids, or just late avatars of 19th century historicism, also called Beaux Arts eclecticism? For indeed earlier studies of French interwar architecture, like the ones undertaken by Jean-Claude Vigato and Gerard Monnier, paid particular attention to the professionalization of young Paris-trained French architects. In 1942 the architect Paul Vera asked how the method and training of the hegemonic Ecole Beaux-Arts could result in anything but mediocre regional architecture:

Is it because most often for a construction in the provinces, an architect arrives from Paris to the place where he is to build, inquires about a stationary store for drafting supplies, buys illustrated postcards to get a sense of the local style, and returns home? Under those conditions he could only design something that is completely superficial like a painter would do for a stage set.

The concept of the hybrid has been particularly enticing for those writing on colonial fairs in the light of postcolonial theory. It is undeniably striking that at a time when

Marocco and Algeria were the in fact the laboratories for a French "techno-modernism" *outré-mer*, what the French were given to see at home were complete and utter Dysneyfications of the colonial (fig. 10). At the 1931 Paris Exposition Coloniale one would stroll along a Champs Elysees of the colonial world lined up to be consumed like so many boutiques along a mall. At the 1937 exposition the colonial section, exiled and miniaturized on a little island on the Seine, was even more blatantly a fake then in 1931. And yet when the Russian literary theorist Mikhail Bakhtin initially made use of the concept of "hybridization" in his *Dialogic Imagination* in the 1920s, he defined it as follows: "a mix of different stylistic consciousnesses widely separated in time and social space. Novelistic hybrids are intentional and their double-voicedness is not meant to resolve. Since hybrids can be read as belonging simultaneously to two or more systems, they cannot be isolated by formal grammatical means, by quotation marks". But in the colonial pavilions are we really looking at hybrids in the sense defined by Bakhtin or actually, to the contrary, at the pettiest instance of parochial domestication of the "other", buildings meant to speak in the single, hegemonic, colonist's voice?

In painting, the French public's favorite representations of Paris during the interwar years were, if one is to judge from the art market, Maurice Utrillo's saccharine depictions of the capital as if it were a provincial village. The same is true of the much beloved paintings of the so-called *naifs*.

Utrillo himself owed his success to the fact that he was painting in a *faux-naïf* style. How, one may ask, does the concept of naivete and pseudo-naivete translate into the medium of architecture? The relation between the two is particularly interesting when it comes to regionalism because it can be said that what makes regionalist architecture so famously "picturesque" is precisely the fact that—if one looks at the etymology of that word—it implies an architecture seen as if it were a painting, architecture as pictorial representation, architecture framed. And yet things that could be signified in painting were still untranslatable, at that period, into architecture. *The Street* painted in 1933 by Balthus is one of the largest pictorial representations of Paris of that period (fig. 11). While it looks at first like a monumentalized version of the *naifs*, if becomes perfectly evident, after a second look, that the painting was meant as a subversive mimicry of the benign images so beloved by the French bourgeoisie. The grotesque depiction of the babe-in-arms, the little girl in pink, and the detail of the young man molesting a pubescent girl on the left on the composition on the backdrop of a stage-like architecture were obviously meant as so many jabs on the part of Balthus at the *contes moralisés* dreamed up by the Regionalists. Was there and could there be such a thing as subversive mimicry in 1930s architecture? It would seem that one has to wait for postmodernism (a la Robert Venturi) for that.

One of the most overlooked aspects of regionalism during the 1930s, which I ignored in my book, is the way in which both the French and the Spanish Socialist Popular Fronts sought to visualize their desire for a reconciliation between regionalism and the world of industry in the medium of the photomural. This was a paradox because large black and white photomontages had been largely associated with two things, both of which had to do with capital: the Machine Aesthetic and the huge advertisement billboards on the metropolitan landscape. And yet at the 1937 Paris fair, with the exception of a photomural by Leger in Le Corbusier's Pavillon des Temps Modernes, all the pavilions dedicated to industry, transport, science, and technology were decorated with painted murals meant to imitate the centuries-old medium of fresco. It was in the Spanish pavilion and in the French pavilion dedicated to agriculture that one saw the best and the most spectacular arrays of mechanically reproduced images, and most of these dealt with peasant life. The French photomurals were commissioned from Fernand Leger and Charlotte Perriand, one of Le Corbusier's principal collaborators. Perriand was also commissioned to wrap a set of photomurals around a waiting room in the Socialist Ministry of Agriculture (fig. 12). The Socialists' experiment with the pastoral photomural was short lived. With the center-right back in power in late 1938 a set of frescoes depicting scenes of grape-gathering and harvest, in the timeless manner 19th century painter Puvis de Chavannes were commissioned from painters Roger Chapelin-Midy and Roland Oudot to refurbish the Ministry's offices (fig. 13).

