



UNIVERSITAT POLITÈCNICA
DE CATALUNYA
BARCELONATECH

La experiencia del ILAUD y la “Escuela de Barcelona”

Paolo Belloni

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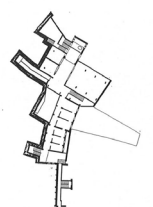
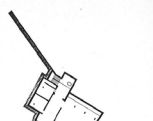
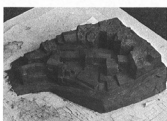
Josep Giner
Paul Murdoch

Growth and Integration

The introduction of a district center into a block of the Oca Contrada, near the historic center of Siena, is an attempt to maintain the strength of the contrada organization and its custom while allowing the new facility to be used by participants from outside the neighborhood. Our project is a search for the means by which the contrada could grow to include these new facilities. The documentation and analysis of the existing morphology of the block reveals the precedence of physical growth from the strong perimeters of via S. Caterina and via della Galuzza

into the orchards on the side of via Fontebranda. Accepting via S. Caterina as the center of the Oca Contrada we chose to follow the example of this growth to accommodate the new facilities in a way integrated with the existing urban pattern. The project does not define a district center, a contrada facility, and a place where the two can overlap, but one facility, integral with the block, where all overlap in many places, depending on varied functions at different times. The building is developed with the idea that each space can be both an extension of the contrada, used by contrada members, and/or a separate element, used by the town.

The physical growth from the Contrada facilities occurs through two existing



buildings, currently housing, and ends on via Fontebranda, where we propose the demolition of an existing building of inferior quality which is incoherent relative to the morphology and language of the block. The direction of growth emphasizes the initial priority of the idea of Contrada extension. The meeting with via Fontebranda offers a secondary but important priority. Access to the block via Fontebranda as a pedestrian street and a major entry to the town the street becomes important as a place of access to the project for those from outside the contrada. By clearing two streets of the workshops a tertiary entrance from Fontebranda is created, echoing the fountain's former importance while reinforcing its current situation. Due to their

differing urban roles and the direction of the buildings' growth, these three sides about different architectural character. The fact that the entrances are from the streets demonstrates our decision to keep circulation primarily on the existing streets and not throughout the block. We can, therefore, maintain the orchards as they now exist. The building known as "the villa" is kept since it is part of a larger pattern of similar buildings on via Fontebranda. The building on via della Galuzza would be demolished, due to its poor static condition, and rebuilt as housing.

possibilities by circulation across the site and through the building in crossing zones. These zones also offer light to all spaces in addition to skylights and varied treatment of the walls. The via Fontebranda elevation remains a diagram of ideas, from the plans and sections, awaiting further study for its formal development.

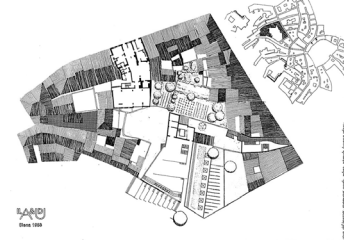
At this stage the project has been studied primarily in plan and section in the effort to provide the flexibility of functional

Chris del Barrio
Massimo Guidi
Silvia Schmutz
Luciano Solarì

Signs and traces: Memories of the site

During the whole of our design process, we kept in mind the idea that the block in the Oca area had a precise structure, organization and character, determined by a continual stratification through time, to the point of being an element capable of influencing directly our design decisions. It therefore seemed to us that the site already possessed many architectural elements and that to invent new ones would have been unnecessary and superfluous. In fact, it was enough for us to simply interpret and evaluate these pre-existing elements in order to obtain a great number of starting points, ideas and suggestions for our project. Briefly, the architecture already was there and all it required was its discovery or, as Kahn would put it, one needed simply to understand what the site should have become.

Our attempt has been that of keeping an image of this block that could be considered analogous to the existing one, by inserting new architectural elements that

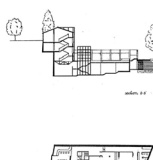
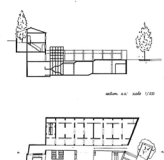


at the same time use and respect, as far as possible, the present design of the ground-tracks, boundaries, differences, in level, etc., that are nothing but the materialisation of all past events, changes that have occurred in the course of time

and therefore also of the memory of the site. We limited our intervention to the area overlooking via di Fontebranda and vicolo del Costaccino for two main reasons. First of all, because these were the points in the

block that did not present a homogeneous structure as in the rest of the site that, in fact, we thought should remain unchanged. Then, although via di Fontebranda is directly connected with the Campo, it is scarcely used; we try to bring more life in the area, by creating provisions for an easy accessibility to public facilities located in the block.

Within our area of intervention, we chose the existing farmhouse - also for its position - as the element that if rightly used, could become a hinge around which new architectural events could occur, always respecting the above mentioned concepts.



Jordi Fontury
Michèle Lans
Kriszta Szendrői

Minimal Intervention

We tried to keep the typical Sienese block without destroying the wall, keeping it as a limit of our intervention.

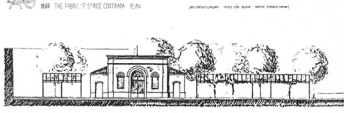
Definition of Via Campana by giving a longitudinal direction of the existing market.

Definition of the piazza by using a new geometric shape and a fountain as a point of reference to the space.

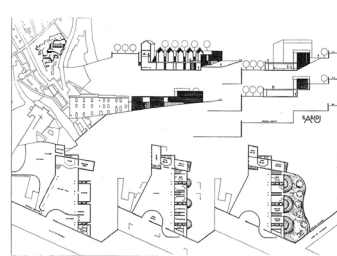
Clear definition of the public and private space.

Important opening as symbolic enlivenment of the private and public space; the visible contact by transparency.

Respect for the structural constitution of the contrada. Double use of new functions.



Roberto Briccola



Guy Depollier
Duccio Malagamba

"A specific object is a building, Westminster Cathedral is architecture"
N. Pevsner.

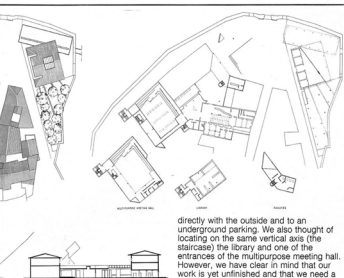
We started working together from three very different points of view. However, since the very beginning we decided to reduce our opinion resting from a common understanding to arrive to a coherent final proposal. This made the work proceed slowly, but at the end we can say that result came from the sharing of our ideas and different opinions.

The three central assumptions from which we began our work were: the importance of the relationship among private, public and contrada spaces; the piazza as a place where many important activities take place; the desire of keeping as much as possible the existing buildings in order to be in a realistic situation of work.

Following the general assumptions of the program we tried to improve the quality of the relationship between the contrada and the city; we designed as hinge of the whole intervention a space distributing both public and contrada activities.

Seeking for a spatial re-ordering of the piazza, in order to improve the quality and the organization of the functions, we pointed out two possible interventions: the enlargement of the market building and the rebuilding of the facade on the piazza, in the attempt of giving back to the space a continuity in space and volumes.

Another aim of the project was to enrich the life of Via Maiba by connecting it



directly with the outside and to an underground parking. We also thought of locating on the same vertical axis (the staircase) the library and one of the entrances of the multipurpose meeting hall. However, we have clear in mind that our work is yet unfinished and that we need a further exploration of the design process in.

Group 4 Istrie

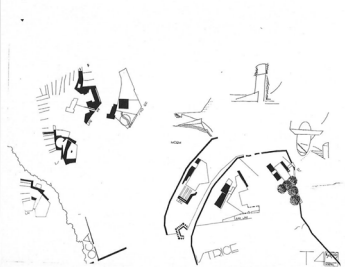
The built space shapes the open space: to shape in the sense of giving new rules. The buildings take their clues from the walls:

- The wall is not sacred and untouchable;
 - One can walk on the wall;
 - One can build against the wall;
 - One can pass through the wall.
- By a cut in the wall, one can pass from outside through the market and the restaurant. A round window screens the door. In order to make an entrance to the contrada, building at the same time, the space we enter and the space at our backs.

In two alternatives, the theatre is placed inside the garden and against the wall, forcing a flexibility in the connections between public and private city and contrada.

In Istria, the wall is a kind of mirror. It gives back answers to our questions and directs our design.

P.S. The end is very close to the beginning. It is no more than a common agreement. A large part of the project has been done by the LULUP hypothesis. The ideas are much older than the design. Now the work of those who look closely at the projects is to go one step further and make a synthesis and a reconstruction of new ideas and objects.



Group 4 Oca

The open space shapes the built space: to shape in the sense of accepting the existing geometry.

- The buildings come from what exists:
- Walls keep being walls;
 - Terraces continue to be terraces;
 - The theatre settles among the loggias;
 - The loggias develop inside loggias.
- From the top of via della Galluzzia, the library opens onto a terrace that connects to the district center. The center opens to the vicolo dei Costaccioni. At the lower end of the slope the theatre opens to three sides: to via S.ta Caterina and the contrada, to via Fontebranda and down toward the fountain and the gate. All three entrances connect on the same level to create a new public space. An alternative proposal links the theater underground, close to the library and district center, along the wall on via Fontebranda.

In Oca, the block is a fortress attached by our arrival. We enter the new project from many places along the edge, but never out the site. Because via S.ta Caterina belongs to the contrada, we respect the life that already exists there. Our entrances add life to the softer edges of the block. Once inside, one can view the secret gardens but never cross them.

Mary Cornejo/Enric Miralles

Domènec Castell A new entrance to the town

The project started with the tearing down of the back part of the market (as suggested in the program). Because of the aerial view from outside the wall, in order to make it possible to walk along the wall behind the market.

Immediately other ideas came out. A new entrance should be opened, through the wall behind the market, so as to connect the existing spaces to both the market and the town. This new entrance, as well as offering a new possibility and choice to enter the town, also attempts to give more importance to the commercial functions in the market building. The latter is at present badly organized. In order to give it new possibilities and better conditions it seemed necessary to expand it; for this reason the walls should be more open. Having decided to keep the front facade on the piazza, it was necessary to work on the sides of the building. The opening of the sides gave the possibility to connect the park, the market and the wall. The market can expand rather freely, its border becoming in a way the wall.

The ground floor is occupied by permanent shops; around them, made and outside the open space can be organized in a daily market.

The height of the building allowed me to insert another floor, where I located a restaurant.

By reshaping the whole volume, a new and stronger relation with the park is attained.

Angela Mas Jesus Menendez This is (almost) a Din A1

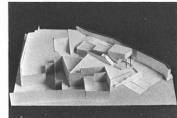
Things are often not as important as they seem. Sometimes just a bit of enthusiasm, just a bit of love are the only essential instruments to solve one's problems. Love does not mean peace, enthusiasm, heroic enthusiasm, does not mean compensation but all together can give you both peace and compensation at the end.

At the beginning we had as discussion elements the "piazza", contrada's building, the public facilities building and a possible courtyard in the interior of the block. It was established that it could be possible to understand one in juxtaposition to the other: the public facilities building in contrast to the contrada's one (they support complementary functions), the "piazza" in contrast to the courtyard (different character, different size, different use). All the time we worked with this double juxtaposition and we should understand

the extension of the market is based on the extension of the existing steel structure within it.

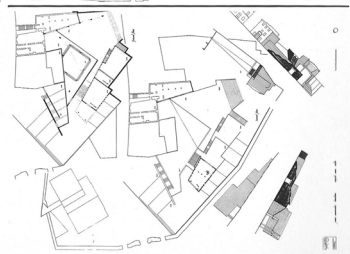
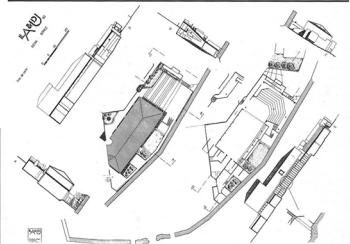
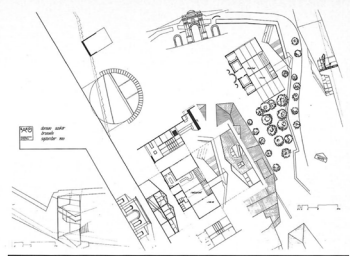
A ramp/stair leads to the market, and to a bridge across the open space behind it; the bridge breaks through the wall and leads to a balcony outside the wall, just above the new entrance.

The balcony is not only a place from where to look out, but also a sign for who is outside indicating the new entrance. All these elements (the new entrance, the two ramps/stairs, the bridge crossing the open space) plus the new round opening on the rear facade of the market - a minimal reforming of an existing arch, that indicates the new axis of the market - form a new space with a pleasant atmosphere for the entrance to the town.



the whole design as the design of the connection between these four main spaces. The resolution of the communications that we established between the four focal points, gave form to the central part of the whole design. That is a kind of ambiguous function depending on the four main points of attraction. This triangular hall and the public facilities building try to establish some kind of relationship between the courtyard and the "piazza". The building becomes higher as it comes nearer to the public open space and since it has to deal with the existing market, a big hole is opened in contrast to the big holes in the market. At the same time the roof of the triangular hall is curved in order to give some kind of distant facade to the "piazza".

