

# ARCHITEXT

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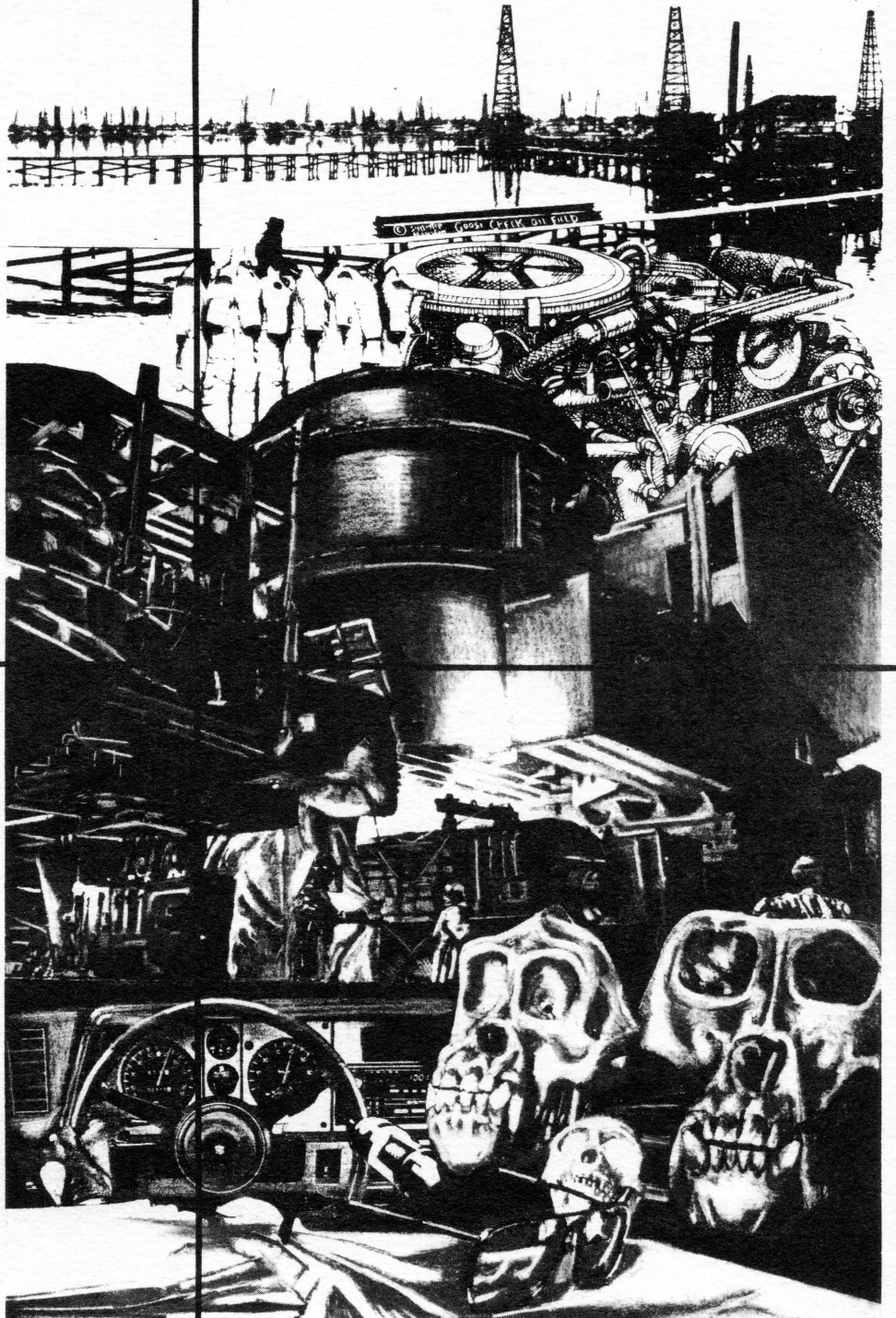
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The main topic of this issue of *Architext* is *Man And Machine*. Also, student works covering other topics have been included.

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This Fall Issue is a combined effort of the *Architext* staff and Editorial Boards of Spring 1984 and Fall 1984 terms.

# A QUESTION?

by J. Ski (John Savitski)

Architecture, in unison with art and all other creative endeavors, forms a tangible documentation of society and social change. Can architecture be the instigator of social change or does architecture merely respond to social change? Each reflects the fact that architecture and society are changing at an accelerated rate. Future social tastes and technical advances unquestionably will be integrated in architectural design. Will we be among the first to take the risk and creatively apply new social attitudes and technical developments in our designs? Will our designs be an integral part of social dynamics or will they reflect the status quo?

The study of architecture is the study of change, of contribution, of evolution. Is the Chartres Cathedral only a church? Was the Crystal Palace only an exhibition hall? Is the Guggenheim only a museum? No, they are more, much more. They exemplify architecture which transcends mere building. They are the results of innovative changes in structure, form, massing, meaning, materials, emotion and attitude.

We learn of the architects who made the changes and pushed architecture ahead of the status quo. These architects, who did not reject the past, pushed into the future. They looked at design through different eyes, innovative eyes, unrestrained eyes. They applied innovative ideas to their knowledge of existing architecture, which was made possible by previous architects with innovative ideas; a fragment of a continuum. Were they ridiculed? Maybe. Were they appreciated? Maybe. Did they contribute to the evolution of architecture and life? Yes.

As designers of architecture with the complexities in technology, program, and aesthetics, we should be qualified to direct our design skills to other fields in design. Mies gave us the Barcelona Chair. Saarinen gave us tables and chairs. Today, Robert Venturi, Richard Meier, Michael Graves and Aldo Rossi have designed silver tea services. Frank Lloyd Wright also designed in a broad scope. Some

accomplishments included furniture, music and even a birdhouse. All these architects broadened the scope of design to include anything receptive of their creativeness.

Why are we studying architecture? Will we merely design buildings, or will we make contributions to the evolution of architecture and society through design? As students, now is the time to take the risk. Ignore ridicule, ignore appreciation, just explore and experiment. Encourage innovative design which solves the problems that are set before us and do it with a spirit consistent with great design.

What should we expect to do in school?  
Create great architecture? No.  
Graduate as great designers? No.  
Make mistakes? Yes.  
Observe and absorb? Yes, Yes.  
Take a risk? Yes, Yes, Yes.  
Ask questions? Emphatically YES.

Stop.  
Look at yourself.  
Look at architecture.  
What do you require it to be?

# SLIM PACK

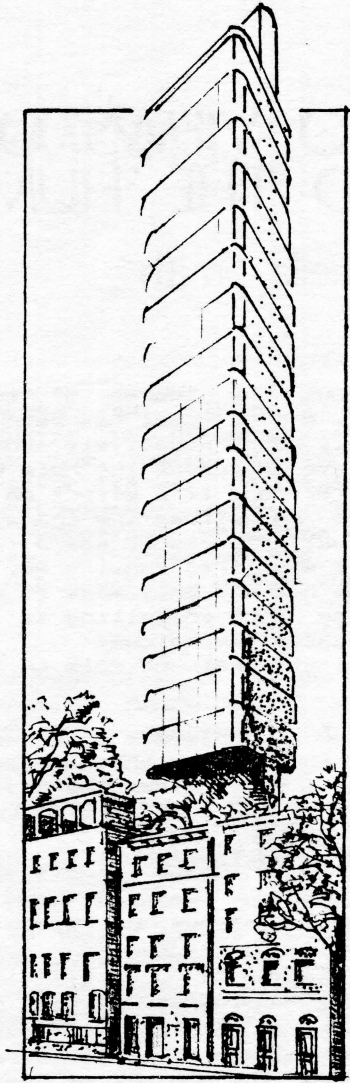
by Tammis Donaldson

As I gathered momentum to write about "Man and the Machine" for this issue, my eye gazed over a new box sitting on my desk: "Koh-I-Noor / Rapidograph / Slim Pack / Compact, Easy Storage." These are the words of the day, slim and compact. Slimness is an attitude; it is technology; it is design. The interest in slimness is cultural. Pursuing slimming diets, purchasing narrow-legged pants and thin shirt ties, compact TV sets, stereos, cars, sliver-wafered calculators, and building towers are all examples.

The silicon chip has become the workhorse of this decade. In the field of electronic technologies, the silicon chip has triggered off great leaps in product design. The personal calculator has evolved from a bulky, hand held box, sometimes stored by hanging off a belt loop, to a thin wafer that can be stored easily in a check book or, for easy reach, included in a wrist watch. The office computer has been reduced from a room-sized component to a button-sized brain attached to a digital panel. Technology has given today's designers the key to the micro-small and the super-slender. The effects can be seen everywhere in such cultural aspects as design concepts and social awareness.

The "silicon chip" of architecture may be thought of as the new building type, sliver towers. These towers are sprouting up in dense urban areas and in popular residential neighborhoods, primarily in New York City. The overall proportions are noticeably slimmer than their neighbors and are sometimes referred to as being anorexic. Slivers have been criticized for adding congestion in dense urban areas and for exploiting the context of residential neighborhoods to benefit the developer's pocket book. A typical residential sliver may have one apartment per floor and rise twenty-six floors, shadowing a six story brownstone.

The criticism is valid, yet their slenderness is intriguing if not sometimes graceful. As the writer Henry James has noted, "the skyscraper is all about reaching and overreaching." The sliver may verge on the overreaching. Its height may not set startling records, but its contextual response could do so. The sliver's structure is not technologically difficult; however, the acceptance of such compactness in a congested area may be difficult to accept.



Slim and compact have become words of the social concern for the economy of energy due to dwindling natural resources. Meeting the challenge of keeping one step above our limited energy stock, the auto industry has applied the economy of form and materials to achieve economy of energy. The modernist concept of economy of form responds to many needs of today's society from energy to life styles. It is a concept practiced by industrial and electronic designers, as well as architects.

The electronic technologies have seen the economy of form as a frontier to be pioneered. Degree of slinness has become a linear measurement of technological progress; the slimmer the better. It is a sign of advancement for mankind. Slimness, as an attitude, arises from an awareness of technology, but it goes beyond the physical aspects by becoming a mind set. If the slim-pack tower is a product of technology, it is also a product of the social consciousness geared towards the slender.

# TWO VIEWS OF TECHNOLOGY AND THE HUMAN CONDITION

by Sheila Smith

Throughout the course of the twentieth century, a great deal has been written both positively and negatively about machines. Many have discussed the role of technology in society and its effect on the quality of life as well as the character of the individual. The topic was a formidable one when it was first considered. The passage of time has not only made it more complex, but also more compelling as increasingly sophisticated techniques play an increasingly profound role in our lives.

In order to achieve a balanced view of the issues surrounding this subject, it should be useful to consider the opposing points of view of two individuals, Lewis Mumford, a philosopher and historian, and Samuel Florman, a philosophical engineer.

Lewis Mumford is the author of twenty-seven books written between 1922 and 1979. His works include several biographies, histories, critical works on art and architecture, and philosophical writings on the development of civilization. Mumford approaches the subject of present day and future civilization through a historical perspective. He believes that man has a true nature rooted in the simpler life of the earlier stages of his development. In one of his books, *Interpretations and Forecasts, 1922-1972*, Mumford gives a lengthy and detailed description of human beginnings. He writes:

Now that man understands these primordial connections, he must acknowledge his old debt to his partners throughout the whole range of organic creation, his constant dependence upon their activities, and not least his link with his own original nature. (1)

Mumford does not believe that the primordial connection has been adequately maintained. He finds many areas of our present state out of keeping with our earlier, more authentic selves and out of keeping with reality. Among other aspects

of our high tech society, Mumford disapproves of our use of photography and print. It seems that when we escape into our television sets, we lose more of ourselves than meets the eye.

Between ourselves and the actual experience and the actual environment there now swells an ever-rising flood of images which come to us in every sort of medium - the camera and printing press, by motion picture and by television. A picture was once a rare sort of symbol, rare enough to call for attentive concentration. Now it is the actual experience that is rare, and the picture has become ubiquitous. We are rapidly dividing the world into two classes: a minority who act, increasingly, for the benefit of the reproductive process, and a majority whose entire life is spent serving as passive appreciators or willing victims of this reproductive process. Deliberately, on every historic occasion, we piously fade events for the benefit of photographers while the actual event occurs in a different fashion. (2)

According to Mumford, we have lost even more than actual participation in the activities of life; we have lost our ability to think for ourselves and behave in our own interests as well. The culprit, once again, is our technology. This technology is working for the benefit of a materialistic power seeking minority. We are molded, according to Mumford, by a standardized presentation of our world.

So an endless succession of images passes before the eye, offered by people who wish to exercise power, either by making us buy something for their benefit, or making us agree to something that would promote their economic or political interests: images or gadgets manufacturers want us to acquire; images of seductive young ladies who are supposed, by association, to make us seek other equally

desireable goods; images of people and events in the news...; images so constant, so unremitting, so insistent that for all purposes of our own we might as well be paralyzed, so unwelcome are our inner promptings or our own self-directed actions. (3)

Is this the extent to which we have been robbed of our own nature? Our humanity itself by our own inventions? No, Mumford tells us that we have lost our spiritual and aesthetic capabilities as well.