The most provocative question remains Le Corbusier's take on Regionalism at a time when he began to flirt with the anti-capitalist doctrines of Regional Syndicalism and *Plannisme*. The paradigm shift in his work from the decontextualization of the Machine Aesthetic to a recognition of the importance of site-specificity was first elaborated in his work as a painter in a series of still-lives painted in the little fishing village of Arcachon around 1927-28. The application to architecture came later. Thus an overtly autobiographical painting like *The woodcutter* of 1931, which Le Corbusier kept in his collection until the end of his life, may be read as a manifesto painting spelling out the need for a new dialectical relation between the architect-as-engineer and

the architect-as-*Homo Faber* (fig. 14). In a deliberate contrast to the earnestness of regionalism, what Le Corbusier seems to have derived from his paintings is a sense of play, humor even, which he translated into his architecture. For what we have at the Maison aux Mathes in the Charentes Maritimes, the Maison de Weekend in the leafy Paris suburb of St-Cloud, and the Swiss pavilion at the Paris' new Cite Universitaire (fig. 15), all build in the early to mid-1930s, is a jocular juxtaposition of building materials: industrial plywood and glass next to a fieldstone wall; a dazzling whitewashed wall or a translucent glass brick wall next to heavily rusticated stones.

In a revised version of the Maison Loucheur, his prototypical dwelling for rural areas, prefabricated parts were imported from Paris to be combined with the rustic masonry walls made by the local contractor: half craft, half prefab. This was an architecture that for once truly deserves the words 'collage' and 'hybrid'. In the 1930s Le Corbusier began to use materials within quotation marks as if to say: "this is a tactile, heavily rusticated wall which I am placing just next to the hyper-smooth Purist whitewashed wall; look, this is Purism versus Primitivism; here is optic versus haptic". This arbitrary, highly authorial, and idiosyncratic bracketing of materials on Le Corbusier's part should be understood as the very opposite of regionalism in the traditional sense, in which building materials are 'expressed' as a natural, author-less system of signs emanating, growing like a tree from region and soil.

During the years of Vichy the country versus city debate took in France an almost surreal turn. Surreal because France found itself in the uncanny situation of being a two-headed country with Paris occupied by the Germans and the seat of the state now in Vichy, a nondescript town in the heart of provincial France. The question arose: how does one devise a modern regionalist style not just for individual buildings, but also for a regionalist urbanism? Although Vichyites called for the relocation of Frenchmen from cities to the provinces and actually laid out ambitious plans such as a network of highways connecting Paris to its surrounding countryside, the regime, having to operate during wartime and under the boot of the German occupation, ended up achieving precious little. Just as interesting as the projects themselves is what someone like Michel Roux-Spitz, what we may call a mainstream Art Deco modernist architect very active in Paris in the 30s and 40s, had to say in a 1943 article he wrote for *L'Architecture française*:

Architects will have to recover those same qualities of French art which have always signified order and moderation, tact and propriety; they will have to recover this same logic in the use of regional and modern materials; this same popular wisdom in the conception of which, like past techniques, resulted in the success of our traditional architectures; but avoiding the obsolete and superficial decorative formulas and picturesque effects without real sculptural qualities. Regionalism will no longer be that misleading, negative style of certain prewar snobs or charlatans, neither will it be those regional styles of universal exhibitions, but it will be the new architectural style of France, symbol of its resurrection.

This is the kind of statement now being heralded by a new generation of architectural historians as a proof of the existence of a progressive, anti-historicist current during the years of Vichy. Yet I would argue that Roux-Spitz' indictment of the phonicness of French regionalism between the two world wars is actually disturbing. For his contrast between the charlatanism of the interwar years and the present resurrection of French culture sounds exactly like the moralistic argument made by Petain.