At another level the stairs and the terrace make easier the connection from the "piazza" to the contrada's building and also the public facilities building. Stairs and terrace act as a point of reference to the feeling that there is something else happening next to you, something that you can get, live and...love.



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Barcelona



REDESIGN OF THE "CASA BLOC" PUBLIC SPACE SYSTEM:

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ESCUELA TECNICA SUPERIOR DE ARQUITECTURA DE BARCELONA I VALLÉS

I.L.A.U.D. 1984

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Redesign of the Casa Bloc public space system.

The work we are doing as a Permanent Activity focuses in an a singular building and its surrounding. In some sense this building is a monument but it is a singular one.

The Casa Bloc, built in Barcelona by the GATEPAC during the Republican period, is a typical sample of the "redent" typology of housing. For us it's a fragment of a most large idea : the periferic ordenation of Barcelona planned by the GATEPAC and Le Corbusier as an extension of Cerdà Grid, and named the "Pla Macià".

Considering this sample of the Modern Movement as a monument raises the problem of what is the rule of a monument as a part of the city. For us it is not isolated and mythical piece.

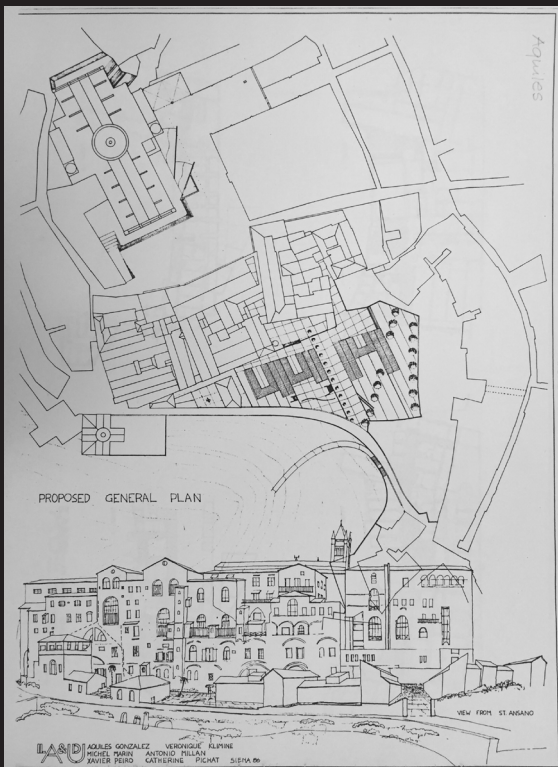
On the contrary we would like to achieve the connection between this building and the fabric of the urban area.

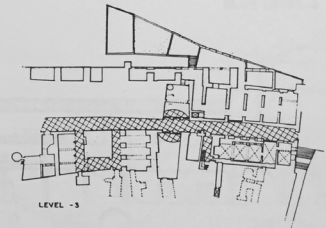
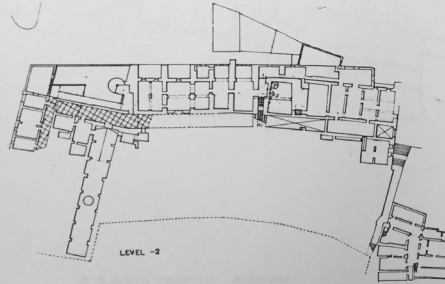
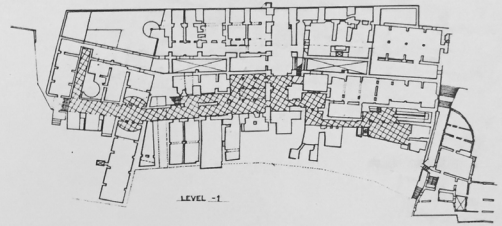
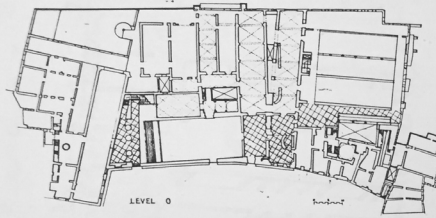
But solve this connection appears not easy and peacefull but as a confrontation of different morfological logics.

In one hand there is the logic of the "redent" with the big scale, out of the street frame and producing public spaces without formalized shape. On the other hand there is the spontaneous growth of this part of the city, a proto-industrial structure with the irregular land division, topographic sense of the streets trace and with a different relationship between the public and private spaces.

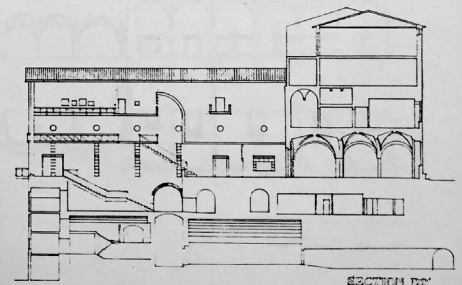
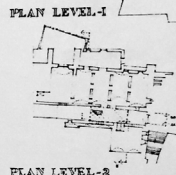
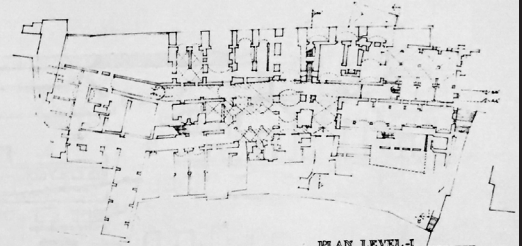
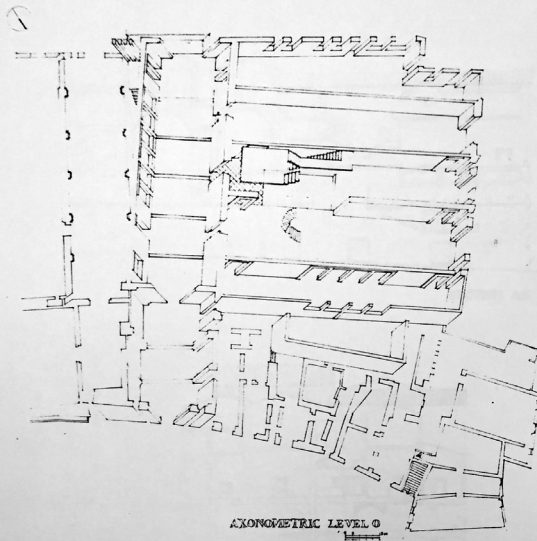
In front of those different logics our attitude is not dogmatic. We have a similar historic capacity to understand one and other. We establish different values in front of different problems. Of course modern architecture give us better solutions related to the dwelling organization but the let's say "old way of doing city" shows values in terms of alive public space, privacy and variety.

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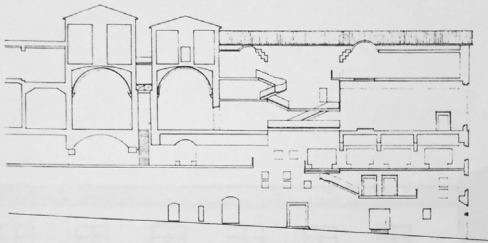




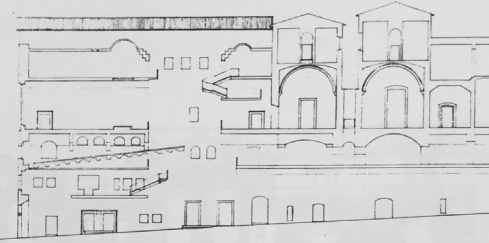
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 MICHEL MARIN ANTONIO MILLAN
 XAVIER PEIRO CATHERINE PICHAT SHEN B6



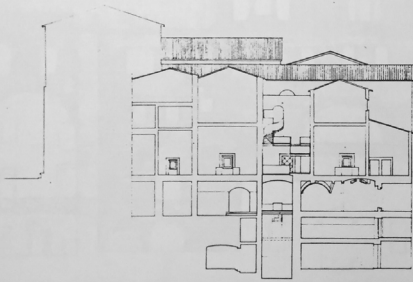
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SECTION A-A

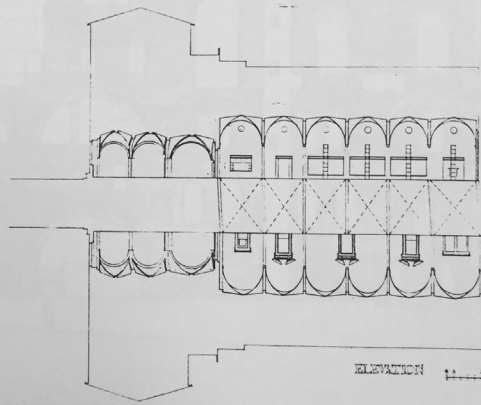


SECTION B-B



SECTION C-C

LA&U ADRIAN GONZALEZ VERONIQUE KLIPFNE
MICHEL MARIN ANTONIO MELLAN
XAVIER PEIRO CATHERINE PICIAT SHINA EN



ELEVATION



LA&U ADRIAN GONZALEZ VERONIQUE KLIPFNE
MICHEL MARIN ANTONIO MELLAN
XAVIER PEIRO CATHERINE PICIAT SHINA EN

1983
MULTIPLICITY OF
LANGUAGE
VS. ECLECTICISM

in **Barcelona**

ILAC&UJ SEMINAR

April 25-30, 1983

**Multiplicity of Language
vs. Eclecticism**

Manuel Ribas i Piera

Some references to the City and to the Theatre,
concerning present architectural language

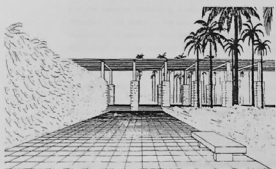
The consideration of cities in a discussion on Eclecticism, leads to a deeper level: the urban languages.

Four approaches to a concept of city conclude on two aspects of action (contents) and scene (container), as the roots of city signification i.e. Urban Form, where succession or mixture of languages can be shown.

Then, the concept of "imitation" since Aristotle to our present days is dead. Coherence, as an issue of present contradiction seems to be a new concept to be retained.

That concept could be explored in the field of dramatic action into a physical container: the theatre. The parallelism with the City, where action and scene are also components, gives us another approach to multiplicity of language.

Finally, the lecture puts forward some conclusions, assuming Jean Baudrillard's opposition between the invasion of non-participated information and the "scene" as an ideal place of discussion to assume issues. It means "TV model" in front of participated architecture, coherent with its contents, like the City or the Theatre are.



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Opening

I feel in myself the real problem of Multiplicity of Language: I need coherence (English), I cannot mix languages.

Introduction

The consideration of cities in a research on Eclecticism leads to a deeper level of Eclecticism: the urban level (reference to Don Lyndon's paper).
What city? Four approaches:

idea	image	ABSTRACT
action	scene, stage work of architecture	REAL
NON-PHYSICAL (we can write)	PHYSICAL (we can design)	

We have two concepts: action/contents and scene/container, both with communication/signification. I mean real signification, aesthetic expression.

Which is the form of a city? It is a lattice of successions, series; it is a concept based on action.

The eclecticism in the city is constrained by a succession of languages: old, but not by a mixture of languages: modern.

In this deep level of eclecticism, there is:
- diachronic traditional
- synchronic modern

Imitation as a creative concept

Aristotle in his "Poetics" wrote: "imitatio is the only source of artistic creation".
In the introduction to a recent Belgian edition of the book by Quatremère de Quincy, "Essai sur

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la nature, le but et les moyens de l'imitation dans les Beaux-Arts", arch. D. Porphyrios makes an historical statement: "imitation is the unique rule until the 18th century".
Then we have:

1st, a metalanguage during the Romantic period: styles;

2nd, the Desert, after Kandinsky, the cubists, the Modern Movement Abstraction

What is new?

3rd, a new imitation as a reference, with:
irony - humour in coherence
- insults, offence

Expressionism = decoration, in coherence to shout
- make-up

We arrived to a new concept: coherence between historical formal references and fulfilling contents.

This is not against contradiction in the pre-existing world of requirements, plurality of constraints.

Donly Lyndon and Lode Janssens said that.

The parallel between City and Theatre

The urban approach gives us a very simple conclusion: Multiplicity of Language is obvious in an urban context.

Let us introduce a parallel with the Theatre.

I will pick up again the conclusion about action/content and scene-stage/container.

Theatre is a big manifestation of human intelligence and sensitivity, like Architecture

is. Theatre is mainly action. City is mainly scene. In old times, the Theatre is born in the City: the action is represented, the environment is real, because there is coherence.

In Renaissance: classical ideals need: either a

theatre-building with artificial scene, or a

City designed to receive the action.

The ideal City could be Urbino or Florence or

Rome; Teatro Olimpico or Sabbioneta, etc.

There is a still better example: the Multiplicity of Language in Serbia.

He has three different languages for three different scopes: comedy, tragedy, satirical scene, but in every case, he wants coherence between action and scene.

Some conclusions

In our time, there is plenty of contradictions; participation is the way to get to a synthesis; that could mean a reference to historical forms, with plurality of languages.

But in each case, there must be coherence between contents and container, between reference and participated form.

Jean Baudrillard reassumes our modern situation, as an invasion of communication through, without discussion, without participation with the scene, where things are discussed and assumed.