The general effect of this multiplication of graphic symbols has been to lessen the impact of art itself. In order to survive in this image-glutted world, it is necessary for us to devalue the symbol and to reject every aspect of it but the purely sensational one. For note, the very repetition of the stimulus would make it necessary for us in self-defense to empty it of meaning if the process of repetition did not, quite automatically, produce this result. Then by a reciprocal twist, the emptier a symbol is of meaning, the more must its user depend upon mere repetition and mere sensationism to achieve his purpose. This is a vicious circle if ever there was one. Because of the sheer multiplication of aesthetic images, people must, to retain any degree of autonomy and self-direction, achieve a certain opacity, a certain insensitiveness, a certain thickening of the hide in order not to be overwhelmed and confused by the multitude of demands made on their attention. (4)

Is there no hope? Yes, Mumford feels we have been spared absolute loss of control. Now that we realize what we have done to ourselves, we can turn off the television set, or at least turn it down. "We have gratuitously assumed that the mere existence of a mechanism...carries with it an obligation to use it to its fullest capacity. But there is simply no such necessity. Once you discover this, you are a free man." (5)

So what of our future? Now that we have recognized our technological mistakes, how do we put together a world that we can live

in again like real people? Mumford calls for a common philosophy with common goals, but he wants scientists and technical specialists to assume, at most, a very minor decision making role.

To command the forces now at man's disposal and direct them toward organic and human development, man must be capable of directing his actions towards ideal ends, imaginatively conceived and rationally criticized. The formation of these ends does not come within the province of science, so long as it remains faithful to its own salutary discipline; it is rather the product of the arts and the humanities, of religious visions and moral aspirations. (6)

It is hardly necessary to point out that scientists and engineers are unlikely to take Mumford's view of their role in our present or future culture sitting down. Samuel Florman is one such engineer. He not only disagrees with Mumford's assessment of the accomplishments of his profession, but also he contends that any attempt to mold the future through a common ideal, manifesto, or constructed philosophy is doomed to failure. He has written three books: *Engineering and the Liberal Arts*, *The Existential Pleasures of Engineering*, and *Blaming Technology: The Irrational Search for Scapegoats*. In each of these books he discusses the role of the engineering profession and technology in our culture. He responds specifically to many of Mumford's criticisms as well as to those of other writers. Florman responds in this way to Mumford's charge that technology has permitted governments and advertisers to standardize human behavior:

In technologically advanced societies there is more freedom for the average citizen than there was in earlier ages. There has been a continuing apprehension that new technological achievements might make it possible for governments to tyrannize the citizenry with Big Brother techniques. But in spite of all the newest electronic gadgetry, governments are scarcely able to prevent the antisocial actions of criminals, much less control every act of every citizen. Hijacking, technically ingenuous robberies, computer-aided embezzlements and the like are evidence that the outlaw is able to turn technology to his own advantage, often more adroitly than the government. The rebellious individual is more than holding his

own. The establishment has potent propaganda techniques at its disposal, but this is more than offset by the increasingly free flow of information that the establishment cannot control. And, as in the case of criminals, anti-establishment movements have been quick to turn new techniques to their advantage. A generation ago, it was labor unions. More recent examples are the civil rights movement, the students' anti-war movement, and women's liberation. If members of the establishment are indeed trying to persuade the masses to consume an oversupply of shoddy merchandise, then the consumer movement is a response that can be expected to grow, using advertising to combat advertisers, lobbyists to combat lobbies. (7)

Mumford may see technology as a threat to the expression of the human spirit, but Florman sees it as a medium for the same. To Florman, the engineer is an artist creating objects that have a beauty equal to any found in painting, sculpture, or other more recognized creative disciplines. He wants us to know not only his own thoughts in this vein, but also that he is not alone in his perception.

If there is a sparseness of talented novelists exalting the beauty of machinery, the ranks are more than filled by spokesmen from the realm of the fine arts. Francis Picabia, famous along with Marcel Duchamp for the introduction of machines as central subjects for painting, announced in 1915 that "The genius of the modern world is in machinery and that through machinery art ought to find a most vivid expression." To artists of this school, the machine is not an alien intruder into the organic world, but a natural part of it, a part also of man's inner visionary landscape. (8)

Even though Florman's general outlook is very optimistic, he recognizes that engineers have made numerous mistakes. He sees government regulation, imperfect as it is, as the best method of directing the development of future technology toward human ends. He says, "The public interest must be protected mainly by engineers hired by the public. (And here I would include the increasing number of 'public interest groups', as well as government agencies.)" (9)

Florman does not subscribe to the idea of a common philosophy because he does not believe that one could be constructed or remain intact outside of a totalitarian society. "Since moral truths and even

technical truths are so elusive, we have no choice but to rely on an adversary process." (10)

There is no better evidence of humanity's continuing capacity for healthy differences of opinion than the works of Mumford and Florman. There can be no better way to begin the process of thinking for one's self than through an internal adversary process built on consideration of the conflicting ideas and values of others.

After considering the arguments of Mumford and Florman, I have come to the conclusion that both points of view have some validity. One has only to be caught in an extensive electrical blackout to become alarmed at how very dependent we are on things that our ancestors were able to live without. On the other hand, what would be the benefit of trading the insecurities of our present existence for the perils of an earlier one?

The intensive stimulation that we receive through various media is surely a mixed blessing. Television can be a substitute for better quality experiences. However, sensitively done programming can inspire people to seek out experiences which they may never have dreamed of having without it.

Florman seems more realistic than Mumford when it comes to the question of how the future should be directed. A "balance of powers" approach is likely to be more flexible and responsive to change than any predetermined set of values, even if those values could be agreed upon as momentarily correct. If there's one thing we need most to learn to cope with in the future, it's the pace of change.

#### ENDNOTES

(1) Lewis Mumford, *Interpretations And Forecasts 1922-1972*, (New York: Harcourt, Brace, Jovanovich, Inc., 1973), p. 421.

(2) *Ibid.*, p. 298.

(3) *Ibid.*

(4) *Ibid.*, p. 299.

(5) *Ibid.*, p. 286.

(6) *Ibid.*, p. 483.

(7) Samuel Florman, *The Existential Pleasures of Engineering*, (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1976), p. 63.

(8) *Ibid.*, p. 134.

(9) *Ibid.*, p. 28.

(10) *Ibid.*

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# ALVAR AALTO AND HIS NATURAL USE OF LIGHT

by Ken Grabowski

People have a deep need for the presence of natural light. As humans we can not function efficiently in dark spaces or in spaces which rely entirely on artificial light. Daylighting is ever changing in intensity, location, pattern, reflectiveness and shadows. There is truly a unique excitement caused by natural light. Yet unfortunately, it is assumed by architects and clients that daylight is a luxury in the design of energy conscious buildings. Many architects today do not understand the sun or how buildings behave under the sun. Daylighting is both an art and a science. The foundations for daylighting design were first established by a prominent Finnish architect by the name of Alvar Aalto (1896-1976).

Aalto was born in Finland, a country where natural light is very rare in the winter months. As a result of this, Aalto was especially sensitive to the importance of natural light in his designs. To Aalto, natural light became the driving force behind all of his decisions relating to his designs. He was always concerned with where the sun rose and set and how he could use that light to its greatest potential. By exploring the dynamic qualities of natural light, Aalto was able to enhance the spaces he created.

Good daylighting does not simply imply large windows. In order to design correctly with natural light, an architect must understand the difference between sunlight and skylight. Sunlight is a very strong direct light (6,000 - 12,000 footcandles) and must be avoided where visual tasks are done. Sunlight produces glare and must be controlled to ensure a pleasant and comfortable environment.

A design which relies on sunlight is only valuable when the source of the light is a point such as the sun or an incandescent lamp. The path of light must be direct to the target through clear glazing. (See Figure A). This concept provides good solar heating wherever applicable. However, it is not the case in most commercial spaces where direct lighting hitting a book makes reading much more difficult. (1)

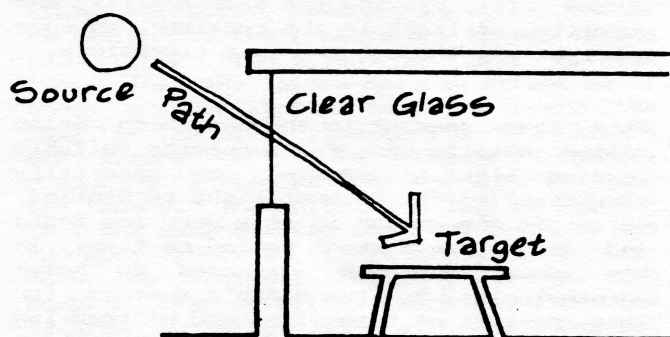


Figure A.

Skylight, on the other hand, is a low level light which occurs when sunlight is reflected and refracted by the atmosphere and the surrounding environment. A design which relies totally on skylight will exclude all direct light from a space. This is accomplished by the use of north glass. (See Figure B). However, due to the large amounts of energy lost through north glass, it becomes very impractical to use this method.

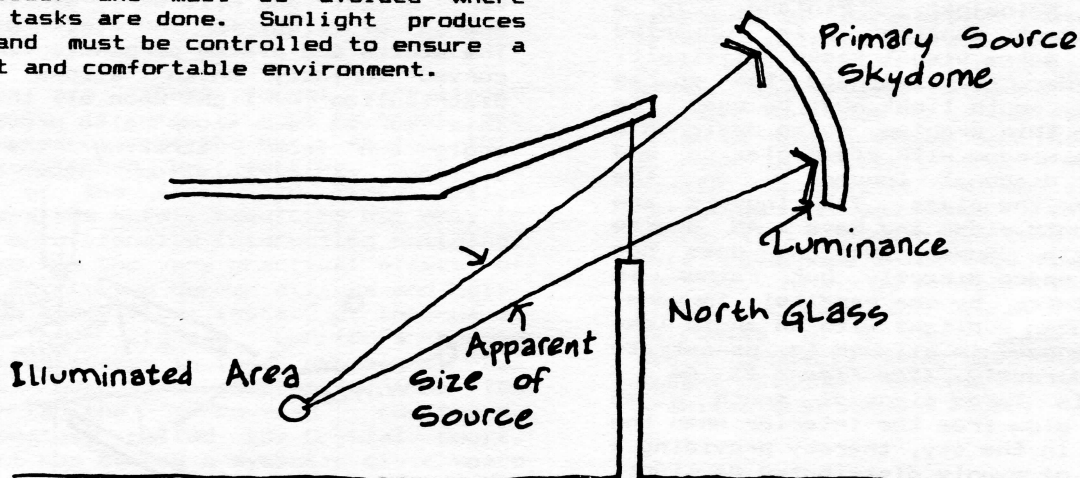


Figure B.



The inadequacy of both of these solutions made it necessary for architects to respond in another fashion. By either reflecting or refracting the direct rays of a point source, a designer can gain increased illumination in a space without the effects of harsh sunlight. (See Figure C). Using this method the same quality of illumination can be obtained, yet the required amount of glass area is 90% less than that of north glass. (2) Direct sunlight admitted through relatively small glazed openings can be used effectively for illumination if diffused by white reflective or translucent materials, while at the same time cutting down on heat loss through the glass and heat gain from direct summer sun. As a result, a cloudy, overcast sky perceived through a clerestory window will provide the same quality and quantity of light to the receiver as does a bright sky through the same clerestory.

This last concept is the one which Aalto relied heavily upon for supplying suitable reading light. Aalto was especially sensitive to the natural light in Finland, which in the winter is at a very low angle and remains for a short period of time. In the summer the sun appears to hover perpendicular to the earth's surface for long periods of time. Instead of ignoring the extreme conditions of light which existed, Aalto responded to this problem by maximizing the full potential of this light. In order to maximize the sun's full potential, Aalto developed *light giving devices*, for example roof top lighting, clerestories, screened windows and light scoops as major design elements. (3) Aalto was always very careful to consider the human activities which he wanted to illuminate. His philosophy was to "put light where you want it and need it." (4)

A building designed by Aalto which clearly represents this philosophy is a Public Library in Seinajoki, Finland. In a library, direct sunlight is unwanted because it makes visual tasks difficult. Yet, in order to illuminate the spaces effectively, south light must be used. In response to this problem, Aalto designed a large south window with clear glazing and horizontal, diagonal louvers on the exterior of the glass. The louvers are white on both sides and have a 45 degree cut-off angle. Summer sunlight does not enter the space directly, but rather is reflected twice by the parallel louvers. Whereas, winter sunlight with an angle less than 45 degrees is allowed to penetrate the space directly. (See Figure D). As a result, this large piece of south glass appears to glow from the interior when the sun is high in the sky, thereby providing a high level of evenly distributed daylight.