It was in Fascist Italy that Giuseppe Pagano managed most successfully to avoid both that nationalist atavism associated with regionalism and the quirky, romantic individualism of Le Corbusier in his project *Architettura rurale Italiana*. It began with a series of articles and photographs for his journal *Casabella*. It then took the form of an section dedicated to the rural habitat at the 1936 Vth Milan Triennial and a photobook (figs. 16 and 17). Pagano described rural architecture in the following way: "Autochthonous traditions: clear, logical, linear, morally and formally very close to contemporary taste. Its elements have to be understood as being almost anonymous, collective, perfectible: this is true of both the classical and the rural model". The words "autochthonous", "tradition", the comparison with the "classical" must have sounded sweet to Fascist ears. And yet the serial, taxonomic, and documentary nature of what was first and foremost a photographic enterprise aimed at recording countless variations (i.e. regular vs. irregular loggia, external versus internal staircases, arched versus columned courtyards) of the Southern *casali* and the Northern *cascine* compiled as for a User's Guide, were meant by Pagano to functioned as an anti-rhetorical, deflationary weapon. And this precisely in 1936 when, Italy having just been granted the title of Empire, the neo-classicism of Marcello Piacentini and the neo-Byzantinism of Mario Sironi, respectively Mussolini's favorite architect and artist, reached an unprecedented degree of rhetorical bombast. With Pagano's project the rural became—as

Italian architectural historians Manfredo Tafuri, Cesare De Seta, Giorgio Guicci were all too happy to concur—the patrimony of an anti-Fascist culture and of the premise for the anti-heroic, populist architectural ethos of the post-WWII years.

At the aftermath of WWII one witnessed a dramatic inversion of all the signs. Mythical, ritualizing, Fascist recollections of *Volk* were turned around and refashioned into a new “politically correct” version of the regional: the vernacular. The vernacular managed, first of all, to successfully negotiate a basic contradiction: it pointed to the ordinary, the everyday, and thus to the ubiquitous, while it at the same time it referred to the local and the particular. And, as opposed to the pre-capitalist, classless society dreamed up by 1930s Corporatism, the vernacular pointed not only to class, but even to proletarian subculture(s). This is not to say that during the 1940s and 1950s the vernacular was not immune to the old pitfalls of regionalism—such themes as nostalgic pastoralism, populist demagoguery, overly specific references to autochthonous forms. Yet its prosaic and Existentialist ethos guaranteed it a safe niche on the political Left. And while Heideggerian notions of architecture-as-dwelling and as provider of a “sense of place” continued to have a powerful resonance in the postwar years, currents like New Humanism and New Empiricism managed to steer the vernacular away from what Theodor Adorno called “the jargon of authenticity”. The vernacular also served to counter the overarching schemes of an Hegelian history of art and architecture influenced during the interwar years by the Rielg and Wolfliin model. Models that were predicated on the totalizing quality of the notions of *Zeitgeist* and *Kunstwollen*, the idea, that is, of a single, dominant “period style”. Thus, for instance, the art historian Meyer Schapiro, in an important article published in 1953 in *Anthropology Today* called for a definition of style in a minor key, one that would pay attention to “the smaller picture”: i.e., stylistic shifts taking place from year to year; geographical stylistic distinctions within the same region; the importance of different types of workshop training; and most important, stylistic disparities between the margin and the center understood now in terms of class, the civic vs. the religious, elite vs. popular culture. What emerged from this in the field of architecture after the Second World War is a new positionality in which modernity is deliberately inflected with regionalism and vice-versa, and in which regionalism is no longer used defensively to counter or to tame the modern but as a form of commentary on the architecture of modernity.

The positions taken by France, Italy, and England vis-à-vis the vernacular are particularly telling of their historical situation in 1945. The fact that Le Corbusier was the one to pull off the most elegant visual combination of building materials—deeply saturated red and brown masonry bracketed by rough untreated concrete at the Maisons Jaoul, a wealthy suburb of Paris is significant (fig. 17). A similar aesthetic can be found at that moment in painting where Jean Dubuffet’s concept of *Art brut* served the same important ethical function as *béton brut*. Both are symptomatic of a retrenchment on the part of the French in art for art’s sake. A retrenchment, I would argue, which had very much to do with France’s unwillingness to deal with the lies of Vichy. Maisons Jaoul also share their formal elegance with the paintings of Nicholas de Stael and Pierre Soulage, often compared in their emphasis on *matière* to the tactility of Le Corbusier’s fifties surfaces (fig. 18). Indeed what the most vocal French art critic of the period, Michel Tapié, championed as *Un art autre*, an art supposedly outside of the accepted aesthetic norms was, as the American critic Clement Greenberg rightly put it, just more French ‘*belle peinture*’. Derived from urban, vernacular, subversive, wall *graffiti*, even Dubuffet’s *Art Brut* was almost immediately converted into that elegant mark which the French themselves have called ‘*écriture griffée*’.