In the first case is the aesthetic of TV; the architectural collage. In the second, is the participated architecture, coherent with its content like the City, or the Theatre, are.



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Alexander Hens
Manuel Ribas
I did not seize the meaning of "dialects" you mentioned in your lecture. A chronological language can be used in different ways by several architects belonging to the same cultural movement, because they add personal aspects to it. These ways are the dialects.

Jan Schreurs
I would like to comment on some aspects you explained. I understood by your conference that coherence is the rule for a good architecture.
On the other hand, you quoted several periods: Initiation, Romanticism, Desert and finally New Initiation. I think you gave a negative connotation to the Desert period, because there was non-coherence in abstraction, but could you not look upon abstraction as if its use were coherent with an abstract way of thinking such as Deleuzian? I think that if we use abstract forms we are in coherence with an abstract Deleuzian.

Manuel Ribas
My use of the term "Desert" is a kind of pedagogic instrument to explain the absence of external reference to Initiation. But this does not mean it was an empty period without any coherence.

Benoit Echon
I know that difficult questions cannot be solved by easy ways of thinking, but I wish the debate were more related to the place, to material construction. Here on the wall there is a picture of an eclectic bridge that I do not understand very well. I wonder what people or workers would say about it.
(Silence in the audience)

Ignasi de Solà
Talking about the example of the bridge, I would like to raise some issues. You talked about coherence related to collage. Coherence is a set of rules whose aim is to control the diversity. Collage is a way of assembling different materials, without coherence. Could you explain both ideas?

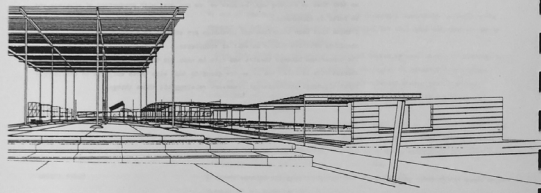
Manuel Ribas
I am not against collage. A collage can be coherent by means of the glue, by the essence of the material put in contact.

Ignasi de Solà
According to Serlio's view on the stages, the glue for a tragic scene is not the same as the glue for a comic one, our cities are they tragic or comic?

Manuel Ribas
The answer would be both. There is a coherence when there is a communication between content and expression.

Julian Beinart
The way you relate city to architecture intrigues me, because in the United States this relationship is very difficult to establish.
I found three dimensions to explain conceptually the relationship between city and architecture:
1st: Degree of control or orderliness which in architecture is single and in a city is plural within a democracy.
2nd: Rate of scale of change which is slow in architecture and fast in modern cities.
3rd: Display of resources which in architecture is in a specialized fashion and in cities it is a display of social structure.
Furthermore, for a good city we need buildings and not relations. Each building

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is responsible for the whole city, in face of the complex reality the debate comedy-tragedy is something trivial.
I would like to introduce a new quality, on the one hand there is rhetoric, whose aim is to convince people. On the other hand there is poetry, whose aim is to produce a work that cannot meet success. There is the idea of coherence, as a rule for defining a good work of art is not always possible to achieve. My reference to coherence did not deal with convincing but with expression and communication.
We should distinguish between sources of multiplicity and sources of language.
In the first one, we may refer to Ignasi de Solà's lecture about Initiation, which can be used as a mean to ease production of meanings like in Bauhaus arts, or as an object in itself, like in Le Corbusier. As far as sources of language are concerned we deal them in a wrong way, because we do not deal with production of meanings and we refer to appearances.
I think that both Initiation and invention are present in a creative process. Users should be creative people as well as architects.
The connection between theatre and city is nice but theatre is representative of life whereas city is life, and if we are going to deal with those subjects we should have first a general philosophical framework relating all those things.

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John Moule McKeon

A Few Scribbled Notes...

A few scribbled notes at lunch time. Occasional thoughts on the last two mornings. Partial open-ended, anecdotal but written, because English is a difficult language, especially for me as it is my daily language, so I cannot even hide behind the good luck of speaking it easily and being easily understood ambiguously!
I said a few words this morning to provoke argument, not to end it. I was too late so I repeat:
The white architecture of the 20th as Desert, not as Desert, as I have noted after the various steady sized slides of Bauhaus-arts (elevation, expression, not plane). Creative misinterpretation? (only possible after Habel ...)
Is Manuel Ribas too restricting in not being able to mix his languages? Maybe his English is not up to it, yes (he is an architect, not a linguist) but, paradoxically, in the hands of an expert - e.g. James Joyce - a multi-layered multiplicity of languages makes the product essentially more rich for the less literate reader, like as (its layers revealing themselves slowly, it always attracting at an immediate level as well, never retreating into hermetic obscurity - a point so much advantageous could not see ...)
which links, of course, with Ignasi de Solà-Heras' point yesterday of the Bauhaus-arts a Modern moment on "production of subjective values which above all suggest states of mind, passions, sentiments, rather than perceptions which are clearly objectifiable" ... I would rather say "public", "shared" than "objectifiable" ... which is so closely linked to "the Fall of Public Man" (Richard Sennett's thesis) and also to the invention of the street-garden too.
But when I intentionally misunderstand the Desert for a Green Desert which cleanses the palate, I was reminded of Iconoclasm and its cycles - another view (one could go back to Byzantium ...)
But it more obviously links 18th century (Laugier, Lobbli, etc. to neo-classical production at the turn of the century) to the avant-garde of early 20th century. Links the mainstream of 19th century (Solà-Heras' scribbled "Bauhaus-arts" is really to tight to contain Villiet-in-Dub, Sennet, Ruskin, etc.) with today. There is indeed, again, a main stream for order, for taxonomic neatness, for neo-Durand say which yes, is calming, homogenizing: Serial increasing visual variety, returning expression to the artists' "subjective values, sentiments ..." as within painter in England. It is again, of course, time of confusion, of speed (I use the adjective fast as they did 100 years ago, except we say "TV aesthetic" and they talked of railways and photography). Manuel Ribas talks today of "how to solve the contradictions which are at the root of our times" and participation being the tool. But is this a useful or indeed a possible goal? Perhaps it is in the nature of Initiation to work to hide conflict rather than to expose it, rather than to encourage a public realm where conflict (confusion, different values, etc.) can be aired in the social realm. (Architects should not take on the "burden" of pluralist, conflict ridden, etc. society, surely?) Maybe we could rather be exposing, offering Multiplicity in USE, not necessarily multi-coloured designs.
In other words, the spoon can be used in many different ways some of which, surely, are accidental, even symbolic. So: the archetype vs the multiplicity - specificity of objects. The proliferation of spoons (of hats, shoes, pans, etc.) into soup spoons, serving spoons, sugar spoons, tea spoons, pudding spoons in the 19th century is partly bourgeoisness, is consumerism, is conspicuous consumption, etc. but it is partly the result of serious design strategy (e.g. in England by "realist" designers around Morris). Too cluttered with irrelevant meanings perhaps? As Nikola said this morning, meaning comes from creative action and creative use of memory, by clients, users, people and not just architects. So they endow the spoon with meaning in use which is neither patronizing or trivial? ...
Forget spoons, I was carried away. Buildings are not just simple instruments of cover, but if we use their qualities as instrumental and emblematic, the issue, after Habel, is the Multiplicity of emblematic readings. (Not waving, but drawing - goes on misreading such signals, by Steve Smith. So, must we use more careful (deeper) games? Keep emblematic meanings, today, well pruned back - hinting, alluding to archetypes? Quaintness, Sennet, look become more than just figure for walling metaphor and also allowing open-ended, inviting cultural action in our public, not prescribing behaviours as on the stage set.
[?]. Schöenberg "There are many fine tunes still to be written in the key of C ..." Slavava

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Josep Maria Rovira

Eclecticism and architecture in Catalonia between 1901 and 1929

Introduction : Artistic method or chronologic accuracy

The competition for the Palace of Peace in The Hague in 1905 means the last attempt of the possibilities for an eclectic language.

Architecture and Modernism : the development of memory or the attachment to the avant-garde Movement.

There are serious attempts to look for a synthesis between both an industrial and an artistic world, starting from the conditions of Modern Movement. The classical memory is reflected in AEO Turbine Factory. Bruno Taut's Glashaus in 1910 shows the use of the possibilities of synthesis of new materials.

Back to the classical language

In Catalonia doubts on what language is likely to be used in Modern Movement begin to loom up.

- The proposals of Josep Puig i Cadafalch : between autochthonous neo-Baroque and foreign neo-Gothic

- The important classical opportunity appears in 1917 with the project for the International Exhibition of Electric Industries.

- The problem of a classicism impossible to achieve : the broken synthesis shown by Otto Wagner and Gustav Klimt. Silence as a response. From the Viennese mistrust to the

Catalonian missed concealment.

- In 1914 the actual opportunities for Modernism come out in Catalonia.

- In Josep Goday's schools autochthonous baroque pieces are used as a pacifying element of the complexity of the Modern programme.

- In Ramon Puig i Cairall's libraries and buildings, classicism is something separated from the whole project. It is the classical plastic antithesis.

- As far as leisure places are concerned history hinders the Modern process : the competition for the city theatre, the building of Coliseum Cinema and Olympia Circus.

- In via Layetana, Casa Llabrés is an example of office building.

- Neo-Renaissance in Catalonia is chosen as a rational and ordering language.

The Tower of Babel of languages

The International Exhibition takes place in Barcelona in 1929.

Language becomes an ideology and a resistance to Modern Movement.



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Josep Muntañola Thornberg

Eclecticism, experience and architecture: pre- and post-modern architecture

In order to uncover similarities and differences between pre-modern and post-modern eclecticism, I will point out the opinions of Walter Gropius and Josep Lluís Sert about architecture and stylistic historicism. (See texts 1 and 2)

Modern Movement gathered a set of principles that cannot be isolated, moral, aesthetic and epistemologic qualities mix together and define the specific characteristics of a set of products (buildings) which are innovative thanks to this mixture. If we select some of these principles and not all of them we are distorting reality and we are not considering Modern Movement but something else.

Modern Movement linked some moral principles to a new visual order created for a new functional reality, in doing so it reversed the academic tradition and we cannot return to it now. As a matter of fact we will never be able to return to it without taking account of the Modern Movement effect.

Any architectural principle, style or idea will never be the same than before after this modern Movement Effect of Reversal.

We can see this effect in the changes in the architectural eclecticism before and after the M.M. Bernard Maybeck and the Studio PER are perfect examples for this comparative analysis. (See texts 3 and 4) Maybeck's sophisticated eclecticism presents an eclectic attitude very far from the historical "pastiche" defined by the M.M. It is a sensitive, user-oriented, sometimes even technically innovative and always creative design. We can find a lot of similarities between Maybeck and Studio PER

"Style should be transparent like a window"

Llorenç de Vilatorrada, Mallorca 1897-1980

both in the process of design and in the product. However the M.M. effect changes some essential points and explains (more than the years) aesthetic and ethic obvious differences.

The "New Visual Order" of the M.M. is always inserted into the Studio PER projects.

Historicism is not a serious response to emotional needs attached to a style which comes from tradition, but the result of an eclectic research in order to match style with intention at much more abstract level, both in concept and in figure, than in Maybeck's procedure.

M.M. effect converts the link between intention and style in something "found" through the process of design and not in history or tradition. Ironically, we can understand such better now Maybeck's ideas and ideals. He distorted historic styles in order to accommodate old and new too. He tried to accommodate to the site as Studio PER does today.

Studio PER uses style as "model to be distorted" and matched to future effects of the building. They look for "modern experiences" and for traditional roots simultaneously.

It is easy to feel the strong continuity in between the conceptual historicism of the Studio PER and the figurative historicism of Maybeck. They are two sides of the same coin and the coin is very thin. The M.M. produced the difference between these two sides, it reversed the relations among concepts, symbols, forms and functions in architecture. If we can understand this difference we will be able to understand the meaning of eclecticism and style in architecture.

I would like to make some comments on the



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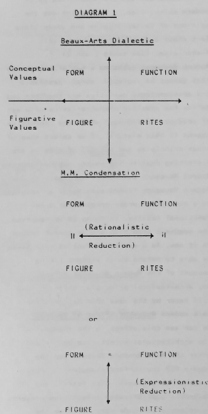
on the values of eclecticism in architecture. The first idea comes from David Matkin's observations about "style against principles". It is very clear that for Maybach and for the Studio PER, "image-making" is not at all a crime and it is not against morality.

More important to me is the idea by E.H. Gombrich about "imitation and assimilation" in art. Gombrich uses these categories borrowed from Jean Piaget's work on epistemology, in order to explain how Renaissance works of art could imitate Greek and Roman products and create high art at the same time. The author argues: "... assimilation demands a degree of generalization. The artist must learn how to create a figure that embodies his idea of the classical style."

Another important point to discuss is the identification of eclecticism with historicism. We actually know that M.M. tendencies have produced eclecticism too, even if M.M. ideas were against historicism. Post-modern eclecticism mixes pre-modern and modern styles, and it is very difficult to differentiate among them.