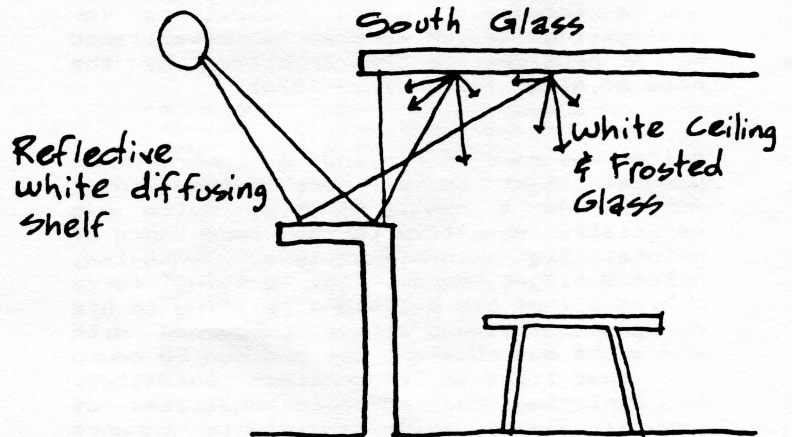
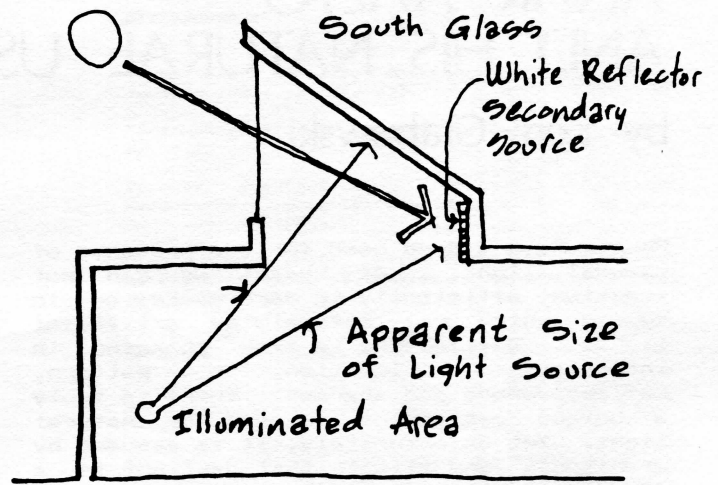


Figure C.

The majority of winter sun entering the space directly will strike a large curved reflective "sun scoop" and will be reflected back toward the south wall. (See Figure E). This curved surface becomes very bright and will serve as the major source of light for the stack of books. The stacks are placed perpendicular to this curved surface, which allows an even distribution of light upon all the books. This curved "sun scoop" also prevents low angle sun from striking the reading surfaces or circulation desk directly,

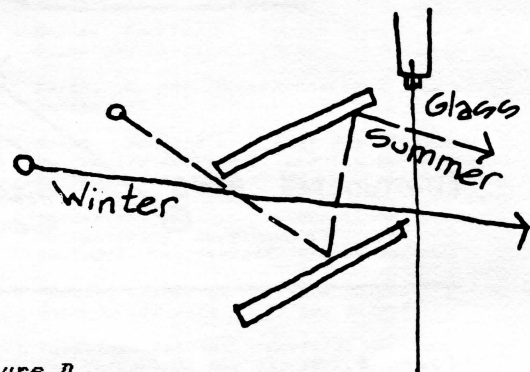


Figure D.

where it would be a distraction. This "sun scoop" has taken on the same function as a human eyebrow and accomplishes its task quite well. (5) Because the majority of south light is blocked by this large eyebrow, Aalto has placed a small north clerestory above the circulation desk to supplement the light from the south window. The reading room in this library is sunken below the main level and it receives light from both south and north glass. By sinking the reading room, the light sources are far above the reader's field of view, and as a result, glare is eliminated.

In regards to suitable reading light Aalto commented: "The problem with reading a book is more than a problem of the eye, a good reading light permits the use of many positions of the human body and every suitable relationship of book to eye." (6) Since Aalto was so concerned with providing suitable reading light, he was very innovative in technological features for his buildings, whereas his contemporaries simply specified standard elements. The biggest of his technical innovations is the use of skylights in his buildings. (7) By using skylights in his designs, Aalto provided natural light for the interior space, and also created a psychological link between inside and outside. This is very important in Finland where the harsh winters force people to spend a great deal of time inside. Aalto's technological innovations, such as the skylight, encouraged the use of natural light. This was coming at a time when many architects were relying very heavily on artificial lighting. He was criticized at the time for trying to control natural light because many architects felt it was unnecessary because artificial light was available. However, this criticism and challenge of using natural light is what drove Aalto to explore it even further.

One of the first buildings Aalto designed which began exploring natural light is the Viipuri Municipal Library (1935). He used clear round skylights with horizontal glazing. Each skylight contains a single oculus as the sole light source. Direct sunlight penetration is minimized by the ceiling thickness which forms a deep well between the glazing and the interior space. (8) The wells are conical in shape and have a matte white plaster surface. When sunlight enters this well it will strike the uppermost portion and then will be reflected many times before entering the interior space. The lower portion of the well appears equally as bright due to these interreflections in the well. (9) (See Figure F). In the Viipuri Library, Aalto had arranged these round skylights in a grid which covered the entire ceiling. It very effectively supplied an even amount of light to the entire space.

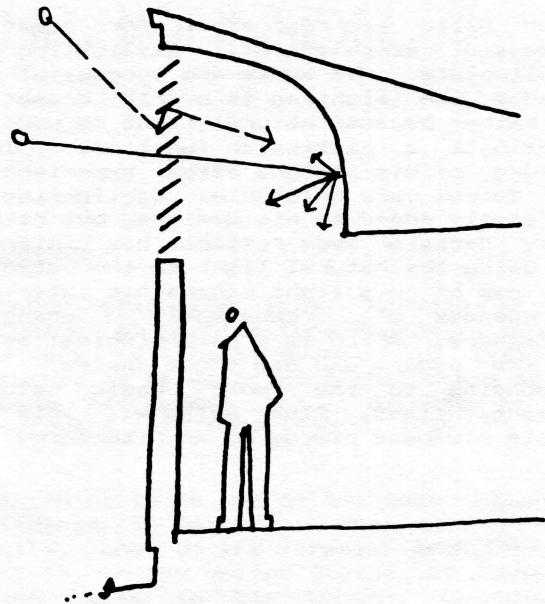


Figure E.

A second building where Aalto used these same round skylights is the Library at the Wolfsburg, Germany, Cultural Center. Once again he has made use of these skylights to supply diffused natural light, but now has gone one step further. Suspended above these skylights on the exterior of the building are artificial lights. In the long winter days, artificial light enters the interior space exactly as natural light would. Consequently, the artificial light begins to take on some of the qualities of natural light. It is attention to small details like these that make Aalto's interiors very pleasant and suitable for human activities.

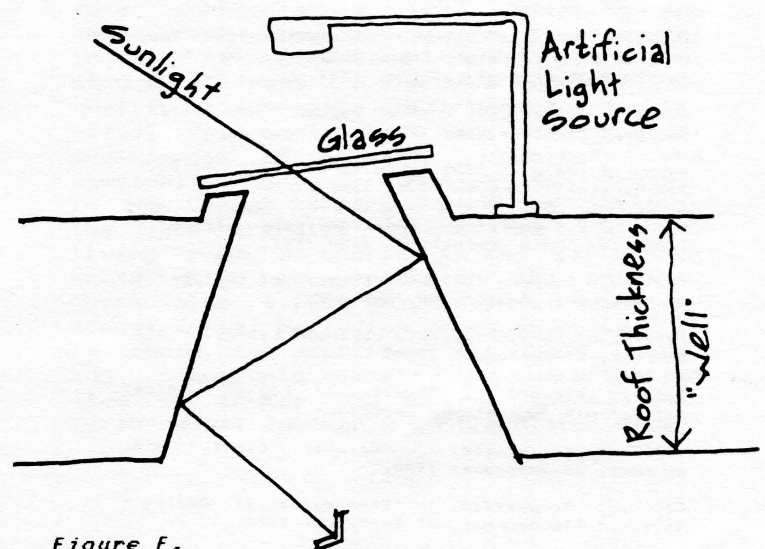


Figure F.

Alvar Aalto is responsible for creating successful examples of daylighting in architecture. His works are successful not because the lighting is overly dramatic, but rather because natural light is used to illuminate a particular function. This feature of his designs makes experiencing his spaces very enjoyable. Daylighting is not simply added to his designs, but rather every decision made reflects his interest in using the natural light to the utmost. The use of this light causes his interiors to possess a constantly changing atmosphere, which is a psychological asset to the people who use those spaces. By responding to the most basic natural element, light, Alvar Aalto was able to create eloquent pieces of architecture.

#### ENDNOTES

(1) Fuller Moore, "Daylighting: Six Aalto Libraries," AIA Journal, 76 June 1983, p. 56.

(2) Ibid., p. 59.

(3) Richard C. Peters, "Masters of Light: Alvar Aalto," AIA Journal, 68 September 1979, p. 54.

(4) Richard C. Peters, "Aalto's Luminous Library," AIA Journal, 69 September 1980, p. 72.

(5) Moore, p. 61.

(6) Richard Horn, "The Humanism of Alvar Aalto," Residential Interiors, 4 May, June 1979, p. 100.

(7) David Pearson, "The Legacy of Viipuri," Architectural Design, 49 June 1979, p. 10.

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# VEBLER, CONSUMERISM, AND RETAIL ARCHITECTURE

by Rick Talley

In 1899, a book titled *The Theory Of The Leisure Class* was written by economist Thorstein Veblen. The importance of Veblen's work was that he tried to understand economics in a sociological mode. Unlike the economists who had preceded him, he based his concepts on man's irrationalities instead of man's rationalities. One of his chief discoveries was that "snobbery and social pretense play not a peripheral but central and dominant role in shaping the life of a socially democratic society." (1) By examining historical social cultures, Veblen had concluded that society existed in two different evolutionary stages. The first stage was that of the peaceable savage. This phase was characterized by noncompetitive relationships between people and an unambitious manner of life. In response to the instinct of workmanship, work was done for work's sake more than for survival. It was a classless society.

Eventually society evolved into a stage dominated by the predatory barbarian. During this phase, occupations and means of obtaining a livelihood had developed. This allowed for the classification of people based upon the type of work they performed. This stage saw the appearance and rise of the leisure class. A class structure developed in which those people not directly involved with the everyday task of surviving were the superior class. As Veblen states: "...manual labor, industry, whatever has to do directly with the everyday work of getting a livelihood is the exclusive occupation of the inferior class." (2)

This latter phase of predatory barbarism was further categorized into three stages. First came the primitive-barbarian state that expressed itself as a feudal society dominated by warriors and priests. This was followed by a quasi-peaceable stage distinguished by the institution of chattel slavery. Veblen included women as chattel slaves. The final stage is the modern-peaceable barbarian. Veblenite John Brooks gives an unsurpassable definition of the term when he states:

This is modern society, and in particular, the United States during Veblen's time. All of the characteristics of the primitive-barbarian stage - in particular, ferocious competitiveness in pursuit of status - are carried over into the modern-peaceable stage. The difference is that competition in hunting and fishing has been mostly replaced by competition in such fields as sports, money manipulation, and public display of affluence. On the other hand, peaceable traits also survive and exist as a minority force. The outcome is a society marked by constant tension between the conflicting forces of "predatory barbarism" and "peaceable savagery." (3)

All of the barbarian periods are marked by unremitting emulation and antagonism between individuals, and also by a class system in which the top class displays "clannishness, massiveness, ferocity, unscrupulousness and ferocity of purpose." (4)

The way in which one becomes associated with the leisure class is through the display of wealth in the form of consumption, waste, or leisure. Display is the key ingredient. Whatever is done must be done conspicuously in order to reach as large an audience as possible. Veblen's concept of "industrial exemption" states that these items usually illustrate the fact that a person does not rely upon physical labor for sustenance.

Two other concepts which are important to Veblen's theories are pecuniary emulation and pecuniary decency. Veblen uses the term decency to mean "conventionally proper and seemly." He illustrates this with an example of journeyman printers who act "decent" when getting drunk at regular intervals because it is a norm among their social class. It is in the fulfillment of pecuniary decency that people resort to conspicuous consumption and conspicuous waste.

Pecuniary emulation means imitating and trying to surpass a competitor's display of wealth. Although strongest between adjacent classes, the forces of emulation extend through the entire social strata.

The leisure class stands at the head of the social structure in point of reputability; and its manner of life and its standards of worth therefore afford the norm of reputability for the community. The observance of these standards, in some degree of approximation, becomes incumbent upon all classes lower in the scale. In modern civilized communities the lines of demarcation between social classes have grown vague and transient, and wherever this happens the norm of reputability imposed by the upper class extends its coercive influence with but the slightest hindrance down through the social structure to the lowest strata. The result is that the members of each stratum accept as their ideal of decency the scheme of life in vogue in the next higher stratum, and bend their energies to live up to that ideal. On pain of forfeiting their good name and self-respect in case of failure, they must conform to the accepted code, at least in appearance. (5)

The chief trait of the predatory barbarian is his invidiousness. Veblen defines this as a constant comparing of oneself to others and, in the end, finding yourself to be of a superior status.

During the industrial expansion of the 1920's, we find the concepts of leisure class enlarged to create a leisure mass. The advertising industry of this era was responding to the needs predicated by the advent of mass production. The captains of industry had achieved the capability of producing in mass. In order to sustain full production capacities they now had to convince the public to consume in mass.

Consumerism, the mass participation in the values of the mass industrial market, thus emerged in the 1920's as an aggressive device of corporate survival. (6)

The creation of fancied wants was crucial to the modern advertiser. The transcendence of traditional consumer markets and buying habits required people to buy, not to

satisfy their own fundamental needs, but rather to satisfy the real historic needs of capitalistic, productive machinery. (7)

Advertisers looked for ways to create fancied wants, and one of their avenues was the want based on social mobility. In 1911, adman Walter Dill Scott stated that "the goods offered as a means of gaining social prestige make their appeals to one of the most profound of human instincts." (8)

The advertising industry, whether aware of Veblen or not, utilize his concepts in their merchandising strategy. Pecuniary decency, pecuniary emulation, and industrial exemption are all utilized in order to sell goods.

