Attitudes towards the Urban Past

Kayed I. Lakhia

Bachelor of Architecture
University of Bombay
Bombay, India
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Signature of Author:
Kayed I. Lakhia

Certified by:
Ronald Lewcock
Prof. of Arch. & Aga Khan Prof. of D.I.S.
Thesis Supervisor

Accepted by:
Julian Beinart
Departmental Committee for Graduate Studies, Chairman

May 30, 1990

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"I have explained that 'logical' thought is what is expressed in words directed from the outside world in the form of a discourse. 'Analogical' thought is sensed yet unreal, imagined yet silent; it is not a discourse but rather a meditation on themes of the past, an interior monologue. Logical thought is 'thinking' in words. Analogical thought is archaic, unexpressed and practically inexpressible in words."

- C.G. Jung
Abstract

The city and its artifacts are among the most prominent witnesses to the material and spiritual condition of a culture. Far from remaining static, they are continually changing to adapt to the changing nature of individual activities, social patterns and technology.

Thus a city is a fabric of several layers of time, existing at the same moment in the same place. This continuum is, on one hand, a repository of its people's memory and collective consciousness; and, on the other, of their hopes and aspirations. It is this which gives a place its character, and contributes to its inhabitants,' 'sense of place' and 'sense of time.'

The monuments of the city may be in a state of ruin, and there may be arguments for their demolition, continuation in a state of ruin, or conservation. This raises the issues of why, how and to what extent to preserve the past; which of the several layers to preserve; and whether a general methodology of actions with regard to the inherited past is possible. In the case of rebuilding in an existing fabric there arises the issue: to which of the context’s several pasts should one relate the character of the construction; or should one focus solely on the present moment?

The purpose of this thesis is to understand different attitudes towards the Past and how they may be drawn upon in the perception, understanding, and making of our cities and their artifacts. Through the use of representative examples in each of the several approaches, the thesis proposes to evaluate critically their attitude towards the past. The thesis also aims to assess the appropriateness of intervention in terms of the creation of a sense of place and identity in time; the means of enabling the people to readily associate with the city; and the maintenance of a sense of physical, spatial and cognitive continuity.
The bad architect in all his splendour
hurrying through a wasteland:
no eyes, no ears, no hands,
across dead skulls lying around arbitrarily.
Empty, senseless interiors - projecting screens.
Architecture, buildings signaling violence
and oppression. Laissez-faire!
The elements are in rebellion,
apocalypse in the air.
Yet the bad architect is always in a hurry
to sell his inability to the next sponsor.

The good architect, on the other hand,
ambling through a beautiful garden,
an ensemble of buildings richly decorated
and sculptured, built according to classical rules.
He has three eyes, four ears, four hands -
signifying the wide range of abilities
that make a good architect.
Impressive words are not for him.
He is concerned with learning from the past,
observing the present and anticipating the future,
in order to avert badness wherever possible.

From:
Architecture de Philibert de l'Orme
Oeuvre entiere
Paris, R.Chaudiere, 1626

During the course of my thesis several people have been of immense help. I would like to thank a few here:
My advisor Ronald Lewcock, for his encouragement, patience and continuous questioning. My readers Francesco Passanti and Larry Vale, for their constructive criticism. Nader Ardalan and Julian Beinart, for their rich insights. Finally, Abbas, Yasmin and my mother, for their faith.

Dedicated to H.H. The Aga Khan
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Preface

"This means that you pick up, and try to continue, a line of enquiry which has the whole background of the earlier development of science behind it; you fall in with the whole tradition of science. It is a very simple and decisive point, but nevertheless one that is not often sufficiently realised by rationalists - that we cannot start afresh; that we must make use of what people have done before us in science. If we start afresh, then, when we die, we shall be about as Adam and Eve were when they died (or, if you prefer, as far as Neanderthal man). In science we want to make progress, and this means that we must stand on the shoulders of our predecessors. We must carry on a certain tradition." (Sir Karl Popper) ¹

"We must know the right time to forget and the right time to remember and instinctively see when it is necessary to feel historically and when unhistorically." (Friedrich Nietzsche) ²

This thesis comes about as a result of the so-called 'Revision of the Modern Movement.' That is, the suspicion and perhaps the realization that many of the promises of Modernism were false and so perhaps were some of the underlying premises; that the idea of working with the ideal man was perhaps not as ideal as once supposed; that the Utopia central to Modernity, even if attainable, seemed no longer an entirely desirable place; that fulfilling Function perfectly was a mere Fiction; that the passion for abstraction was wrong when applied to human societies; that an excessive infatuation with technology was to put only one criterion in too prominent a position; that assumptions about the inevitability of the zeitgeist - the spirit of the times - were not entirely justified. That the Past was not dead.

The thesis is also inspired by the realization that it may be more fruitful working with what is rather than what ought to be; that men, far from being uniform, are varied and shaped by their social and cultural climate; that there exists a possibility of relieving the 'crisis of the
object' by considering its context - the city; that buildings do have 'meaning' and can 'communicate;' that previous associations are valuable. That the past does play a vital role in all of them. And that it is our responsibility to "carry on a certain tradition..."

It is the above case for the past that the first two chapters try to present. Not only does the past play an important role in relating architecture to its context, but its appropriate use can have the power to communicate meaning. Thus, it is vital to create a sense of both time and place. In fact, the criteria for the appropriateness of intervention is partly based on an understanding of these issues. An additional argument for conserving some of the past is that it enables people to maintain a sense of physical, historical and cognitive continuity in the city. This is not a case for 'traditionalism.' Nor does this thesis propose a reverential attitude towards the past. Rather, as I shall go on to elaborate, it proposes a positive but critical attitude to the issue. Although we have to carry on a certain tradition, we should have the liberty to feel, when necessary, unhistorically.

Although it is desirable to maintain continuity, this is not always feasible. It is inevitable and sometimes even necessary to accept demolition and rebuilding of buildings in the city. This is the subject of the third chapter. Since the use of the past is no longer illegitimate, the criteria for its use and incorporation in our present situation are by no means clear. Nor is there enough historical distance to enable us to pick out the strands of the various attitudes towards the past and develop critical generalizations about them. Since this situation is often the case, we have to accept that today we are going through a transitory phase; and like all phases of transition, it is one marked by frustration and confusion. This thesis will not attempt to develop a rigorous set of criteria for an analysis of this situation or its evaluation. Rather it will examine the range...
of contemporary attitudes, tentatively testing them as regards their appropriateness as defined earlier. For it is through the present chaotic and perhaps frightening diversity that strands of sensibility must emerge in the future.

The following two chapters deal with the examination of traditional quarters of cities and their monuments. Arguments are presented about when it is desirable to maintain continuity through the preservation, conservation or adaptive reuse of a city's artifacts, as against their demolition and rebuilding. The artifacts are the key witnesses to the progression of time in a city. Besides maintaining continuity through the city's key-buildings, there are instances when it is valuable to maintain continuity not just in the isolated monument but throughout the urban fabric of traditional cities. It is valuable to do so since the traditional fabric supports a certain social condition and physical character. That is, the environment sustains a certain ambiance.

Chapters five and six are more directly related to the ambiguous role of the monument and the ruin in the city, and reasons why it might be desirable in certain instances to allow a ruin to continue to exist in a state of ruin. As against the monument, which conveys a sense of permanence, the ruin has a role to play in developing a historical understanding and a sense of progression in time. In its state of incompleteness and ambiguity the ruin allows the inhabitants of a city to create their own historical and cognitive continuities. Thus the citizens of a city may endow the artifacts, the ruins and the city with conceptual and mythical realities. These entities argue for participation as a vital part of creation.

If a monument is in a state of a ruin, as against the ruin which has assumed the status of a monument, an understanding has to be developed, of what, when, how, and to what extent, either to restore, conserve or reuse. Once again, through the examination of contemporary
approaches, I would like to examine critically the appropriateness of each.

The thesis concludes with the realization that the uses of the past, both in the case of rebuilding and in the case of restoring or conserving, are not passive acts, but involve political realities. If buildings can communicate, they can be made to communicate overt political ends. Through the abuse of the past individuals in power can manipulate tradition so as to assert authority, and in a short logical step, once again assert the supreme power of historicism and the inevitable unfolding of the zeitgeist. It is very easy to replace a critical attitude with such a dogmatic one, and this is what we must safeguard against. In the final analysis, the thesis argues for a critical attitude and an ‘open society’ with its promise of rich diversity as against an utopian ideality.

Notes:
2 Friedrich Nietzsche: *The Use and Abuse of History* (NY: Bobbs Merrill, 1957), p 8
1. Introduction

"The philosophers have only interpreted the world in various ways; the point however is to change it." (Karl Marx)

A large component of Modern Architecture and more specifically most of the International Style, is based on an ideology that has been termed 'Historicism' - a theory of historical prediction and discovering trends that underlie the evolution of history by laying bare the zeitgeist - the spirit of the times. It is an ideology which not only states that historical unfolding is inevitable, but also that every new period of architectural history should unfailingly produce a totally new and homogenous expression of collective society, each one superior to the one before.

The notions of natural unfolding and of historical determinism are not beyond question, and Popper has effectively demonstrated this in his Poverty of Historicism. He argues that since the course of human history is strongly influenced by the growth of human knowledge, and since we cannot predict by rational or scientific methods the future growth of our knowledge, to predict the future course of history is for strictly logical reasons impossible.

"No scientific prediction - whether a human scientist or a calculating machine - can possibly predict, by scientific methods, its own future results." (Popper: 1957)

By the adherents of the 'International' brand of Modernism, architectural history was seen as consisting of discrete ages, each characterized by a different spirit invalidating previous traditions and cultural patterns. The architects' role was to reveal this essential spirit which was morally superior to all others. This Utopian and Historicist ideology underlies most Modernist tendencies. It is an attitude towards history, in which art is thought to improve by violent breaks with existing traditions. Because the future is morally superior to the past, the forms of the past are regarded as contaminating, and to go back
to the past is to regress morally and socially.

To the extent that the past is relevant at all, it is viewed competitively as needing to be surpassed - as a rival, not as a mentor. Modernist thinkers did not accept things as they appeared in nature and in the man-made world; but rather sought to discover their hidden and presumably essential character. Since Utopian Modernism could not model its forms on the past, nor justify them as pure whim, the doctrine of historicism joined hands with the doctrine of scientific determinism. Modernism, if it did not give up its pursuit of form, at least learned to cloak it with a facade of functionalism. But Hitchcock and Johnson had foreseen the impossibility of function alone dictating form:

"Consciously, or unconsciously, the architect must make free choices, before his design is completed." (Hitchcock/Johnson: 1932)

Carried to its extreme, this position legitimized the designer's intuition and personal whim, although Gropius and the rest of the Modern masters were quick to deny accusations that their practice was arbitrary. The forms of the New Architecture, according to Gropius, were not, "personal whims of a handful of architects avid for innovation, at all costs, but simply the inevitable, logical product of the intellectual, social and technical conditions of our age." (Gropius: 1935)

For most of the practitioners of the Modern Movement there was to be only one style - a styleless style not determined by 'stylistic' concerns but by function and technology, since there was but one true essence of the new age: "The historical styles are a lie." (Le Corbusier: 1923) But the notion of a style-less art is itself a tenacious fantasy of modern culture. As Susan Sontag pointed out, it was no more possible to get an artifice out of art, than it was possible for a person to lose his personality.
Creating an architecture on the inevitability of strictly materialistic bases of function and technology is a questionable proposition. Scientific method was mistakenly assumed to reveal universal truths. Basing an architecture on materialistic causes was never a matter of fact, but always a question of faith - the belief that science and technology had drastically altered the world [2]. But the myth of functionalism itself has been exposed by Banham, Anderson and others. Under the best of circumstances, it is explained as a creed displaying a certain austere nobility, but much of it symbolically poverty stricken. In fact, Reyner Banham’s questions whether the ideas implicit in Functionalism were ever on the agenda of any of the Modern masters. No description of function, no matter how detailed, could ever translate automatically into architectural form. Functionalism was, “a weak concept, inadequate for the characterization or analysis of any architecture.” (Anderson: 1987)*

Another idea close to Modernist thinking was the notion of social reform; that architecture had the power to influence lives and bring about social change.

“Architecture - a thing which in itself produces happy people.” (Le Corbusier: 1923)*

Lynch, among others, has convincingly shown that the relation of environmental to social change is at best only loosely coupled in both directions.

“Neither social nor environmental patterns are good or bad in themselves, apart from their impact on the human being. They link directly with the central figure through his perceptions and actions, thus only indirectly with each other, and then only in certain limited ways.”(Lynch: 1972)*

Although environments can affect human behavior, there is little evidence they in themselves can bring about significant social change.

Modernist theory, guided by this kind of reasoning, was utopian and positivist. It pledged a better world
environmentally and socially through rational thinking and the technologically advanced tools of the age. Man was conceived as an abstract, universalized entity, for whom a pan-cultural language of forms could be developed. Design now has become less generalized: social, economic, physical convictions of the local population are an integral part of the design and programming process. With the conviction that the architect can profit by working with what is, rather than what should be, the role of the architect as the willful creator of Form has changed to that of the architect as a translator of economic, social and technological conditions into an appropriate architectural expression.

Dissatisfaction with the radical reformulation of the human environment divorced from traditional methods of building and modes of expression was voiced simultaneously from two camps around the same time (1966, the year of the publication of two books, Venturi's, *Complexity and Contradiction in Architecture*; and Rossi's, 'L'Architettura della Città'). One revolved around the issue of meaning:

"In their attempt to break with tradition and start all over again, they (Modern Architects) idealized the primitive and the elementary at the expense of the diverse and the sophisticated. As participants of a revolutionary movement, they acclaimed the newness of modern functions, ignoring their implications. In their role as reformers, they puritanically advocated the separation and exclusion of elements rather than the inclusion of various requirements and their juxtapositions." (Venturi: 1966)\(^n\)

The other around the issue of context, more specifically, the city:

"Gone are the days of urban models and with them also has gone the age of urban techniques, self description, and functions passed off as solutions. The city must be dealt with each time, by gathering and developing its contradictions, day by day, directly." (Rossi: 1972)\(^n\)
Both issues, that of meaning and that of the relationship of architecture to the city, involve dealing with the past consciously, at a profound level. This has led to an interest in reintegrating more traditional methods of creating form - and to establishing meaning with a less antagonistic view of history and a less revolutionary view of progress.

Restrictive design methodologies, on one hand, sought refuge in scientific methodology and programming the myriad problems of architecture [3]. On the other hand they attempted to introduce social sciences into architecture in order to secure a more direct translation of needs and wants into form. In all these approaches they, "tried to make architecture something it would not, or could not become: in the first case a computer printout, in the second case a sociology rap session." (Harvard Arch. Review: 1980)

Disillusioned with an ascetic visual language and a restrictive method, architects once again started looking for operational and figurative resources. They started once again seeking a more communicative architectural language [4] and exhibited an interest in forms which made direct reference to the architecture of the past.

The tendency of the Modern Movement away from concerns of symbolic meaning and communication has been variously interpreted. It is commonly seen as the replacement of kitch with abstract, essential and pure forms by the avant-garde. To appreciate these, one had to
belong to or be initiated into 'high-culture.' This was seen by the sociologist Herbert Gans as a failure of democracy, whereas the social critic Tom Wolfe saw it as a subversion by a group of intellectual "phoneys" who were primarily concerned with maintaining a social status. Gans is of the opinion that the public is excluded from the 'high-culture' because social inequities deny it whereas Wolfe holds that the public is just not invited.

The dominant trends of the Modern Movement proposed a radical re-examination of methods and assumptions as an a priori condition for all creative endeavor. Architecture carried logically along this route however, can only tend to become a self-referential object - unable to communicate and isolated from its context. The work of architecture becomes a concise exposition of its constituent elements and program (commodity), structure and construction (firmness), and abstract play of masses in light (delight). It is autonomous due to a deliberate distancing from the past.

But if the radical break with the past proposed by the moderns is no longer tenable, how is one to incorporate the past once again as a legitimate source of inspiration? Emulating, copying or learning from the past has always been a difficult business.

"Before Modern Architecture, the use of history was not a problem to be discussed, it was the way architects operated and the only possible quarrels might have been about what history to choose; but its authority was not discussed. History had never been consciously 'used' but naturally 'assumed.'" (Silvetti: 1980)

Since the discontent with the program of Modern Architecture, architects, in trying to work with what is, have also started searching for meaning outside the strict functional requirements of the project and are striving to expand their architectural messages to embrace wider cultural concerns. There has been some random appropriation of historic forms and images to jog the memory.
and make associations; the incorporation of traditional elements from understood and recognizable parts; an interest in issues of morphology and type; an emulation of spatial sequences and principles of organization [7].

So far we have discussed Modern architecture. A brief mention has to be made of Modern urbanism. Self-referential, autonomous architecture conceived purely in terms of program and function and generated from inside to outside could not be subservient to external pressures.

“A building is like a soap bubble. This bubble is perfect and harmonious, if the breath has been evenly distributed from the inside. The exterior is the result of the interior.” (Le Corbusier: 1923)

The city became subservient to the architectural object. Around this primary argument (and the advent of the skyscraper and automobile), was a proliferation of secondary rationalizations, which provided the rhetoric for the modern city. The building was considered a free-standing object in the round [8].

“The New Architecture will develop in an all sided plastic way.” (Van Doesburg: 1918)

Entire cities or large parts therein became a series of conspicuous disparate objects, standing in free space [9]. The matrix of the city was transformed from continuous solid to continuous void. The disintegration of the street, and all organized public space was inevitable. What, in fact, distinguishes ancient city planning from the modern is the limiting of amorphous, limitless space and making it finite. The creation of a ‘square’ was a human and civil act. The Modern metropolis denied this.

The solid and continuous matrix, the texture of the city as we shall see in chapter four, gives energy to every specific space. It may be useful to note that, in terms of Gestalt criteria, the object in free space is to be condemned, for an object requires a ground for figure to be read. When it is unsupported by any recognizable frame of reference, but only amorphous undefined space, it can only become enfeebled and self-destructive.

"The object building, the soap bubble of sincere internal expression, when taken as an universal proposition, represents nothing short of a demolition of public life and decorum." (Rowe/Koetter: 1978)

This debate is succinctly described as the debate between the acropolis and the agora and a comparison can be made of Le Corbusier’s proposal for Antwerp and say, the city of Parma. One almost white, the other practically all black; one object, the other space. The crisis is pushed to a kind of schizophrenia when the acropolis attempts to perform as a version of an agora; when the space occupier pretends to act as the space definer.

Just as the skyscraper and the automobile had partially provided the justification for horrors such as Le Corbusier’s proposals for the center of Paris; the myths of the noble savage and of the return to nature have propagated the limitless space of the Universal society. It did not take long for the ‘city in the park’ to become the ‘city in the parking-lot.’