The works of the Italian postwar artist Alberto Burri have been accused by contrast, by art historians like Yve-Alain Bois, of exploiting a romantic, pauperist vein. His coats of rusty paint coagulated over roughly sawn burlap inevitably alluded not only to war wounds but to the countless bums that populated the peninsula at the aftermath of the war (fig. 19). His canvases would, moreover, soon be compared by the art historian and critic Cesare Brandi—in what is clearly a favorite Italian trope—to the burned colors of the hilltops of Umbrian towns, where Burri was born. The burlap rags reminded Brandi of the jute robes of the Franciscan order. This was an art of contemplation and morality, he wrote, an art for a life of humility as predicated by the Franciscan creed. Similar allegations of sentimentality have been made at Italian Neorealist cinema and the so-called Neorealist architecture (fig. 20). In 1950–51, Ludovico Quaroni, Marco Ridolfi, Adalberto Libera and Saverio Muratori designed the new Roman working-class suburbs of Tuscolano, Tiburtino, and La Martella. Bruno Reichlin has recently written about what he sees as the intention of producing in these *quartieri* a “double mimesis”. Although built *ex-novo*, they had to appear to their new inhabitants as the product of historic, archaic sedimentation. And so the three-storied row houses with small courtyards in the back the wrought iron balconies and windows artfully and asymmetrically placed, were derived from fishermen houses in the

island of Ponza. But they as well perform a second mimesis in that the new inhabitants would come to consider themselves the very ones who had built this place laden with history. In line with the existential ethos of the postwar years, Quaroni & Co. thus made sure to show in their architecture traces of vicissitude. Instead of the covering-up of modernist structures with picturesque revetments found in the 1930s, formal dilemmas were now allowed to appear. Like Burri’s images, these buildings were aimed to show their scars and their seams. To that effect the layout of the neighborhoods was carefully kept irregular. Ridolfi, Quaroni et al., architects in their mid-career who had been all too happy to be involved, as ambitious young men, with the tail end of Fascism at EUR 42, now aimed at erasing authorial composition in order to produce vernacular and, as it were, anonymous architecture. One of the first critics to write about these buildings, Manfredo Tafuri, was not duped by this sudden pride of modesty after the marked immodesty of the *ventennio*. Here was an expiation of atavistic sins by means of a populist and sentimental image of the nation.

France’s unwillingness to reckon at all with the collaborationist aspect of Vichy and Italy’s all too easy pedaling towards ideological redemption in the years that followed the Second World War did not serve them well. It was England that held the moral high ground in Europe at the aftermath of WWII. It is not by chance that two of the CIAM meetings of the postwar years were held there, CIAM VI in Bridgewater in 1947 and CIAM VIII in Hoddeston in 1951. The fact that England had always been associated with pragmatism, empiricism, and a no-nonsense domestic architecture, and was the *Ur-site*—since Marx and Engels—of a truly proletarian subculture, made it an all the more appropriate model in the context of the anti-rhetorical ethos of the postwar years. It was England who stood thus in the late forties for that vague and yet at that moment so powerfully enticing concept of “the everyday”. The French may have had for theorizing the everyday, for example in Sartre’s Existentialist philosophy and Henri Lefebvre in his now famous (and in fact anti-Existentialist) *Critique of Everyday Life* of 1947. But it was Britain’s newly elected Labor Party that best knew how to capitalize on it politically when it came to power in 1945. Thus we hear Siegfried Gideon commenting just after the Bridgewater CIAM:

Today in England, behind all discussions lies the question, what does common man want? How do we have to respond to certain wishes? Are they legitimate? Are they naked atavism? From the outside we can hardly understand the intensity with which these questions are put on the part of painters, sculptors, writers. There are in France today more ingenious plans for city building than we saw in England. But if we ask what characterizes the mood of both countries, unfortunately in France at the moment it would be the ephemeral philosophy of existentialism, while in England, on the contrary, it would be the planning initiatives, which have prepared for almost every city a change in their form of life.