One business theorist contended that freedom and equality could be translated into the ability of each person to emulate or aspire to emulate the tastes of the upper classes, "and what could be a better method of doing this than by consumption." The "fashion cycle," he contended, was an expression of the tastes and values of the wealthy, yet through the mass production of low-priced goods which imitated "high-priced merchandise," upper-class might be internalized within the culture of the poor. "Reproduction of high-priced goods into lower-priced goods makes it possible for people of lower incomes to participate in the fashion cycle." (9)

The above quote shows how literally the concept of pecuniary emulation was accepted. Pecuniary decency, on the other hand, became transformed to fit the new need. The advertisers created a standard ideal consumer which became the new measure of decency against which the American public could gauge itself. The handy thing about this standard ideal consumer was that he could be upgraded whenever the average American got too close. Industrial exemption was not only applied exactly as Veblen had stated, but also it was something for advertisers to heed.

Paul Nystrom, writing on the economics of fashion, stated that "as wealth or social status were the basic selling points of most garments, the styles should go as far as possible in proving that

the owner does not have to work for a living." What Thorstein Veblen has theorized as the conspicuous consumption habits of the leisure class were now propagated as a democratic ideal within mass advertising. (10)

We see Veblen's leisure class transformed into something that can be obtained by all. The combination of abundant wages, quantities of consumable goods, the advertiser's impetus, and the predisposition toward leisure class emulation produces a society that locates its "needs and frustrations in terms of the consumption of goods rather than the quality and content of their lives." (11) What cannot be overstated is the predisposition toward leisure class emulation. While it is easy to view the advertisers as evil manipulators, their easy success, while not absolving them of all crimes, is their vindication. It reveals much about the general public and is vivid proof of Veblen's theories.

With the stage now set, we can follow the evolution of the store type whose very existence fulfills the final link between manufacturer and consumer. Our examination will start in the 1940's. Although the auto industry had begun its expansion in the 1920's, it wasn't until the 1940's that we can see a retail architectural response to this. The depression of the 1930's slowed things greatly and it wasn't until the first release of building materials from wartime controls in 1944 that things started to change. The automobile had already started to have decentralizing effect on American cities. The small town main street had begun to lose business to the larger cities.

The automobile is both originator and continuing escalator of the consumerist cause. The production line was originally invented for the car, and for most people automobile ownership brought fulfillment of the American Dream. The car provided personal mobility which shortened travel time over long distances and promoted the urban exodus. Private home ownership in suburbia was aided by the auto and relentlessly portrayed as the norm by the advertising industry. The standard ideal consumer, featured as the main character in all of the network sitcoms, was usually just high enough in pecuniary strength to be above the average viewer but close enough to be within range of pecuniary emulation.

The growth of the suburbs in the 1950's was quintessentially a consumerist movement. During this time period, consumerism was even portrayed as patriotic as illustrated by President Eisenhower's slogan "You Auto Buy Now." (12)

The store type that originated as a response to the automobile is the suburban shopping mall. These retail camps followed or, in some cases, preceded the population shift to the suburbs. The centers surround themselves with oceans of parking lots to accommodate the cars.

Originally rectilinear and exposed to the elements, the malls have undergone a series of transformations that were primarily aimed at increasing the profitability of the merchants, thereby increasing the rent which the developer could charge the tenants. By the mid-sixties the malls were being enclosed. While protecting the mall user from extremes in climate, it also distorted the consumer's time sense, thus encouraging him to remain longer and to consume more. By the mid-seventies, the malls changed from rectilinear to orthogonal. The reasoning behind this was that as the consumer saw more goods, he purchased more goods. As older malls are now becoming updated and modernized, we see the creation of pseudo-orthogonal malls. Original axial straight-shot malls are now being updated to correspond with the current marketing thought by reconfiguring existing store front facades and placing specialty shops in the middle of the aisles. The result is that the consumer must weave and dodge around the obstacles placed in his path thereby exposing a larger amount of consumable goods to his view.

A question arises. Is the consumer really that simpleminded? Do people buy things just because they see them? Are people coerced into this or are they just waiting for the opportunity? When Veblen defines pecuniary decency he states:

...while the regulating norm of consumption is in the large part the requirement of conspicuous waste, it must not be understood that the motive on which the consumer acts in any given case is this principle in its bald, unsophisticated form. Ordinarily his motive is a wish to conform to the establishment. (13)

Pecuniary decency, however, becomes modified by pecuniary emulation.

...as fast as a person makes new acquisitions and becomes accustomed to the resulting new standard of wealth, the new standard forthwith ceases to afford appreciably greater satisfaction than the earlier standard did. The tendency in any case is constantly to make the present pecuniary standard the point of departure for a fresh increase in wealth. (14)

If these definitions are applied to the riddle of pinball consumption, we can see that the new form gave people a new excuse to buy. It gave the consuming public a point of departure for a fresh increase in wealth without displaying their conspicuous consumption in its bald, unsophisticated form. The American consumer becomes a willing victim.

Even if the head of the household is too busy actually earning a living to be a mall participant,

...decency still requires the wife to consume some goods conspicuously for the reputability of the household and its head. So that, the wife, who was at the outset the drudge and chattel of the man, both in fact and in theory (the producer of goods for him to consume), has become the ceremonial consumer of goods which he produces. (15)

The multi-level central courts of malls that are common today provide a vast stage from which to view and to be viewed. The placement of fountains in central areas denies the consumer any place to sit and rest. The stairs and ramps constantly encourage movement up and down. The malls are constantly filled with people always on the move, always searching with no particular place to go, and constantly moving with no productive result. As Thorstein would say: "it does not directly serve to enhance human life on the whole - it does not further the life process if taken impersonally. (16) This is Veblen's definition of conspicuous waste. The malls become the epitome of conspicuous consumption, conspicuous leisure and conspicuous waste. Shopping malls then become giant exhibitionist parlors - a chance to see and be seen by others, to become conspicuous heroes. Consumers thus set themselves in a position to become victimized by the shop owners that line the

stage. In allowing themselves to become victimized, they again become heroes in terms of pecuniary emulation and pecuniary decency.

In the Detroit area lately, we see a recurrence of strip commercial development. Why? With the abundance of the dens of conspicuous consumption and conspicuous leisure in the form of malls, why are these areas now becoming prominent?

...when... it becomes necessary to reach a wider human environment, consumption begins to hold sway over leisure as an ordinary means of decency. The means of communication and mobility of the population now expose the individual to the observation of many persons who have no other means of judging his reputability than the display of goods. (17)

Now that the malls are frequented by almost everyone from post-pubescent New Wave punks to mobile inner-city dwellers to wealthy suburbanites, they lose their exclusivity. Those who can, find it more effective to flaunt pure consumption as opposed to consumption diluted with leisure. This line of logic explains the popularity of the commercial strip complex. Remote from any form of public transportation, one must have a private vehicle in which to arrive.

The parking lot is an arena for automobiles, and one's chariot is one's entry card. The entrant becomes immediately associated with and judged on the basis of his automobile. And, by hitting all the shops on the strip it is possible to flaunt wealth much faster than through simple leisure in a mall.

Automobiles first decentralized the malls from the city, and now they are actually breaking apart the malls themselves. This becomes a function not only of mobility, but also a function of the quest for status, invidiousness and public display. As with the mall store fronts, the strip shops all seek to be the most conspicuous by displaying all manner of grotesque and perverse skyline bumps and surface mutations. As clothes are to people, so are store fronts to buildings. Thus..."dress, as an expression of the pecuniary culture...is the rule of the conspicuous use of goods..." (18)

The greatest formative influence on retail architecture has been man's desire for pecuniary emulation. It is this desire for pecuniary emulation and social mobility that allowed the automobile to have such a decentralizing effect upon our way of life. The automobile ushered in the age of consumerism. Hand-in-hand-in-hand, the automobile, consumerism, and pecuniary emulation have brought forth urban sprawl and suburban sprawl. They have given us the suburban mall and the vehicularly oriented strip development. These factors are the controlling forces in the attraction of retail architecture. We must be aware of them and their influence if we are to control them.

#### ENDNOTES

- (1) John Brooks, *Showing Off In America* (Boston: Little, Brown, and Company, 1979), p. 4.
- (2) Thorstein Veblen, *The Theory of the Leisure Class* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1973), p. 16.
- (3) Brooks, *Showing Off In America*, p. 36.
- (4) *Ibid.*, p. 260.
- (5) Veblen, *The Theory of the Leisure Class*, p. 67.
- (6) Ewen Stuart, *Captians of Consciousness* (New York: McGraw Hill, 1976), p. 46.
- (7) *Ibid.*, p. 35.
- (8) *Ibid.*, p. 54.
- (9) *Ibid.*, p. 94.
- (10) *Ibid.*, p. 79.
- (11) *Ibid.*, p. 47.
- (12) Brooks, *Showing Off In America*, p. 9.
- (13) Veblen, *The Theory Of The Working Class*, p. 87.
- (14) *Ibid.*
- (15) *Ibid.*, p. 38.
- (16) *Ibid.*, p. 45.
- (17) *Ibid.*, p. 71.
- (18) *Ibid.*, p. 118.

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# NEW WAVE BARS - AN EVOLVING ARCHITECTURE

by John E. Dancer

Our society moves so fast that it has become impossible to discern any truth to life. We are addicted to sensory information; we grew up with television; there is always something on. The fast pace has led to a loss of individualism. Numbers are easier to keep track of than letters. This, combined with the drive for success, the desire for upward mobility and the toll taken by fame, has blurred the distinction between heroes and victims. Society has begun to question its own values.

For many people, bars are an important part of life. They are one of the few places where the common man is a participant rather than a spectator. Much of the ordinary person's life is dictated to him: when, where and how to work; when to eat; when to rest; when to play. For relaxation, he may attend sports events or watch television, but even here he is not a participant in the unfolding drama. He remains always just an onlooker. In a bar, however, as soon as a person purchases a drink he becomes an actor, an integral and involved part of the scene.

It is here also that people who are most affected by society's loss of individualism and values can be found. Bars have attracted sociologists since the 1930's as an indicator not only of existing behavior, but also of future behavior. However, architects have failed to recognize the importance of bars. This article looks at the architecture of one particular type of bar, the so-called New Wave bar. It looks at the New Wave bar on the premise that it is primarily frequented by the young and aspiring, those who most feel the grip of society. What connection is there between the changing attitudes of our culture and the architecture of New Wave bars? What can be learned, and how can this be incorporated into the architecture we create?

The term *new wave* was coined by Francois Giroud in *L'Express* in 1958 as a "new youthful spirit in French film." Since then it has been applied to any cultural phenomenon that we see as new or rebellious. In 1976, a rebellion against rock and roll music started in London and New York City. Rock and roll had lost its

meaning and was no longer fighting for anything. It had become overly sophisticated and expensive. It had, in fact, become everything that it set out to defy.

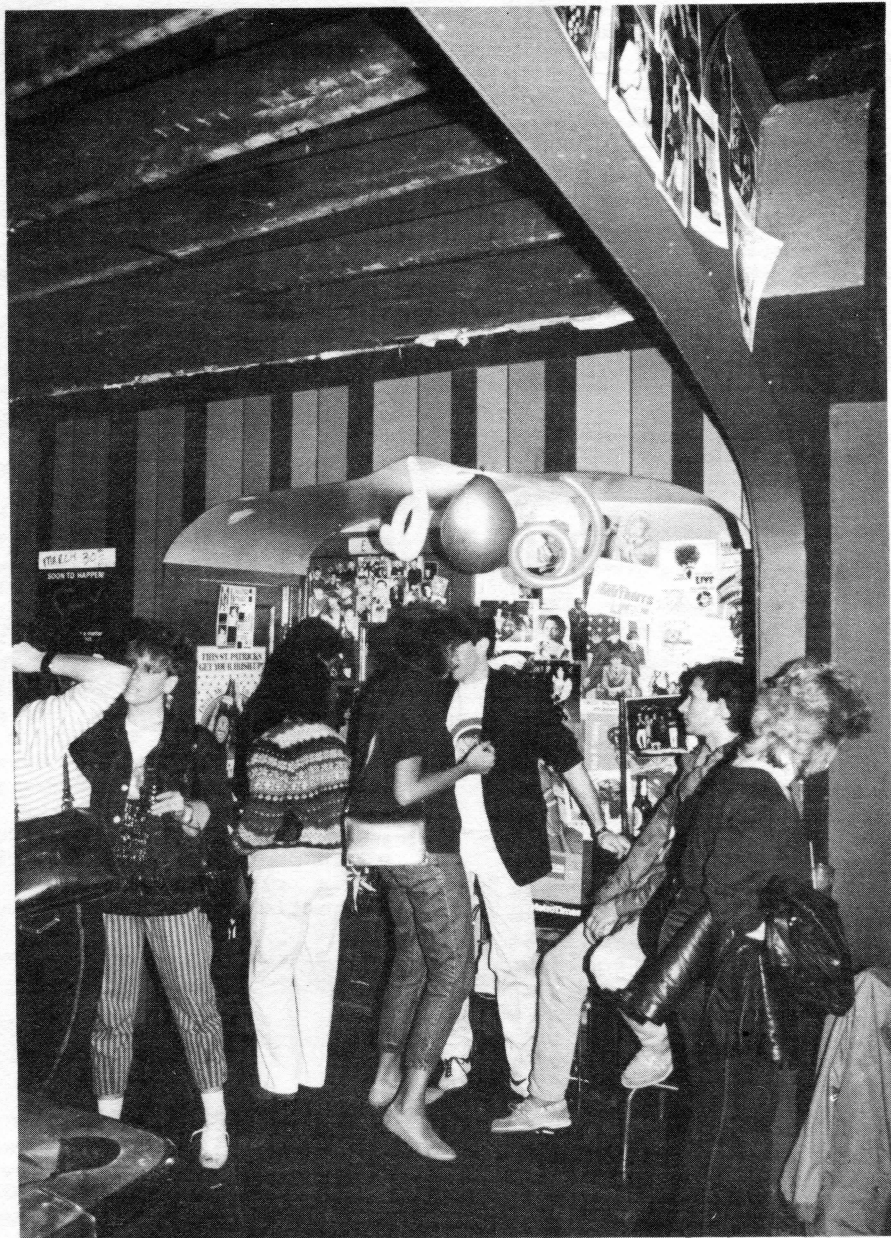
The Punk movement in England was composed of the young trapped working class who saw no means for upward mobility. They became frustrated, angry, bored and motionless in a changing society. The victimized sought the attention of society by dressing in black leather, spikes and chains, by piercing their noses and by shaving their heads. This became their symbol of having survived punishment and abuse. The expressions they wore were lifeless, their faces like masks. They became unmotivated and asexual. The music was loud, obnoxious and threatening, the performers grotesque.