Historical destiny (as against historical continuity), in the irreversible grip of Hegelian fate, could only ‘inevitably’ lead to mute objects in vacant space. It could also lead to far greater horrors, as we have witnessed in the last hundred years, but that is not the topic of this thesis.

With the strong reaction against the Modern Movement, there has come a promotion of limited planning horizons, localized community participation, and
acceptance of what is found socially, economically and physically rather than extensive revisions of existing patterns. Simultaneous rise in the activities of preservation and conservation has increased conceptualization of the city as a fabric - dense areas of building interrupted by carefully designed public places - has also given a renewed interest in traditional urban space, scale and organization. The traditional city has become the starting point of entire theories of architecture. It has become a source not just of ideas - architectural type and urban morphology, but also a source of method - reference, accommodation, continuity, etc [15].

But attempts to work with tradition and somehow incorporate the past has created problems of its own. The result has been termed the 'Narcissist Phase in Architecture,' marked by wildly diverse tendencies. This 'narcissism' is causing architects, as we shall see at greater length in chapter three, to lose basic skills related to fundamental human needs and making architecture lose touch with the phenomena of cultural and social change.

"It is a poor criticism that condemns without explanation. It makes a profession vulnerable to whims, pressures and interests, unable to develop a body of stable and defensible norms." (Tzonis/Lefaivre: 1978)

The situation today is remarkably similar to the one Mies found himself in 1910:
"We find ourselves in painful inner discord. Our enthusiastic hearts demand the unqualified and we are ready to pledge ourselves to an idea but the potential vitality of the period has by this time been lost."

Has the potential vitality of our period too been lost? Have we lost touch with reality and is the present irrationality the result of the closed nature of our thinking? Have we merely replaced one rhetoric by another?

To summarize, it seems clear that we cannot get rid of the past - hence derives the title of the chapter: The Relevance of the Past. It should be clear that utilizing the past is not only inevitable, but an attitude has to be taken toward it one way or the other if we are to act at all. We have to acquaint ourselves with tradition in order to use it eloquently, or free ourselves of it, as we see fit. At times traditions may be kept alive by the smallest of adjustments and innovations; at other times if our traditions have sunk to the level of apathetic convention, radical innovation may be necessary. Our best means of fulfilling goals - even ones which may be radically new, should be through an acute understanding of the past, and its influence upon us. The past not only does, but should form an active ingredient of our design process.

"...a critical understanding of our tradition is a necessary aspect of any rational and fruitful context for decision making."

(Anderson: 1965)

Popper's non-absolutist analysis of society denies that there is any independent criterion or dogma which can serve as the basis of our actions. Although it is futile to deny the importance of tradition in society, this is not an argument for adopting a conventional traditionalism. Tradition per se has no real authority, and just because a thing or event occurred in the past, it does not make it hallowed. Every aspect of our tradition, like every aspect of our life is open to criticism and, if necessary, rejection. In fact, whatever notion we may have of knowledge, it can

be made to grow with careful criticism.

"We do not know where or how to start our analysis of this world. There is no wisdom to tell us. Even the scientific tradition does not tell us. It only tells us where and how other people started and where they got to. It tells us that people have already constructed in this world a kind of theoretical framework - not perhaps a very good one, but one which works more or less; it serves as a kind of network, or as a system of coordinates to which we can refer the complexities of this world. We use it by checking it over and by criticising it. In this way we make progress." (Popper: 1963)

The tradition we cherish is not a mere accumulation of knowledge, but a vital body of our ideas and our values. It can thrive and flourish under close scrutiny and a critical attitude, as opposed to reverence, faith and dogma which are not open to question or interpretation. Some of the past may have exerted an irrational and unwanted influence or may truly be obsolete. It is incumbent on us to criticize it as Popper has pointed out. But we can't seek to escape tradition just because we disagree with it. In the following chapters I propose to discuss how we may acknowledge, criticize and reshape it.

Notes:

2 Popper: Historicism, p 3
6 Susan Sontag: Against Interpretation (NY: Delta, 1966)

" Le Corbusier: Towards, p 9

Kevin Lynch: What Time is this Place? (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1972), p 223. See especially Chapter 9, 'Environmental Change and Social Change.'


" Le Corbusier: Towards, p 167


Rowe/Koetter: Collage City, p 63


Mies, quoted in Philip C. Johnson: Mies Van der Rohe (NY: MOMA 1947), p 181


2. The Past and a Sense of Time and Place

"The gods did not reveal, from the beginning, All things to us, but in the course of time, Through seeking, men find that which is the better." (Xenophanes)

Qualitatively, as well as quantitatively, one of the most important sources of our knowledge is tradition. This is not to say that our traditions are sacred, but rather open to critical examination. We cannot start from nothing - from a tabula rasa. The advancement of knowledge largely consists in the modification of earlier forms of it. Without tradition, knowledge would be impossible.

One can generalize that tradition and dealing with the past are indispensable. Communication rests upon tradition and the spirit of any given society is connected with it. Tradition is the critical vehicle for the betterment of society. Tradition is also somewhat akin to myths which are the common bonds a society carries and which have value, however imperfectly, of helping to understand society.

"...traditions have the important double function of not only creating a certain order or something like a social structure, but also giving us something on which we can operate; something that we can criticize and change. (And)...just as the invention of myth or theories in the field of natural sciences has a function - that of helping us to bring order into the events of nature, so has the creation of traditions in the field of society." (Popper: 1963)

Besides the critical attitude which enables us to formulate hypotheses by criticizing existing myths, Nietzsche believes history to be necessary to living man in two other ways. Where the first attitude may reflect man's desire for deliverance from the suffering of an oppressive past, the antiquarian and the monumental attitudes serve other purposes. The antiquarian attitude is the reflection of a man who is content with tradition and the venerable uses of the past. This attitude, as we shall see in the course of this thesis, leads to one form of traditionalism or another.
A monumental attitude, on the other hand is that of a man who, in producing something great, needs the past in order to make himself its master. This attitude is also one which we shall encounter in the concluding chapter. In the course of this thesis, I shall argue for a critical attitude, and my reasons for doing so ought to be clear by the end of this chapter.

We have seen in the first chapter how Modernism, by its rhetorical rejection of the past, was incapable of addressing issues of communication, or the relation of the architectural object to the city. The consequences, were of course, vast ‘placeless’ spaces of ‘organised nowhere.’ Most modern spaces are universal and abstract, whereas a ‘place’ is concrete and particular. People do not experience abstract space, but rather experience places which can be seen, heard, felt, imagined, loved, enjoyed or avoided. Where abstract space is infinite, offering in modern thinking a framework of possibilities, a place is immediate, concrete, particular, finite and unique. The Greek philosopher Thales elevates the notion of place to the highest realm:

"Of all things that are, the most ancient is God, for he is uncreated. The most beautiful is the cosmos for it is God's workmanship. The greatest is place for it holds all things."

[16] Steinberg: Abstraction in a Concrete World
According to Heidegger, a man *dwells* when he can orient himself within an environment and experience it as being meaningful. Dwelling implies something more than shelter. Spaces where life occurs are places in the true sense of the word. The task of the architect is to create meaningful 'places' whereby he can help man to 'dwell' and to be at peace in a protected place.

The alienation characteristic of modern cities is due, first, to this loss of a 'sense of place'. It is also due to man's loss of identification with the natural and man-made things which constitute his environment.

"Human identity presupposes the identity of place." (Norberg-Schulz: 1979)

The totality of what people do, think, and feel in a specific location gives identity to a place. Through its physical structure, it shapes a reality different from that of an object or a person, and although it requires human experience to complete it, it lives in its own way.

"Its form of experience occupies persons - the place locates experience in people. A place is a matrix of energies generating representations and causing changes in awareness." (Walters: 1988)

In fact we can go to the extent of saying that places are locations of experience. Experience means perceiving, doing, thinking and feeling. A place has a history which is an account of experience located in that position. Even if we may not have experienced a specific place before; through its evoking a quality which refers to our previous experience by association, a 'sense of place' may be created. The making of 'places' that we call architecture is made possible by man giving meanings to the concrete presence of a building. This, in his everyday world, becomes a meaningful 'home,' where he can *dwell*. It should be the attempt of all environments to permit this. If past experience plays such a crucial role in creating this desirable quality in our environments, it may be seen that we cannot avoid taking into account the element of time in
our decisions.

The questions facing us then, are these: If people lack a sense of clearly articulated time, will they have a sense of place? If space exists in the present, how does it acquire a temporal dimension? The answer seems to be that we may do this by understanding three ways in which time may be related to place. Time may be considered a motion or a flow, with place a pause in the temporal current; time may be considered a function of attachment to a place ("it takes time to know a place"); and time could be made visible in a place (as a memorial to times past).

People look to the past for various reasons, but shared by all is the need to acquire a sense of self and identity, in a particular time. In order to do this, the past needs to be rescued and made accesible. A city does not become historic merely because it has occupied the same site for a long time. Past events make no impact on the present, unless they are memorized in some sort of physical or social form and recognized as part of an on-going tradition. An old city has a rich store of facts on which successive generations can draw to sustain and re-create their image of place.

Memory and imagination are crucial elements in the quality of a place, as is a sense of nostalgia. Evoking the past was a familiar way in the nineteenth century to
examine or to live with the defects of the present. For some Victorians however, the wistful view of the way we used to live expanded their topistic consciousness and modified their orientation to the environment. They turned old buildings and ancient places into material supports for mythical place. Their sense of place reached deeper than the experience of the moment stretching beyond their own time. That this is a phenomenon not just confined to the nineteenth century, can be seen by the number of buildings being adaptively reused as museums in our own times.

It is by providing physical tangible objects which can act as convenient markers for recalling our stories, legends and myths, that a sense of place becomes shared by a society. Architectural practice in the near past has realized that buildings do not have to be based on science since human activities do not seek perfect adaptation to the so-called factual plan; but by crossing over and building other possible orders. The notion of 'bricolage,' adaptive re-use and narrative story-telling, then take on a significance in creating a sense of time and place. How these concepts play a role and what is each one's attitude towards the past, we shall examine in the examples of the Town Hall at Pula, the City of Zadar, and the via Dolorosa in Jerusalem.
The town of Pula in Yugoslavia, has been in existence since the fifth century B.C., when there was an Illyrian fortified settlement there. The Romans founded a colony here in 177 B.C. and during the reign of Augustus, Pula became the center of administration of the Istria peninsula. After the fall of the Roman empire, the town was controlled by the Ostrogoths, Ravenna, the Frankish kingdom and Venice. More recently it was under Austro-Hungarian rule and Italian and German occupation, before becoming a part of Yugoslavia after the second world war.

The varied history that the town has gone through can be 'read' in its town hall. The structure stands fronting the main town square. Adjacent to it is the Roman temple of Augustus [17]. One an eclectic mixture of styles in a fairly good state of preservation and in use; the other a
classical Roman building in a semi-ruinous state and not being used. By the looks of it, it seems fairly clear, but when one goes around to its rear, that a different story is told. We see the rear of the temple of Augustus, and we see an identical façade as part of the town hall [18]! It becomes even more intriguing as we come around to the side of the town hall and discover a façade which has literally suspended into it several layers of history [19]. It is as if each of the transformations that the building has gone through have been captured and its memory preserved for times to come. To make it even more fascinating, excavations at the rear of the town hall reveal the existence of a pre-Roman basilica. Only its foundations remain, and they are now preserved in the form the flooring pattern takes [20]. A study of photographic documentation just about the turn of the century shows that just as the town hall was undergoing changes, so was the fabric of the city around it [21a,b].

When we start to investigate, it becomes apparent that the town hall and the temple of Augustus were originally part of the capitol complex, presumed to have been built in the first century B.C. It was a classic triad composition, consisting of the Capitol temple flanked by two smaller temples, that of Augustus on the west and Diana on the east [22]. These three temples stood till the end of the eight century, when the capitol complex was demolished and its stones used for constructing the forum.

During the Romanesque period, the forum underwent great change. The temple of Augustus was probably transformed into a Christian sanctuary while it is believed the temple of Diana fulfilled the function of a town hall. Between these, in place of the Capitol temple, were built three profane buildings, probably serving as bishop's residence, an aristocratic (or mayor's) house, and a municipal building.
The next transformations occurred in 1296 with the completion of the Gothic style town hall. Two of the central buildings, and the temple of Diana were merged to form this building. The eastern façade was angled to maintain the street line. A bridge connected it to the newly constructed municipal tower. The façade of the third ‘Romanesque’ house and the temple of Augustus were not changed but became an integral part of the town hall complex. Although conceived in the Gothic, the new town hall was still under the strong influence of the Romanesque style.

In 1331 Pula surrendered to Venice and in the ensuing maritime conflicts with Genoa, Pula faced severe destruction. In 1380, during the war between the two Republics, the town hall was badly damaged. By the end of the fifteenth century, the town hall complex was partially modified in the Renaissance style. With the decline of the Venetian republic, the town hall deteriorated rapidly, no efforts being made to maintain it. The municipal tower collapsed and in 1634, the duke of Pula moved out of the town hall because of its delapidated state. In extremely bad condition, the palace was partially torn down in 1651 and remained as a fragment for 46 years.

The reconstruction began in 1697 - this time in the Baroque style. The ‘restoration’ at the end of the seventeenth century represented even stronger degradation of the architectural values of an earlier era. Once again, a state of neglect and lack of care resulted in the Western wall of temple of Augustus being torn down in 1751.

It was not until 1818 that the next restoration took place, this time giving preference to antique architecture. The ruin of the third Romanesque house was removed and the complex separated after nearly a thousand years. In the 1860’s the Austrians put barriers around the monuments to ‘protect’ them. In fact they isolated them, leading to their natural decline due to lack of upkeep.
At the beginning of the twentieth century, it was ascertained that the town-hall was unsafe and in 1908 steel joists were added. In the second half of the twentieth century, adequate maintenance has been given to the buildings and they stand as a mark to transformations over a period of two thousand years, and witness to the rich history of the town.

Walter Benjamin has written about having to seize the image of the past as it flashes by. If we fail to do so, it is never seen again and every image of the past that is not recognised by the present moment as one of its own concerns, risks disappearance irretrievably. It is not as important to articulate the past 'the way it really was,' because that itself would be against the course of history. It is important to seize hold of its memory as it flashes by, at a moment of danger.

If we provide a 'totally objective history,' we can only do so by logically making the future into a fatalistic reproduction of the past or else into something totally subjective. How then, does one solve the problem of the irreconcilability of prospective and retrospective thought? Benjamin's solution lies in a process of invention by abstraction. The past is only present in the form of ruins or rubble, and not alive but rather like a carcass of a memory drained of life. Where acknowledgement of historical reality would lead into mere formalism, abstraction preserves the hidden memory of history. The historical materialist, if he sees a sign of a cessation of happening, or sees a revolutionary chance in the fight for an oppressed past, he takes cognizance of it in order to 'blast' a specific event or object out of the course of history. As a result, the past is preserved, as we have seen in the case of Pula, but at the same time cancelled out. The Hegelian term aufheben describes this phenomena perfectly: to preserve, to elevate, but also to cancel.
"The nourishing fruit of the historically understood, contains time as a precious but tasteless seed." (Benjamin: 1973)

The central issue is: how is one to reconcile memory and desire, nostalgia and hope? How are we to gather the past within us and move into the future?, or as Van Eyck has poetically posed, achieve, “the projection of the past into the future via the created present.” (1969) Although we have noted the role of nostalgia, and how it may in fact be worthwhile to save some of our heritage in the form of a precious, and if necessary, tasteless seed; another sense of the past can be conveyed from letting history follow its own course as far as possible, and this we can see in the town of Zadar in Yugoslavia. How we may decide to preserve monuments and at times, entire quarters of cities we shall examine in subsequent chapters.

When Zadar’s historical center was heavily bombed during the second world war, it revealed important traces of classical Roman buildings underneath [23]. Not atypical of political practice universally, it was decided to retain the ancient past rather than restore the recent past.12

Through the town one observes several attitudes that have been taken towards the past. On one hand is the ‘authentic’ Roman which only survives in the form of ruins. One of the columns in what used to be the Forum still exists. Traces of the tabernae and the capitol can be

![Artist's reconstruction of the Forum & Capitolium, Zadar](image1)

![Superimposed Roman & Present Plans, Zadar, Yugoslavia](image2)
easily perceived. The rest lies in the realm of mere conjecture [24]. On the other hand, the church of St. Marija [25] built in the twelfth century, across the forum, is in an excellent state of preservation. Built in the Romanesque style, it has several details directly copied from Classical Roman models. In this case, the visible past has been a direct inspiration for the design.

A different reading can be made of the solitary column which stands in what used to be the forum [26]. Its position today does not indicate any position of importance or significance, only helping us to deduce the presence of another identical column (which does not now exist), marking the extent of the forum. Pieces of some columns however were removed from their original setting in the Capitol and constructed in a square in 1729, as an obelisk marking the culmination of a principal axis [27]. This indeed was a device prevalent between sixteenth to nineteenth century vista-planning in Europe.

In the former case one witnesses the ‘real’ in an ‘unreal’ setting. The column in the forum was and is a free standing column: hence real. However, it has meaning only with its twin counterpart and in the original form of the Forum, none of which are existent, hence in an unreal setting. On the other hand, the 1729 column demonstrates the ‘unreal’ in a ‘real’ setting. The ‘column’ is not really a column and as originally conceived certainly not a free standing object. The pieces are taken from the Capitol temple, hence unreal; but the setting even today is exactly as it was in 1729. The column still marks the culmination of a principal axis, still stands freely in the square, and is in that sense in a real setting. The words ‘real’ and ‘unreal’ are of course interchangeable, depending on the view of history one takes.

Lastly, the church of St. Donat [28], built at the beginning of the ninth century, is perhaps the most interesting for our conjectures. In the very structure of the
rotunda there are many fragments of monumental architecture, once belonging to the Roman forum. The portal is constructed out of classical fragments - two architraves used as door posts and a third serving as a lintel. Sometimes, the original use of the element is maintained - the two columns fronting the altar were once columns in the arcade of the forum. Occasionally, the elements take a touch of irony. Perhaps even absurdity. Capitals of the pagan Romans can be seen in the foundation, and - so to say - at the foot of the Christian church. Maybe there is some symbolism in this... maybe just the whim of the mason...

The supreme testament, however, is that all this, all pasts, are living in the present. Unlike a 'frozen moment' in the monuments as they are preserved today in Pula, at Zadar they are all determined by their past history, and all in turn dictating their own histories.

[28] Church of St. Donat, Zadar, 9th Cent.
A city can be a common store of myths, concerning not just the local area, but regions, nations and sometimes all of humanity. A knowledge of this is not redundant. Though inaccurate and colored with phantasms, myths are necessary to the sense of reality of one’s empirical world. Mythical spaces can function as a component of a world view and can represent systematic attempts of a people to make sense of the environment.