Diagram I tries to explain the effect of reversal realized by the M.M. Eclecticism today is aware of this effect of reversal, it wants to be "modern" and simultaneously to maintain relations with history. This "selective" position demands a lot of architects, both in relation to the social meaning of architecture (e.g. the debate Bennett-Rapaport and the ideas by Rudi Bernstein) and in respect to the equilibrium between concept-formation and verbal-formation in architecture. Realism versus abstraction, diversity versus order, figurative coherence versus conceptual coherence, etc. Architecture is engaged into

whirlwind and it cannot escape from it. The only way to escape is from within, by making the style transparent.



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TEXTS TWO AND THREE

WALTER GROPIUS: "APPROACH" (1937) AND "ARCHEOLOGY OR ARCHITECTURE?" (1949)

I.

Approach*

MY intention is not to introduce a, so to speak, cut and dried "modern style" from Europe, but rather to introduce a method of approach which allows one to tackle a problem according to its peculiar conditions. I want a young architect to be able to find his way in whatever circumstances; I want him independently to create true, genuine forms out of the technical, economic and social conditions in which he finds himself instead of imposing a learned formula onto surroundings which may call for an entirely different solution. It is not so much a ready-made dogma that I want to teach, but an attitude toward the problems of our generation which is unbiased, original and elastic. It would be an absolute horror for me if my appointment would result in the multiplication of a fixed idea of "Gropius architecture." What I do want is to make young people realize how inexhaustible the means of creation are if they make use of the innumerable modern products of our age, and to encourage these young people in finding their own solutions.

I have sometimes felt a certain disappointment at being

* From a statement, made for *The Architectural Record*, at the start of my teaching career as Professor of Architecture at Harvard University, May, 1937.

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TEXT ONE

JOSEP LLUIS SERT 1934, BARCELONA (Summary)

"Against the dominant desire in the last century of finding one original style and the objective and intellectual orientation in the most advanced architecture today, there exists day by day a larger abyss.

Going back to the basic elements, the systematic simplification which guides architecture today is the child of necessity. We needed to get rid of representations in order to be able to create in freedom again.

This theoretical and intellectual research, basic law in modern art, is the basis for a new theory in architecture. It was necessary to translate, as in mathematics, the pure mechanistic laws of modern architecture into clear principles thanks to these cold intellectual ideas.

Once these universal bases are conceived we can think about their plastic appearance, translation into architecture of the complexity of human spirit.

However this concern with emotions has nothing to do with the old and arbitrary complications. Emotions should be filtered through knowledge.

Architects have to be in tune with their time in order to express it. They need inspiration to overcome the limits of knowledge and they have to be "impulsive" and "sane"; finally, they should escape from recent academicisms, like horizontal windows, tube elements, etc..."

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SCOPE OF TOTAL ARCHITECTURE

asked only for the facts and tricks in my work when my interest was in handling on my basic experiences and underlying methods. In learning the facts and tricks, some can obtain sure results in a comparatively short time, of course; but these results are superficial and unsatisfactory because they still leave the student helpless if he is faced with a new and unexpected situation. If he has not been trained to get an insight into organic development no skillful addition of modern motives, however elaborate, will enable him to do creative work.

My ideas have often been interpreted as the peak of rationalization and mechanization. This gives quite a wrong picture of my endeavors. I have always emphasized that the other aspect, the satisfaction of the human soul, is just as important as the material, and that the achievement of a new spatial vision means more than structural economy and functional perfection. The slogan "fitness for purpose equals beauty" is only half true. When do we call a human face beautiful? Every face is fit for purpose in its parts, but only perfect proportions and colors in a well-balanced harmony deserve that title of honor: beautiful. Just the same is true in architecture. Only perfect harmony in its technical functions as well as in its proportions can result in beauty. That makes our task so manifold and complex.

More than ever before is it in the hands of us architects to help our contemporaries to lead a natural and sensible life instead of paying a heavy tribute to the false gods of make-believe. We can respond to this demand only if we are not afraid to approach our work from the broadest possible angle. *Good architecture should be a projection of life itself and that implies an intimate knowledge of biological, social, technical and artistic problems. But then—even that it not enough. To*

More emphasis on material.

make a unity out of all these different branches of human activity, a strong character is required and that is where the means of education partly come to an end. Still, it should be our highest aim to produce this type of men who are able to visualize an entity rather than let themselves get absorbed too early into the narrow channels of specialization. Our century has produced the expert type in millions; let us make way now for the men of vision.

taken by responsible educators? These questions seem to touch the very roots of our civilization, laying open both its weaknesses and its virtues.

Good original architecture depends just as much on an understanding public as on its creator.

Vasari tells the revealing story of Brunelleschi's cathedral in Florence and how the entire population participated in its development. People get the kind of architecture they are ready for, and tendencies in education which foster either creative habits or imitative habits are decisive in forming their attitude.

One of the consequences of our purely analytical and intellectual approach to education has been the habit of teaching the visual arts by historical and critical methods of appreciation and information instead of by participation in the processes and techniques of making things. Esthetic consciousness has generally displaced a creative conception of art.

Here, then, we find the very reason for the timid attitude so often shown when the architectural character of new college buildings has to be decided upon. We seem to have forgotten that there is an opportunity to make architectural history for ourselves and to have buildings designed in unmistakable terms of our own period.

What we need is a new code of visual values. So long as we flounder about in a limitless welter of borrowed artistic expression, we shall not succeed in giving form and substance to our own culture, for this implies selective choice of those artistic means which best express the ideas and spiritual directions of our time.

The impact of environment on a young man during his

Archeology or Architecture for Contemporary Buildings?*

ARCHITECTURE is said to be a true mirror of the life and social behavior of a period. If that is true, we should be able to read from its present features the driving forces of our own time. There is conflicting evidence, however. If we compare current public buildings—for example, the "classical" character of the National Gallery in Washington—with the contemporary character of the new group of buildings for the United Nations, a deep-seated controversy becomes apparent.

We will find an even more puzzling discrepancy if we observe the current state of collegiate architecture, which is bound, of course, to influence the next generation growing up in and around it.

Should it follow the Gothic tradition or the Georgian tradition or should it fulfill the requirements of new college buildings by using "modern" means of expression unprejudiced by any period design? And, if this last trend seems to have become more prevalent in recent years, why is that so? What is happening to tradition? What stand will finally be

* This article, published in the *New York Times Magazine* of October 23, 1946, under the title "Not Gothic, But Modern for Our Colleges," received the Howard Myers Memorial Prize in 1951.

college years is certainly decisive. If the college is to be the cultural breeding ground for the coming generation, its attitude should be creative, not imitative. Stimulating environment is just as important to free the student's creative talent as vigorous teaching.

Accordingly, the student needs the real thing, not buildings in disguise. So long as we do not ask him to go about in period clothes, it seems absurd to build college buildings in pseudo-period design. How can we expect our students to become bold and fearless in thought and action if we encase them timidly in sentimental shrines, feigning a culture which has long since disappeared?

The physical and spiritual functions determining the design of a building are interdependent. They are both part of our present life. It is an anachronism to express the physical functions with the newest technical means but to express the spiritual functions by borrowing a historical shell from the past. Such an attempt confuses the art of architecture with applied archeology. Genuine architecture of organic growth implies continuous renewal.

As history shows, the conception of "beauty" has changed along with progress in thought and technique. *Whenever man imagined he had found "eternal beauty," he fell back into imitation and stagnation. True tradition is the result of constant growth; its quality must be dynamic, not static, to serve as an inexhaustible stimulus to man.*

If, from this vantage point, I now look at my own immediate problem in hand—the design of the new Graduate Center for Harvard University—and contemplate the way in which these structures can be made into a vital link between the historic mission of a great educational institution and the

restless, inquisitive minds of the young men and women of today, I know that it cannot be done without enlisting the student's wholehearted emotional response as well as by paying due respect to the specific architectural tradition of Harvard University.

What now is this tradition? Harvard's "Yard," so familiar to many sons of this country, shows a sound basic theme of architectural design which has been reverently kept throughout the centuries by almost all the architects who have contributed individual buildings; a composition of quadrangles, varying in size and confined by individually different buildings, offers a sequence of arresting surprises in space.

This spatial theme fulfills an ancient requirement of the art of architecture—namely, to balance artfully the building masses and open spaces in conformity with the human capacity to experience and sense harmonious space and scale.

The buildings themselves, however, though each is an integral part of the whole, do not "match." Harvard's most famous architectural bequests, built during three centuries, could hardly differ more strikingly in their enriching contrasts of forms and colors. Yet they all conform to the noble spatial pattern of the Harvard Yard.

Careful study of this existing pattern of open spaces and structures has therefore become the starting point for the design of the new Harvard Graduate Center. For here lies the inherent tradition of the Yard; its timeless pattern may well be interpreted again today in new terms of architecture, valid for present-day life.

There is no need to emulate the "atmosphere" of this or that period. *New buildings must be invented, not copied.* The great periods of architecture in the past have never imitated the

PALACE of FINE ARTS AND LAGOON

*On desperate seas long wont to roam,
Thy hyacinth hair, thy classic face,
Thy maid airs have brought me home
To the glory that was Greece
And the grandeur that was Rome.*—Pee

In discussing a subject such as that of making plans for a World's Fair, it is necessary to assume that the hearers admit there are mental processes not to be expressed in language. The first example that comes to our mind is the process of understanding music. Stone and wood construction proper bears the same relation to architecture that the piano, for instance, does to the music played upon it. Music and architecture are vehicles of expression for phases of our human experience.

Omitting construction, we will discuss only the architecture as a conveyor of ideas and sentiments. The combinations and arrangements of the buildings and gardens at the Fair were planned according to the principles discovered by the

[1]

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PALACE OF FINE ARTS

French architects. Besides other phases, the fundamental idea was that the picture presented by the ground plan of a group of buildings and their surroundings should be agreeable to the eye, and therefore in the development of the plan it is treated as though it were an ornament, without regard to the fact that it represents buildings.

If the plan of the Panama-Pacific International Exposition group of main buildings were reduced in scale to the size of a golden brooch and the courts and buildings were made in Venetian class some jewelry, that brooch thus made would pass as the regular thing in jewelry without causing the suspicion that it represented a plan for a World's Fair.

To be an ornament the plan must have a sense of direction, and in the Panama-Pacific International Exposition it has top and bottom, of which the Machinery Hall would be the bottom and the Fine Arts would be the top, with relation to the geometric center of gravity.

Now, besides the physically ornamental, there is a spiritual significance in the plan. There is a succession of impressions produced as one walks through the different parts of the grounds that play on the feelings and the mind, each part having its own peculiar influ-

[2]

PALACE OF FINE ARTS

ence. Along the main axis, for example, the Machinery Hall and neighborhood suggest a mixture of the classic and romantic as you understand the terms a literature.

The Court of Abundance, better called the Court of Ages, suggests the medieval with all its rising power of idealism in conflict with the physical. The Court of the Universe suggests Rome inhabited by some unknown placid people. The Court of the Four Seasons suggests grace, beauty and peace in the land where the souls of philosophers and poets dwell in continued satisfaction.

The Fine Arts Palace suggests the romantic, of the period after the classic Renaissance. Someone familiar with the philosophy of art will no doubt wish to challenge this classification of the various courts, but I believe it will be admitted that some such classification can be made for one class of mind, and other classifications for other minds.

These terms, "romantic," "classic," etc., are usually covered by the word atmosphere—the physical forms reflect a mental condition. For instance, when the Director of the Division of Fine Arts explained what he felt was necessary for the Fine Arts Palace, he said that he did not want the visitors to come directly

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PALACE OF FINE ARTS

from a noisy boulevard into collections of pictures, but on the contrary he wanted everybody to pass through a gradual transition from the exciting influences of the Fair to the quiet serenity of the galleries.

Mr. Trask not only wanted the mind of the visitor to be in a tranquil mood but he worried lest the high coloring of the outside of the building would dull the eye to the delicate shades of some of the light-toned pictures.

In the same way Mr. Trask wanted all the smaller details to be harmonious with the rest of the architecture. He wanted the pedestals, the water pools, the rubbish cans, the color of the walls, all to fit in. All of these details collectively make an atmosphere.

Let us analyze the Fine Arts Palace and lake, not from the physical but rather from a psychological point of view with reference to the effect of architectural forms on the mind and feelings, and discuss the various elements which influenced the composition of the architecture and landscape.

The first question to settle is, what character should an exhibition building of paintings have; and the second question is, by what process may we find the elements of architectural forms that will

[4]

PALACE OF FINE ARTS

give the feeling that corresponds to that of the exhibition of paintings.

The first is fixed; the second must be left back and forth until the nature of the building reflects that of the exhibit.

The first question depends upon the character of the paintings to be housed, and the second depends upon finding such forms as will portray the character of the paintings, and, using that character for your theme, weaving it into all the parts of your composition as though you were composing a musical symphony.

We can perhaps get a little clearer idea of the foregoing remarks through discussion of an art gallery composed of five-dollar Broadway hand-made paintings, the gold frames of which cost more than the labor of painting the picture. These pictures could be fitly housed in a building called "Palatial Picture Palace," which to be in harmony should remind you of an overdone ice-cream parlor or candy store, with many steam orchestras playing various tunes just far enough apart so that they audibly compete with each other. The magnificent gardens should be all hand-made artificial plants and artificial waterfalls. Such an art palace might be deemed to have a Broadway atmosphere and, of its kind, a harmony of escotads. Each form that is used must

[5]

PALACE OF FINE ARTS
be of the same feeling as the Broadway picture.