This attitude that the only things that are worthwhile in society are those artifacts or objects which symbolize the ability to withstand punishment and to survive will be characterized and defined in this article as the *survival aesthetic*.

America's New Wave did not involve the young, disadvantaged working class as a whole, as it had in England, since the black and hispanic groups, which comprise a significant portion of the working class in the United States, were not essentially involved in the movement. America's New Wave became more of a stylistic revolution, representing a revolt against fads and fashions that America loves one minute and discards the next. America's New Wave recognized the past by assimilating bits and pieces of past fashion in order to be obviously pretentious. The 1960's long hair, jeans and workshirt were a rebellion against the establishment. The establishment was represented at that time by those who wore short hair, suits and

*Opposite Page*

Lili's: Subliminal Sensory  
Overload Brought to the Conscious.



Photographs By John Dancer.

ties. However, the long hair, jeans and workshirt became just as much of a costume as a suit and tie. New Wave recognized the costume, so it became obviously "dressed up" to the point of pretentiousness. America's New Wave music was simple, upbeat, and recalled rhythms of past rock and roll. It had nonsensical lyrics which questioned America's values.

This overtly pretentious look which celebrates polyester and the previously discarded second rate fads will be characterized and defined here as the *pretentious aesthetic*.

For obvious reasons, the survival aesthetic did not stay in England, nor did the pretentious aesthetic remain solely in America. What was felt by the young working class in England was similarly felt in the industrialized areas of the United States, particularly as the unemployment rate continued to soar. Thus, the United States New Wave also adopted the use of leather, spikes and chains as symbols of survival.

#### Detroit's Early Punk Bars and the Survival Aesthetic

In 1978, Bookies Club 870 was the place where the Punk rockers hung out. Inside existed a society with no rules and no pretense of nicety or nobility. There was nothing an individual could do to be noticed; if he wanted to dance, he danced by himself. There was no distinction between the sexes, not even between male and female restrooms. The architecture similarly displayed this attitude. Bookies was located in a distressed area in the midst of vacant buildings, and from the outside appeared to be a vacant building with no sign or lights. There was no evidence of life in the area, and the only hint that a potential customer had was some graffiti on the side of the building which read, "Bookies sucks -- go to Nunzio's."

The bar was circa 1940 unrestored art deco. However, those who frequented the establishment took no time to notice, recognize or appreciate its architecture. The floor was black and white vinyl with no differentiation made for the dance floor. The dance floor was simply an area with no tables. The few tables that did exist had no cloths, were four legged and made of deeply gouged wood. The club made no

distinction between good furnishings and bad. The message was one of survival, in spite of having been discarded by society. Bookies existed only to be replaced in 1984 by the Pink Pelican, a gay bar.

New Wave was a beginning, not an end, and many changes have taken place between 1978 and 1984. New Wave is now almost acceptable. Large department stores have New Wave sections which they call the Fast Lane, or something similar. Here you can buy your Punk ripped sweat shirt with a Bauhaus emblem on the front for \$40.00. It's the new "in" fashion!

#### Detroit's Recent New Wave Bars and the Pretentious Aesthetic

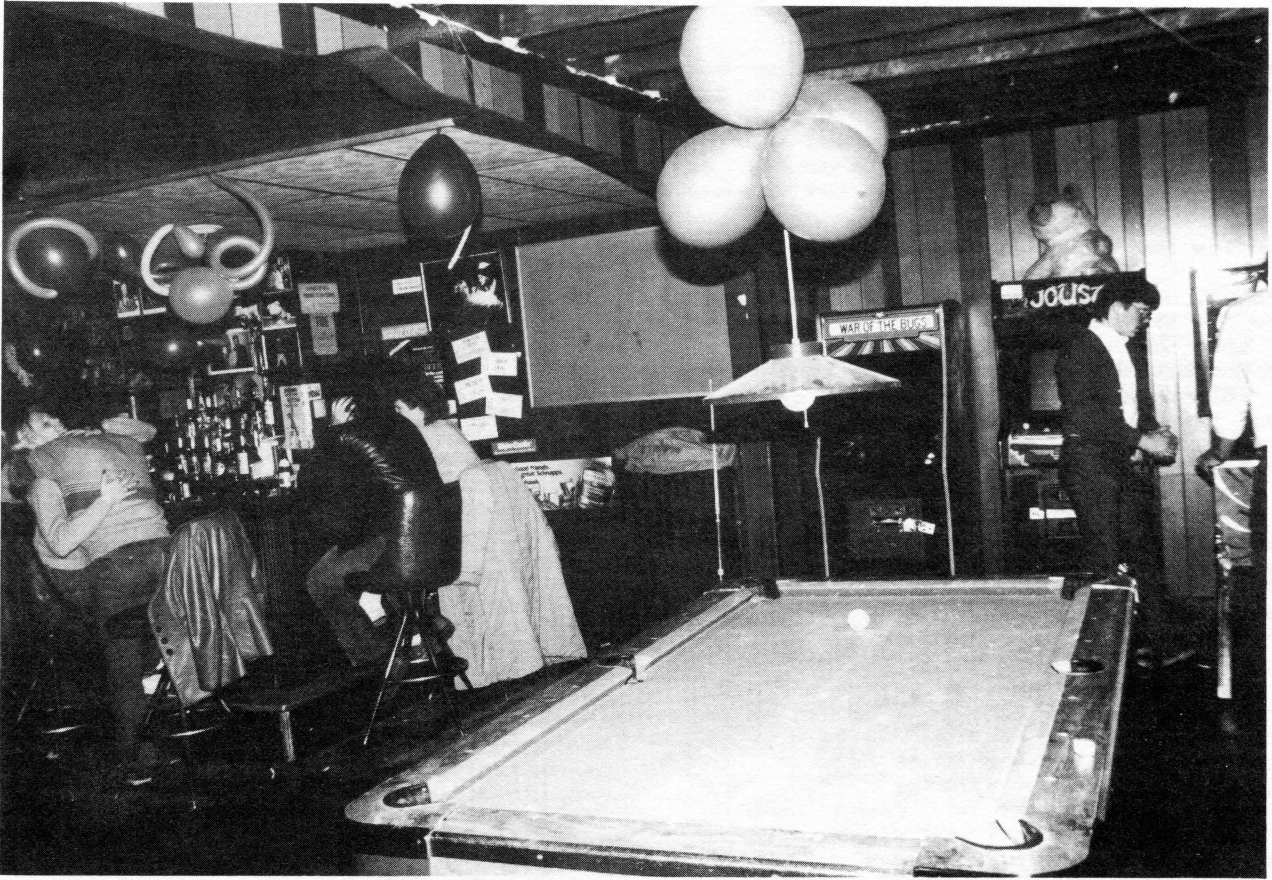
The ambiance of Todd's Bar is far from the rule-free society atmosphere conveyed by Bookies. The New Wave dance has become standardized, as has the look. Both call for the use of timeless fashion styles. The architecture of Todd's similarly fuses together once neglected artifacts to create a ageless present tense. The bar at Todd's is also art deco style, but it is not used here to portray abuse. It is, instead, recalling an architectural style that has been discarded. The interior architecture does not stop at 1940. The red vinyl bar stools, black and white tables and chairs are from the 1950's, the shag carpet from the 1960's, and the disco dance floor from the 1970's. New Wave architecture assimilates and synthesizes into the new all of the second rate materials which society has been taught to despise or has discarded because of fashion dictates. This is a clear example of the pretentious aesthetic.

#### *Opposite Page, Top*

Lili's: Survival/Pretentious -  
Wood Bar/Red Vinyl Bar Stools;  
Pool Table/Video Games;  
Exposed Joists/Lay-in Ceiling.

#### *Opposite Page, Bottom*

Paycheck's: "Punks Fall Asleep  
With The T.V. On."



### The New Wave Bars of Hamtramck

Hamtramck, a Polish blue collar community inside of the City of Detroit, has largely been the victim of the auto industry's planned obsolescence. It is here that the most interesting New Wave bars can be found, bars which incorporate both the survival aesthetic and the pretentious aesthetic.

The bar known as Paycheck's looks, from the street, like the typical neighborhood bar. In fact, it is, or was, or sometimes still is a neighborhood bar. The club is broken into two different and distinct spaces. The first is the bar area which incorporates the pretentious aesthetic. The bar and matching tables are done in three types of plastic laminate, two pretending to be wood and the third pretending to be leather. Red vinyl bar stools, vintage 1950, are accented by tacky fake ferns hanging overhead. Raised at the end of the bar is the television set. It is always on.

The stage area, the second distinct space, begins behind the television with a chipped and cracked masonry wall. The 2 x 4 lay-in ceiling panels are missing and only the metal grid remains. The tables here are basic wood instead of formica, and the ceiling is bisected by a broken concrete beam. Two steel columns, three feet apart, now hold up the broken sections. The entire stage area seems to imply that it has survived punishment and is a depiction of urban decay.

Lili's Bar is in the same community and appears to be just another neighborhood bar. On weekend nights the front entrance is closed to provide an area for the band, and customers must walk down a narrow dark alley in order to enter. The entrance is full of graffiti, a celebration of urban decay and an expression of the survival aesthetic. From the decayed alley, those entering are suddenly bombarded by unbelievably loud colors and patterns, orange, yellow and brown vertical stripes, and paneling with a red cornice running into red and lime green horizontal bands. The floor is vinyl tile in a chevron pattern of terracotta and black. In the center is a pool table with its green felt top brightly lit; balloons hang above the bar. Subliminal sensory overload is brought

to the conscious level. It is a totally synthesized environment and a wonderful example of the pretentious aesthetic, which is again contradicted by the cherrywood bar and tables. This bar represents a tight weave between the survival aesthetic and the pretentious aesthetic. It is not, however, the distinction between the two that is important, but rather how they work together.

What does the New Wave mean in terms of architecture?

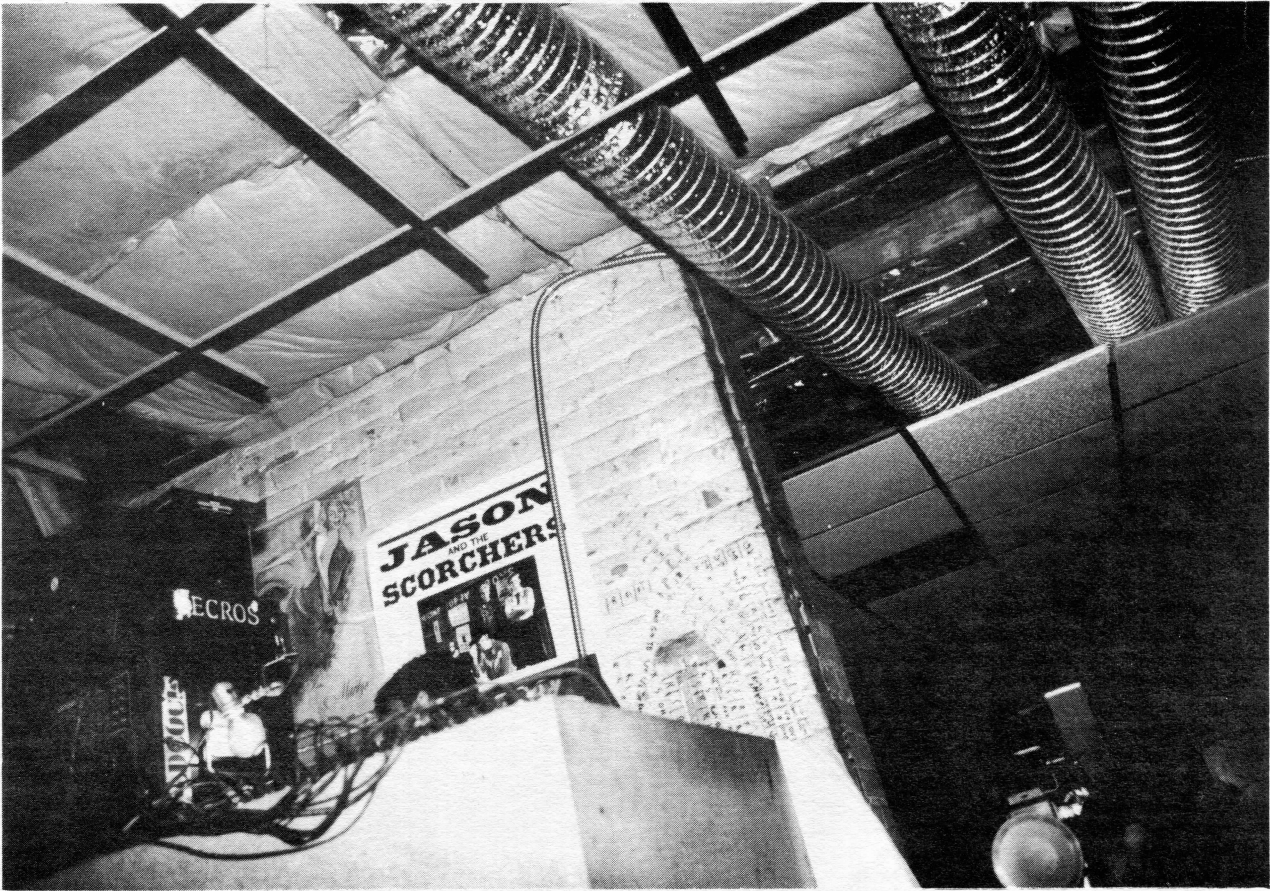
### Learning From the New Wave

Holistic architecture is certainly nothing new. Robert Venturi wrote *Complexity And Contradiction* in 1966, pointing out that "both/and" was more interesting than "either/or." Furthermore, the survival aesthetic is not new. The Viennese painter Hundertwasser has stated that in 1920 the pavement and walls of houses had to be constructed smooth, but that in 1957 it was an insanity he could not understand. He felt that the air raids of 1943 were a perfect automatic lesson in form, that straight lines and their vacuous structures ought to have been blown to pieces, and so they were. He felt that following this, transautomatism should normally have occurred, but society continued to build cubes, and he asked the question, "Where is our conscience?"