“Oriented mythical space... organizes the forces of nature and society by associating them with significant locations or places within the spatial system. It attempts to make sense of the universe, by classifying its components and suggesting that mutual influences exist among them. It imputes personality to space, thus transforming space in effect into place.” (Tuan: 1977)
Mythical spaces may be intellectual constructs, and at times elaborate ones, but they are also responses of feeling and imagination to fundamental human needs. They differ from pragmatic and scientifically conceived spaces. Often in mythical thought, the parts can symbolize the whole and have its full potency. It is through myth, captured in the physical environment, that Jerusalem creates its identity of time and place.

The city of Jerusalem has a recorded history of some four thousand years. It is a story marked by a succession of conquerors - Egyptians, Assyrians, Babylonians, Persians, Seleucids, Romans, Seljuks, Crusaders, Saracens, Mamelukes and Ottomans. It is also the birthplace of three major religions of the world. It is hardly surprising that each conqueror would have tried its best to lay its claim to immortality, by leaving its physical trace there. Jerusalem has been destroyed and rebuilt probably more than any other city in the world. Some may have been more sympathetic to the past, others not at all. Yet memories of successive dynasties accumulate and they all have a tale to tell.

It is little wonder that each of the three sects are staking a claim to the city, each one steadfastly holding on to parts of it which are his and claiming a legitimacy of his connection to the past and hence with the city. Maps are drawn differently, the same street has different names in English, Hebrew and Arabic; and each sect celebrates its own holidays and none other. Consequently, a third of the
old city closes on friday, saturday and sunday - the Muslim, Jewish, and Christian sabbath.

Just as each section of the walled city has a myth associated with it, so does the via Dolorosa [29]. It was the path taken by Jesus, when he left the Praetorium after his trial, and bearing the cross, his journey to the Holy Sepulchre where he was crucified and buried. It was the custom in Roman times to make those condemned, walk through the major streets of the city. Via Dolorosa was one such street, and it is made famous by the event of Jesus having walked his last journey along it.

Along the road one finds nine stations associated with events of Jesus on this journey. The remaining five stations are within the church of the Holy Sepulchre. Each station commemorates one specific incident, and walking through the via Dolorosa, one can narrate the mythical as well as the physical story which took place there.

The exact route of the via Dolorosa is disputed. Some of the stations are mentioned in the New Testament, others are rooted in popular tradition. The monastery of the Flagellation has in its courtyard pavement stones with grooves chiselled onto them to prevent horses from slipping. Some are engraved with designs of games which the Roman guards are believed to have amused themselves with during the trial. The second station is said to be the place where Jesus was whipped, judged and crowned with thorns. The third is only in the form of a fragment of a pillar now incorporated in the railing of a church rebuilt after the second world war, and it marks the place where Jesus fell the first time [30 a, b]. The stations proceed narrating their story, until they culminate in the church of the Holy Sepulchre, built atop the supposed burial site. The church is also the place where the skull of the first human being is supposed to have been found!

It is not important how historically accurate or factually true these tales are. In fact an alternative narra-
tive exists which proposes the 'Garden-tomb' outside of the walled city as the burial site of Christ. It is important that these myths are vivid in the people's imagination, and they have a corresponding place that supports and continues them. The Christians in Jerusalem (as other sects) will go to almost any length to safeguard their myths and the places associated with them. In the via Dolorosa, the myth has transformed into a ritual where the story of Jesus's last journey is reenacted every Friday [31]. Many pilgrims and visitors join the weekly ceremony. It was also customary during the mediaeval times for some European churches to construct a replica of the via Dolorosa in their own towns. The pious who could not reach Jerusalem could do so in their own lands. The past lives on till today, even if it is in the form of a myth.

Hence we can see that direct enjoyment of a space is enlarged because visible identifiable objects are convenient pegs on which to hang personal memories, as well as shared memories. They can also contribute to our sense of orientation in a space. The security and pleasure offered by good environmental orientation affects experience at deep psychological levels. Good orientation, enhances access in addition, and thereby enlarges opportunity.

Thus, there is an obvious importance in the safeguarding of some landmarks, monuments or artifacts, which can act as sign-posts for our memories. No one however would want to live in an infinitely vivid place, where everything is connected to everything else. In such an existence, one would be overwhelmed by the multiplicity of evocative signs, and there would be no room for the building of new myths.

On the basis of the foregoing, we can try to agree upon a criteria which might be necessary to create an environment having a good sense of place. A good place is, "one which in some way appropriate to the person and
her culture, makes her aware of her community, her past, the web of life and the universe of time and space in which those are contained.” (Lynch: 1981)

Additionally, the image of such a place would be, “one that celebrates and enlarges the present while making connections with past and future. The image must be flexible, consonant with external reality, and above all, in tune with our own biological nature.” (Lynch: 1972)

The creation of a sense of continuity with the past, through time as well as through space, is one of the most important criteria that we can argue for in the case of both rebuilding and restoration. Local continuity can be established through the tangible presentation of historical contexts, by saving the special artifacts of a city. This continuity should extend to the near future, as well as the past. Those elements least likely to interfere with the present should be chosen, as should be ones which are symbolically rich, or directly connected with past activities and conveying a sense of the ambiance of the past. The image of the spatial environment as a scaffold to which we order our actions has an immediate practical role in our lives. It also has a profound psychological role. The psychological dimensions of time and space, although not identical, are linked together, and effective action and inner well-being depends on a fit between the two.

A sense of place depends on a strong image of time - on a vivid sense of the present, well connected to the nostalgic memory of the past, yet receptive to the hopes of the future. This concept of time must be consonant both with the structure of reality and with the structure of our minds and bodies. Our task is not to prevent or obstruct change in our environments, but, “cause it to change in a growth-conducive and life-enhancing direction. The environmental image of time-places can play a role in speeding that necessary change and its analysis can tell us what some of the features of a life-enhancing universe
would be.” (Lynch: 1972)"

To conclude, the past is indispensable to our creation of a sense of time and place. Yet the question of when to feel historically and when unhistorically, remains. It should at this point be understood that there are two main approaches that one may have towards the past. One can accept it uncritically, and often not even be aware of it; or in the second case possess a critical attitude towards it. A critical attitude may result either in acceptance or rejection, or even in compromise as the degree of consciousness of either alternative may vary. Yet, we have to know it, before deciding either way. In this sense we can never really free ourselves from the past.

Nelson Goodman has suggested criticism as a form of speculative construction. There isn’t, he states, such a strong distinction between thoughts applied to what exists and what might be. Both are exercises of judgment on part of a human subject, although a judgment, as Rossi believes, “that is somewhere between logic and biography.” (Rossi: 1981) In this way prospective and retrospective thought are no longer at odds with one another.

Although we can never free ourselves from the past, we can free ourselves from taboos, and this we can do not only by rejecting the past but also by critically accepting it. The latter position maintains that in order to operate one has to replace intolerance by a tradition of tolerance; and more generally replace the attitude of tabooism by one that evaluates existing traditions critically. Even if we ultimately reject them for what we believe to be better ones, we should be aware that all social criticism and betterment must refer to an existing framework.

Popper attributes the amazing capacity of the pre-Socratic Greek philosophers to find at least one new philosophy of staggering originality and depth precisely to a tradition - the tradition of critical discussion.
“It was a momentous innovation. It meant a break with the
dogmatic tradition which permits only one school doctrine and the
introduction in its place of tradition that admits a plurality of doctrines
in which all try to approach the truth by means of critical discussion.”
(Popper: 1963)\(^9\)

Although referring to the growth and progress of scientific knowledge, his ideas suggest that it is a lesson
that might well apply to our attitudes to the built environment. It is an attitude where critical discussion also im-
plies a tolerance of diversity, yet without an attitude of ‘anything goes.’

Notes:
\(^1\) Xenophanes, quoted in Sir Karl Popper: *Conjectures and
\(^2\) Popper: *Conjectures*, pp 120-35
\(^3\) Thales quoted in E.V.Walters: *Placeways* (London: Univ. of N.
Carolina Press, 1988), p 121
\(^4\) Martin Heidegger: “Building, Dwelling, Thinking,” in *Poetry,
\(^5\) Christian Norberg-Schulz: *Genius Loci* (NY: Rizzoli, 1979),
p 22
\(^6\) Walters: *Placeways*, p 131
\(^7\) Yi-fu Tuan: *Space and Place* (Minneapolis: Univ. of Minnesota
Space.’
\(^8\) Walters: *Placeways*, p 25
\(^9\) Besides assorted guide books and a personal visit, I am mainly
relying on the following: Attilio Krizmanic: *Komunalna Palaca,
Pula* (Pula: 1988); and, Tomislav and Gordana Marasovic: *The
Yugoslav Adriatic* (Belgrade: 1988)
\(^10\) Walter Benjamin: “Theses on the Philosophy of History,” in
Hannah Arendt (Ed.): *Illuminations* (London: Collins/Fontana,
1973), p 265
\(^11\) Aldo van Eyck: “The Interior of Time,” in Jencks / Baird (Eds.)
12 My major references are the 1970 issue 64-65 of Arhitektura Urbanizam - “New and Traditional in the same Town,” and, Ivo Petricioli: A guide-book of Zadar (Split, 1987)

13 Tuan: Space and Place, p 91

14 I am mainly drawing upon the following two books and a personal visit for my information: Teddy Kollek/Moshe Pearlman: Jerusalem-A History of 40 Centuries (NY: Random House, 1968); and, Shlomo Gafni: The Glory that was Jerusalem (Cambridge: Cambridge Univ. Press, 1982).


16 Kevin Lynch: What Time is this Place (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1972), p 1

17 Lynch: What Time, p 242


20 Popper: Conjectures, p 151
3. Reconstruction Attitudes towards Rebuilding

"It is not a matter of what he thinks. Architecture has a tradition of thousands of years and we are the inheritors of it." (Krier: 1982)¹

"To build today does not mean to ignore the element of survival in history but rather to question how to maintain one's presentness... I think architecture always deals with the problem of presentness." (Eisenman: 1989)²

The project of Modernity, as we have seen in the first chapter, was to develop spheres of science, morality and art according to their 'inner logic.' The promises of the Enlightenment were much needed in an age marked by intrusions of kitsch and academe. Modernism, with its purported break with the past and a doctrine of historical progress, nevertheless came to rarefy culture and to reify its forms. In the last chapter, we have tentatively proposed a good environment as one which creates a sense of time and place, and establishes continuity with the past and the future through the present. As I have mentioned earlier, the revisions which took place in the sixties mainly revolved around two problematic issues: the inability of the architectural object to communicate; and the relationship of the object to the city.

In the twenty-five years which have followed, these issues have developed in a range of different approaches, especially towards rebuilding in existing fabrics. In this chapter we shall pick up a few of these approaches and examine their attitude towards the past. We shall also attempt to evaluate them on the basis of the criteria we have suggested for good environments.

The approaches have been varied and the debate has often centered about issues of Tradition and Modernity. Where traditional culture, it is claimed, produced their objects for long term use, Modernist cultures are accused of producing theirs for short term consumption.
In these antagonistic philosophies, invention, innovation and discovery have different meanings. Where for the former it is claimed that invention, innovation and discovery are the means to achieve a lasting and comfortable world, for the latter these are ends in themselves. I do not wish to polarize the discussion here between Tradition and Modernity, but even if we take the issues of communication and relationship to the city as convenient starting points, then the range between these two is varied and the logical extensions of each of the approaches bring their own problems.

Architectural theory Alan Colquhoun argues, has always been based implicitly upon one of two interpretations of history and attitudes towards the past. On one hand, it has been held that history is the repository of 'permanent truths' transmitted from one generation to the next. In this 'normative' view, norms are accepted either by natural law or cultural convention. This view is accompanied by a myth of pure form and a return to origins to regain it. On the other hand, it has been held that history is a process of evolution and each culture and epoch possess only a relative truth. What appears absolutely true in one epoch, is seen in the next as contingent. This view tends towards visions of an utopian future, rather than that of an exemplary past. It would be a mistake, however, to present these views as simple alternatives.

In the Renaissance and the Middle Ages, the normative view was prevalent, with strong Aristotelian and neo-Platonic tendencies. In the eighteenth century, however, with the discovery of 'exotic' cultures the normative view was replaced by positivist thought. Tradition was no longer justified in terms of rules laid down by the ancients but by customs and conventions of human society.

"The temple of Solomon was replaced by the primitive hut as the paradigm of architecture." (Colquhoun: 1981)

Ever since the eighteenth century, architectural
discourse has raged between two poles according to which either all styles are permissible, or all styles are forbidden. After WWII, architecture’s projection both as art and as utopia began to recede. Instead of foreshadowing a system of production, it became a mere instrument of the production process. With this change architecture either took refuge in formal manipulations or was transformed into methodology. Also following was a corresponding view of history in a continuous state of progress. Meaning, it came to be believed, resided in an already existing cultural context. At any moment in history, there was a fully articulated structure of meanings. There was no ‘value-free’ reality ‘out-there’ to be discovered independent of the cultural position from which we view it. This view was lent support by structuralist philosophies and the idea of language as the paradigm of all cultural action. Transferred to architecture, this notion held that architectural meaning depended on the existence of pre-established types. Types then, depending on one’s attitude can either be seen as the invariable forms which underlie the various proliferations of form; or alternatively as historical survivals which have come down to us in different manifestations, and whose meaning does not depend on their coming into existence in a particular way at a particular time. In the first sense ‘type’ is the essence which lies embedded in each form. In the second sense, type is a de facto form rich in meaning and can be reinterpreted again and again in different historical circumstances.

The discourse was brought into focus in 1966 with publications by Aldo Rossi and Robert Venturi. Rossi and the Neo-Rationalists have tended towards the first interpretation of history and their work is mainly derived from the study of the city and the view that architectural type is the instrument of cultural memory and the bridge between the architectural object and the city [32]. Venturi and others
draw on the second interpretation of history where communication is seen as the function of ornament, leaving the body of the building as a neutral framework for containment and activity [33]. The notion of type is inseparable from ornament and there is a random borrowing of stylistic images with an ironic separation between substance and meaning.

Venturi and those after him, are chiefly concerned with the meaning and style of buildings with reference to the individual and the problem of popular expression. There is historical allusion and eclectic borrowing, and a nostalgia for architectural ornament. There is a concern for contextualism, but only of forms and details. There is little speculation about content, and it makes no proposal for the external space of the city. The neo-rationalists are apparently concerned with the opposite. There is a focus on the ideology, structure, and meaning of the whole city as a collective form. With the critique of Modern architecture’s destruction of the city, there is a proposed re-establishment of a rational physical fabric integral with the new society. There is a nostalgia for clear categorization and orders of typological form based on an idea of recovering the monument in the city and recollecting cultural meaning.

For the neo-rationalists, the architecture of the past and the built city are classified by types.

"The city is viewed synchronically as a morphological fact; study and project, analysis and proposal, are then no longer separate - 'there is no jump in logic, but unity,' as Aldo Rossi wrote in 1964" (Semarani: 1985)

The question is not so much that of a return to the old architectural orders, but of assembling and re-assembling buildings within the urban street. A feeling for context, urban analysis, territory and type are at the heart of a reinstatement of diversity of meanings and figuration into building. There is a need among the neo-rationalists
to base technical experience on methods of *typifying* processes of formation of things which serve the common customs of society regarding matters of settlement.

The terms type and typology have several shades of meaning in current architectural discourse. Typology of the city is a system of regulations, criteria for development, limits of dimensions and techniques of formation integrated with one another, making it possible to represent everything in the urban context as a function from which architecture in the city is formed. Typology is also a form of knowledge, partly factual, partly creative, which provides a method - however tentative - of giving physical space its urban structure. Besides, typology is a phenomenon of culture which contributes to norms, regulations and modes of conduct. It provides social definition of physical space from which an assortment of public and private behaviour derives.

For Rossi, architecture is an autonomous discipline, eternal, outside of time and creating typologies which have independent existence. The city is a permanent structure which holds collective memories and through its monuments, 'remembers' its past and 'realizes itself' as it develops. In Rossi’s own work there is a search for a timeless essence which determines meaning of individual phenomena [34]. His work recalls an archetypal and Italian vernacular, as if discovered for the first time like a child. The city which is his point of departure is not defined in economic and social terms, but as an *architectural* fact which has *permanences* and *meaning*. It comprises of *monuments* which serve as environmental foci and generate urban form. The city as a work of art has to be analyzed and defined.

The analysis is done through a process of rational and systematic decomposition. The totality is split into 'urban facts' which consist of cylinders, columns, pediments, conical roofs etc. The urban facts are reduced to...
their simplest possible ‘typical’ form. It is almost as if Rossi was recalling Laugier’s elements of the primitive hut [35]. An urban artifact comes into being through the addition of such ‘pieces’ although unlike in Venturi’s work there is no inflection between them. They are placed next to one another, devoid of ornament, and with little interaction, so as not to disturb the ideal, archetypal and essential nature of the composition.

“The type is the very idea of architecture, that is, what is closer to its essence.” (Rossi: 1966)

The concept of typology represents an important contribution to the recovery of meaning in architecture, but it is a meaning very different from that of Venturi as we shall see. More importantly, it has contributed immensely to the regaining of the obscured relationship between architecture and the city. Although the word locus appears several times in The Architecture of the City, Rossi does not use it to investigate the character of places. In general Rossi defines architecture as an autonomous discipline, although he adds, it is an “integral part of man.” (1966)

Yet the notion of architecture as an autonomous discipline - as a source of knowledge and capable of deriving meaning, and gaining sustenance, from within itself - is not without problems as we shall encounter later in the work of Eisenman. The nature of architecture as an autonomous discipline for Rossi does not deny knowledge of politics, economics and other social-cultural determinants, but denies the possibility of translating this information directly into architectural form. Architecture so defined implies production of knowledge about itself.

Ultimately, it is not as important where inspiration is derived from, but that it be a source for authentic inspiration and a catalyst for something genuine. Rossi quotes from Benjamin:
"I am deformed by the connections with all that surrounds me." (1981)

The all which surrounds him is of course Benjamin's rubble heap of history, and all the deposit that the past has left behind. Architecture then, for Rossi, is the instrument which permits the unfolding of a thing. It is made possible by the confrontation of precise form with time and the elements and is a combat which lasts until the form is destroyed. But architecture - the idea (or, memory) of it survives - and is one way humanity expresses its fundamental search for happiness.

"Cities, even if they last for centuries, are in reality great encampments of the living and the dead where a few elements remain like signals, symbols, warnings. When the holiday is over, the elements of the architecture are in tatters, and the sand again devours the street. There is nothing left to do but resume, with persistence, the reconstruction of elements and instruments in expectation of another holiday." (Rossi: 1981)

Others since Rossi have given different interpretations to the notion of typology and urban morphology depending on their attitude toward the past. O.M. Ungers, drawing on the work of C.G. Jung, has referred to his own work as an 'Architecture of the Collective Memory.' It transcends temporal meanings and is realized in the city where symbolic and archetypal ideas and images can be found. Ungers' city of memory is a pluralistic vision with meaning derived from the dialectical relationship of diverse architectural images that vie with each other for recognition [36]. As a microcosm of the urban context, each design is a 'city within a city.' It is a theme referring to a typical urban form, although self-referential and not responding to a specific site condition. The typological method for Ungers is not so much a search for architectural origins, but rather a search to represent metaphorically the process by which the city is built. Once the 'type' is established, a simple and possibly random combination
assures the 'production of the city.'