The Fine Arts exhibition is made up of units representing the best efforts of the artists, the beginning of which started years ago. The work did not begin, as some people imagine, when the artist made his first lines in charcoal on his canvas, and did not terminate in a few hours and then sell for fancy prices. Indeed, some of an artist's dreams are put into execution many years afterward. In every good painting there is a quality which makes you feel that years of experience have preceded it. The artist began his work a long time ago in a nebulous haze of whys, and it is usually a long experience before his paintings are nearly as good as a photograph, and often a great deal of hard work and disappointment must come before he suspects that it is not the object nor the likeness to the object that he is working for, but a portrayal of the life that is behind the visible.

Here he comes face to face with the real things of this life; no assistance can be given him; he cannot hire a boy in gold buttons fashionably to open the door to the Muse, nor a clerk nor an accountant to do the drudgery. He is alone before his problem and drifts away from social portrayals. After this he strives to

[6]

PALACE OF FINE ARTS
and the spiritual meaning of things and to transmit that secret to the layman.

Sometimes the artist has not received his message clearly enough and the layman fails to understand. So each picture is a message which the artist has deciphered after many years of work, and artist John Doe always tells the same message, whether it be the lady in pink or the wave crest, but it is a different message from the other pictures painted by Richard Roe. A picture by Whistler is always a Whistler; Mathews' paintings are always Mathews.

From the paintings of any historic period one gets a reflection of that age. Therefore in a collection of ancient and moderns such as the Fine Arts exhibit you will find many atmospheres, which leave as a sum total of impressions a single one; just as of the instruments of an orchestra, the violins play one set of notes, the flutes another, the cellos another, altogether myriads of sounds, which may be recorded on a phonographic disc in one set of vibrations, producing the sum total of sounds.

The sum total of impressions of an art exhibit I got while visiting one of the art galleries in Munich. With others we dragged ourselves from gallery to gallery seeing Madonnas and Christs crucified,

[7]

PALACE OF FINE ARTS
also a picture which portrayed a Polish princess sitting on a throne in a courtyard in midwinter, who in a mad fit ordered freezing water to be thrown over nudes, maidens, amid snow and icicles. Some of the maidens in the foreground were dying and others lay dead, ghastly and frozen. And farther on we saw Böcklin's "Isle of the Dead," and on we wandered. We dragged ourselves along until we came to the broad marble stairs leading out into sunshine once more, but we sat down for a moment's rest before leaving. All at once our eyes fell on the marble bust of a five-year-old boy cleverly portraying a little mischief, and underneath the bust were the words, "Dear God, make me pious,"—and we smiled. We watched the weary faces come out of the galleries and one by one when their eyes saw the bust, the drawn expression relaxed; some smiled, some laughed, but all seemed to be brought back to a happy life, and we realized right there that an art gallery was a sad and serious matter.

Some years ago there appeared a story by David Graham Phillips, and by some happy accident the atmosphere of each part or chapter of the story was portrayed in a frontispiece by an artist named Wenzel. In this frontispiece Mr. Wenzel depicted the sum total of the general

[8]

PALACE OF FINE ARTS
impression of what was to follow so successfully that I could anticipate the contents, although the frontispiece might have been only a Diana and her hunting dogs, and Diana had nothing to do with the story.

Now what Mr. Trask wanted was a frontispiece to his art collection, which could anticipate the general impression as a whole. And if among the many pieces of sculpture I were to choose one piece that came nearest to being a frontispiece of the general impression of the exhibition of painting, I would choose the white marble Muse finding the head of Orpheus, which was made by Berge, and now stands under the acacia tree at the south entrance.

Summing up my general impression, I find that the keynote of a Fine Arts Palace should be that of sadness modified by the feeling that beauty has a soothing influence.

Now follows the second part, the architect's part. To make a Fine Arts composition that will fit this modified melancholy, we must use those forms in architecture and gardening that will affect the emotions in such a way as to produce on the individual the same modified sadness as the galleries do. This process is similar to that of matching the color of

[9]

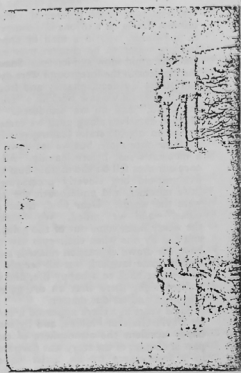
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PALACE OF FINE ARTS
ribbons. You pick up a blue ribbon, hold it alongside the sample in your hand, and at a glance you know it matches or it does not. You do the same with architecture; you examine a historic form and agree whether the effect it produced on your mind matches the feeling you are trying to portray—a modified sadness or a sentiment in a minor key.

An old Roman ruin, away from civilization, which two thousand years before was the center of action and full of life, and now is partly overgrown with bushes and trees—such ruins give the mind a sense of sadness. The Renaissance French artists portrayed the same sensation in the fountains in the forests of Versailles, made up half of shrubbery, half of marble—imitation ruins, Dianas, gods and goddesses, waterfalls. These today have a spirit of sadness because the trees and bushes are old; nature outgrew the gardeners' stiffening care. Great examples of melancholy in architecture and gardening may be seen in the engravings of Piranesi, who lived a century ago, and whose remarkable work conveys the sad, minor note of old Roman ruins covered with bushes and trees. There seems to be no other works of the builder, neither Gothic, nor Moorish, nor Egyptian, that give us just this note of vanished grandeur.

[10]



PALACE OF FINE ARTS AND LAGOON—A FOGGY NIGHT

PALACE OF FINE ARTS
"They say the lion and the lizard keep
The courts where Jamshyd gloried and drank
deep.
Sad Bahram, that great hunter—the wild as
stamps o'er his head, but cannot break his sleep."

Overdone in sadness for an art gallery frontispiece would be the "Isle of the Dead"—a dark picture of an island of tall black trees enclosing a white marble columbarium; in the foreground a boat carrying the dead across.

The islands of Clear Lakes, California, where the trees and bushes seem to rise out of the water, make the same impression of sadness as Böcklin's picture, but in a lesser degree. But the feeling given by the Clear Lake islands is similar to the sentiment expressed in the statue of the Muse finding the head of Orpheus—its beauty tempers the sadness of it.

As an example of what is meant by matching impressions: suppose you were to put a Greek temple in the middle of a small mountain lake surrounded by dark, deep, rocky cliffs, with the white foam dashing over the marble temple floor—you would have a sense of mysterious fear and even terror, as of something uncanny. If the same temple, pure and beautiful in lines and color, were placed on the face of a placid lake, surrounded

[11]

PALACE OF FINE ARTS
by high trees and lit up by a glorious full moon, you would recall the days when your mother pressed you to her bosom and your final sob was hushed by a protecting spirit hovering over you, warm and large. You have there the point of transition from sadness to content, which comes pretty near to the total impression of the Fine Arts Palace and lake.

By the process of finding forms of architecture and gardening for the general composition of the Fine Arts Palace and lake that will best convey the same impression to the heart and mind as those impressions made by the works of art inside, the mind of the visitor to the gallery is prepared as he enters for what he is to see, and as he comes away his senses gradually are led back to the common-places of human activity; and the horns of automobiles, the cries of the popcorn vendors, will not grate upon his ears as they would if he were plumed out directly into the hustle and bustle.

From the standpoint of the composition of the whole scheme, or symphony of the main group of buildings of the Fair, this lower key of the Fine Arts Palace helps to give a finish; and beyond the Sunday-like appearance of the State pavilions also helps let the visitor down gently from the strain of the galleries.

[12]

PALACE OF FINE ARTS

This paper was written to point out one of the phases of the Fair, in the hope that people will realize that such a group is not a conglomeration of soulless buildings dolled up in holiday attire like the palatial palace of Broadway pictures, but that in the Panama-Pacific International Exposition is expressed the life of the people of California. It has its geographic stamp just as the architecture of Thibet has its geographic reason for being. This same group could not have happened in Boston or in India.

When the people of California visit the grounds they should think of the fact that the Fair is an expression of future California cities, and although the columns of the courts will not appear in the office buildings on Market street, nor the triumphal arches appear in the residence part of their towns, the future city of California will have the same general feeling; because it will be a California city.

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TEXT FOUR

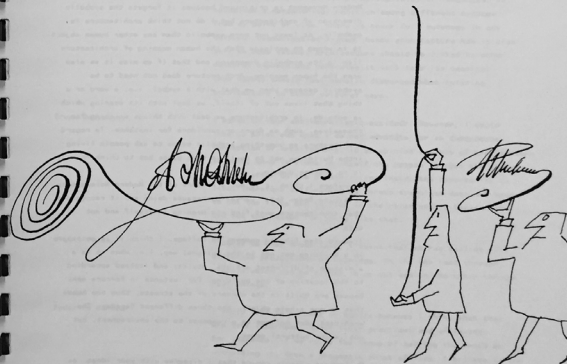
HOUSE IN SAINT ANTONI DE VILAMAJOR, BY PEP BONET
(Studio PER, 1975)

"... my problem was to put one small house in a flat and countryside land. I have never seen a good "calet" in the middle of a countryside. However the "chicken-houses" fir perfectly and there were a lot around the place. Moreover, these constructions are flexible and easy to build. Consequently my house has the image of something that could have been bigger. I preferred to live inside a dignified chicken-house than inside a ridiculous palace..."

"In order to maintain this appearance of false agricultural house it was necessary to keep the land free, just the contrary of "calet"s owners, who build a microgarden, a wiss or brasilian, and hide the house. I wanted that people from the countryside feel free walking near my house. So I do not build fences in my garden, and I should then create around my house transitional spaces built with light architectural elements. Now I see people walking around my house and they do not feel repressed. Neither they nor me."

"I never liked the idea of one inside-courtyard. It makes me sad. I was always thinking in day light, but now I realize that white elements are very efficient by night and they give a beautiful sensation of security in the darkness..."

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Federico Correa

In today's agenda we have several subjects introduced by Rovira's lecture on eclecticism in Catalonia, McKean's on the possibilities of Multiplicity of Languages in a place like Trafalgar Square and finally Montanyola's with a combination of theoretical and practical aspects.

Bruno Queysanne

Montanyola's chart was very clear, however I do not think that the direct use of human sciences you made, can really help us to understand architecture.

Modern Movement is criticized because it forgets the symbolic dimension of architecture but I do not think architecture is symbolic, at least not more symbolic than any other human object.

It is wrong to envisage that the human meaning of architecture lies in its symbolic dimension and that if we miss it we also miss the human meaning. Architecture does not need to be symbolic because when we deal with a symbol, i.e. a word or a thing that lives out of itself, we deal with its meaning which is outside. In architecture we deal with things existing for themselves, such as doors or corridors for instance. To regard architecture as something symbolic means to ask people living inside buildings not to dwell in that place but to think from it to another domain.

Therefore I think it is not a failure of the Modern Movement to criticize Beaux Arts' Caryatids because doing so, it recognizes that architecture must find its meaning in itself and not outside.

I would also like to comment on collage. I think it is necessary in a building but not in the cultural way, i.e. when it is a mixture of different artists' styles and instead according to the location of the building. For instance in Ferrara many houses are built in the corners of the streets, thus one house, that is one single object, has three different facades. The architect used collage as a response to the environment, but not in the cultural sense.

Josep Montanyola

My lecture clearly showed that I disagree with your ideas, as I think they were good some time ago, but not anymore. I did not say that the Modern Movement forgot the symbolic dimension, it has just invented a new one: an abstract one.

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Giancarlo De Carlo

For instance, I sympathize with the moral judgement which is within Puig i Cadafalch's work because it means the rejection towards a similar operation carried out at the same time in Catalonia and which tried precisely to impose the opposite ideas Puig i Cadafalch was fighting for.

Eclecticism comes up whenever there is a crisis in society. Yesterday it was mentioned that in every crisis people believe there are two ways, either silence or memory. But I think there are two attitudes: we believe it is the end or on the contrary, the beginning. Therefore, memory can be understood in both senses: as nostalgia or as a way of plunging again into the past in order to find a solution for the future. Nobody can say whether it is wrong or right because tension in a work of architecture goes beyond any shallowness of the language.

Going back to the chart made this morning, I would like to connect "forms" and "rites" with the word "figuration", because it is free from geometric essence of forms and it can perceive within a historical mind too. On the other hand, I would call "functions" and "rites", "activities" since it includes a mobility of mind, of references and a trend towards an hegemony of culture.

We must bear in mind that unity is lost for ever in relation with our lives, reality is made of fragments and what is relevant is the system of relationships connecting these fragments.

On the other side, the problem of feeling has two elements.

The feeling of history, i.e. when we consider ourselves in the present time as part of a process which involves both the past and the future; and the feeling of town which is completely new and which is the feeling of the urbanized physical world. This last feeling gives us a system of connections which should be consistent.