In 1980, Barbara Gladstone said that Punk was just the latest permutation of the twentieth century radical impulse that has been manifest in futurism, constructivism, dadaism, surrealism, the Bauhaus, abstract expressionism and pop art.

In 1984, although New Wave seems to be on its way out, it may make use of the past "isms" and be similar in nature to pop art. However, it is very different from pop art in that it has a desire to represent its time, not simply to mock or act as a counter revolution.

The one aspect that makes the Hamtramck bars unique is that they are in a constant state of flux within a fixed framework, with the survival aesthetic celebrating urban decay and acting as the framework. The truth pointed out by Hundertwasser in 1957 remains today, for World War II was not the last war, nor is this architecture



*Above*

Paycheck's: Transition Between Pretentious Bar & Survival Stage Area.

*Facing Page*

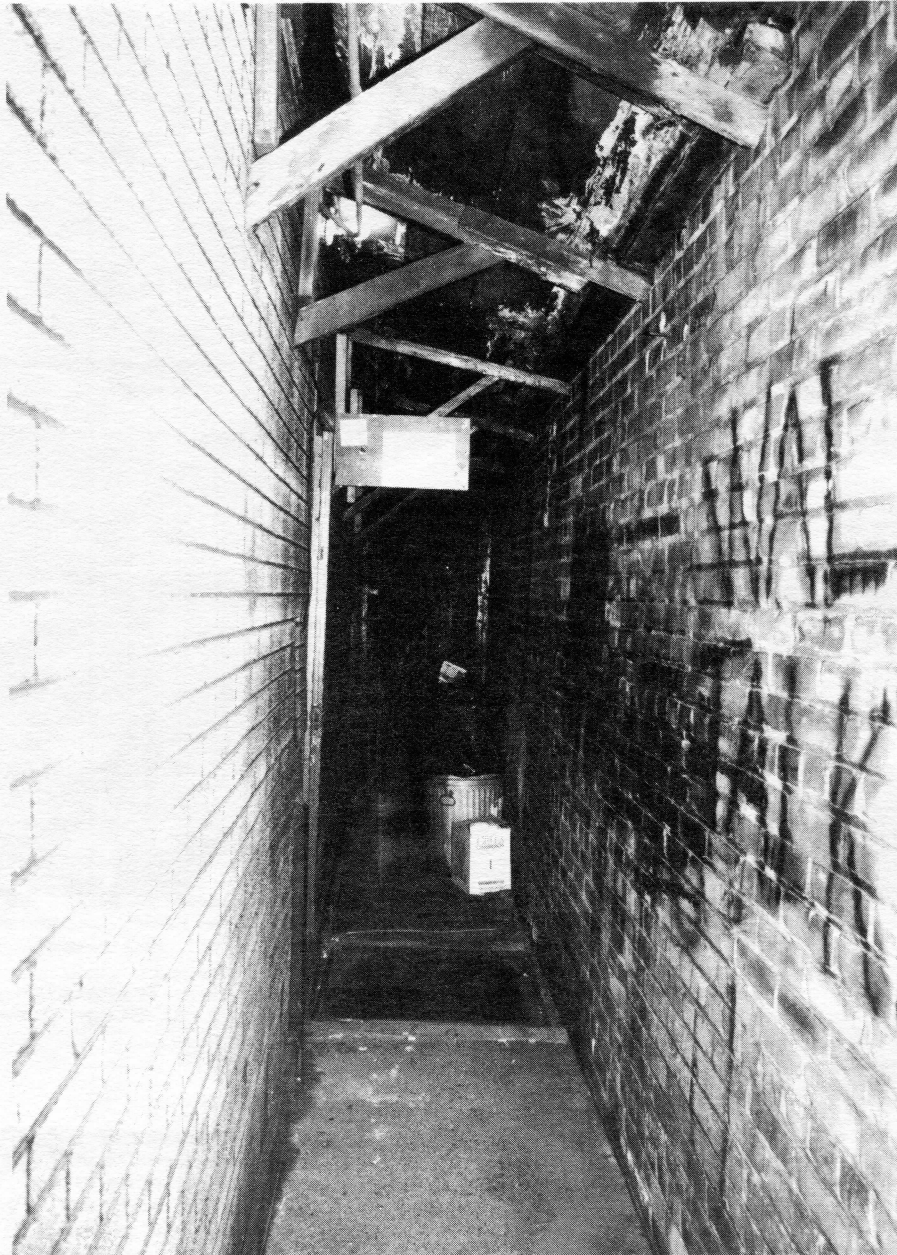
Lili's: Weekend Entry - Celebration of Urban Decay - Survival Aesthetic.

limited to representing just war. It represents also the element of destruction which is present in all of life. It is a truth in urban decay, urban renewal, destruction for progress, and deterioration over time. In fact, it may be the single constant of architecture.

Whether New Wave is in or out, these old and decrepit bars will continue to exist under the survival aesthetic. By the application of the pretentious aesthetic (the use of cheap materials such as vinyl, plastics and paint, which can be discarded at will), they can remain in a constant state of change and make way for the new. Thus, at the same time they incorporate the

need for a constant, what has historically gone before (the stable, the solid, the worn and well used), as well as the ever present need for moving on to keep up with society's changing views and attitudes.

Douglas Davis, in writing about performance, stated that the point was that we are nature matrixed, defined always by the artifices of the moment, which is conditioned, in turn, by the artifices bequeathed by the past. When we indulge in



this fact, he said, we paradoxically liberate ourselves and cultivate delight in those who watch us. New Wave architecture is also nature matrixed. The survival aesthetic introduces the element of time as fashion, thus giving architecture the freedom to move on while alluding to the past.

In a society that is constantly changing, where it is impossible to distinguish a single lasting truth, the only question which remains is where will architects turn

after high tech and post modernism? Perhaps the answer lies in an architecture that is holistic and nature matrixed, an architecture which creates tension between the survival aesthetic and the pretentious aesthetic, an architecture that is in a state of constant change within a framework, an architecture which will liberate us from the "now" in order to create something totally interesting and different, but which will be, paradoxically, also a product of the "now."

# THE PROCESSION OF PHILIP JOHNSON

by Greg Crockett

Philip Johnson; maybe no other name in architecture evokes such disparate images. There's the Philip Johnson who introduced the International Style to the United States, and the Philip Johnson who, some thirty years later, pronounced the death of Modern architecture. There's the Philip Johnson who more than anyone helped establish the aesthetic and vocabulary of Mies van der Rohe, and the Philip Johnson who more than anyone, except perhaps Louis Kahn, led the way away from the Miesian style. And in terms of associated works, there is the Philip Johnson of the New Canaan Glass House (1949) and the Philip Johnson of the AT&T Building in New York (1978). However, these seemingly contradictory images are not really contradictory at all, rather, when viewed in perspective, they are the result of an artistic search, and a logical and intellectual development.

Philip Johnson's career began at Harvard University, where he studied the classics from 1923 to 1930. During this period, he met Alfred Barr who was teaching modern art there. Through Barr, he met Henry-Russell Hitchcock with whom he would later travel to Europe to investigate the International Style for a show at the Museum of Modern Art. Johnson returned to Europe in 1928. On that visit, he met Mies van der Rohe, Walter Gropius, Le Corbusier, J.J.P. Oud, and Andre Lurcat. His enthusiasm for the new architecture of these men was so great that he decided to return to Harvard, this time to the Graduate School of Design. At the time Johnson returned, Gropius and Marcel Breuer had become the heads of the School of Design.

By 1940, Johnson had already become critical of the strict functionalism of Gropius. In fact, he was much more influenced at Harvard by Breuer and also by the rational works of Mies. Johnson's first work, which he built for himself while still in school, reflects particularly the earth-hugging court-houses of Mies' last European domestic designs in which the living spaces were oriented about a secluded courtyard. (1)

Johnson graduated from Harvard with a Bachelor of Architecture Degree in 1943 at the age of thirty-seven. In 1946, he returned as Director of Architecture at the Museum of Modern Art, a post he had previously held from 1930 to 1936.

"I think it is one of the most important buildings in America." Thus said Vincent Scully, one of the foremost architectural critics in the United States, of Johnson's Glass House in New Canaan, Connecticut (1949).<sup>(2)</sup> While it was initially the sketches of Mies' Farnsworth House which Johnson had seen in 1945 that most critics compared his Glass House to, there were perhaps as many, if not more, other influences attributable to the design. Johnson gave the Glass House many sources, including Le Corbusier, Karl Friedrich Schinkel and Mies.

Where it is instinctly logical to compare the Glass House with the Farnsworth House, it would appear that upon close appraisal, the totally glazed walls are all the two homes have in common. In Johnson's house, there is no central core as in the Farnsworth House, rather, the chimney and bathroom are contained in a circular brick silo which was indeed inspired by a farm silo according to the designer. Where Mies' house is rational articulation of form, Johnson's is self effacing and departs from Mies' expression of structural logic. It is indeed the less obvious structural frame and the more membrane like quality of the walls which provide, "...the visual framework for a series of spatial experiences of greater subtlety and complexity."<sup>(3)</sup> In addition, the house in New Canaan is merged with its setting. The yard actually becomes part of the living room, as opposed to the Farnsworth House which is perched on its columns. There also exists in Johnson's house an almost formal Palladian cross axiality. It is these two aspects of the Glass House, the cinquecento symmetry and the Wrightian flow of inside and outside space, that first reveal Johnson's subtle historicism.



In the Glass House, which is usually regarded as being of Johnson's Mies period, there already are evident leanings in Johnson's design bent. There is a rejection of structural clarity in favor of surface treatment. There is a sensitive siting which heralds Johnson's processional experience, and there is the humanizing and rather American re-interpretation of the cold rationale of the International Style. In this sense, the house becomes criticism (Johnson's former occupation) and somewhat manneristic. This ambiguity is well described by Denise Scott Brown:

The black steel columns of Johnson's house, like the rounded and subtly proportioned marble columns of a Greek temple, suggest the human body. An unusual oscillation in our associations - between a machine rationality, which we link to steel and glass, and a warm humanity, which we relate to antique Mediterranean classicism - gives force to this architecture, as it does to some of the early modern work of Le Corbusier. It also suggests that Johnson forms the link between Mies and Louis Kahn of the Richards Medical Labs. (4)

It is interesting that Ms. Brown should make the observation about Kahn, because Johnson was profoundly affected by the Richards Labs. He found in them:

...new sculptural architecture, design elements that surprised us all. It was the first building that shook my faith in strict glass box architecture. Kahn showed us the route to freedom from the International Style. (5)

The late 1950's and early 1960's saw Johnson effecting a real break with the International Style, though he never would leave it totally behind. Being a generation younger than the 1920's designers, he had the advantage of a historical perspective on the International Style. To some, this would be his greatest claim to fame as a leader. Eugene J. Johnson claimed, "Perhaps the greatest contribution that Philip Johnson has made to the whole period is his leadership in the vanguard of those who look back." (6) This apparent dichotomy, the proponent of the non-antecedent International Style versus the emerging historicising monumentalizer, is not contradictory at all when viewed from the perspective of Johnson's notion of architecture. Johnson saw architecture as art, as not needing any other validity or reference to other disciplines. (7) Being an artist had very

clear implications for Johnson. He felt that, "The duty of the artist is to strain against the existing style." (8) If this notion were known to more uninformed critics who characterize Johnson as a chameleon who is changing colors with every new style, perhaps they would appreciate the fact that he has usually been one of the first to explore new expressions.