The debate is also one between Re-construction and De-construction. To counter an architecture which, as Eisenman believes, deals with the problem of 'presentness,' Leon Krier proposes to, "make buildings not just suffering from presentness, but from everlastingness." (1989) For Krier, the claim that you can't have innovation is simply not true - it is 'mere slander.' The aim of a building for Krier is to last for a long time and hence not just embody 'presentness' but something which is satisfying over a long period of time.

For both, Rob and Leon Krier, the street and the square [37 a,b] represent the only necessary models for the reconstruction of the city and a public realm. There is a dialectical relationship between building typology and the morphology of urban space, between the public and the domestic, between the monument and the urban fabric, and between classical and vernacular architecture. The credo of 'Function follows Form,' has also resulted in an anti-technocratic attitude and an insistence on cultural importance of place. The preferred forms are pre-industrial which according to Krier are the best and most beautiful. He also argues for the reconstruction of the European city [38], not by fragmented and local interven-
tions but rather as a global project which could in time, “make it possible to save a millenial culture of cities.” (Krier: 1980)∗

This typo-morphological approach has also been a strategy of design for S.H. Eldem, whose typological classifications of Turkish house plans [39] have provided a source for invention [40]. His practice is an attempt to install, “architecture as an anonymous practice whereby stylistic virtuosity or pretentious ‘ideal’ gestures are eliminated.” (Eldem:1987)∗ His accent is on anonymity, a quality Eldem believes is most hard to achieve.

Connected to the idea of urban morphology as a design strategy are Colin Rowe’s proposals. It was his preference for ‘piecemeal social engineering’ as over Utopian totalitarianism, that Rowe advanced the notion of Collage City [41]. Its idea was dualism and an incorporation of opposite qualities which modern city planning in its Utopian phase had denied. There was a place for urban form in fragments set within a background of private buildings or urban poche. A collage is not just a simple mix of dualities such as old and new, figure and ground, but the product of a judgment resulting from the deliberate juxtaposition of disparate elements so that the form and meaning of each is amplified, yet the coherence of the whole is maintained. The collage technique permits Rowe the luxury of Utopian poetics without the horrors of Utopian politics.

The type is not so much an image of something to be copied or imitated, as the idea that can serve as a rule. The model however is something to be imitated exactly for what it is. The type is something in relation to which different people may conceive works of art having no obvious resemblance to one another, but in the model no variation is allowed.

“All is exact and defined in the model; in the ‘type’ everything is more or less vague.” (Argan: 1963)∗
Architects such as El Wakil have taken the notion of model of the past as the starting point for their architecture. His theoretical impetus can be found in the work of Hassan Fathy, his anti-Modernist stance, and reliance on traditional vocabularies and methods of construction. In the Al-Qiblatein mosque in Saudi Arabia [42], one can see a free borrowing from various sources: Mamluk architecture, Yemeni architecture, Fathy's vocabulary, and the rural architecture of upper Egypt, to the extent that virtually every facade, every element represents a different style borrowed directly from the past. There occurs a literal eclectic transposition of typological fragments such as facades, minarets and domes and an eclectic grouping of them without a syntactic structure.

This approach also brings us quite close to Venturi's design method and the populist's free borrowing from the past. The limitations of Rossi's theory was felt in it not being entirely relevant to other cultures. The European tradition of solid city may easily be contrasted with the American passion for the open road. Venturi was to remark, "Main street is almost all right." (1966) [43] The debate was not just between the acropolis and the agora that we had mentioned earlier, but between the plaza and the strip. McLeod has pointed out how Rossi's categories - dwelling area, urban nucleus and monument - have only
limited meaning in the context of such cities as Las Vegas or Los Angeles. The malls in Denver for instance are no different from the ones in Boston. The reuse of a building in the U.S. is more likely to involve the transformation of a bowling alley into a restaurant, or a skating rink into a discotheque.

"After the changes in signs and decorations, the forms hardly persist in our memory." (McLeod: 1983)

It might therefore appear that in certain contexts, Venturi’s emphasis on the scenographic [4] may be more appropriate than the typo-morphological.

Venturi in his *Complexity and Contradiction in Architecture* argues that architecture should be rich, ambiguous and complex. A multiplicity of meaning is more appropriate than a simple unity. Historical allusion and use of precedent are essential components of architectural expression. The search for a lost ‘meaning’ is a reaction against Modernism’s anonymity, alienation and man’s loss of belonging and participation. Where Rossi protests against liberal diversity, prefers a return to simple typical forms which may be understood by everybody, Venturi reacts against monotony. His departure is an architecture of complexity and contradiction and one which expresses the “richness and ambiguity of modern experience.” (Venturi: 1966)
History for Venturi acquires an unique dimension - history understood in its extreme sense as not of a discipline, but as a sum total of culture’s products. The fatality of the ‘world as it is’ is turned into a virtue, and the strategy of design does not arise from internal consistencies of architectural language, but from the dynamics of the consumption of symbols. Where Venturi tries to uncover the contents which are implicit in any given life situation, Rossi looks for ‘eternal truths.’ Where one is vital and concrete, the other is rational and abstract. For Rossi, reality is not based on contingencies of history, but society’s memory of it - an ‘atemporal’ history, where architectural facts acquire value as contribution to the construction of the city. For Venturi the ‘proven’ and ‘believable’ nature of the objects of consumption in the market have more value.

“Anything that turns you on... is valid.” (Venturi: 1981)44

Where type for Rossi is the rational, ‘universal’ and non-individual form, for Venturi it is the concrete, idiosyncratic and temporal icon. Given everyday life and ‘the ugly and the ordinary’ as Venturi’s starting points, elements which are hybrid, distorted, ambiguous, and both-and, are preferred over those which are pure, clean, straight-forward, and either-or. As mentioned before there is a separation between the shelter which houses function, and the applied decoration which expresses meaning.

“Architecture occurs at the meeting of interior and exterior forces of use and space. The wall becomes an architectural event.” (Venturi: 1966)7

In his work one finds subtle interactions of spaces, varied inside-outside relationships, complex accommodations of functions, and façades which, although quoting from past architecture, combine a striking and an ironic image quality. Much of Venturi’s work plays with the past but in a way more thoughtful and knowing than those who follow him. In his Mother’s house [44] applied ornament [44 a,b] Robert Venturi: Mother's House, Chestnut Hill, Pennsylvania, 1963, Front Façade & Plan
and traditional house forms are combined in a symbolic way. The exterior shows Palladian symmetry and stereotypes of a house but with unstereotypical variations. Some windows are exaggerated, decoration of a ‘false’ broken arch signifies a public entrance, though with a non-conventional sequence...

Venturi expected his own work to be legitimized not by history but by modernist contradictions. References to the past are always juxtaposed to the present, and Venturi has always referred to himself as a Modern architect and belonging to a tradition. He has disassociated himself from the work of the post-moderns and the reason why is not hard to see. In most post-modern architecture, historical allusion rapidly degenerates into nostalgia, an escape from reality into enjoyable simulacrum, and a denial of history itself. Tension and parody are eliminated in academic re-creations of the past. The ironies of the difficult whole become the banalities of the simplistic whole.

"Cartooned exaggeration alternates with esoteric mannered quotation; history is randomly scavenged to create an aura of historical depth." (McLeod: 1989)¹¹

These post-modern tendencies do not react against the past in any profound way either to repudiate it or acknowledge a debt. Their historicism is decorative and operating on the level of surface rather than content [45]. They are unable to structure ideas of reality and hence conceive of reality itself as unreal. Philip Johnson's AT&T [46] borrows freely from Brunelleschi, Ledoux, Raymond Hood... The references are obvious and admitted. Johnson's intentions do not exclude irony, frivolity or calculated shock value, but his interpretation of monumentality and principles of Renaissance composition remain unconvincing. As early as 1961 Johnson had remarked:

"There are no rules, absolutely no given truths in any of the arts... unlimited possibility to explore of an unlimited past of great
examples...”

Post-modernist stylistic eclecticism meant aesthetic liberation - art for art’s sake and the easy degeneration into kitsch and academe, the same conditions that Modernism had once revolted against. In an attempt to be more communicative, historical styles once rejected were adopted readily. This offered a means to represent a variety of experiences, moods and allusions. For Graves too [47], as for Rossi, (as once for Corbusier), the basic elements are simple and few. One wonders whether we are not merely replacing one rhetoric by another. The creation of a sense of time and place and the establishment of continuity, so necessary for the creation of a good environment, still distant dreams.

Raymond Abraham justly criticized the ‘truth’ of AT&T residing in the fact that when you put your fingers in the seams between the three inch granite stones (that hang from a metal skeleton), you can feel the soft silicon.21 The reality of most post-modernist buildings is just that three inches deep.

The rise of regionalism and attempts to seek meaning and communicative language in local situations are also often prone to reduction to simplistic formulae [48]. The critical line between pastiche and genuine invention rooted in the past is very fine. There are few buildings where idea, form and technique are fused in an indivisible unity. The issue is not so much the reference to the past, for this as we have been arguing is unavoidable, but rather the critical attitude which forges the old into a new meaningful whole and establishes a profound connection to the past and the future. Viollet le duc witnessing the revivals of his age wrote:

“A certain school has lately arisen based upon the principle of composing a new architecture out of all the good features of the former styles; a dangerous error because a macaronic style cannot be a new style. It may indicate some knowledge and a certain amount of
skill and spirit... but it can never be the manifestation of a principle or an idea."

It is a lesson not entirely without value to the conditions of our own times. The post-modernist struggle for meaning has virtually become the reduction of meaning. But even were a 'meaningful' expression possible, the entire notion of meaning has come into question today. The issue of meaning, understood in a literal sense and transferred to architecture is problematic. The post-modernist notion of forms that can literally be read as words and buildings which convey specific messages is questioned. Semiologists consider meaning an aspect of communication and hence a linguistic problem. They believe that people invariably see a piece of architecture in terms of a similar object, that is, a metaphor. The meaning of a building resides in looking like something else. Semiology reduces the problem of meaning to one of its more superficial aspects. They claim, if a meaning of a building consists in its relationship to other things, this relationship comprises more than similar 'looks.'

"A metaphor should be no more than an accident of expression, and it is dangerous to make a thought of it. A metaphor is a false image." (Bachelard: 1964)

It is this reduction of meaning which has led architects such as van Eyck to vehemently denounce postmodernism:

"The best Post Modern is as stale and stereotyped as the worst Modern... there is no such thing as a solid teapot that also pours tea." (1981)

There are others for whom this difficulty has led to the severe criticism of the entire enterprise of meaning. The post-structuralists and the de-constructivists, deriving from the work of Baudrillard and Foucault ("What does it matter, who is speaking and who is spoken to") have placed simulation over reality. Normally simulation follows from reality; now reality must follow simulation.
In today's relativist world they claim, there no longer are any ideologies. Structuralism tried to analyze texts as complete and total entities, but post-structuralism disputed the notion that something could exist within its own world. As Derrida says, meaning is continually deferred and there is no beginning or end. The notion of process is critical. Things can be apprehended at any moment in the process. If the built work is understood only as a moment in time, then it represents neither a beginning nor an end, just a fragment.

Eisenman’s House El Even Odd comprises of three Els. The El according to its author is a decompositional form representing in a single geometric configuration the complex cultural condition of an age of partial objects - both a fragment and the sign of a fragment. It is moving towards completion as a single cube or else towards incompleteness (non-existence), as a single void. The El represents the displacement suffered by man threatened with annihilation. The 3-D El is a sign of displacement halfway between nostalgia for the idealism of the past and the fear of an uncertain future expressed by the void. The object has no past or future history, only a present condition as a suspension of past and future. His houses then are ‘ideological statements’ which make a commentary on the loss of center.

“I am not preaching disharmony. I am suggesting that disharmony might be part of the cosmology that we exist in.”

(Eisenman: 1984)

The loss of self-evident value according to Eisenman allows the timeless to be cut free from the meaningful and truthful. What is important is the realization of, “architecture as an independent discourse... the intersection of the meaning-free, the arbitrary and the timeless in the artificial.”

(Eisenman: 1984)

The past no longer has any sense. Nor does anything else. Everything is arbitrary - that is, simply starting
at points without value - artificial, relative and having no natural connection. The process of modification is an open-ended strategy, reinvented for each circumstance and adopted for the moment, and not forever.

Architecture, for the de-constructivists as for the post-modernists, is a language, but no longer a code to which one can assign meanings. To paraphrase Eisenman, we read whether we know what language we are reading or not. That is, we can read French without understanding French.

"Architecture in the present is seen as a process of inventing an artificial past and a futureless present." (Eisenman: 1984)³⁶

If we are to accept Colin Rowe’s idea that the supreme role of architecture is the rational subversion of the status quo, de-constructivism by its critical skepticism and the questioning of the existing conventions of composition and form, has played a role in undermining post-modernism’s pseudo-historicism and mindless contextualism. But outside of the formal sphere, the critical role of de-constructivism remains elusive. It raises deep political and ethical questions such as how in a world of endless ‘textuality’ can the causes of oppression and manipulation, for instance, ever be determined or examined sufficiently to be countered.

"In a world without truth, history, or consensus, what is the basis or criterion for action?... Is there any way to avoid total relativism - a sense that anything goes?" (McLeod: 1989)³⁶

Raymond Abraham has rightly remarked that if one were to start talking about fragmentation in an ideological sense, it would become rather scary. Decomposition in the social context would lead initially to revolution, next to anarchy, and ultimately to re-composition in terms of the strictest form of order.

"Fascism is a conceivable result." (1985)³⁶

Deconstructivist forms reject nostalgia, historicist fabrication and meaning, but they embody another kind of
rejection as well - the social. Regardless of questions of an epistemological nature, some values however tentative - perhaps no more than *Conjectures*, and some notion of collective identity are essential for social betterment and good environments. By being open to critical discussion and, if necessary, *Refutation*, these conjectures can bring meaning and shared values back to our environments.

Despite general criticism of Modern architecture, neither the Italian neo-rationalists nor the American post-modernists provide a clear critique nor explicit alternative to the dilemma of Modern environments.

"It is as though each imagines that history can be rewritten to suit its own purpose... one slanted towards the collective memories within a communist order, the other towards the individual in a capitalist society." (Harvard Arch. Review: 1980)

Both positions in their logical extensions and differing attitudes towards the past, have created horrendous results. The neo-rationalist autonomy tending towards nihilism [51], and post-modern eclecticism ending in kitsch [52]. Both are justified in criticizing the Modern Movement's exaggerated faith in technology and progressive view towards history. These two positions have, however, erred in another direction - the abjuration of the social realm and the assumption that form is independent of social and economic processes.

"The formal and the social costs are too high when the focus is so exclusively on form." (McLeod: 1989)²³

Norberg-Schulz nevertheless believes that the 'new tradition' is basically fine.²⁴ It does, however, need a stronger foundation to become fertile. This foundation can only be based on a deeper understanding of the everyday world in which both man and architecture play a role. The quest for the 'authentic' demand that each of our artifacts and spaces aid in creating the genius-loci. The genius of a place cannot be understood in a Platonic sense but in real concrete terms where it becomes a part of living reality.

Frampton, too, shares the above concerns in what he terms as a search for a 'resistant' architecture.²⁵ He believes that architecture can be sustained as a critical practice today only if it assumes an arrriere-garde (as opposed to avant-garde), position. That is, a practice which distances itself from the Enlightenment myth of progress, as well as from a reactionary and unrealistic return to the forms of pre-industrial past. It has to remove itself both from the tendencies of optimization of advanced technologies and the tendencies to regress into nostalgic historicism. It has to stop oscillating between melancholia for a lost Enlightenment and a mania which tries to compensate for that by hyper-simulation. It is only an arrriere-garde that can cultivate a resistant architecture
and an identity-giving culture which at the same time has discreet recourse to universal civilization.

Van Eyck stresses in his *Labyrinthian Clarity*, that the past, present and the future, must be active in the mind's interior as a continuum. If they are not, our artifacts will be without temporal depth and associative perspective. The excessive infatuation with change leads to the severing of the past from the future, with the result that the present is rendered emotionally inaccessible.

"I dislike an antiquarian attitude towards the past as much as I dislike a sentimental technocratic one towards the future. Both are founded on a static, clockwork notion of time... so let's start with the past for a change and discover the unchanging condition of man." (Van Eyck: 1966)a

We are on a path of possibilities, living in an age where contradictions abound. It is from these contradictions that strands of sensibility are to emerge. To put our decisions into the field becomes a dramatic choice. Beyond a few certainties, every path is full of risks. The journeys which lead each man to his home are fraught with dangers. Yet it is in this voyage that one can lead to the 'confluence of two seas.' The confluence of the world of ideas and images, with the world of sensible things.

Notes:
1 Leon Krier, in response to Tadao Ando: *The Charlottesville Tapes* (NY: Rizzoli, 1985), p 127
2 Peter Eisenman, in Peter Eisenman/Leon Krier: "‘My Ideology is better than yours,’” *(Architectural Design* Vol.59, No.9-10, 1989), p 9
6 Rossi: *Architecture*, p 13


9 Leon Krier in, Eisenman/Krier: “My Ideology,” p 11


11 Eldem quoted in, Sibel Bozdogan: “Sedad Hakki Eldem” *(Mimar 24, June 1987)*, p 45


15 Robert Venturi: *Complexity*, p 8


17 Venturi: *Complexity*, p 88


21 Raymond Abraham in, Kenneth Frampton: “The Culture of Fragments,” *(Precis 6, 1985)*


25 Michel Foucault quoted in, Frampton: “Culture,” p 66


27 Peter Eisenman: “The End of the Classical” *(Perspecta 21, 1984)*, p 166
Eisenman: “The End,” p 172
McLeod: “Architecture and Politics,” p 51
Raymond Abraham in, Frampton: “Culture,” p 73
Each city has a personality of its own, to lose which is always an impoverishment. With time, each city assumes a character which reflects its history and explains its survival. It is not something static but rather a manifestation of human activities: a focal point of life but a life which exceeds the span of individual existence. It is these aspects, striking though transient, that make up a city because of the continuity of culture it offers to its inhabitants. As van Eyck says, the past, present, and the future, have to be active in the mind’s interior as a continuum for our artifacts to have temporal depth and associative perspective.

The past of a city can be read from the form it may have taken, the way the streets and squares are laid out, and their shape, size and place in the natural landscape. From the physical form can also be ‘read’ the myths and legends associated with it, as we have seen in the case of Jerusalem. The physical form thus allows us to at least partially comprehend the kind of society that gave rise to it.