In front of a crisis we are bound to adopt a point of view. If it is a pessimistic one we fall into eclecticism, and if it is an optimistic one, we jump into multiplicity of languages which is a collage on its pragmatic side. Nevertheless, multiplicity of languages is much more complex than collage and therefore it should appear in a field of events in communication between one another.

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But the point is that, as any process, it has an end, and now for example many artists have changed towards another kind of symbolism and you cannot say whether they are worse or better or even wrong, because what they are doing is changing the trend, pathing a new way.

As far as self-reference is concerned I think it is limited both in time and in space. Indeed, if you turn a symbol into a self-reference system, you are making a concept of it, therefore it is only understood by people who are within this particular system. Whereas, if we accept multiplicity of languages, we establish a metaphorical relation among different systems. From my point of view, there is never full autonomy in any cultural communication system, hence architecture has it also only to some extent. Architecture should be linked to other cultural expressions otherwise it will lose its meaning. Thus nobody should feel morally disturbed when relating architecture to other cultural ways.

Bruno Queysanne

I agree on your anti-moralistic attitude. However, I would like to point out that I do not advocate for an autonomous conception of architecture. In my opinion a piece of architecture is such when it finds in itself the reason to open the place, i.e. to offer to the people living inside the opportunity to live. Therefore self-reference versus symbolism does not mean to cut the links but to find in the relationship between in and out the reason for being like that.

Nikola Polak

I agree on what Bruno said. I think that we are dealing with different productions of meanings. On the one hand through symbols which can be either in or out and on the other through real things.

Federico Correa

I would like to comment on morals because I think that they are very important, or at least practical and efficient. For instance, if we raise the issue of telling the truth or withholding it, from a pragmatic point of view, I believe in the efficiency of telling the truth in order to know at once what the other person wants. Morals are wrong of course when they try to impose on us ideas we do not wish. But for me it is impossible not to deal with a subject in a moral way.

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Josep Montanyola

I think that the example quoted by Federico Correa was very good, for it showed the relationship between a historical symbol and an ideology.

Concerning multiplicity of systems, I think that the more general or abstract a system is, the less things it can apply to. However, I agree on the fact that we can think of structures between functions and rites.

Julian Beinart

I would like to comment on Maybeck's building shown this morning. Maybeck was a very tense man, and his neurosis appears in the Berkeley building. It reflects his state of mind.

Josep Montanyola

I do not see a neurosis in this building, and I think he was less eclectic at the end than at the beginning, but he was good in both periods. As it already has been said, states of mind appear not only in relation to eclecticism but also to Beaux Arts.

Giancarlo De Carlo

Throughout this seminar we had the opportunity to go deeper into the subject of eclecticism and multiplicity of languages. A great deal of ideas have been discussed. Not everything has been said of course, but this is positive, because it means that we still have many ideas. Thanks to you all.

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Bardi

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John Maule McKean <u>A Few Scribbled Notes</u>	19
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Josep Mantanolà Thornberg <u>Eclecticism, experience and architecture: pre- and post-modern architecture</u>	23
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1984
ARCHITECTURE
MULTIPLE AND
COMPLEX

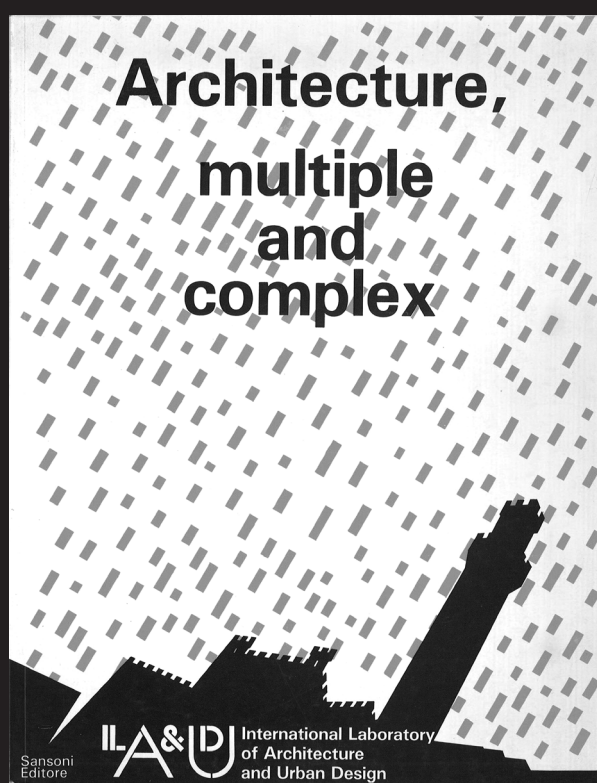
ILAUD
Siena

profesores

Ignasi de Solá Morales Rubió
Eduard Calafell
Mario Corea Aiello (ETSAV)
Federico Correa

estudiantes

Isabel Boncompte Vilarrasa
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Elena Fernández Sala
Marisa Garcia



el tema general sigue siendo el del espacio público y uno de los lugares de estudio sigue siendo S. María della Scala.

ETSAB y ETSAV presentan un estudio sobre la Casa Bloc y su capacidad de producir un concepto de espacio público nuevo para Barcelona.

Por primera vez se registra la presencia de cuatro profesores procedentes de Barcelona: Eduardo Calafell y Mario Corea por la ETSAV y Federico Correa y Ignasi de Solá Morales por la ETSAB.

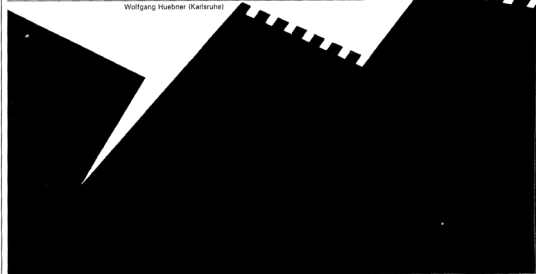
El espacio público ya no es el resultado de una operación de vaciado de una de las manzanas del Plan Cerdá, sino que se realiza de forma más fluida y continua.

El trabajo de los estudiantes durante el Residencial Course se concentra en edificio de Santa Maria della Scala. Una operación de estudio, levantamiento, redibujo de plantas, secciones y alzados de este edificio son la base para los proyectos que proponen una organización funcional de este conjunto arquitectónico, de sus recorridos o calles interiores, de las conexiones con los espacios públicos externos y con una reorganización de la fachada posterior hacia San Ansano. El grupo 4, compuesto, entre otros, por E. Calafell, M. Garcia, C. Jover presenta un trabajo que pone diferentes soluciones para resolver con especial atención y un

atento diseño la reorganización del espacio sur de S.M. della Scala y el Palazzo del Capitano, opuesto a la Piazza del Duomo.

9th Residential Course
Siena 1984

Barcelona	Eduardo Catalá Mario Corza Federico Corza Ignasi Solà Morales	Isabel Boncompagni Elena Fernández María García Cristina Jover Felix Solergran
Berkeley	Lisa Harris John Mader	
Brussels	Lode Janssens Evert Lagrou Renand Mathu	Peter Leonard Didier Weynchens Olivier Meysart Ludo Pieters Clémence van Bievelot
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Zurich	Ruggiero Tropeano Wolfgang Huebner (Kafirrahl)	Maria Ruggat



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Group Three

Paolo Badetti
Mario Corza
Pierre De Broche
Maria Carla Fioraro
Evert Lagrou
Jacques Plante
Jacques Singillo
Catharine Verhulst

The inner streets as a vital spine etc. The inner street is read as a vital spine that collects the energies of the activities that take place along its whole length and connections between different levels of the building from piazza del Duomo to piazza della Selva. From piazza della Selva the street at the beginning has the same characteristics of an urban place and brings into the building the quality of urban life. In this way artisanal and other activities

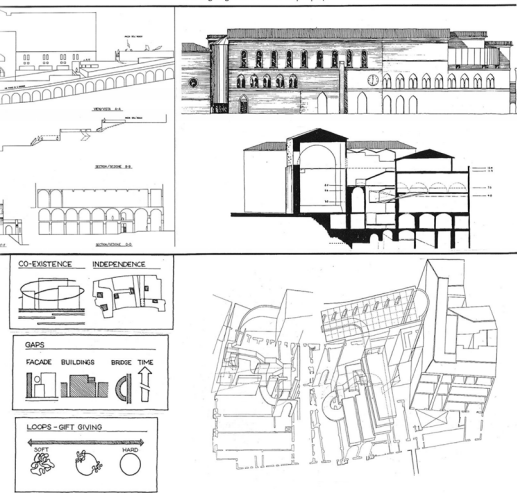
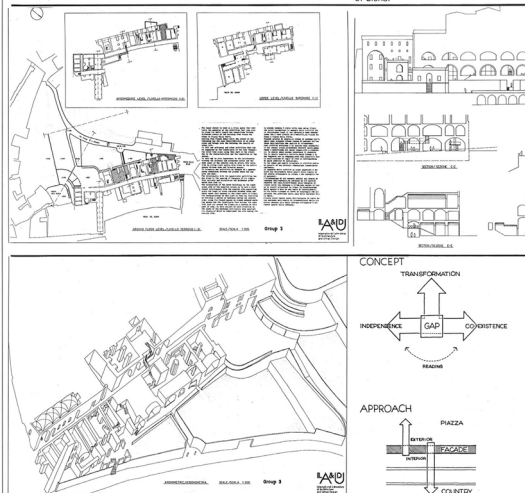
that can be suggested by the town inhabitants themselves could take place along this part of the street due to the characteristics and the capacities of the spaces. In this way we give importance to the relationship between the internal and protected street and the open space of the countryside. We obtain this relationship by giving light points with views in the public spaces between open interior spaces. To integrate our activities we thought of a spontaneous connection between the

places where one can live and work. The relationship with the upper level activities takes place in the opening of the space of the loggia that collects and distributes the different paths which flow into it. The elimination of the newer buildings on the landscape side of the hospital allows us to have a more direct relationship with the countryside, suggesting again the image of clear contrast between urban and rural space that occurs in other parts of Siena.

The reorganisation of this part of the town would be done through a series of terraces facing the countryside. Along via del Fosso di S. Ansano we located covered parking places for the inhabitants, gathering the cars that presently are parked all around the piazza. We also considered the needs of the Contrada dell'Aquila while redesigning its piazza, working on the side facing the countryside.

Approach Following the reading of the building, as well as the urban context, we have approached the building in two different ways: (1) Exterior-Interior, where the building is seen as a series of walls which generate a series of spaces from the facade, through to the countryside, allowing the piazza and its activity to expand 3-dimensionally into the interior; (2) Interior-Exterior-Interior, where the building is given back to the people,

starting with the facade, the piazza, symbol of any Italian city, will enter the building and expand. Independence vs Co-existence Independence, because of the typologies of the various buildings, and co-existence, because of the program of the museum, must be related one to the other. The association of the two is possible through the concept of loops. Looping, through the modification of the buildings, is expressed



Escola Tecnica Superior de Arquitectura - Barcelona & Valles

The Casa Bloc

Redesign of the public space system

The work we are doing as Permanent Activity focuses in a singular building and its surrounding. In some sense this building is a monument but it is a singular one.

The Casa Bloc, built in Barcelona by the GATEPAC during the Republican period, is a typical sample of the "redent" typology of housing. For us it's a fragment of a most large idea: the peripheral ordination of Barcelona planned by the GATEPAC and Le Corbusier as an extension of Cerdà Grid, and named the "Pla Macià".

Considering this sample of the Modern Movement as a monument raises the problem of what is the role of a monument as a part of the city. For us, it is not an isolated and mythical piece. On the contrary we would like to achieve the connection between this building and the fabric of the urban area.

But the solution of this connection appears not easy and peaceful but as a



confrontation of different morphological logics.

On one hand there is the logic of the "redent" with the big scale, out of the street frame and producing public spaces without a formalised shape. On the other hand there is the spontaneous growth of this part of the city, a proto-industrial structure with the irregular land division, topographic sense of the streets traces and with a different relationship between

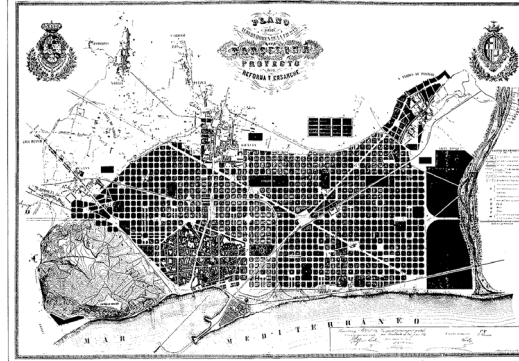
the public and private spaces.

In front of those different logics our attitude is not dogmatic. We have a similar historic capacity to understand one and the other. We establish different values in front of different problems. Of course modern architecture gives us better solutions related to the dwelling organisation but let's say that "old way of doing city" shows values in terms of alive public space, privacy and variety.

For us historic buildings, old or modern, are materials for our own project. We wouldn't be historicists not following the proto-industrial city structure, not assuming without criticism the models of the rationalism.

Our intervention is strategic. Using the existing materials we have recognized the conflict of structures as a starting point of our own solution.