The decade of the sixties found Johnson straining against the existing style. In the Munson-Williams-Proctor Institute Building, Utica, New York (1960), under a Miesian-like skin lies a traditional, classicising design expressed in modern forms and details. This building captures an ancient monumentality which is totally alien to Mies' Crown Hall at IIT in Chicago (1952), even though both buildings share some of the same basic elements, most notably the large external girders which support the roofs. Where Crown Hall continues in the Miesian tradition of universal space, even between inside and outside, Johnson's building becomes massive and compartmentalized. Entrance to the Proctor Institute is gained through a small portal, further emphasizing the distinction between inside and outside. But perhaps the most significant aspect of Johnson's design is the introduction of the notion of procession, of architecture existing as a function of time, motion, and changing perception. This is accomplished by the transistion in the entrance, the distinction of spaces, and the grand, romantic staircase descending into the central hall. This notion of procession was explored at the Glass House and was achieved by a sensitive siting of the building which controlled the way it was perceived as it was approached.

At the Sheldon Art Gallery in Lincoln, Nebraska, (1963), Johnson produced probably his most elegant building to date. Again, he has taken the opposite route of Mies by combining formerly articulated elements into a sculptural whole. The result again is a classic expression in contemporary forms. There remains a feeling of column, capital, and entablature, yet they have all been combined into one supple, plastic form. This idea is also carried over into the walls, normally discrete elements, which flow into one another. The retention of a stylobate and portico and the grand interior staircase demonstrate Johnson's on-going concern for the processional element.

The remainder of the 1960's gave Johnson some of his largest commissions such as the New York State Theater in New York City, (1964), the New York State Pavillion at the

World's Fair in Flushing, New York, (1964), and the extension of the Boston Public Library (1967). Once again, however, it was a project at his New Canaan estate which was to become the basis for ensuing projects in the next decade. This seminal project was the underground sculpture gallery. Here, as he often did at New Canaan, Johnson started experimenting with new forms and elements. This time it was with projecting diagonal forms, greenhouse roofs, and the play of light and shadow. These experiments, which led to an exquisite space in the sculpture gallery, were to be the harbingers of three of Johnson's most successful and monumental projects, the IDS Center in Minneapolis, Minnesota, the Pennzoil Place in Houston, Texas, and the Crystal Cathedral in Orange County, California.

A proper preamble to the discussion of these buildings would seem to be the concepts which the architect was dealing with prior to their development. Johnson felt:

Architecture is surely not the design of space, certainly not the massing or organizing of volumes. These are ancillary to the mainpoint which is the organization of procession. Architecture exists only in time...(and the)...beauty lies in how you move into the space. (And such, they)...are positive, not negative virtues which are basic to the entire discipline of the art.(9)

In regard to present directions, Johnson states:

We are experimenting with shape as much as anything else - doing sculpture, I admit. I've lost interest in playing all that much with the surface - it's formal variations which interest me now.(10)

So, what are these formal variations? Essentially it is an attempt to break out of the vernacular of the box. At IDS, this was accomplished by setting back the corners of the fifty-five story office tower and the hotel, resulting not only in a much more visually interesting building, but also in the very practical effect of having thirty-two corner offices and hotel rooms on every floor instead of the usual four. The zig-zag corridors become interesting spaces in their own right. But the most successful aspect of the IDS complex is the covered courtyard, affectionately called the Crystal Court. The Court has become a symbolic civic space

and serves not only as shopping mall, but also as entrance to the complex and hotel lobby. As Paul Goldberger put it:

The courtyard has become one of downtown Minneapolis' focal points since its completion. It is, really, all a good urban space should be: a clear, processional entrance to the buildings surrounding it, yet an identifiable space in itself; full of life and activity, but not too busy or fussy; and large enough to create a sense of grand civic scale, yet able to relate well to the neighborhood around it.(11)

In Houston, the Pennzoil Place, like IDS, fills the site. However, here the formal variation is two trapezoidal towers facing each other with a ten foot slit between them. They are joined only at street level where a huge atrium courtyard covers the rest of the site. The tops of the towers are slashed off in steep diagonals producing a garret like space on the top ten floors. The building proved so popular that the owners asked the architects to add two more floors as it was being constructed. Both the Pennzoil Building and the IDS complex are spiritual descendents of the Seagram Building (1959) with which Johnson collaborated with Mies. Essentially, what Johnson did was to take the Seagram building with its external plaza and turn it inside out.

When Reverend Schuller sought out Philip Johnson to build his church, he gave him a program, "...to create a structure that would be a living form of art. A truly beautiful place so it would attract people and inspire them to build beautiful lives and beautiful families."(12) He essentially got what he wanted. The Crystal Cathedral, as it has come to be known, has been referred to as the embodiment of nature and light. The structure is composed of carefully detailed space frames, painted white, and entirely glazed with over 10,000 lights of reflective glass. The Crystal Cathedral achieves what Johnson set out to accomplish, namely a sense of both grandeur and intimacy. "It's a room with little corners where you can cuddle, and yet it's a room as big as the Colosseum if you need that kind of space."(13) Johnson achieved intimacy in this cavernous space (400 ft. x 200 ft. x 120 ft. high) by manipulating scale in a pinched diamond configuration, and sloping balconies in a centralized space which would probably have made Bramante proud. Robert Fischer described the building in Architectural Record thusly:

In truth, the building is extraordinary architecture: with its magic of light and structure, it is a building that reaches out to people and that people reach out to - a fair litmus test of any serious piece of architecture. (14)

Philip Johnson may not be the creative juggernaut that Le Corbusier, Frank Lloyd Wright, or even Mies were, but he was instrumental in distilling the works of many great creators to a monumental, vernacular form, which, in many cases, has filled some gaping holes in the seminal works of the masters. He has in effect often been a translator of a language many people are unable to speak, and he has performed this task with immeasurable wit and consummate taste. Styles may come and styles may go, but one thing remains the same: "After all, with all the movements, the architect's duty really hasn't changed - and that is to create beautiful buildings for people to feel better in."

#### ENDNOTES

- (1) John M. Jacobus, Philip Johnson (New York: George Braziller Inc., 1962), p. 25.
- (2) Calvin Tompkins, "Profiles - Forms Under Light," New Yorker, 53 May 23, 1977, p. 43.
- (3) Jacobus, Philip Johnson, p. 26.
- (4) Denise Scott Brown, "High Boy - The Making of an Eclectic," Saturday Review, 6 March 17, 1979, p. 55.
- (5) Philip Johnson, "Beyond Monuments," Architectural Forum, 138 January 1973, p. 52.
- (6) M. Sanderson, International Handbook of Contemporary Development in Architecture (Westport, Connecticut: Greenwood Press, 1981), p. 105.
- (7) Brown, "High Boy...", p. 57.
- (8) "Lessons From the Past," Time, 76 September 5, 1978 p. 53.
- (9) Paul Goldberger, "Form and Procession," Architectural Forum, 138 January 1973, p. 48.
- (10) Paul Goldberger, "Philip Johnson's Eminent, Elegant, Practical World," Smithsonian, 5 February 1975, p. 54.
- (11) Ibid., p. 55.
- (12) Douglas Davis, "The Crystal Cathedral," Newsweek, 96 October 6, 1980, p. 97.
- (13) Robert E. Fischer, "The Crystal Cathedral," Architectural Record, 168 November 1980, p. 79.
- (14) Ibid., p. 78.

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# MAN AND MACHINE

by Rick Whitney

## MAN

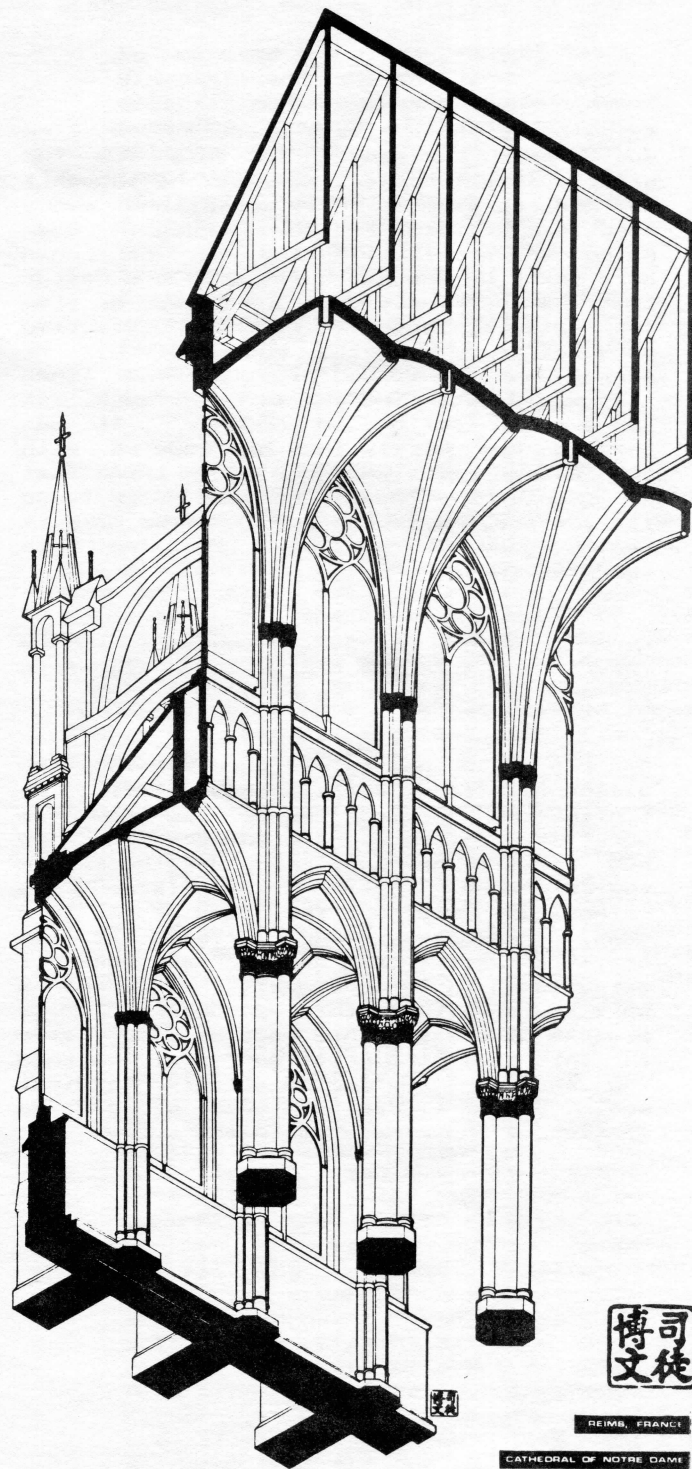
He slowly walked around the base of the new cathedral. Its shape was outlined against the setting sky; its massive stonework just beginning to rise from the ground, climbing up the slender timber framing. The builders had gone for the day leaving him alone to examine its progress. His experienced eye ran over the stone, noting with approval the precision in which it had been fitted.

He continued to walk, sensing the care so necessary to the craftsman's work; even more important in that it was a house for the worship of the Lord. He unrolled the etching of the main entrance portal that had been tucked under his arm. He stopped to compare it to the nearly finished sculpture, its shadows cast deeply in the fading glow. Its ornate facade radiated majestically. Soon a spire would rise above the rooftops to rule over the town and to proclaim its place under the heavens. He continued to gaze, feeling deep inside that it was right; it answered to Jesus Christ, the Church, and the town. Surely it would be the place of worship the town needed; sacrifice of their hands.

Abruptly, he woke from his vision and made to leave. He rolled up the etching as he began to walk down the street. He turned to view the cathedral again, the timbers outlined against the nearly faded sky. He realized with awe that he wouldn't live to see the completion of this, his mentor's most important work.

## MACHINE

He rose from his hunched position over his terminal, stretched his stiffened limbs and viewed his drawing, an elevation of a new church. The entire sea of draftsmen was



REIMS, FRANCE

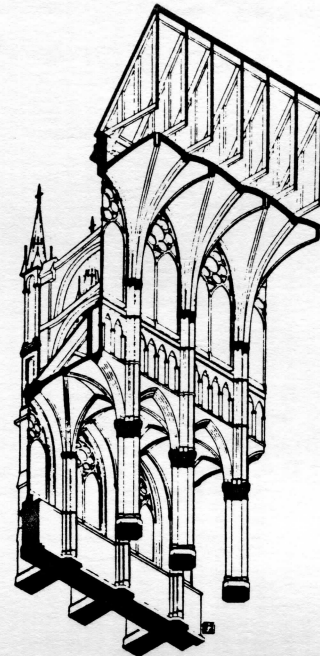
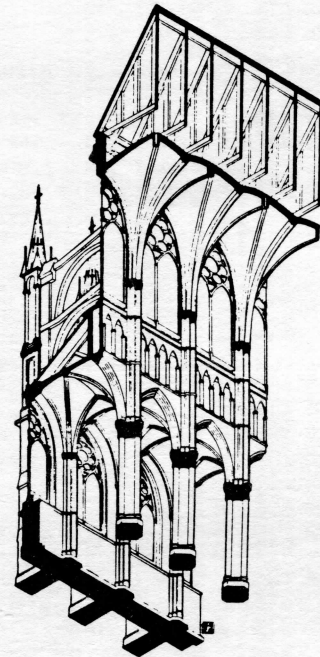
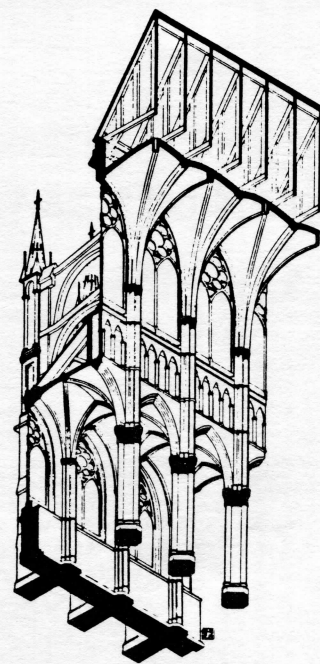
CATHEDRAL OF NOTRE DAME

Cathedral Drawing By Jeff Stebar.

swimming with activity because the firm would soon be sending out this job for bids. It all happens so fast, he thought; there's no time to fully understand every step the building had been through. Even being an architect on the job, he could only think of the basic steps of the design that had hurriedly come and gone. No time for details, push it through...time constraints... phantom budget.... He sighed and continued plotting the lines that would determine the main entrance. It is a good design, he thought. It was amazing how quickly they had come up with the design solution. One would think that we should have spent more time on it to do it justice, he thought. What we have is really good though, at least on this computer image.