Thus, just as an argument can be made for the preservation of individual artifacts in a city, an equally strong argument can be made for conserving the character of the city: that is, its texture or fabric which is the setting for its artifacts, but is also a result of (and in turn sustains) the socio-economic factors which created it. It is not uncommon in many instances to see a well preserved or carefully restored monument which has lost its historical association and perspective because of the modern structures that surround it. The monument takes on an Hegelian *aufheben*: fossilized, captured in time and removed from the course of history.

In several urban fabrics, say for instance, those of Islamic cities, the monuments cannot be dissociated from their urban context. Mosques and other prominent buildings, as we shall see, hardly stand out as isolated buildings, but rather they dissolve into an architectural mass. Conti-
nuity is maintained in the texture of the whole area rather than in the contours of individual monuments - however beautiful they may be.

Lynch describes texture as a quality more important to a settlement than many of the gross map patterns that usually attract design attention. A fundamental feature of the texture is its grain - the way in which the various different elements of a settlement are mixed together in space. These elements may be activities, building types, persons or other features. The grain of a mix could be fine or coarse, sharp or blurred and is a spatial feature describing degrees of segregation, integration, diversity, purity, etc.

"In its many forms, grain is critical to the goodness of a place." (Lynch: 1981)¹

The distinctive fabric which characterises each city is in part a reflection of the social, economic, and other forces which shape it. For instance, the Greek colony of Neapolis (present day Naples)[53] shows its streets following the typical pattern called per strigas (by row or furrows). We can see that the street layout to a large extent

[53] Naples, Italy, Aerial photograph

[54] Kerman, Iran, Aerial photograph
determines the texture of the fabric. The city’s defensive walls are related to the form of the ground and not to the streets. This is a pattern which has persisted for at least 2,600 years.

The general configuration of the traditional Islamic city is a succession of contrasting cubical forms, solids and voids, light and dark, counter-balanced by sunbathed terraces and shadowy courtyards, relieved from visual tedium by periodic intrusions of protruding minarets and domes [54]. Janet Abu-Lughod has pinpointed four principles which constitute the 'deep structure' of the Islamic city.² They are, the residential superblocks enclosing semi-public space; the secondary nature of most circulation spaces; the delegation to units of contiguous neighbours the responsibility to police individual property and common easements; and the recognition of elaborated property rights which theoretically permit infinite divisions of space.

These principles result in a separation of the public and private domain, volumetric articulation of space, houses grouped in districts such as haras with their wakalas (rest houses for travelling merchants), rabs (rented lodgings for the common people) and sabil-kutubs (place for drinking water and Koranic school for children). On the main arteries lie the suqs (market-places) and behind them the funduqs (warehouses). Despite pronounced functional differentiation, the city form is a coherent unity owing to the morphological affinities of its architectural elements. The layout is not geometric, but despite the absence of an imposed plan the configuration of the fabric is not chaotic, in part due to implicit forces of social order and Islamic tradition that brings spontaneous expression into harmony with the whole.

The historical and traditional quarters of cities such as Delhi, Fez and Cairo are all characterized by a certain similar texture and they all share in differing
degrees current woes of decay and dilapidation. All of
them it seems are victims of the forces of change. In some
cases, change forced upon them due to colonial interven-
tion, in others a change brought about by the inevitable
march of history and changing technology. The issue is
how one is to cope with and manage change. If these
districts are the result of a social order which may no
longer exist, what is the justification behind preserving a
past that may be bygone? What is the relation between
social change and environmental change? And lastly, is it
possible that there still remain social orders which retain
value and are worth preserving? That perhaps these social
orders are struggling to survive changes in the physical
order, and maybe they deserve a chance?

As we have argued at the beginning of this chapter,
there are instances where it is preferable to preserve entire
districts or quarters of a fabric and not just an artifact. But
the cost of preserving or conserving an environment is
bound to be higher than the price of preserving a single
building. The criteria needless to say, must be very conserva-
tive and there must be a strong reason for choosing the
former alternative.

The fabric that we choose to preserve should
illustrate not just the 'great' moments, but the full spec-
trum of its culture. Pastas which are preserved ought to be
preserved on the basis of knowledge and values of the
present. We want them to change as our present knowl-
edge and values change - the way history itself is rewritten.
One danger we must safeguard against is in preserving an
encapsulated image of the past which in time may prove
to be irrelevant:

“For preservation is not simply the saving of old things but
the maintaining of a response to those things. This response can be
transmitted, lost or modified. It may survive beyond the real thing
itself. We should expect to see conflicting views of the past, based on
conflicting values of the present.” (Lynch : 1972)"
We can successfully deal with the past only when we can simultaneously preserve continuity of people, things and places. That can be our only reasonable strategy for coping with change. The physical environment is said to be the mirror of culture. Whenever a feature of the environment is directly linked to an important social function, the modification of one will cause the modification of the other. Our intention is not to halt change for, “change is within the very destiny of things, for there is a single inevitability about evolution,”(Rossi: 1981) but to guide change with a respect to the singular authority of the built object and of the landscape which is of a permanance beyond people.

Physical settings reinforce and perpetuate behavior in such a way that they also correspond to the desires of the behavers. Change in the environment can have an effect on the growth and development of individuals. It thus indirectly also has an effect on the patterns and norms of society.

We can see in the cases of Delhi and Algiers how a change in the physical environment affected social behavior. Where the old city of Delhi is characterized by a certain grain which defines its character and quality of life, a sharp contrast in form can be seen between the traditional existing city and the British colonial town developed adjacent to it [55]. The two zones abut each

[55] Delhi, India, Aerial view, Boundary between the new & the old city
other: the old and the new, the crowded and the sprawling, the disorderly and the orderly, the poor and the rich, the native and the foreign.

The development of Delhi shows a bipolar form familiar in colonial history. The leading emotions of the conquerors are those of pride, fear and a sense of exile. Along with the contrasts of form, a huge schism can be seen between the two towns and the evils of a stratified society that go with it. On the part of the colonizers, it is an attitude towards the past which detaches and places a distance from it. Separation and control is maintained. Space is used to express social distance but at the same time is made visible, concrete and made to express dominance. To achieve this, devices of spatial separation, gates and barriers, open views and axes of approach and parade, and scale devised to overawe, are all employed.

Just as Delhi was guided by great neo-baroque axial avenues displaying military force and civil grandeur, not dissimilar interests guided the creation of the boulevard de l’imperatrice (renamed boulevard de la Republique after the 1870 revolution, and currently boulevard Che Guevara), in Algiers. Completed in 1874 after considerable delays, the intervention not only affected the traditional quarter of the city - the casbah but destroyed a third of it. In efforts to ‘tidy-up,’ besides the rue de Rampart, two roads were widened right through the fabric of the casbah and the entire quartier de la marine cleared to make way for an ‘ordered’ environment [56] (Incidentally, still incomplete after a series of aborted schemes, most notably Le Corbusier’s Obus A-E).

The entry of the French into Algiers in 1830 and the establishment of a colonial power in the city created immediate serious urban problems for the authorities. The logistics and needs of a modern army were strongly hampered by the existing fabric and immediate measures were taken to facilitate connection between the main gates

[56] Algiers, Algeria, Figure-Ground Plan
and the port. The idea of the rue de Rampart was formulated in the first decade of the French occupation consisting of a military road along the top of the ramparts besides the sea to be used as a promenade for the civilian population.

It is more credible to believe that the military authorities saw the building and maintenance of a continuous enclosure around the sea as indispensable to ensure the defense of the port but also serving as a device for the display of wealth and power.

"... a promenade largely open to the port and bay, a balcony on top of which the city is presented to the traveller arriving from the sea." (Cresti; n.d.)

The project was built as planned: a true grand maritime avenue in the military sense of the word consisting of eight bastions and extending for 1700 meters between the two gates. This not without a considerable damage to the traditional fabric of the casbah and the life of its inhabitants.

By these standards, Fez in Morocco [57] can be said to be more fortunate not being affected by direct physical interventions in its fabric, but characterised by a condition shared by many other traditional cities and hence worthy of our attention.

The medina of Fez [58] is the center of spiritual and economic activity of the city and is one of the great traditional capital cities of the Arab world having left its
mark on the cultural life of the *maghreb* for centuries. It is described as a pulsating heart and brain of the country inspiring much of Morocco's religious and political thought and artistic creation. With the coming of the protectorate, Fez found itself confronted with the modern world. The establishment of a modern city by the French colonists created a schism, causing problems similar to Delhi and Algiers [59]. The situation worsened with the decision to move the administrative capital to Rabat and the economic centre to Casablanca. Although the French left in 1956, it did not bring about to the *medina* a reaffirmation of traditional values.

Today social segregation threatens to turn the medina in a quarter for the poor and the destitute. Many crafts which had in the past sustained the city moved out and rural migration caused the number of inhabitants to triple since 1900, with a density of over 1000 persons per hectare. Buildings have deteriorated and are rapidly crumbling, open spaces are freely speculated and built upon, public facilities are in severe need of maintenance, and infrastructure is loaded to dangerous levels. Very few efforts have been made to equip the old city with modern facilities or to adapt the facilities to present needs. Many traditional facilities which originally had important functions in the social order and which had created a certain
climate of humanity are neglected or abandoned. There was little will to rehabilitate, the first attempts at even formulating a master plan (leave alone implement) occurring in 1975 by UNESCO. When faced with rebuilding, instead of discovering forms respectful of scale and typology of the existing fabric, alien forms were introduced into the medina.

It is not that the medina is lacking in vitality even today. The crafts that play a major role in giving form to the fabric are still alive (although depleted in number). It is just that the physical structure has fallen into an almost fatal state of disrepair. The fate of the medina will depend upon how the existing legacy is maintained and adapted to the social and economic conditions of the inhabitants. It means discovering forms of habitat that correspond to the characteristic texture and typology of the medina and at the same time offer solutions to the current problems.

Yet, despite the above examples what evidence do we have that the crumbling physical order is still one which supports a social order which is fighting for survival?, and if it is, why is it desirable to continue it? A few clues can contribute towards this evidence and help us build an argument for it. I shall begin with the examination of a traditional residential quarter in an Islamic city, the hara.

Hara was the name in medieaval times for a quarter or section of town, with a main through street and an hierarchy of dead end streets. The quarters were occupied by both rich and poor, the residents being involved in the production and distribution of goods. Each hara was also a political unit of administration and control, with each hara having a political official - the chief spokesman and administrator of the district, responsible for maintaining order and settling trifling disputes.

The hara also supported a range of public activities such as the hammam (public bath-house), mosque,
sabil-kuttab, shops and workshops. Each quarter was both a physical and a social entity, each quarter housing people of one ethnic and social group. An analysis of the al-Sukkariyya hara [60] in Cairo shows an intricate web of kinship, only 38 of the 117 families having no other relatives in the hara. Even residential mobility in and out of the hara is minimal. Of the 117 families, 41 household heads have lived in the hara all their lives, while only 18 families have been in the hara for six years or less.

Though there is a street going through the hara, outsiders are not encouraged to enter. The inhabitants are well known to one another with close relationships and a strong sense of community. Most physical structures in the hara have mythic or legendary tradition associated with them which are passed on from generation to generation and help the inhabitants preserve their continuity in time.

Interviews with people in the hara reveal a strong feeling of identity, “people know who you are;” a sense of security, “the place is controlled, no outsiders could intrude;” a sense of trust in one akin to themselves, “one finds better ones (people) in the hawari inspite of their inelegant dress;” a sense of freedom and play, “where else could I play soccer;” and a marked preference over the modern city, “I like my sister’s apartment...It is cleaner there, she has running water and a tub. But I get bored when I go to her... here I have more fun.” (Al-Messiri: 1979)

Neither is physical environment deterministically related to social space, nor is it irrelevant to social space. We carry on the same activity in more than one environment. We also engage in more than one activity in the same environment. Yet some environments are more appropriate than others for the carrying out of certain activities. These environments exhibit thresholds toward
other kinds of activities. Finally, there are absolute limits in which the physical environment acts as a constraint against the introduction of a new use. Each of these thresholds or limits may be viewed negatively or positively depending on the changing values of a society.

"Thus physical environment is conditional; it imposes constraints and provides support. The relationships between physical space and social space are neither deterministic nor autonomous, but are rather reciprocal and possibilist." (Anderson: 1980)

The hara, as we have seen, is still a living entity. It is still an entity with an economic base that is not quite dead and a social structure which is tenaciously persistent. It nurtures a sense of individual pride, fosters a sense of community and establishes a continuity in time and place. No doubt there are individuals who prefer the luxurious amenities of modern living. But as long as there is a substantial population who still prefer communal life such as the hara has to offer, with its informal networks and easily accessible support system; there is evidence that some of the old residents would move back were conditions to improve. It would be a denial of freedom and of choice were environments such as this left to die.

Haras are not just characteristic of cities in Morocco or Egypt. During the recent seige in Beirut, neighbourhood assistance was organised by block committees which allocated vacant apartments, oversaw rationing of water and distributed food and medical relief. Many forms of life connected with the old city are alive and in a sense, contemporary. They stem from tradition and mark a stage in the evolution of culture. It is this intangible, yet intrinsic, quality which certain historic fabrics display, whose environments sustain a certain ambiance, a certain 'feel' or character, which should be continued. It behooves us in most cases not to destroy the character of these tissues and of the past that lives with them.
Notes:

1 Kevin Lynch: Good City Form (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1981), p 266


8 Al-Messiri Nadim: Concept of the Hara, p 337

9 Stanford Anderson, “Conventions of Form and Conventions of Use in Urban Social Space (Extract),” (Ekistics, Vol.47/No.280, Jan-Feb 1980), p 32

In the previous chapter, we argued that it was desirable at times to maintain the ambiance of the environment as a whole. In this chapter, we shall attempt to understand the role of the monument in nurturing a sense of the past, its relation to the city, and what Colin Rowe has succinctly summarised as the debate between the Acropolis and the Agora [10,11] considered briefly in chapter one. In the light of this debate we shall examine several examples to try and understand processes which have motivated and transformed the monuments in a city. We shall conclude with hypothetical exercises done previously by others to transform one model (that of the acropolis) into the other (the agora). For the above purposes we shall consider examples from Cairo, Rome, Split, Chandigarh and Dacca. Indeed, whether this confrontation between the Acropolis and the Agora is really unavoidable; and whether some transition between the two can be achieved, are themes that we shall try to explore.

Since the second half of the sixties, more and more attention is being given to the analysis of the city as an integral part of architecture. There has been a strong questioning of the legitimacy of the ‘object in the park,’ and what it entails: disintegration of the street and of organized public space [9]. The city has come to be considered an architectural fact and its complex character the result of the dialectical relationship between the architectural object and the city itself. Consequently, there has resulted the recomposition of the false dichotomy between architecture and urban planning. The conceptual confines of the architectural object have been enlarged. Urban construction is covered and the meaning of the city is captured in its totality - in time as well as in space.

"The city of the past is therefore not just the image of a more beautiful city, but also a reference point of architecture.” (Rossi: 1967)
Every city develops its own unique individuality in the course of its history. It is a kind of palimpsest of values charged with signs and symbols made by distant generations reflecting motives which first caused people to come together and remain. Layer upon layer, the city holds within itself the imprint of the values of successive generations, of great events and social movements. It is thereby man’s greatest collective artifact and sometimes his greatest collective work of art [61].

Rossi’s critique focuses not so much on the sterility of forms in modern architecture as on the neglect and destruction of the city, repository of the collective memory of man. In discussing the overall structure of the city, Rossi introduces two categories: the area (or sector), and the primary elements. The primary elements are the nuclei of all urban developments, and to explain them Rossi introduces the term permanances.
Permanances can be monuments, the street plan, or the city centre which persist in the evolution, growth and change of the city. They endure the passage of time, playing a primary role in the constitution and configuration of the city. Reviewing Rossi, Mary McLeod states:

“Primary elements are permanances that contribute continuously to the growth and formation of the city.” (1983)

For Rossi, permanances, whether they are typological or physical monuments, represent the driving force of an urban dynamic. Their outcome can never be taken for granted. Processes of interaction between the city and the permanances make possible the invention of the city in time and they interpret genius loci to its maximum.

“The dynamic process tends more to evolution than preservation, and...in evolution, monuments are not only preserved, but continuously presented as propelling elements of development.” (Rossi: 1982)

The city is the place of collective memory and is the guiding spirit of the entire urban structure. The ‘idea’ that each city has of itself is the guarantee of its continuity. It represents the union between the past and the future and it has the same role that memory has in the life of each person. The ‘idea’ is guarded by the institutions citizens create and the physical manifestation of them: the permanances and more specifically the monuments. If we are aware of what ties architecture to the city and to the ‘idea of itself’ that each city holds, then it is believed we can make our compositional choices in a less arbitrary manner.

It must be clarified that we are using the word monument in its brodest sense, to mean ‘significant buildings or spaces’ with its etymological roots being ‘things that remind.’ Reminding us on one hand of the past and the memory (collective or individual) of the place, and on the other acting as familiar landmarks which provide visual cues and aid in the imagibility of the environment. Monu-
ments derive from the eternal need of the people to have symbols which reveal their inner life, their actions and their social conceptions. Monuments are an inevitable fact of human civilization. They are the record of a civilization and are human landmarks symbolizing the people's ideals, aims and actions. They are intended to survive the period in which they were built to provide a heritage for future generations. They thereby provide a deliberate link of the past with the future. It is, "... an essential function of the monument that it should make a claim on the transcendental and set out to defy time." (Curtis:1984)

A good monument compresses many levels of meaning into a simple arrangement of clear hierarchy. It must possess a life enhancing and spatial vitality related to the human figure and his movement through space. It should therefore accommodate the private mental life of an individual and express the public persona of a society. Its form lives in numerous periods of time and it reveals a profound bond with the content. The monument should seek to transcend mere image-making or a spurious literary character. It should rather aim at a symbol of lasting power which is capable of lasting inspiration and enhance memorability. The good monument will then serve as a repository of memories and an imaginative stimulus to new courses of action.

It is worthwhile at this point to make a distinction between the concept of monument and that of monumentality. Not all monuments necessarily need be monumental and many objects other than monuments may possess monumentality. Monumentality in popular usage is linked to size, but this may be misleading. The dictionary definition stresses the memorial role, and hence, besides size, intensity of expression, the power to symbolize and the ability to create ‘a lasting presence’ are of importance. The monument refers to the past as a means of suggesting continuity.
The continuity of meaning in the city is dependent on the reciprocal relationship between the image of the past, consciousness of the present, and the idea of the future - the relationship between nostalgia, security and hope. Monuments most clearly bear witness to the connections between the three. The central spot in Roman and many later towns was marked by the town's *mundus* - a column erected at the central intersection of streets [62]. It had its foundation in both the ritual and the topographic site of origin. It anchored the city at one and the same time in its history and place and in the mythical realm of origins. It was the landmark of the city's inauguration and it rose beyond the centre and the origin, reminding one of the end as well as of the beginning.