More precisely, the object of our work is to attain a solution for preservation and reuse



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of the Modern GATEPAC building but with an idea of intervention specially related to the surroundings of it and trying to reshape its open spaces connecting them to the extension of the proto-industrial building structure.

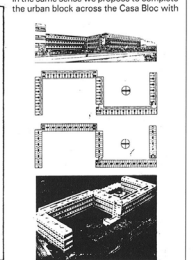
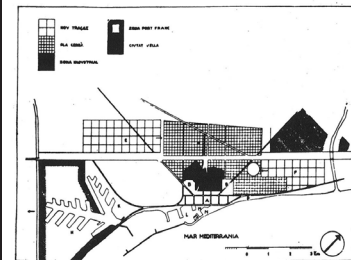
We believe the Modern Movement architecture had been not very accurate in structuring the architectural objects through the design of public space and also this public space was not so comfortable as was the same in the traditional city.

Redesigning public spaces of the modern movement architecture is, for us, part of a necessary exercise today. We have to understand and profit from this modern way of doing city but also we have to improve them by the way of proposing complex and rich structures for it.

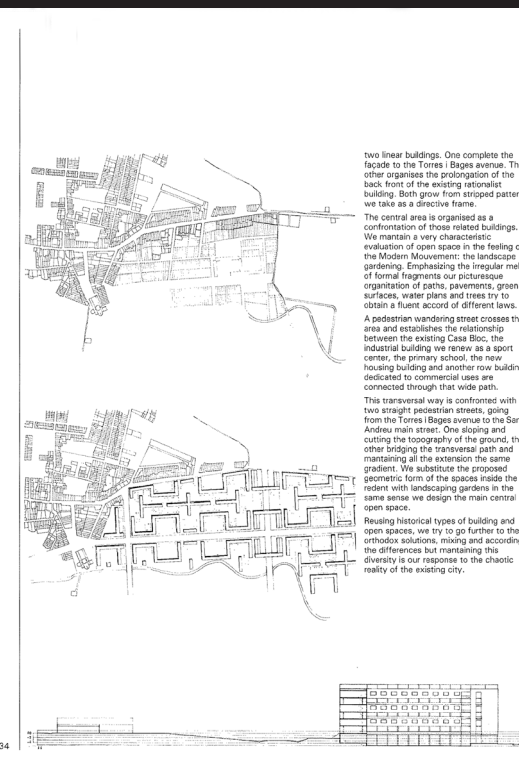
This particular case study, seems in that sense, not only a possibility of developing this idea but also an exercise of checking it in front of a degraded part of the city who has high cultural values.

Our solution takes as a pattern the module of the Casa Bloc. Because the duplex type was a montage of row houses we decided to put one family row houses at the front of the Sant Andreu main street. They are homogeneous with the existing preindustrial housing and homogeneous also with the Casa Bloc.

In the same sense we propose to complete the urban block across the Casa Bloc with



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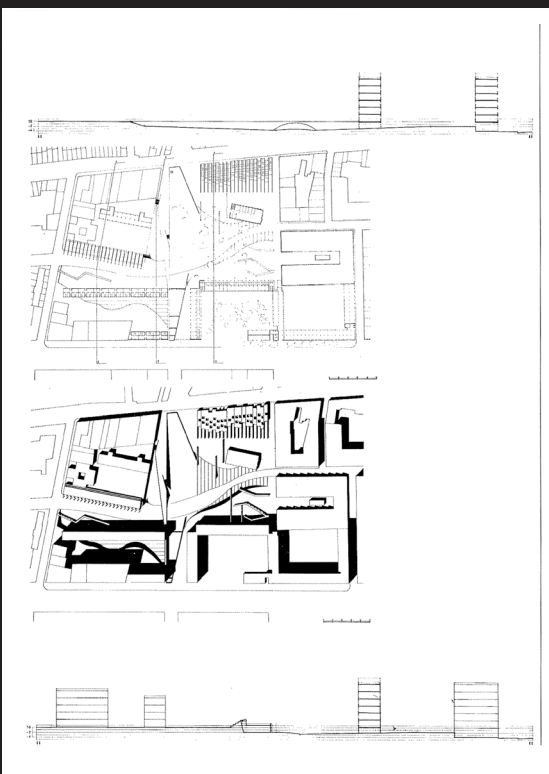
two linear buildings. One complete the facade to the Torres i Bages avenue. The other organises the prolongation of the back front of the existing rationalist building. Both grow from striped pattern we take as a directive frame.

The central area is organised as a confrontation of those related buildings. We maintain a very characteristic evaluation of open space in the feeling of the Modern Movement: the landscape gardening. Emphasising the irregular mesh of formal fragments our picturesque organisation of paths, pavements, green surfaces, water plans and trees try to obtain a fluent accord of different laws.

A pedestrian wandering street crosses the area and establishes the relationship between the existing Casa Bloc, the industrial building we review as a sport center, the primary school, the new housing building and another row building dedicated to commercial uses are connected through that wide path.

This transversal way is confronted with two straight pedestrian streets, going from the Torres i Bages avenue to the Sant Andreu main street. One sloping and cutting the topography of the ground, the other bringing the transversal path and maintaining all the extension the same gradient. We substitute the proposed geometric form of the spaces inside the redent with landscaping gardens in the same sense we design the main central open space.

Reusing historical types of building and open spaces, we try to go further to the orthodox solutions, mixing and according the differences but maintaining this diversity is our response to the chaotic reality of the existing city.



35

Gunilla Axelsson
Isabel Boncompagni
Dora Brogustador
Eduardo Calafell
John Dale
Marisa Garcia
Cristina Jover
Roland Marthou
Per Quarnstrom
Marisa Ruediger
Emy Serra

Areas for sub-group projects

1. The "Topic"

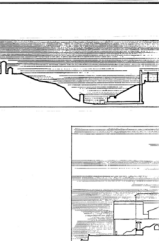
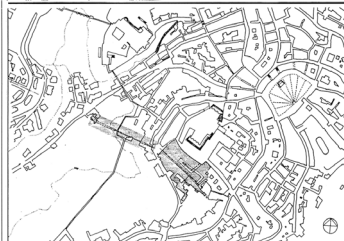
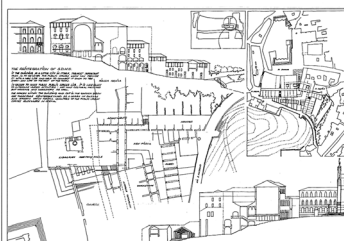
Reconfiguration of internal spaces
Light
Language of vault structures - how to change and reuse them
Programming of more specific activities
Pavement from Duomo to gardens

2. Open spaces and their interrelationships

a. Duomo)
b. Selva) Characterize the
c. Aquila) transformations
d. garden terraces)
- language of modern interventions
- pavement treatment
- facade treatment

3. The inner road - system of connections (vertical, horizontal)

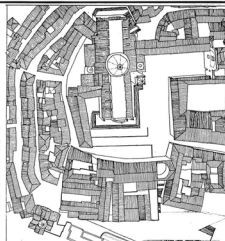
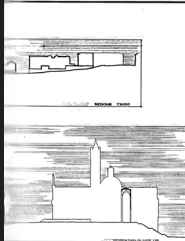
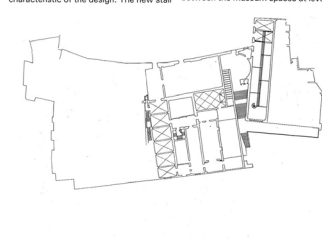
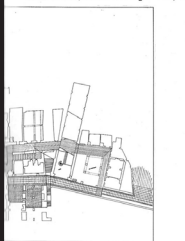
Bigger context of connections - a town gate
Ways of bringing in light
Ways of entering different parts of the building
Programming activities in and just off "street"



The transformation of the hospital presents the problem of juxtaposing two languages: an old and a new one. Following a reading of the building, a transformation was explored which could set up a conversation between these different languages and help articulate the different parts of the building. The hospital building is understood to have three distinct parts: the internal street with its adjacent spaces below level zero and a series of independent buildings above, the

Palazzo del Capitano and the main block of the hospital. The separate buildings are made evident by the introduction of a main connection, perpendicular to the long axis of the building: a stair between piazza del Duomo and the landscape, the existing relationship of the piazza with the countryside, with the hospital acting as a wall between them, is maintained and emphasized as a fundamental characteristic of the design. The new stair

begins with a change in the slope of a section of the pavement on the piazza, continues through the lobby area which is like the ambiguous inside: outside spaces found elsewhere in the city; and proceeds directly out into the garden beyond. Other perpendicular connections are established: one stair between the inside and the outside (taking advantage of two existing walls that open out to the landscape) and another acting as a hinge between the museum spaces at level zero

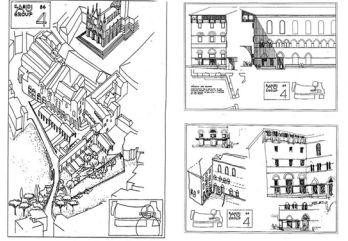
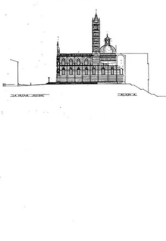
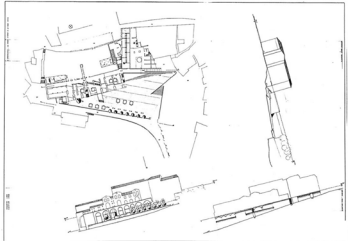
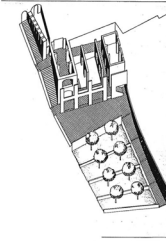
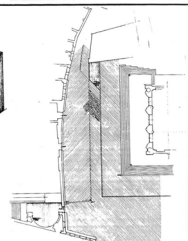
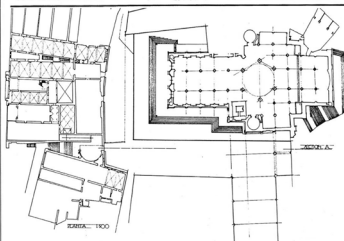
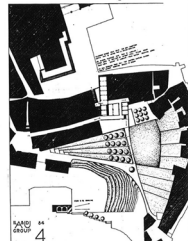
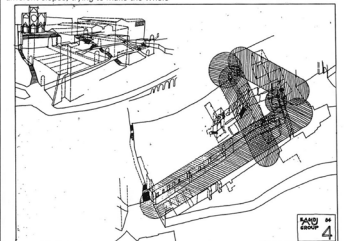
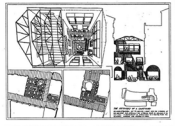


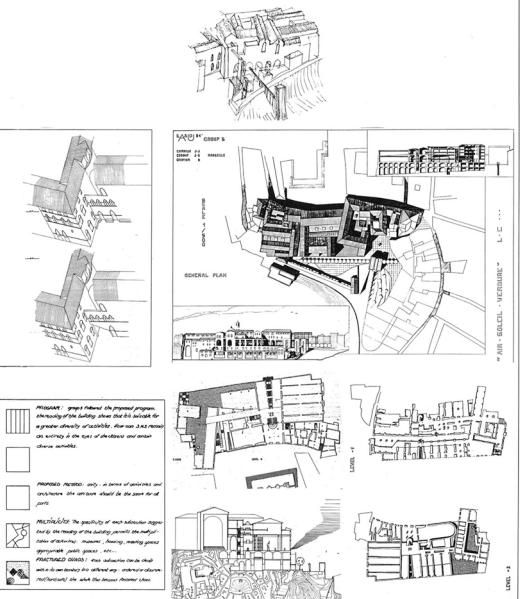
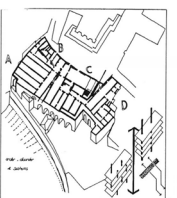
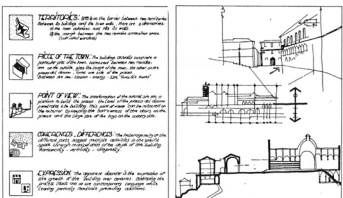
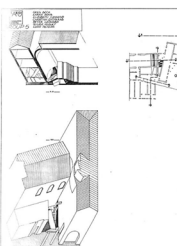
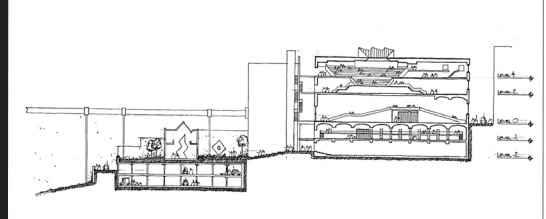
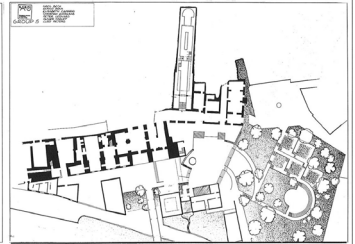
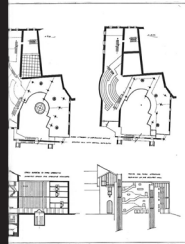
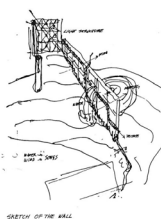
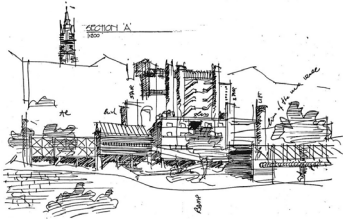
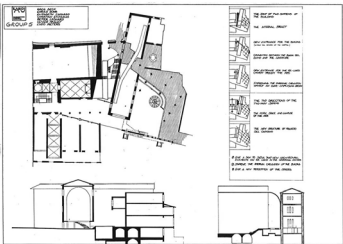
and the internal street below. This latter street becomes an important interior space in itself as a terraced gallery for contemporary art exhibitions. The internal street works not only as a connection within the building but as a real street that links piazza della Selva with piazza Posteria, with another small piazza just at the end of the hospital. The difference in level between the two spaces was solved with a ramp with different slopes, trying to make the whole

street work as a ramp. This lead to important changes in the section of the internal street and in the building, where a part of level -1 is demolished in order to bring in more light and also to emphasize the relationship with the landscape. Since we are aware that it is very difficult to make a street work within a building, because of the narrow spaces and the complicated access to them, we decided to make it work with the outside space treated as a limited garden. That garden,

a sloping surface entering the building enhances and mediates the conflict between the massive built form and the openness of the outside space, while it meets the inner street prolonged with towards the outside. In order to define the continuity of use of those spaces, some small studios are proposed all around them (we also consider an important feature the contrast between the old, huge structure and the new small ones). In the design of the

building itself we open or reshape some important vertical openings trying to find the same relationship inside/outside also vertically. In our design work we tried to keep the main character of the building through some important changes leading to new functions, private and public, to have an understanding of the building and at the same time work together.