This said, England was at first certainly no less immune to the picturesque and to pastoralism than any other European country. Thus the “New Picturesque” of cottage estates was heralded both by the Left and the Right as a return to an empathic view of Englishness, the one already evoked by Garden City projects in the teens and countless other occasions in the 19th century (fig. 21). Similarly, a painter like Peter Blake now re-invented by art historians as a proto-Pop artist, was seen in the 1950s as something like a blue collar *naïf*. The success of Richard Howard’s book *The uses of literacy: changing patterns in English mass culture*, a bestseller when it came out in 1957, was due, by the same token, to the fact that it read as a nostalgic salvo from the “old” Left for an authentic, genuine, communal, popular culture in England against current the onslaught of mass culture.

But most significant, I believe, is the fact that the English were able to conceive of the vernacular radically because they had stood outside the Master Narrative of modernism in architecture and art throughout the first half of the 20th century. Here is a case in which a “parochial” or more exactly “insular” attitude, if we go back to the distinctions drawn by Elkins referred to at the beginning of this article, proved in fact to be an asset. For this position allowed England to tap in a convincing manner into two very different, yet equally marginal and equally unorthodox currents. The first was recent Scandinavian architecture. Instead of the defensive and overwhelmingly anti-modern stance of regionalism during the 1930s, architects Alvar Aalto, Gunnar Asplund and Eskil Sundhul, had taken a instead a corrective approach to modernism. As a young Swedish architect invited in 1943 to write a piece for the London-based *Architectural Review* put it: Swedish modernism was “a critique of high modernism’s pseudo-functionalism not on ideological but on down to earth commonsensical grounds”. Its goals were a better simplicity, a better functionalism. Intent on keeping rational design, Scandinavians managed to reintroduce nevertheless “the valuable and living elements which existed in architecture before the machine to live in”. “To inter-

pret such a program as a reaction and a return to something that is past and to pastiches is definitely to misunderstand the development of architecture in that country".

The second, more transgressive source the English were able to draw on with a unique edge was Dada. This was done by the Independent Group (I.G.), a movement that had initially very little to do with architecture and yet whose offspring was the New Brutalism. The brainchild of critic Rayner Banham, New Brutalism stood for an impure, helter-skelter vernacular. Banham's use of the somewhat daunting term 'New Brutalism' was meant to discredit the other new -isms. i.e., New Humanism, New Empiricism, New Picturesque, as old-hat, gentle vernaculars embraced by the generation of the interwar years still basking in nostalgia and in search either for redemption or for cure of the traumas of recent history. It is thus New Brutalism, not 50s Corbusianism or Italian Neorealism, that marked a true break with the first half of the century. There is no parallel in the 50s, anywhere in Europe or in the U.S., for Banham's and Lawrence Alloway's writings on art and architecture in the way they understood how strategies of appropriation, semiotic inversions, and bricolage percolate a proletarian vernacular culture. Eduardo Paolozzi's, Nigel Henderson's, and John Mc Hale's collages resist the upward aestheticizing pull of art in a way Dubuffet's *Art Brut* (which they greatly admired) did not (fig. 22). Similarly Henderson's late 40s photographs of little corner stores and of children playing in bombed out spots in Bethnal Green in blue collar East London are devoid of the sentimentality of similar subject in Neorealist Italian cinema.

The derelict vernacular of the Independent Group was epitomized by Peter and Alison Smithson's *Patio and Pavilion* at the *This is Tomorrow* exhibition in 1956. This was a plywood and corrugated plastic shed 'decorated' by a grisly collage and urban junk assembled by Henderson and Paolozzi (fig. 23). This shed which can be best described as a wryly ironic post-atomic shelter at the height of the Cold War, can also be read as a parody of the *Ur-shelters* that had occasionally cropped up in the modernist imaginary such as Le Corbusier's primitive hut in *Une Maison un Palais* and Aalto's *Forest pavilion* of 1938, not to mention the 'home sweet home' just revived in England by the proponents of the New Picturesque.

This English' singular ability to reread the first historical avant-garde radically is what Philip Johnson meant when he wrote about the Smithsons mastering the 'Mies vernacular' at their school at Hunstanton in Norfolk, in an article written for *Architectural Review* in 1954. For what sounded like an oxymoron, in view of Mies' famously stripped down, minimalist vocabulary, was precisely their feat. Here is a building that has been called enigmatic in its simplicity and yet whose raw masonry, raw concrete, unpainted walls, electrical and heating appliances, were all spectacularly exposed (fig. 24).