The monumentality of a city is dependent on the hierarchy of its social structure and the hierarchy of its forms. The preoccupation with object-building at the expense of context resulted in the separation between society's collective aspirations and Modern architectural practice. The city cannot be regarded simply as the sum of buildings that constitute it but must be seen as architecture in itself. It is a collective built object with a history of its own. The objects and their composition must be understood to have implicit collective significance. Thus the city is a monument to the covenant between individual liberties and the limits of public control. Only when the value of the city is so raised, will its forms and structures reveal the hierarchy which orders the activities of individuals within its boundaries. Without such a conscious program of the monument and its relation to the city, our monuments will only be distinguished by their size, annoyance or nostalgia. The relationship of the monument and the city is both an architectural problem and the problem of the society at large.

For example, in Islamic cities the confrontation between laws that govern the architecture of mosques-
mausoleum complexes and laws of urban design can often be seen quite clearly. For instance the monuments in the medieval city of Cairo had to solve three often differing needs. First, they had to be imposing; second, they had to face the street; and third, they had to be oriented to Mecca. Ingenious plans were often developed to fit into their sites. The emirs could build monuments along the streets of the old city and they did so all through the Mamluk period. The streets were already existing and could not be altered and the façades of the monuments had to be aligned with them since the reason for building a monument was to appear prominently in the street front. Monuments were visible symbols and sources of power. Their elements were disposed so as to dominate the view and assert control of the street.

The concept of Funerary architecture within the city was introduced by the Shiis whose veneration of the Imams and their descendants made it a pious duty to give their tombs special attention. The mausoleum in the cemetery and the mausoleum in the city did not differ in type, but the way in which it related to the surrounding. The former was a free-standing monument visible in the round; the latter had to respond to the urban morphology. As the prophet had prohibited the building of secular mausoleums, earlier tomb chambers were concieved as places for prayer and endowed with a mihrab. Later there was a division between the two, often a separate mausoleum being attached to the prayer hall.

Also guiding the position of the tomb chamber was the notion of baraka (invocations of blessing upon the soul of the deceased). Where in cemeteries, tomb chambers were placed on the qibla side, in the city it was on the side of the street as the passer-bys (at least quantitatively) could contribute more baraka. The tomb chamber was not to be arranged in just a religiously beneficial position, but to demonstrate publicly the piety and power of the de-
ceased and was designed to attract attention. It was the privilege of the Sultan to site his mausoleum on the city’s main boulevard. If *baraka* could be combined from two sources - the passerbys and the devout praying within, it would be perfect.

"The ideal place for a funerary monument, no doubt was a site where the *qibla* side of the complex coincided with the street.” (Kessler)

Sultans often built their funerary complexes on the western side as on this side the *qibla* wall coincided with the street. In cases where the funerary complex touched more than one street, the tomb chamber was placed at the intersection where it was most prominent. Siting in this fashion often compromised religious tenets in favour of secular concerns of glorifying a patron through a monument.

One of the earliest example of a mosque adjusting to the street layout is the Mosque of al-Aqmar (1125) [63 a,b]. The Mosque shows an unprecedented concern for its urban role. Conspicuous display of architecture to the street and individual manipulation of the façade became commonplace in succeeding developments. In the mausoleum of Emir Taghri-Bardi (1440) [64 a,b], the tomb chamber has been carefully sited at the corner of the street as well as in a way that its direction corresponds to the direction of the *qibla* getting the maximum advantage of *baraka* from both streets as well as from the people performing prayer.

The siting of the mausoleum in this way to accommodate to the layout of the city and to secular concerns, often compromised religious concerns. Consequently we find even basic requirements such as orientation of the whole building in the direction of Mecca are ignored. For instance, in the mausoleum-mosque-*sabil kuttab* of Emir Khayrbak (1502) [65 a,b] we find the *mihrab* in the mosque and in the tomb chamber both at different angles and both
in turn differing from Mecca by as much as 29 degrees. The monument was an integral part of the texture of the city and intricately woven with it. The result was an environment shaped by the forces between the two, in which the monument adjusted itself to respond to the street layout and the street layout in turn modified itself to accommodate the monument.

In Rome the monument had a different role and conception from that in Cairo. Mussolini had divided the problems of Rome of the Twentieth century into two categories: the problems of necessity and the problems of grandeur. One could not confront the latter unless the former had been resolved. The problems of grandeur however were of a different kind.

“We must liberate all of ancient Rome from the mediocre construction that disfigures it.” (Mussolini: 1924)

All of Rome’s past was divided into three phases: Roma monumentale which was further divided into Roma antica and Roma Cristiana-rinascimentale; Roma moderna from 1870 to the start of the Fascist regime; and Roma modernissima or Fascista. That Mussolini had political intents we shall see in the concluding chapter.

With this three-tiered attitude towards its past, Rome sought to revive monuments of the classical phase; restore monuments of the Renaissance and Christian phases and bring down monuments of the second or modern phase. The third phase had to accommodate what it safeguarded of the past to the problems of necessity - mainly traffic.

Fascist planning showed a preference for the straight line. The law of speed and the mentality of the straight line encouraged liberties, effacing and distorting much of the ancient fabric. Among hundreds of monuments which survived it was difficult to decide which had preference. Not every monumental building enjoyed the immunity of a monument. From the distant past sometimes even an insula was spared despite its humble pro-
gram. Urban planning came to be identified as a branch of architecture. In early streets of Rome, monuments were single episodes of historical and visual interest. No cohesive program of iconography bounded them contextually. Since the days of Sixtus V in the Sixteenth century, monuments in Rome had been connected together by straight axial roads at the termination of which were monuments. Mussolini undertook a similar program and monuments acquired narrative weight. The opening of the via del’Impero alone, in a ruthless straight line from the Colosseum to the Piazza Venezia destroyed 5,500 habitable units [66]. Archaeologists, and historians of art and architecture as official interpreters of the value of monuments entered the planning process in a primary role.

The monument had to be isolated and monumentalized.

“...The millenial monuments of our history must loom gigantic in their necessary solitude.” (Mussolini: 1925)

The monument in Rome, unlike that in Cairo, had to be freed from construction that surrounded or overlaid it. It had to be seen as a free-standing object. On the bi-millennial of the birth of Augustus and the twelfth anniversary of the Fascist march on Rome, Mussolini climbed on the roof of a building adjoining the tomb of Augustus and raised a ceremonial pick to start demolition to liberate the monument from the accretion of centuries. 28,000 square meters of built environment containing 120 multi-storeyed tenements, were destroyed. The monument had to be completely isolated and restored to its original function the way Augustus had bequeathed to his people of Rome [67].

Although Rome may be an extreme case of forced change upon the environment, urban change by additive transformations is not uncommon. The process by which the original nucleus is transformed by a sedimentary and incremental process of addition of new parts, is fairly
common. Such a process is what in the first place led to the accretions around the tomb of Mausoleum. Such transformations at an even larger scale occur in Emperor Diocletian’s Palace in Split [68 a,b,c].

The palace is an enormous rectangular building which was abandoned in 316 A.D. on the death of the emperor and it fell into a long period of decay. However when the nearby city of Salona was invaded and sacked by the Slavs in 614 A.D, the survivors who fled inhabited the abandoned palace. A conversion of enormous scale took place. The ruins of the monuments were gradually transformed into a town and social stratification was reflected in the way spaces were used. The wealthy took possession of places in the palace precincts where they could build their mansions. Less powerful citizens inhabited spaces which had remained from the original fabric and the plebians were left with the basements and cellars. New buildings and a new street layout was superimposed over the Roman one. Existing buildings were converted: the mausoleum of the Emperor was rehabilitated to become a church. A similar transformation has taken place in the abandoned amphitheatres of Arles [69] and Florence [70 a,b] which have been converted into living urban fabrics by accretion over the centuries. But their memories persist. Cities need permanances as much as they need transformations in order to be alive.

[68 a,b,c] Diocletian’s Palace, Split, Yugoslavia, Stages of Transformation
Understanding the relationship between temporary elements and the permanent monuments is of vital importance to the city. Some of the monuments are capable of undergoing transformation although retaining their unchanging quality. Continuous changes in the collective use of the these buildings and parts of the towns result in continuous changes in their architecture. The plan of the town however is permanent as its essential features tend to remain. Monuments are elements of significance. These unique buildings are differentiated from the fabric of the town by their architecture, urban location, symbolic value and fixation in time. While they may have very precise and definitive forms they can accept radical transformation. Transformations may not, however, be always desirable and the issue of sometimes continuing a ruin in a state of ruin and sometimes restoring a monument to its original state we shall examine in another chapter.

If we look at architectural interventions not as isolated events but rather as strategies of urban transformation and of modification, the dilemma between the agora and the acropolis is easier to resolve. It is indeed the urge to relieve the object of its crisis that studies by de Arcel have attempted to in-fill Le Corbusier’s Chandigarh [71] and Kahn’s Dacca [72 a,b] Capitol complexes. They are images according to the author, which can materialize today and thus help to restore the richness of urban life lacking in modern cities.

"Over the last twenty years, the emergence of the idea of permanences of traces, the importance assumed by collective and subjective memories, the interest in what is archetypic and symbolic are all aspects of this tension pointing to the belonging to a context." (Brandolini/Croset: 1984)²⁸

Contextual techniques depend on connecting and articulating what already exists and on densifying what is sparse and disjointed; on consolidating urban space; on interiorizing and making its hierarchies visible; and on
establishing typological continuities which reproduce density of what already exists. All these techniques correspond to a pluralistic acceptance of disparities and differences and the notion that what exists - even the Modern - can be improved.

The understanding of possibilities that exist in our past and of permanances symbolized by the city and its monuments all represent means of establishing continuities. I have been arguing that continuities in time and place, are among the most desirable qualities in our environments. Transformations and modifications imply the use of pre-existing structures. They extend the likelihood of a building or environment being in use for a prolonged period, and although undergoing changes, of surviving.

Rome survived for the very same reason. The medieaval town it was decided, should be built over the Roman one, which had declined. It survived by functionally incorporating the past into the present and continuing it into the future. It survived by reabsorbing the old city into the living city rather than preserving it in isolation.
"To understand monuments as pieces of cities, sedimentations of materials that can be transformed, adapted and arranged for a fresh life, does not mean a cultural adventure, but a great project..." (1976)"

The idea of transforming what exists makes sense economically and socially. It costs less in material terms and in social terms. It does not entail compulsory permanent or temporary migration. The past being familiar is not alienated by the introduction of the new. The new in turn is not unfamiliar and alienating. Continuity is maintained both in spatial and historical terms. In historical terms, as monuments become repositories of successive interventions; in spatial terms, as true complexity and meaningful variety arises from gradual accumulation which confirm and reinforce the space in an incremental process [73]. But these are themes that we will return to in the chapter on Attitudes towards Restoration and Conservation.
Notes:
1 Colin Rowe / Fred Koetter: *Collage City* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1978)
2 Rossi quoted in Claudio D'Amato: "Fifteen Years after the Publication of the *Architecture of the City* by Aldo Rossi," (*Harvard Arch. Review* 3, 1984), p 85
4 Aldo Rossi: *Architecture of the City* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1982), p 60
6 Christel Kessler: "Funerary Architecture within the City" (*Colloque International* 17), p 261
8 Mussolini speech on Dec 31, 1925, in Kostof: *Third Rome*, p 14
So far in the thesis I have been arguing the value of continuity, and its importance in creating a sense of time and place. In the previous chapter was also introduced the notion of permanances, and how maintaining its monuments is one way in which a city attains continuity. Where I confined myself in the last chapter to studying the relationship of the monument to its urban context, in this chapter I shall try to understand the ambiguous relationship between the monument and the ruin.

To understand the differing attitudes towards a ruin in the urban context, we have to introduce two other notions - one of unity, and the other of ambiguity. The achievement of unity or coherence between the various parts of a building and a building to its surroundings, has been a persistent value through the ages. Unity satisfies the human need for predictability: where on one hand it assumes physical completeness, on the other, it can serve to alert a population to the continually changing context of buildings and urban events. An ambiguity can mean, perhaps, an indecision to establish meaning; an intention to mean several things; a probability that one or another or both of two things has been meant; or the fact that an object has several meanings.

A ruinous environment demands some inefficiency, an acceptance of lack of function, and a relaxed acceptance of time.

"Certain materials and forms age well, they develop an interesting patina, a rich texture, an attractive outline." (Lynch: 1972)'

The contrast of old and new in an environment, the accumulation of most significant elements of various periods gone by, even if it is only in the form of fragmentary reminders, in time produces a landscape whose emotional depth no one period can equal. The esthetic aim in such parts of the environment ought to be to heighten contrast, complexity, diversity, and make visible the process of change.

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Linked with the qualities of a desirable environment listed above, is also the quality of the observer playing an active role in perceiving the world and developing his own image. It is an attitude which states that creativity partly lies in discovering and rediscovering qualities which are inherent in an object. This chapter shall try to argue how a ruin through its devices of incompleteness, ambiguity and multivalence enables creation through the act of participation as well as establishing in itself a sense of continuity.

Reality, Kant observed, is not experienced through the senses alone, but is grasped conceptually as well. The observer should have the power to form his own image of the environment and to change it to fit changing needs. An environment which is ordered, final and complete in every detail may inhibit new patterns of activity. Thus a desirable environment ought to permit an open-ended, and not a final order capable of continuous development and further enabling each individual to invest an environment with any meaning that he chooses to give it. Such an image is necessarily incomplete and ambiguous.

"The image should preferably be open-ended, adaptable to change, allowing the individual to continue to investigate and organize reality; there should be blank spaces where he can extend the drawing for himself." (Lynch: 1960)

A ruin by its very nature is incomplete. The aesthetics of incompleteness holds that the most meaningful appreciation of space and form occurs when the physical elements which define them are implied rather than given tangible completion [74]. It is a form of appreciation that is significant and meaningful as it asks the observer to complete the figure in his own terms. It demands participation: one cannot remain indifferent to it. It is rich as different people give it different meanings; and it is multivalent as at different times, one can pick up other cues and interpret it differently and thereby continuously

[74] Implied enclosures & Mental constructs
invent it.

Although a multivalent work need not always be incomplete (in the physical sense), an incomplete work is always multivalent. Both however are ambiguous. William Empson defines ambiguity as, “any verbal nuance, however slight, which gives room for alternative reactions to the same piece of language.” (1965) According to Empson, we call a thing ambiguous when we think there could be a puzzle as to what the author meant; alternative views might be taken without sheer misreading; and it has an irony that is calculated to deceive even if there is no doubt about its meaning. That is, an object may not have more than one meaning, but still be ambiguous through irony. On the other hand, an object may have a double meaning, but still not be ambiguous.

Empsonian ambiguities can never be pinned down. They indicate points where an object gestures beyond itself, pregnantly suggestive of some potentially inexhaustible content of meaning. This quality of potentiality is one of the most essential and desirable state of an object. Things are not what they are but that which they are capable of becoming. Hence Louis Kahn imagined the ruins of Paestum as being more beautiful than the Parthenon. In their imperfection they held the promise of becoming the Parthenon [75].

Ambiguity solicits active participation and the response depends on more than the object alone. The meaning of an object is contextual and the interpreter inevitably brings to the work whole social contexts of discourse and tacit assumptions of sense-making. However, obligation towards the whole and unity does not preclude an ambiguous work from being unresolved. Poets for instance have acknowledged dilemmas without solutions. The goal of poetry thus can be unity of expression over the resolution of content.

Venturi gives the example of the twin churches on
the Piazza del Popolo in Rome [76], which according to him are complete at the level of the program but incomplete in the expression of form. As a fragment of a greater whole in the context of the city, the piazza relates to the scope of city planning to achieve unity of the complex whole.

"An architecture that can simultaneously recognise contradictory levels should be able to admit the paradox of the whole fragment: the building which is a whole at one level and a fragment of a greater whole at another level." (Venturi: 1966)

The appreciation of ruins play an important role in the aesthetics of incompletion. By virtue of the fact that parts are missing ruins give the illusion of depth. A significant attribute of their incompletion is the penetration of space through missing parts to reveal more distant objects. Also the building’s ability to flow through time implies a unity which is not just visual but a fundamental of nature which is born, decays, dies and is reborn. One of the strengths of a ruin as a model of incompletion is that it illustrates the necessity of architecture’s dependence on temporal contexts.

Because of the strong order and harmony which a ruin can often imply about its original state, there seems to be a tendency to always want to see both states simultaneously: its ruinous state showing physical transgression of the original by its effects of time and nature; and its original state as an imaginative construct.

"Manifesting both time frames at once, the ruin hovers between pragmatic usefulness and complete dissolution." (Bell: 1979)

The building in a state of ruin makes us assign values which we may not have assigned before to it in its state of use or completeness as an artifact. The building at a point of ruin is liberated from a set of restrictions. A clear distinction between inside and outside is no longer possible. The contrast between inside and outside is an essential characteristic of urban architecture. Van Eyck for
instance, holds the concept of twin-phenomena as one of the most desirable qualities in his architecture. The contrast and conflict between external and internal forces, exists outside architecture as well. Gyorgy Kepes states, "every phenomena - a physical object, an organic form, a feeling, a thought, our group life - owes its shape and character to the duel between opposing tendencies; a physical configuration is a product of the duel between native constitution and the outside environment." (1956)*

The image of the ruin is as much an echo of the variety of feelings in the interpreter’s cultural climate as that of the age in which the building was constructed. Thus no matter what state we perceive a ruin in - as an expression of romantic mood, as sheer delight in the play of the imagination, as a document of the past or as a particular concept of architectural space; the ruin evokes in us a feeling of the impact of history on the living. The ruin relies on our giving it value and hence it hovers between reality and imagination, past and future.

"The past lies as much in the realm of the imagination as does the future." (Zucker: 1968)

It also partakes in the twin-phenomena by hovering between art and nature. A ruin devastated by time is a combination of man-made forms and organic nature. It is not art, as its original intention has more or less been lost. It is also however not an outgrowth of nature since man-made elements continue to exist as a basis for that which has been contributed or taken away by time. It thereby exists in the realm between art and nature.

In the view of Florence Hetzler, it is this quality that makes a ruin a special work of art unlike music or painting. A ruin to her is defined as the disjunctive product of the intrusion upon an edifice without the loss of unity. In a ruin the human made and nature are one and inseparable. A ruin is a combination of several factors: art, science and technology that produced the edifice in the
first place; of natural elements which led to its demise; and time which is the intrinsic cause of the edifice becoming a ruin. Added to this is the subjective element of the interpreter who brings his individual and cultural values to the reading of a ruin.

“Since nature is involved in a ruin, I believe that ruin beauty comes closer to the sublime and the ineffable than either nature’s beauty or artistic beauty considered alone.” (Hetzler: 1988)*

Together, art and nature in a ruin yield a new kind of beauty and a new sense of time. It is a sense of time which is hard to define and unlike the one we had encountered in the second chapter. No form of visual expression other than a ruin can capture this sense of time which simultaneously involves nature, the human-made and the human.