He wondered how the design continued to the interior; maybe check with the designer to see what he had come up with.

As the afternoon turned into evening, he added the final details and lettering to finish the drawing. As he rose from his work station, he glanced out the window to see the silhouette of the old cathedral in the distance. It still claimed its celebrated rule over the roofs of the old town. As always he marveled at its artistic detail and image and how it established a unique quality of place; a work of infinite depth. He wondered if its process of creation had been as complicated as this project's creation. Alas, he knew the answer. He looked at his terminal again. Was it really a good design? He looked out the window again and mused.



# PLANNING FOR HUMAN SETTLEMENTS

by Stavroula Psarakis

On a recent trip to Athens, I was invited to visit an architectural office that is nestled in a hillside overlooking that energetic city. As I approached the building, I noticed a sign which read:

DOXIADIS ASSOCIATES INTERNATIONAL  
Consultants on Development and Ekistics.

These words were not familiar to me, and thus my curiosity was aroused. I proceeded through the enclosed courtyard to the front door. As I found out later, I had entered the atelier of one of the most brilliant architects and city planners of this century. This is the headquarters of the late Constantinos Apostolos Doxiadis (1913-1975) and his staff.

Doxiadis, a son of a physician, was guided in his work by his sensitivity to the human condition. His father set a prime example for him to follow. In Doxiadis' own words:

I saw eventually that (my father) had given all his life to the cause of saving man. This helped me to understand that merely building walls is not important unless the building has a meaning for man. That is why I have turned increasingly towards planning for the human settlement rather than designing buildings or studying traffic patterns - the important word is "human", both in defining the subject of one's work and qualifying the goal towards which we should go. (1)

Based on this principle, Doxiadis developed the science of ekistics. He defines ekistics as the science of human settlements that are territories arranged by Anthropos (man) for his own sake. These human settlements are the result of human action, and their goal is human survival.

He began teaching this study of human settlements during the Second World War, and it became the basis for Greece's recovery plan after the war. All sectors - industry, agriculture, transportation, communications, housing, education - are seen as manifestations of one thing, the life of man in his nation, rather than as separate parts.

Philip Deane, former Director of the United Nations Information Center and author of Doxiadis' biography analyzes Doxiadis' clearly:

The present is a time of explosions - population, energy, economic - which cause uncontrollable changes. Human settlements suffer from a lack of understanding of these greatly complex explosions. For this reason, Doxiadis tried to develop ekistics which is a science rooted in the knowledge from the past and of the present. (2)

Doxiadis spent thirty-five years of his life developing the study of ekistics. He defines within it five elements of a city: *Nature*: the container; *Man*: settles in it; *Society*: formed by man; *Shells*: houses and buildings created by man; *Networks*: water supply, roads, power. He further defines three types of cities. The first is Dystopia which is derived from the Greek *-dys-* meaning difficulty or evil, and *-topos-*, meaning place. Most modern cities are in this state at the present. The second is Utopia which means ideal and imaginary city. This state does not physically exist. The final one, Entopia, means "in-place". Doxiadis feels this can exist. (3) It is a condition in which the society is capable of solving its own problems.

Great cities of the past, like Athens, Rome, or Peking shared two important characteristics. The first is that they did not grow past a certain size. The second is that they harmonized with the surrounding countryside. This was a static condition. The modern city, on the other hand, is constantly expanding and is thus called dynamic. Doxiadis is sensitive to both of these conditions. He feels the crisis the world now faces occurred because of a great increase in population, a high rate of urbanization, a huge increase of per capita income, and unexpected technological progress. (4) This rate of change accelerates from one day to the next. It is the most characteristic phenomenon of the present era and is the fourth dimension of architecture. (5)

Settlements are biological organisms because a) they take in energy and raw materials, b) transform them into useful products, and c) generate unwanted by-products and waste. (6) The city, therefore, is considered by Doxiadis to be a living network of systems. He thus has created a hierarchy of communities:

- Ecumenopolis
- Colossopolis
- Megalopolis
- Metropolis
- Polis
- Sector
- Neighborhood
- House

Ecumenopolis, the universal city, encompasses all of the structures below it. Because the main trends of the present technological and economic process cannot be reversed, a universal system of life will be formed. This evolution will create one global settlement - ecumenopolis - as Doxiadis calls it, or "World City" as referred to by Arnold Toynbee. (7) It will bring with it a new state of balance between Anthropos, nature, and the human settlement. Doxiadis believes that the quality of life can be greatly improved upon today and probably could be better than any previous time in history.

The structure of this universal city calls for the major lines of transportation to flow outside the primary settlements. Minor arteries branch off of this main line to feed the settlements. (See Figure 1)(8) To allow for the fishbone pattern, the components of the city have to be designed for on-going growth and change. They must also be designed to be rational and economical at every state of growth.

Another key part of Doxiadis' planning is called Dynapolis. This is defined as the way existing cities, as well as new ones, can avoid the vicious circle of a decaying heart in a constantly growing body. (See Figure 2)(9) Dynapolis solves the time dimension which is the fourth dimension in planning. Within a dynapolis (dynamically changing city) the element of Anthropos' direct personal concern should only follow and obey the trends. Anthropos must be able to develop further until he reaches a new balance within his system. Then one day, the dynamic city will become static again. (See Figure 3)(10)

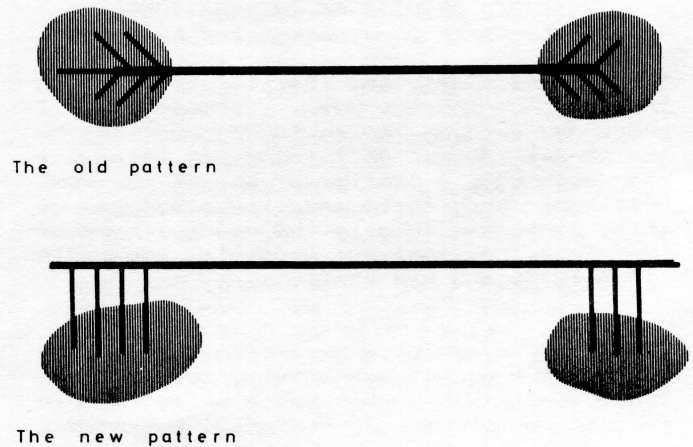


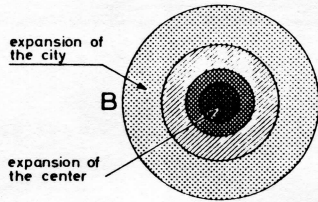
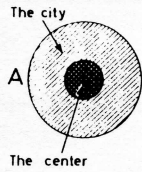
Figure 1.

Doxiadis draws the following conclusions about the city of the future:

- 1) Ecumenopolis will come inevitably, but it will only come in its most desirable form if Anthropos guides events.
- 2) We must set our goal as harmony between the five elements that make up human settlements: Anthtopos, Nature, Society, Shells, and Networks.
- 3) We must use a rational and scientific approach, making a careful study of the complex systems of life in which we live.
- 4) We must find the courage to act at the global scale.
- 5) Our actions must never be based on our desire to show-off - as individuals, groups, or corporations - but only on the desire to serve Anthropos. (11)

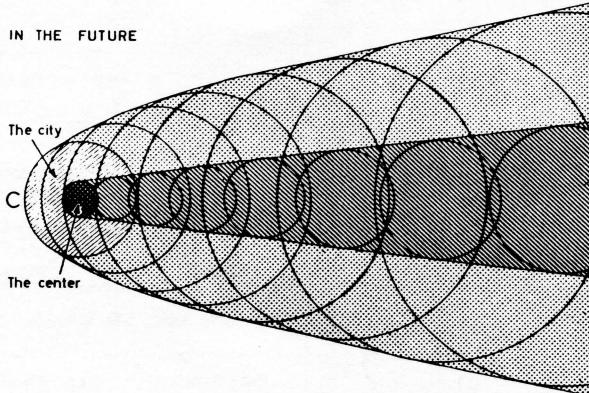
THE EXPANSION OF THE CITIES

IN THE PAST



the concentric expansion strangles the center which struggles with other functions

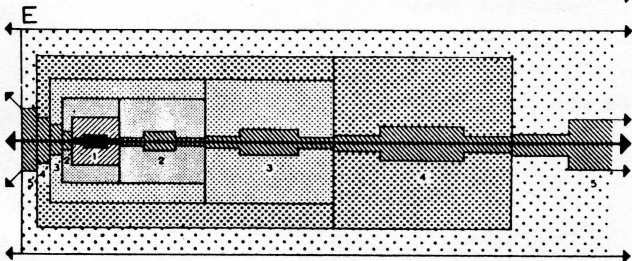
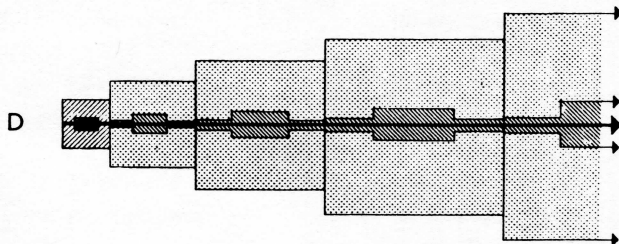
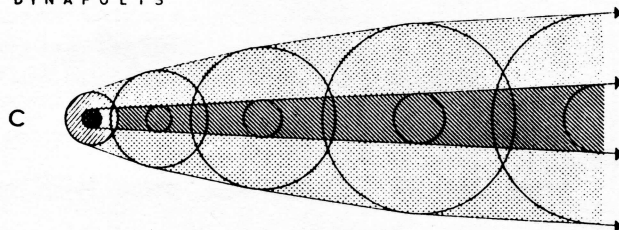
IN THE FUTURE



the expansion in one direction allows the center to expand without difficulty

Figure 2.

DYNAPOLIS



Center 1 will not be sufficient for the left hand part and must be partly relieved by Centers 2,3,4' which must be wider than Centers 2,3,4 to serve sectors developing above and below Center 1

Figure 3.

Ekistics was the basis for the development of many large-scale projects. The firm of Doxiadis Associates International, established in the 1950's, gained worldwide acclaim. Projects that were commissioned to Doxiadis included planning in Brazil, Canada, Ethiopia, Lebanon and many others. In the United States, he worked on housing for the cities of Louisville and Cincinnati, the expansion of Washington D.C., an Urban Renewal Program to eliminate Philadelphia's city blight, and a study with Detroit Edison to determine the city's role in a future Megalopolis from Pittsburgh to Chicago.

The study that was undertaken by the Detroit Edison Company, Doxiadis Associates, and Wayne State University, was recorded in three volumes. The first volume analyzes Detroit's existing conditions and establishes the Detroit Urban System. The second is an essay on future alternatives and methodology on examining human settlements. The third makes specific proposals for future development in the social, political, technological, physical, and cultural sectors. (12) This work was helpful in defining the problems of the city and also methods for solving those problems.

Constantinos Apostolos Doxiadis had a great love for his fellow man and for the world around him. He used his talents, skills, and insights to improve the human condition. His philosophies, and especially his enthusiasm for life and for his profession, serve as a great inspiration for the student of architecture. The example that he set poses a challenge to those who are truly dedicated to their profession and humbly serving their society. In his own words:

We need to understand that, like a tree, our architecture is not going to grow overnight. It will take its time, and we can only help it grow. We (architects), on our part, must develop the attitude of a gardner who cultivates the tree but does not become anxious and expect fruit before its maturity. We need to understand our proper position in time and not be in a hurry for results. We should not think of forms, but create space, build, and live. Architecture will come. (13)



ENDNOTES

- (1) Philip Deane. Constantine Doxiadis, Master Builder For Free Men (New York: Oceana Publications, Inc., 1965), p. 31.
- (2) Constantinos Doxiadis. Ecology and Ekistics (Boulder: Westview Press, 1977), p. XV.
- (3) Constantinos Doxiadis. Between Dystopia And Utopia (Hartford: Trinity College Press, 1966), p. 87.
- (4) Constantinos Doxiadis. Ekistics (New York: Oxford University Press, 1968), p. 7.
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- (6) Constantinos Doxiadis and John Papaidannou. Ecumenopolis, The Inevitable City of the Future (New York: W.M. Norton & Company, Inc., 1974), p. 153.
- (7) Doxiadis and Papaidannou, p. 37.
- (8) Deane, p. 77.
- (9) Ibid.
- (10) Constantinos Doxiadis, Anthropolis, City for Human Development (New York: W.M. Norton & Company, Inc., 1974), p. 6.
- (11) Doxiadis and Papaidannou, p. 396.
- (12) Mary E. Osban, "Emergence and Growth of an Urban Region, The Developing Detroit Area," A.I.A. Journal, 55 June 1971.
- (13) Constantinos Doxiadis. Architecture and Transistion, p. 195.

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