San Ansanus façade has been a recurrent theme of reflection in the usual meetings with Faculty members and students in the last few weeks. The aim of these notes is none but leaving some written remains of some intuitions, as well as doubts concerning the study of this façade of S M S during ILAUD 86.

At the same time, this could be a good opportunity to specify some opinions suggested to our group by the initial programme proposed by ILAUD.

Figuratively speaking, the S M S complex has been taken as a "city within a city" and its morphology could be compared that of the "insula" i.e. the result of a series of additions of different adjacent structures which does not obey to a criteria of global composition, examples of which can be found in Siena even today. In short, it could be considered as a huge mass progressively adapted to the site where it is built, generally without a pre-established dimension.

In the same way, its openings do not follow a regular order or formal criteria of composition; rather, it is a reflection of its use, as well as the result of a settlement on existing allotments of the site and of the activities that occur independently from its interior.

This way of shaping by means of successive additions of several structures has as a result a great variety on the outline of these masses which can explain to a certain extent the formation of such "insula".

All these concepts are applicable in some ways to S M S; for instance, the dimension of the Pellerinaios - though not its actual form, are related to the original requirements of use; and many others instances could be mentioned.

This plurality of features which is contradictory at times could move us to relate San Ansanus façade and that of Piazza del Duomo in order to underline their differences. It is generally assumed that Francesco di Giorgio's intervention was essential to endow the building with a balance based on eurlthmical relations expressed spatially by means of the control of its form as well as that of its parts. Later interventions have followed this compositional idea. The fact of S M S being understood a "city within a city" and the fact that later interventions follow the original guidelines underline the existence of a considerable degree of redundancy in the shaping of its spaces and in the configuration of its elements.

An initial point in the development of our task was to clarify how a programme could be understood, and it seemed plausible to accept it as a metaphorical scheme of the building as well as an understanding of its nature.

Considering it as a conglomerate order, a reading could be approached from which some points were isolated:

- The mode of aggregation in S M S appears at the outside as a single building, although we all know that this is not the case.

- The fabric could be understood as constituted by a set of interchangeable "blocks" or packages, which tune us to the complex essence of the conglomerate.

- More importantly for us, there is a high degree of flexibility:

- flexibility of organization which enables us to house diverse activities and in term, this offers some means of re-interpreting the existing form in several ways.

- flexibility in the combination of packages of existing structures which makes the present morphology quite variable in the future.

- flexibility of circulation, so that one could establish the use of the spaces which is more suited to their nature, thus transforming the character of the space, especially in the case of the internal street.

These points constituted a framework within which a general idea could be advanced and from which a possible proposal could be understood: this considered the alternative accesses to the building and the need of an awareness of the specific quality of space in the different levels of the complex:

- From Piazza dell Duomo a question still persists as to whether or not the existing main entrance should be maintained. In fact, there is no main entrance but only a means to enter the building which acts as such. The alternatives were to keep the existing access or to move it to the bay next to it, facing the Pellerinaio.

This access can be complemented by an entrance to the "gothic houses" providing independence for a specialized activity such as a first aid center or similar and, besides, the entrance to the internal street in the interstitial space between the church and the women pellerinaio offers great possibilities as a direct entrance to a public space.

These two entrances can be linked through a courtyard at the back of the gothic houses by means of a ramp there located and which could be located easily by its light.

From the rear area the two entrances to the internal street are so direct that they should be kept as they exist.

The quality of space at the different levels of the building varies:

At level 0 it is ceremonial (Pellerinaios); sacred and institutional (memories of S M S) which turns it into an almost public network of spaces.

At level -1 the burst of activity in the internal street could be enhanced and the strict organization in spaces which face San Ansanus façade offer many possibilities.

At level -2 provides access to a series of split levels at San Ansanus façade, thus offering a great flexibility of changing the spaces closest to the ground. It also offers a cross-wise circulation as alternative to the existing one.

At level -3 the entrances to the internal street present a synthesis of relations with neighbouring areas and accesses at ground level.

After all the process some questions remain open for further discussion:

1. How to use or re-use the interstitial spaces in a creative way which infuse life rather than being a dust-bin where the services are thrown into?

2. How to gain access to the complex and yet keep the memories of the institution? Should there be several or only one access? The notion of institution is rather abstract at the present moment: the 'contradas' play an important social role, but the institution of SMS is not involved in the concrete mission of articulating groups; rather, there seems to exist a kind of yielding to reach a neutral domain, a kind of nowhere land where hierarchies disappear. There exists a building, but not an institution.

3. How to operate within the building in spaces which have become deteriorated throughout the years and recover at least part of the inner potency of the existing fabric?

4. How to set a hierarchy in the set of activities suited to the building and compatible with the social structure of Siena?

5. How to show the potentialities of the area between the foso de San Ansano and the rear façade, as well as a compromise for the way in which the façade meets the ground?

6. How to link the fabric of SMS with the neighbouring areas SPiazza della Selva, Piazza delle Due Porte, Piazza dell Duomo, landscape:...? ?.

7. How to tackle the deep and elusive complexity of both façades, at the Piazza dell Duomo and San Ansano?

Most of these questions are not faced here, except the last one: for which an attempt will be made in order to better understand the nature and extent of the above mentioned complexity.

A limit (of a construct in space) begins where its presence can be traced.

M. Heidegger

When we approach San Ansano façade from a distance, it appears versatile and rich in the features of its nature.

It can be read in different ways according to the relation established with it: from the parts of view of:

-access

-how it meets the ground

-the perceptible variety as one walks around it.

Despite later aggregations its dignified presence face the landscape with an inner power which is not revealed at first glance entirely.

A differentiation could be introduced for pragmatic purposes - it can be studied from the point of view of its relations with inside and outside spaces.

- or the analysis can be concentrated into the study of the façade as an interface where traces of the past changes of organization can be noticed.

If the approach is this latter one it seems difficult to establish a set of one-dimensional ways of composition. Instead, the message reaches the man who looks at it as full of "noise". This can be summed up in:

- an attitude of continuous re-use: its potential as well as the capacity to be subject of changes throughout the years.

But what remains amidst all these changes?

What are the "invariants" in a process which seems difficult to approach owing to its elusiveness and its complexity.

A phenomenon comes to our minds:

San Ansano façade has a wide spectrum of redundance, both as an inconsciously setting-up of features as a transition area where exchanges between inside and outside have varied throughout the years.

San Argus façade cannot be considered only in its flatness because one recognizes a sort of tension between the quality of its flatness and the existing volume between the two walls that constitute the outmost façade today and the previous one.

Mostly, the opposition characterizes the tension between flatness and thickness; tension defined by the absence of predominance of one above the other. Instead, the present situation can be better shown by the notion of coexistence.

There are several kinds of tension. The first one is caused by the overlapping i.e. superposition of singular elements as rectangular windows on arch windows; or the inclusion of a curvilinear window within the frame of a similar one.

A second tension mechanism is the repetition of a singular element in a different dimension, position throughout the façade: balconies, orders, etc.

Also through the addition or juxtaposition of two or more different elements a third mechanism of redundance appears as in the vertical volume that includes the services and which is fixed upon the flatness of the façade.

And lastly the traces that is the rest or remains of formal elements belonging to earlier activity that one can still recognize in the façade: parts of arches lintels, of infilled windows.

The presence of these and other characteristics is developed on a syncopated rhythm that one can understand in the process of reading the façade. At this moment the process becomes possible through a careful survey of the façade, recognizing and defining the architectural elements by which it is conformed. At the same time a certain degree of "cleansing" is necessary, so that the elements that are undoubtedly alien to this syncopated appearance of the façade are taken away.

Useless to say this process of redundance can not be extended overall the façade since it would cause the loss of its tension.

This can also be understood in a different way:

as a rumour that underlies all the reading, letting no chance for a single or a very clear sound to spring from it, since it is always disguised by this low noise.

We should bear in mind that the presence of the façade cannot be felt in its entirety, owing to the topographic location of SMS and its surroundings in the "foso" of San Ansano, that offers a very specific selection of points of view from the street that goes parallel to it; and then only from the hill in the landscape in front of it.

This means that the façade cannot be observed as a whole but only in parts related to different horizontal and vertical fragments of the façade.

In this space one cannot forget the presence of the group of buildings built between the street and the façade itself, that define and to a certain degree hide the perception of the façade. For this reason, we can consider these volumes as parts of the noise of the complex.

The approach here exposed generates mechanisms of intervention and composition directly related to these aspects. We have to understand the proposal of San Ansano in this way, as developed in two consecutive levels, one already described and a second one consisting of a test on how to introduce the different elements in the façade whilst their impact in the overall composition is progressively checked.

Aquiles Gonzalez Raventós
Antonio Millán Gómez
Xavier Peiró Grasa

Stam. September, 1996

Frederico Correa

Could you explain further the role of Viollet-le-Duc in relation to Modern Movement?

Ignasi de Solà

Viollet-le-Duc, as I said in my paper, is a contrast to the ahistorical way of introducing history in the process as Purser did. For Purser history is a raw material out of the sense of line. I stressed the aspect of abstraction as a preparation for the abstract language in the 20th century. The historical background is reduced to laws, such as interpretation of the lower laws of forces. "trend régulateur" and so on, in order to obtain abstract tools for a new kind of architecture.

Glencarlo De Carlo

I would like to comment another aspect of the subject. Continuity between Bauhaus-Arts and Modern Movement has two sides. One is obvious, i.e. before Modern Movement there was Bauhaus-Arts, therefore the succession is natural. The second one is not so obvious, because why should we oppose Modern Movement to Bauhaus Arts if it was developing Bauhaus-Arts' tools?

I do not consider history as a raw material, but instead as a reference to inventions. The basis of the destruction of the CIAM were those two different conceptions of history. Two trends were taken then. Scientism when history was thought as a raw material and multiplicity of language when there was no way of establishing a continuity.

Ignasi de Solà

I agree on the fact that Modern Movement represents a new attitude, but I intended to show that certain ideas from the 19th century went to Modern Movement's practice. I focused especially on abstraction. Another important factor would be Outremere de Quency's theory of imitation developed in two ways:

- Imitation as a self-reference of architecture, here there is a freedom of signification;
- architecture as a general system of principles, here there is a more rigid system of signification, such as order, proportion and so on.

Josao Mantayala

In your lecture, Ignasi, you stressed the Aristotelian element of Outremere de Quency, but if we have an analysis from an abstract point of view, for instance Gestalt psychology, we invent an object through abstract laws. Maybe the continuity existed at the beginning but not once the object has been created. Lines are used to create a free art which is related neither to history nor to mind.

Ignasi de Solà

Bauhaus Arts had a hierarchic idea of the world, as well as a central one. With Seidinger we have the idea of losing the centre and become free. The abstract concept worked in a field different from that of the 19th century. The new signification of architecture came from a self-commentary of its own memory.

Glencarlo De Carlo

I shall try to pose another problem more specific to our time. Nowadays more people are involved in the decision process in architecture because of the change of culture and information. Modern Movement faced the problem of mass-production and enlarged the margin of people's participation. Gestalt psychology tried to understand the common basis for human needs and helped to increase the quality.

In front of the problem of who decides what people need there has been a dispora towards different ways:

- Architecture considered as dead when it cannot cope with the problem.
- Attempts to invent again archetypes as a new basis for architecture
- Deposition on society of a new historical shell, in order to reproduce a new social order.

We could also ask people about their needs and not consequently to meet their demands. Or else go to the roots of the needs and divide them between the real ones and those which are not. And by "needs" mean not only practical but also cultural ones.