In view of the above, it is not surprising then to find man’s continual fascination with ruins and why both John Ruskin and Alois Riegl were opposed to restoration and why they were for continuing certain monuments in a state of ruin.

“Every artifact is thereby perceived as a natural entity whose development should not be disturbed, but should be allowed to live itself out with no more interference than necessary to prevent its premature demise.” (Riegl)*

To prevent this demise, Riegl suggested conservation in the present state. Since speculation and restoration
were subject to human error, only the original document provided a reliable evidence of the past and that should not be tampered with. Where natural decay should not be reversed, steps should be taken to safeguard against continuing decay; a theme we shall return to in the next chapter.

The fascination with ruins can also be seen in Piranesi’s drawings of Rome. In his visionary world filled with nocturnal light, dramatic shadows, immense stonework and ruins cast in a gloomy light depict a fallen Roman grandeur. Hadrian’s Villa at Tivoli [77] can be seen as a sort of cultural memory bank - a museum of the emperor, it was a conglomeration of diverse architectural styles and physical configurations reflecting eclecticism and used to communicate a sense of nostalgia. By the Renaissance, this splendid villa was a convenient quarry for builders such as those of the Tivoli gardens. It was an attraction for souvenir shoppers, aristocrats and commoners. Piranesi went there to measure, draw and contemplate [78].

Most contemplative pleasure gardens from the Renaissance contained a multitude of artificial ruins, evoking a dream-like landscape, a sense of mystery and sometimes a feeling of terror creating a lasting and powerful impression on the visitor’s mind. In the geometrically organized landscapes of Poussin, ruins serve as three dimensional checking points which establish a harmoni-

[78] Piranesi: Hadrian’s Villa, Central room of the larger thermæ
ous balance [79]. But besides the picturesque and the pseudo-heroic themes of remnants of the past standing against the forces of time and nature, there has been yet another and perhaps insidious attitude toward ruins.

Albert Speer, in his ‘theory of ruin-value,’ consciously decided to exclude technology that did not age well from the monuments of the Nazi regime. He intended that his creations deteriorate in a picturesque way. Speer’s insistence that all metal reinforcement should be eliminated from the construction of party monuments then being erected in Nuremberg [80], led to constructional methods of Roman venerability. The monument’s value resided in its size and representing an intimidating display of power. Even in ruins, they should convey the grandeur of the Roman ruins:

"The ruins of our buildings will bear witness to the strength of our will and the magnitude of our faith." (Hitler)"

The love of ruins has among others, an important modern source. Edmund Burke in his 1756 treatise, Philosophical Inquiry into the Origin of our Ideas on the Beautiful and the Sublime, attacked the widely prevailing classical taste of his time. It was not clarity and formality which makes things beautiful and sublime, but obscurity without a logical system and without any bounds.

[79] Poussin: Ruins of an Arch of Triumph, 17th Cent.

[80] Albert Speer: Incomplete Congress Hall, Nuremberg, Germany

[81] SITE Inc.: BEST Showroom, Houston, Texas, 1974-75
"It is our ignorance of things that causes all our admiration and excites our passions." (Burke: 1756)11

In the twentieth century, the ruin has come to symbolise an existential anxiety and a physical and moral uncertainty with which we are all familiar.

In SITE’s de-architecture, the frontal attack on the polemics of Modern architecture has resulted in the image of the ruin playing a major role in several of their works. In the Houston BEST Products Showroom [81], the brick veneer is arbitrarily extended beyond the roofline, resulting in an appearance of architecture arrested somewhere between construction and demolition. The ambiguity is intensified with a debris of bricks spilled over a section of the central facade onto a canopy. Not only is the image of the ruin a powerful one, the building also uses architecture as a means of social commentary representing the unreality of the monolithic institutions of our age crumbling under their own weight.

"The ruin is a means of iconographically expressing the qualities of indeterminacy, ambiguity, fragmentation and accident, which appear as necessary components in the world." (Bell: 1979)12

Robert Venturi, in his reconstruction of the Benjamin Franklin House, addresses the difficulty and perhaps the impossibility of considering any designed artifact

independent of its context. That the viewer and what is viewed have an intimate and interactive connection with each other is taken to an extreme in this example. The reconstruction also represents qualities of incompleteness and ambiguity exhibited in a ruin.

Faced with the impossibility of doing an accurate reconstruction, since no adequate knowledge of the appearance of the original house existed, Venturi resorted to clear over-simplification. Only the ghostly outline of the house is shown, on the basis of the physical remnants of the foundation. Venturi by this gesture is doing at least two things. First, he is inviting each viewer to complete the frame as he sees fit; second, as the frame is transparent, we are able to see the buildings in the immediate context that fill the frame. We can if we choose, see Ben Franklin's house as a reflection of its context, changing as the context itself changes. Ghostly outlines of a ruin, incompleteness, ambiguity, participation and a sense of time distinctly unique is captured by this monument-ruin, ruin-monument.

To summarise and conclude: we have tried to understand in this chapter, the ambiguous relationship between the ruin and the monument. Thus there may be instances when we may want to freeze a ruin in a moment in time, and as Walter Benjamin says, blast it out of the course of history. And there also may be instances when we may want to let a ruin follow its natural course of history and face eventual destruction. Hence the arguments for 'preserving' a ruin in a state of a ruin. On the other hand, there also are arguments for restoring, conserving and adaptively reusing a ruinous monument. These attitudes we shall examine in the next chapter.

Through our perception of the sense of incompleteness and ambiguity that a ruin evokes, we have also seen how a ruin becomes a form of art unlike any other, and also how it is a form of art which argues for active
participation, allowing us to freely indulge in creative imaginings and speculations. The ruin, as we have mentioned, leads to a sense of time peculiarly its own.

Indulgence in the splendor and insanity of Piranesian visions is a reflection of our wish to envision in our minds, the past as perhaps superior to the present - and also, perhaps, to what it actually was. Nostalgia and romantic association with the past is also characteristic of our age, when fragments are more stimulating than wholes. Intuition is capable of an immediate apprehension of certain aspects of truth prior to intellectual definition. Longings for the past are based upon such intuition without which our world would be only half as rich.

The notion of unity that we introduced at the outset has to be enlarged. It is a unity not bound to rational artifices of beginnings, middles and ends, nor to principles of progression. It is rather an intensification of experience which on the premise of a non-Hegelian dialectic, asks our mind to hold simultaneously two or more conflicting propositions, without ever totally resolving them.

Notes:
1 Kevin Lynch: *What Time is this Place?* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1972), p 44
3 William Empson: *Seven Types of Ambiguity* (3rd Ed, New Directions, 1965), p 1
5 David Bell: "Unity and Aesthetics of Incompletion in Architecture," *Architectural Design,* July 1979, p 177

Alois Riegl: “The Modern Cult of Monuments,” (Oppositions 25, Fall 1982), p 32

Adolf Hitler as quoted in Speer’s foreword to, Albert Speer: Architecture 1933-1942, (Ed.) Leon Krier (Brussels: Aux Archives d'architecture moderne, 1985)

Edmund Burke, quoted in Wojciech Lesnikowski: “On Symbolism of Memories and Ruins,” (Reflections 6, Spring 1989), p 71

Bell: “Unity and Aesthetics,” p 181

7. Rehabilitation—Attitudes towards Restoration and Conservation

"The unhistorical and the historical are equally necessary to the health of an individual, a community and a system of culture." (Nietzsche)

Restoration or Conservation, whether of individual monuments or entire fabrics of cities, are complex affairs. An appreciation of external and often unknown forces which led to the decline of an artifact or an environment requires a profound knowledge of history, a true understanding of the present and an ability to anticipate the future. The physical environment reflects man in a way different from any other form of art, and is thus the most complete and accurate witness to the material and spiritual condition of an age. The fascination with the past and man’s emotional and intellectual indulgence with ruins, even of his own making [83], we have noted in the last chapter. In this one, we shall examine attitudes that may be taken towards saving part of our past and what its implications might be.

It may be worthwhile to clarify the meaning of several terms, noting how they have changed over time. Samuel Johnson in his Dictionary of the English Language of 1755, defined restoration as “the act of replacing in a former state. To give back what has been lost or taken away.” In the nineteenth century however, the meaning of the word started to change to a notion of a special kind of repair. In 1866, Viollet-le-Duc, arguably the greatest restorer of all time, wrote restoration was “to reestablish to a completed state, which may never have existed at any particular time.” This definition left a great deal of room for fantasies. Old parts of buildings were pulled down and new ones erected in ‘correct’ styles. Restorers became experts who interpreted and decided what the past should look like. There was a strong reaction to this. Ruskin in 1849 in his Seven Lamps of Architecture wrote: “Restoration, so called, is the worst manner of destruction... resto-
ration is always a lie..." In 1862 G.G. Scott went to the extent of saying, "... almost could wish the word restoration expunged from our vocabulary."

In 1845, the French antiquarian, Prosper Merimee wrote, "by restoration we understand the conservation of that which has definitely existed." An important change occurred here when 'restoration' transformed to 'conservation.' In our own century Merimee's view that conservation is the goal has been adopted. We have no right to alter the past as it is not ours. This is the opinion expressed by Riegl at the turn of the century:

"In the twentieth century we appreciate particularly the purely natural cycle of becoming and passing away. Every artifact is thereby perceived as a natural entity whose development should be allowed to live itself out with no more interference than necessary to prevent its premature demise."

The French lexicographer Diderot in 1839 had aptly summarised:

"When it comes to ancient monuments, it is better to consolidate than to repair, better to restore than to rebuild, better to rebuild than to embellish; in no case should anything be added and above all nothing be taken away."

In our own age, preservation has taken several different forms. Preservation can seek as far as possible to keep intact the existing state without replacement. The structure may eventually decay and crumble, but even as a ruin will remain a valid historical document of materials and methods of the day. It can seek to replace individual elements as they become defective. If done regularly and faithfully, the form of the original may be retained, even though no original component may. One can also seek to restore parts of buildings which have disappeared or in more extreme cases re-erect the entire monument, but a large degree of conjecture is inevitable in this. One may also remove the entire building at risk and resite it for safekeeping. The development in recent times has shifted
from an interest in isolated monuments to an interest in a
group of monuments in relation to their context and
sometime complete traditional fabrics as well [56-60].

Preservation, restoration, and conservation are not
new ideas. Throughout Imperial times, a replica of the
primitive hut was maintained within the grand marble clad
palaces of the Palatine [84]. In 1938 for the exhibition
dedicated to Emperor Augustus, the hut of Romulus was
reerected on the Palatine hill. It is both a relic of the earliest
Roman times and a legendary starting point of Roman
culture. It represents transition of Rome from pre-history
to a state of civilization. It does not really matter whether
this is history or myth. Perhaps both. Those in charge
maintained it as a holy place.

"They must not embellish it at all, but if by weather or lapse
of time, it is damaged in any way, they repair it and restore it as closely
as possible to the original condition." (Forster: 1984)

What has changed since the mid-sixties, is not
whether our architecture recollects the past, but how it
recollects it.

"Architecture without remembrance is impossible; architec-
ture without new thoughts is boring." (Morsh: 1982)

The purpose of conserving old things is not only
for their own sake, nor to attempt to stop change. But it is
to convey a sense of time and reinforce a sense of place that
we mentioned in the second chapter. Conserving implies
a means of connecting the past to present values, instead
of attempting to detach it from them. If we accept the
conflict inherent in the process, many things become
easier to accomplish: change of function, modifying things
in a creative way, and allowing for diverse interpretations
by the users. The environment can be a tool for heightening
a person's perception of change and helping him to
connect the past to the future via the present.

The environment can in fact teach change - how
the world shifts with respect to the immediate past, which
changes have been valuable and which not, how change may be externally effected, and how change may be directed in the future. Preserving, conserving and saving the past or parts of the past, is one way of learning for the future; in this way people change themselves by learning something now that they may utilize later. An environment that facilitates recalling and learning is a way of connecting the present moment to a wide span of time.

"Environments can make us aware of being alive now and together in a common present, in which we sense the flow of events and to which we can attach our hopes and fears." (Lynch: 1972)

To save and protect our past is to maintain in the present, resources that may be important even in the long-range, unpredictable future. In this way it is possible to avoid the loss or degradation of elements which are valuable evidences of times past and are important markers for the future. Our most important responsibility to the future is not to coerce it but to be attentive to it. It is to conserve our fundamental resources, create and keep open desirable future possibilities and maintain our ability to respond to change in the present. But of course, we cannot save everything of the past because in a sense it is all 'historical.' To preserve all of the past would be life-denying. We need to dispose of some of the past, for the same reason that we can’t remember everything and need to forget, in order to function. Past events are often relevant to present possibilities. They may explain causes or point to likely outcomes. But these causes have to be sifted out of the evergrowing rubble heap of history. There must be some way of discarding obsolete objects. The past is to that extent less relevant if a description of the present provides a more concrete analysis for action.

"There are several ways of dealing with a valued piece of an old environment... the patina of time may be retained, imitated, or removed." (Lynch: 1972)

To be able to decide one way or the other we ought
to understand what the purpose of our action is. What it is that we need to reconstruct and preserve, and which pieces of our past warrant historical treatment. Are we preserving only the climactic moments of an era, any manifestation of a tradition that we can find, or merely retaining what we think is the best. Should a thing be saved because it is associated with an important event or person, because it is unique, or because it is typical of its time? Should it be saved because of its importance as a symbol, because of its intrinsic qualities or special usefulness, or because of the information it holds about the past? Should we in fact save or simply let chance select? And who is the ‘we,’ the people, ‘experts,’ or simply ones in power? Clearly, there are no simple answers to this host of questions.

One attitude we can adopt is the management of an environmental archive, especially since we have no way of being certain about what will be most relevant in the future. We have an obligation to save some characteristic evidence of every major period. But creating an environmental archive raises problems familiar to any establishment and management of a library archive: how is material selected; how and when weeded out; how stored; how indexed and arranged for easy access and retrieval; and at what cost? Once again, difficult questions to which there are no clear answers.

One can suggest a plural attitude towards environmental remains, depending on the particular motive. In case of scientific study, dissection would be tolerated; in case of scholarly study, preservation would be attempted; in case of education, communication would be reinforced by the enhancement of present value and the sense of the flow of time. One tends to favor strategies of temporal collage, and the restoration of elements as selective and impermanent as human memory itself. To preserve the past effectively, we must know for what purpose the past is being retained and for whom. Hence we repeat what we
have been stressing through the course of this thesis: the past per se has no value. Its only value resides in the one we choose to give it. Just as we have proposed a critical attitude towards rebuilding, we have to likewise adopt a critical attitude towards the restoration and the conservation of the past.

“The past is not important in itself. It is the presence of the past and our attitude to it that matters.” (Laenen: 1989)

The management of change is preferable to an inflexible reverence towards a sacrosanct past.

One of the aspects of what we choose to preserve of the past is that it may have value in pointing to the future we may wish to construct. Many of the criteria employed in the past have been political - a subject we shall deal at greater length in the next chapter; others have been selected by chance. The history which is visible to us is a selected history, chosen from a multitude of things ‘historic.’ Through the preservation not of isolated monuments, but entire quarters of cities, we can prevent conveying a partial or distorted sense of history - one which is vividly sensible, but only falsely so. As mentioned earlier, the cost of preserving entire fabrics is definitely high and the criteria have to be conservative. Moreover large-scale conservations should not impair present functions, nor inhibit future adaptations.

“The clash between the aims of cultural preservation and the desire for modernization has become a serious issue in light of the steadily diminishing residues of heritage, particularly in urban areas, and an increasing rejection of traditional values by many classes of society.” (Lewcock: 1986)

Our intention, once again is not to halt change, but manage it more sensibly, and in a way in which our environments fulfill our criteria of maintaining continuity and creating a sense of time and place. The preservation of cultural identity is far from being mere rhetoric. Creative interaction with the past can offer a new series of oppor-
tunities, rather than imply a set of constraints.

In the following examples we shall examine a few different attitudes towards restoration and conservation. The intention is not as much to be comprehensive as to test the range of responses, and realize their implications.

In Boston, social and economic forces have made it necessary for a few churches in the area to be adaptively reused. The reuse falls under two general groups: those which have involved transformation of complete artifacts, and those which have reused and reinterpreted surviving fragments. In the first case, the shell of the church has tended to be viewed as a readily available resource, the inside volume of the sanctuary adapted to make it best suitable for the new function. In the second case, juxtaposition of old fragments and contemporary forms has resulted in an ambiguous game of conscious and unconscious blending and contrasting of forms.

The Third Baptist Church / Charles Street Meeting House [85], falls in the first category. Built in 1807 at the corner of two gracious Beacon Hill streets to serve as a church, it lost its function in 1878 at the dissolution of the Congregation, and the church fell into disrepair. During its entire history, the interior volume of the church had adapted to various metamorphoses. The Episcopalians Gothicized the austere interior: chancel and altar replaced central pulpit, gothic arches replaced neo-classical columns and lintels. Later, more liberal Unitarians transformed the chancel to a speaker’s dais. In keeping with tradition, the latest transformations modified the interior without altering the exterior.

The architects had bought the church to remodel it and make it a profitable venture in an area where real estate was sky-rocketing. The internal organization now has become more akin to most of the adjoining tenements, with mixed use. The multi leveled tower in the church has
become an apartment for the architect's family. The rest has been converted into an office space with the modular grid directly derived from the original column and structural organization of the nave [86]. There is a frank juxtaposition of the new and the old. A sense of the old interior survives simultaneously with a vaguely modern vocabulary which is not apologetic or condescending to the past. Where original interior is revealed, there is enough there for the mind to reconstruct that which has been eliminated. The exterior however makes little acknowledgement of the interior. The reuse embodies a successful compromise of conflicting interests. The loss of a meeting hall is compensated by the existence of a church directly behind. The church now rather than being an isolated monument is an essential component of the urban fabric. A reciprocity rather than competition between the old and the new, seems to have succeeded. If only, there persists a doubt about the reality or fantasy about the outward semblance of complete preservation.

On the other hand, no such semblance has been attempted in the case of the Mount Vernon Congregational Church / Church Court [87], an example which
illustrates our second category. It is perhaps the most bizarre and imaginative reuse of a church in the Boston area and in ways parallels both, the Town Hall at Pula [17-20] and St. Donat at Zadar [28], which we have considered earlier. What is left of the church is fragmentary and what the architects have done is not a cautious restoration but one where old fragments are juxtaposed in a light-hearted and sometimes irreverential manner.

The church built in 1891 to serve the needs of the prosperous middle and upper class families on Beacon Street, reached a state of decline in the sixties and was abandoned. It was sold to a developer who had to face strong opposition from groups who wished to preserve the building. In 1978 however a mysterious fire removed the church from the category of ‘intact monument’ giving the developer greater freedom to redevelop.