This kind of unorthodox re-reading could extend, on the pages of *Architectural Review*, to the older generation, as it did in an extraordinary piece that came out just a few months before Johnson's, written by Nikolaus Pevsner. The article was a spirited answer to a series of radio broadcast by art critic Basil Taylor with the title *English Art and the Picturesque*. Taylor's answer to the question "Must English art be picturesque?" was: unfortunately, except for very few exceptions, yes. As long as they strove to live up to the picturesque identity which they revived during WWII, Taylor lamented, this standard condemnation of British art and architecture would continue to hold true. Ever since the 18th century the picturesque had prevented the English from facing up to the realities of an industrial age, Taylor argued, drawing them into irrelevancies and a nostalgia for the past. Deconstructing Taylor's argument, Pevsner pointed to how he progressively exchanged the adjectives 'accidental' and 'disorderly' for 'irregular' and 'intricate.' There always was, Pevsner stated, a good and a bad, i.e., conceited, picturesque. He accused Taylor of applying pictorial parameters—as the etymology of the picturesque normatively implies—to the field of architecture and, worse, to town planning. One may choose to understand the picturesque altogether differently, positively that is, Pevsner went on, as a sign of openness, imagination, freedom from the straight-jacket of classicism. Instead of escapist, the picturesque, was, in fact, he claimed, 'realist.' Pevsner then did something very daring and provocative: he used the concept of the picturesque, always a curse for the modernists, as the lens through which to revisit major, iconic buildings in the 'heroic years' of modernism. Taking as his examples Gropius's 1925 Bauhaus buildings in Dessau Le Corbusier's Stuttgart houses of 1927, and Le Corbusier's Centrosyus project in Moscow of 1929, Pevsner proceeded to describe them zeroing not on their classic purity, their cubic shapes, the absence of moldings, the large window openings but on their impurity: the free grouping of the individual buildings, their irregular plan and pattern of circulation, their mixture of materials (synthetic vs. natural, raw vs. smooth), the differentiated heights of their elevations, and so on.

What is implied in Pevsner's description of the intricacies and vagaries of these buildings is that they should be read as existing in time, and not in the temporal void

predicated by the tabula rasa of high modernism. In his recent book *Devant le temps*, the French art historian and theorist Georges Didi-Huberman set out to defend, in what I see as similar terms, anachronism as a positive rather than a negative concept. Anachronism, not unlike the Picturesque, is generally perceived as a reactionary fear of present, a flight from present time into the past. It is believed to constitute a non-synchronicity that should be avoided by historians, artists, and architects. But why couldn't one see anachronism, asks Didi-Huberman, taking his cue from Walter Benjamin, not as a collapse of time but a meditation on time-*devant le temps*? Not an embrace of historicism but a reflection on historicity? What would an anachronistic architecture look like? In contrast to the good old, simpler times dreamed up by the regionalists during the interwar years, but also in contrast to the temporal suspension predicated by high modernism, both the debate over the different meanings of the vernacular and the picturesque in 1950s Britain and the work of Peter and Alison Smithson might provide an answer.

URBAN AND ANTI-URBAN: INFERENCE OR ANTAGONISM? CHRONICLE OF A CONGRESS

Ana Esteban Maluenda

In the course of the 20th century, architecture and urbanism were routinely identified with the city. But there were moments, coinciding with critical periods of history, that saw the emergence and diffusion of what we might call 'anti-urban ideologies', and these affected artistic and architectural creation as much as they bore upon urbanistic thought. Such 'anti-urban ideologies'—and their opposition (or derivation) to 'urban ideologies'—were the theme of the 3rd International Congress of Modern Spanish Architecture that the University of Navarre's school of architecture organized in 2002.

The selection of speakers was notable: Romy Golan, who focussed on the regionalisms embraced by different countries in the thirties and fifties; Josep M. Rovira, whose portrait of Josep Lluís Sert dwelt on the master's defense of the 'functional city'; Giorgio Muratore, who defined his own presentation as "a history of the Italian city and its great contradictions"; and Panos Mantziaras, who clarified some interpretations of the figure of Rudolf Schwarz. Their respective discourses and the ideas expressed by participants whose communications were chosen to be read out loud in the course of the congress generated the daily round-table debates, which some members of the event's scientific committee also took part in. The debates stressed the difficulties of defining the term 'anti-urban'. In the opinion of many in the congress, anti-urban culture had its origins in the urb itself.

The meeting had a privileged closing session in the care of no less than Professor Stanislaus von Moos who wrapped up the event with a speech about the urban identity of the city of Philadelphia and the works that the architects of the so-called 'Philadelphia school' did for it.