The redevelopment took place in the form of 43 residential condominiums. From the two street elevations, the image of the building is complex. The tower and façades of the old stone church which are retained as fragments, dominate, but taller newer towers of brick and tile, bay windows and terraces, crowd in all sides, as if to

[88] Church Court, Boston, Plan
create a townscape in microcosm. While much of the stone work of the old façade has been restored, portions have been obliterated by a seemingly random insertion of new openings and balconies. In the process of conversion, the old fabric has undergone a significant re-ordering. One can no longer enter the building through the triple portals but through a neighbouring town-house which has been incorporated into the project. The former belfry houses an unusual apartment on six levels. The volume of the sanctuary has become an open courtyard and in a sense retaining its former congregational function, although now no longer public[88]. Interior details make reference to the original building.

The end result is an ambivalent statement about time and change. The project has been fixed in time at a particular moment as an obsolete monument, but one which still retains memory through a fragmented yet physical presence.

“One is challenged and intrigued by a puzzle of references and quaint gestures and left a little in doubt as to what the building’s new defined role in the city really is.” (MIT: 1984-85)\textsuperscript{11}

By restoring the object thoroughly, one cancels its documentary value, making it an unreliable witness to the time of its origin and its capacity to convey historical depth. However, the use of old forms in new buildings creates a false congruence of past and present, corrupting the identity of both, leaving its objects ‘stranded’ in history. The idea of fragment arises not from an attitude of salvaging a piece of the whole but from disregard or even denial of the value represented by integral works. As an aesthetic category, the fragment belongs less to a ruin than to a contemporary de-constructivist experience [50,51].

“The fragmentary... is not a category of contingent parts: the fragment is that part of the totality of a work which defies totality.” (Adorno: 1982)\textsuperscript{12}
An organic unity can only be imposed by un-natural technical means or authoritarian control, and hence a fragment is ‘truer’ than an integral, resolved and coherent work.

An attitude such as the above relies on the individual interpretations of the users for its success. Almost any interpretation may be selective, incomplete and can be justified provided it leads to an understanding of the original totality.

Tilden in his now classic text, *Interpreting Our Heritage* writes:

"The chief aim of interpretation is not instruction but provocation." (1957)\(^1\)

The interpretation should engage the feelings of the visitors and should enable the visitors to unlatch their imaginations to open the door to the past. The imagination is often a neglected tool of 'provocation.' If it is unlocked, we can promote revelation, education, and perhaps help an individual gain a more vivid sense of time and place. It may thus be preferable - not however at the risk of historical accuracy - to give the visitors a broad latitude to discover history for themselves. To let them create their own sense of the past and fill in the huge gaps that exist in our own understanding of the past.

Another device for avoiding an integral, resolved and coherent work is layering - something which again we have encountered in the case of the Town Hall at Pula, where no one layer is given precedence over the other\([19]\). All are preserved simultaneously, creating a work of a high degree of ambiguity and multivalence. It is an attitude which is not necessarily preservation but implies attention to history. It is a deliberate device of expression which permits the visible accumulation of overlapping traces from successive periods, each trace modifying the old, and in turn being modified by new additions to produce as in this building in Vienna\([89]\), a collage of time.
It is however, also a technique that implies there must be room for new layers to come and even anticipate signs of the future to form a part of the collage.

This technique however is not always possible. At times it is necessary to let one layer of history have precedence over the others in the interest of present needs. The authors of the award-winning scheme, Bugod et al, for the reconstruction of the Jewish quarter in Jerusalem in 1971, suggested a complete archaeological excavation down to bedrock. The dig unearthed 5000 years and 25 layers of history. Traditionally each civilization controlling the city has built on the ruins of previous civilizations. In Jerusalem as in other places with a rich heritage, there is a
delicate balance between the temptation to put archaeology and history first (and turn the area into an almost never ending dig), and leave the past alone beginning a new layer as has been done many times before.

The architects in this case managed a respect for history with a desire to move ahead and build. Archaeological tests determined original cardo was two meters below the existing level of street. Built during the reign of Emperor Justinian in the sixth century, it was an impressive 72 feet wide boulevard with 18 feet wide colonnades on both sides [90]. The architects throughout worked closely with archaeological experts. The decision was made to reuse the ancient cardo as a shopping street, combined with a museum-like display of archaeological finds. A distinct separation was made between the commercial-archaeological uses of the cardo, and the residences above [91].

Three major decisions contributed to the success of the project. A museum-like display was not desirable in a densely populated area which needed immediate housing. Hence the decision was made to incorporate the cardo with the newly constructed apartments. Also a bold decision to reconstruct the original cardo and to put it to use as a shopping street proved there need not be a conflict between archaeological finds and new construction. In fact when old ruins are revitalized and put to use rather than just being converted into a museum, they can enrich the surroundings by giving it historical depth.

A word needs to be said about the ‘museification’ of artifacts of the past which at present is extremely prevalent. Although it cannot be denied that it is inevitable to preserve in a museum a priceless element of our past, it is an attitude towards the past which can be (and often has been) easily vulgarized by the ‘Heritage Industry.’ It is an industry which tends to subvert ‘outstanding universal values’ and markets any viable piece of culture as a
"product that is offered to ‘consumers’ for whose purchasing power the various aspects of the heritage are increasingly in ‘competition.’" (Hewison: 1989)

The language of market structure guides the function and the future of heritage and the competition is with other forms of entertainment. By forcing the museum onto the marketplace, the original purpose of a museum - to preserve and interpret the past in a ‘scholarly’ manner, has been displaced by the desire to give the visitor a pleasurable experience. If there is no payment at the point of entry (or, so to say, at the point of consumption), they must justify their existence by exploiting opportunities from sale of souvenirs, refreshments and so on. The most unfortunate outcome of this consumer orientation is that concepts of education have been supplanted by concepts of consumption.

The past in addition to becoming an object of consumption has also become a unit of production. A new museum is not only a convenient way of reusing an abandoned building such as a mill or a factory; but as a form of investment to regenerate the local economy that has weakened due to the closure of that mill or factory [92]. But the question then is: if museums are centers of production, what do they produce? The Marxist reply to this is social and cultural meaning. The past is processed, pack-
aged and sold for immediate gratification. The pastiched past, once it has received the high gloss of presentation, provides a curious unified image, where change, clashes, and conflicts of interest are generally neutralized within a single depthless surface. The Heritage Industry may well be accused for the effacement of history and the commodification of the past.

“My objection is that Heritage is gradually effacing History... The open story of history becomes the closed book of heritage.” (Hewison: 1989)

The example in Jerusalem offers important relationships between archaeology and architecture. From the outset, the architects relied heavily on the precedent of the cardo - an ancient market street, for the new one. They were attentive to what was special about the Jewish quarter - its scale and character, and designed appropriately to it. Also a decision to link this shopping street to bazaars on the north [93] contributed to the economic viability of the market. The linear continuation of the bazaar into new shopping street also conveys a strong sense of order [94]. Social order of the residents turning their backs on the touristic market place is also maintained. There was also a definite imposition of certain values, choosing this layer over the others.

Lynch introduces the notion of a public attic, where artifacts about to be discarded could be made available for rummaging. The attic would of course require continuous maintenance and purging. Many symbolic and historic locations in a city are rarely visited by
its inhabitants, but they may be sought out by tourists. But a threat to destroy these places will evoke a strong reaction from the residents who may never even have visited them. The survival of these settings convey a sense of security and continuity.

But often it is not enough just to save a portion of our past, but the entire ambiance it conveys. There is an attitude which maintains that the recreation of the past by whatever means is essentially phony. Conservation and rehabilitation should be seen as part of a wider view of urban rejuvenation.

Efforts to conserve the medina of Fez [57,58] began in 1972 by UNESCO. In 1975 the master plan was drawn when it was realized the monuments of Fez could not be considered in isolation. The international conservation campaign was approved in 1976, but was officially launched only in 1980. Initially it was directed only towards the central area revitalizing only the most important parts of the old city, it being intended that the effects would radiate out to the rest of the city and stimulate further revitalization. Eventually the government expanded its concerns to the whole city [95].

The problems facing the old city were complex. The population grew from 100,000 in the early part of this century to over 250,000 today. The separation of the new city from the old meant mixed effects from the point of view of rehabilitation. On one hand, it would make conservation easier since the new city did not impinge upon the traditional one, as for instance in Cairo. On the other, it generated social problems of stratification and isolation and problems of a bi-polar city that we have encountered earlier in the case of Delhi [55].

When Morocco became independent, the vacuum in the new city left by the French was filled by the Moroccan upper class who hitherto had been confined to the medina. Their presence gave it social prestige, but
resulted in the neglect of the old city. The centre of the medina is marked by the Qairawiyyin mosque from which radiates suqs which connect the main gates. The street network follows the well-known hierarchy of main public thoroughfares bordered by suqs, residential thoroughfares, and semi-private cul-de-sacs for access to individual houses. The Qairawiyyin mosque is supported and enlarged by a series of surrounding madrasas enmeshed in overall urban pattern. Together they form the cultural, educational and religious focus of the city.

Conserving the major monuments was hampered by the decline and dying out of traditional crafts. The questions facing the conservers was whether one should continue traditional systems of renewal and accept a certain lowering of standards or conserve the buildings as they were, however imperfect their condition. The major problem was not individual monuments but the conservation and rehabilitation of the traditional housing stock as a whole. Leaving the housing to decay or to speculative redevelopment would have resulted in the destruction of the particular townscape and the ambiance it fostered.

But the conservation efforts ran into several problems. The team given two years to solve the problems felt that the time was insufficient. A great deal of time was spent on reconnaissance, data collection and documentation, and too little on definite proposals and guidelines. A decision was made to establish a new community east of the medina to house 120,000. It would absorb the excess population of the medina and relocate commercial and industrial activities injurious to the fabric of the old city. Attempts were made to reactivate the academic function of Qairawiyyin mosque. There were also attempts at reorganizing and redeveloping the crafts and commerce. A pilot project for a residential neighbourhood near the mosque was devised to establish guidelines for conservation and rehabilitation of residential structures. A second
pilot project experimented with introducing new social facilities into the historic fabric to assess the reuse of traditional houses for primary schools, dispensaries and social centers. Guidelines for rebuilding and in-fill in the traditional fabric were also investigated [97]. The efforts were by no means a complete success despite the laudable intentions. The fate of the medina of Fez is still precarious, and it would be a loss to our architectural and cultural heritage, if it were to die.

Without a sense of permanence, a common world would be impossible. Continuity and permanences are basic ingredients of the stock of memories, experiences and conventions which support a lasting world.

"The concepts of continuity and permanence are inseparable from that of tradition. The process of continuity suggests a development through time and space in which change and stability, renewal and restoration, progress and conservation, are all implied without actually being specified. Tradition provides a vibrant strand of continuity through all the changes and accidents of history, and meets the human need for a permanent world." (Steil: 1987)
Tradition is not a rigid dogma. It has little to do with narrow revivalist practices. It is not a defense of the old against the fresh and the new, but a project about continuity, based on memory, shared values and experience. It is therefore erroneous to consider the past either as irrelevant or as an antithesis to inventiveness. Tradition is the very foundation of invention - the shoulders of our predecessors on which we must stand to make progress. If then, the dichotomy between tradition and invention is at best only partially true, it is necessary to, "hold two opposed ideas in the mind at the same time and still retain the ability to function. One should for example, be able to see that things are hopeless and yet be determined to make them otherwise.” (Fitzgerald: 1936)" 

Notes:
1 Friedrich Nietzsche: The Use and Abuse of History (Indianapolis: Bobbs-Merrill, 1949), p 8
2 John Ruskin: The Seven Lamps of Architecture (NY: Dover, 1989), p 194
3 Alois Riegl: "The Modern Cult of Monuments," (Oppositions 25, Fall 1982), p 32
4 This and the above quotes are from Stephan Tschudi-Madsen: "Architectural Conservation - The Triumph of an Idea," in Isar (Ed.): The Challenge
5 Kurt Forster: "Monuments to the City," (Harvard Arch. Review 4, 1984), p 111
6 Georg Morsh: "Thoughts about Eclecticism - Criteria for the use of Historical Form," (LAUD, Yearbook 1982), p 43
7 Kevin Lynch: What Time is this Place? (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1972), p 89
8 Lynch: What Time, p 31
a Ronald Lewcock: "Preservation v/s Modernization - Realities in


12 Theodor Adorno, quoted in Kurt Forster: “Monument / Memory and the Mortality of Architecture,” (*Oppositions* 25, Fall 1982), p 11


14 Robert Hewison: “Heritage - An Interpretation,” in Uzzell (Ed.): *Heritage Interpretation*, p 18

15 Hewison: “Heritage” in Uzzell (Ed.): *Heritage Interpretation*, pp 21-22


"The warfare’s psychic now. Whoever controls the language, the images, controls the race." (Allen Ginsberg)

Thus far in the thesis I have argued for the reinstatement of ‘meaning’ in a building and reconciling it with the city. I have also urged a critical, rather than a reverential attitude towards the past, both in the case of rebuilding and restoration. To take an attitude towards the past, is to interpret it. As a conclusion, I would like to bring to completion the implications of the uses of history and how we can safeguard against its abuse.

Political implications are inherent in the act of interpretation. Most interpretations originate in politics, that is, in values. Acts of interpretation are often influenced by political interests and even more often they have political consequences. No act of intervention is innocent, but rather is rooted in the interpreter’s need to exploit meaning from the past and use it to his advantage. It is in the interest of the interpreter’s position to use political discourse as the basis of interpretation. As we had stated in the Introduction, the Historicists fundamentally agreed with Marx, who had explicitly stated that the goal of interpretation of the world was to transform it.

Nation states and persons throughout history have controlled and allocated symbolic resources as a way of legitimizing their power and authority, and pursuing their ideologies and goals. The past is a major symbolic resource. Both George Orwell (Nineteen Eighty-four, 1948) and Aldoux Huxley (Brave New World, 1932), have portrayed the state using or manipulating the past to its advantage. In Brave New World, the past is blotted out, “We haven’t any use for old things here.” In Nineteen Eighty-four, the Ministry of Truth continually doctors the past to justify and lend ‘truth’ to the immediate requirements, actions and policies of the state. The control and manipulation of the Past is critical to state ideology and
here as in all nations, past or present, the aim of the manipulators is to convince themselves, their citizens, and the world that their right to rule, their domination over others and their mission is ‘just.’

The argument usually put forward by those manipulating the past is that if politics is inherent in our interpretations; since everybody is ‘free’ to interpret it as they wish; if all historical records are biased; and if ‘truth’ is not attainable, a big lie is no worse than a small lie. That the notion of objective truth could easily be used to justify the actions of tyrants, had occurred to Orwell. But he was equally aware how a denial of the possibility of objectivity could also justify oppressive actions.

It is politically undesirable to make man, society, and culture, objects of an inquiry resembling the physical sciences whose ultimate aim is to predict. Human and social sciences are precluded from developing into true sciences, as the nature of their object of study is different. Men differ from natural objects due to their unpredictability, quasi-autonomy to the environment, and capacity to change social processes through exercise of a certain freedom of will. Both Karl Popper (Poverty of Historicism, 1957) and Hannah Arendt (Between Past and Future, 1961), believe that pretentions to the scientific in the human and social sciences contribute to the creation of totalitarian regimes.

Since our observations are themselves guided by theories, the notion of an objective truth on the basis of factual evidence, untainted by interpretation, is a myth. Therefore if pure, disinterested and unbiased interpretation on the basis of facts is an unattainable ideal, it may seem everyone is free to interpret the past the way they see fit. But relativism is the premise of social tolerance and not a license to ‘do as you please.’ Any scientific theory of history which claims to reveal the laws of historical process, and prevents interpretations differing with the
‘processes’ or prohibits a critical attitude or rational discussion, is dangerous.

"The purity of any interpretation can be measured only by the extent to which it succeeds in repressing any impulse to appeal to political authority." (White: 1983)

The legitimization of political authority is in large measure attained by the ability of the authorities to generate, control and allocate economic and symbolic resources. The past as a source of the most potent of symbolic resources has throughout history been realized and systematically exploited. Earlier we have briefly noted Speer’s ‘Theory of Ruin Value’ [80] and Mussolini’s restoration of the Mausoleum of Augustus [67]. In this chapter, we shall examine a few more examples and varieties of the Politics of using the Past. The examples that follow are loosely classified into three categories. In the first we shall briefly examine cases of Mexico and Fascist Italy; in the second, Nazi Germany, Britain and India; and in the third, Communist China. By drawing upon examples from around the world and different eras, the intention is to demonstrate that this is not a phenomenon confined to any particular place or time, but is universal and one which time and again occurs through history.

The Nazis invoked a ‘Nordic’ or ‘Indo-Germanic’ past as their claim to superiority. European powers used archaeological expeditions in Palestine to seek verification of Biblical history, but also as a cover for seeking control of a strategic area. Today the modern state of Israel is using archaeology as a means of glorifying the Hebraic past and of validating its right to exist as a nation.

The founders of the modern state of Mexico sought Mexican independence through repudiation of the Spanish heritage and restoration of an idealized Aztec Empire. These ideas were sidetracked after independence in 1821 but re-emerged in the revolution of 1910. The importance
of a syncretized past in Mexican ideology is reflected in various ways. For instance, the physical layout of the National Museum of Anthropology in Mexico City stresses continuity of the past with the present. Halls of regional prehistory on the first level are superimposed by corresponding historic and ethnographic halls for each region directly above. The focal point of the museum is a great calendar stone on which the Aztec cosmos is depicted. This stone is also used throughout Mexico as an unofficial symbol of the nation.

In Italy between the wars, there was a recurring use of the term ‘classical.’ The Futurists before WWI had sought a violent break with the past. The Movement proposed the total physical annihilation of traditional Italy to allow the emergence through ‘universal dynamism’ - ‘The absolute life force of matter’ - a new, modern, industrial and pioneering Italy.

“... architecture cannot be subject to any law of historical continuity. It must be as new as our frame of mind is new.” (Sant’Elia/Marinetti: 1914)

Venice, Florence, Rome were ‘three festering sores.’ The Futurists sought to replace the traditional city with the Futurist city of constant movement change and continual demolition and reconstruction [98].

It is amazing to see how just a few years later, the same arguments (“new as our frame of mind is new”), were used to advocate the opposite ideology by Gruppo 7, a Milan based group of architects, with Giuseppe Terragni among them. Founded in 1926 they never rejected tradition but rather thought “tradition would transform itself taking on new aspects.” Fascism derived its short run political success from efforts to appeal simultaneously to diverse aspirations and social groups. Throughout its twenty years, it vacillated between adventurous Modernism and recalcitrant traditionalism. Mussolini described tradition as one of the greatest spiritual forces of a people.

[98] Antonio Sant’Elia: La Città Nuova, 1914
But Fascism did not wish either to cling to the past or dash headlong into the 'seductive mists of the future.'

There was expressed a need for an order based on purity and incorporating a 'Latin spirit.' Classical orders were the basis of order and rationality, and 'classical harmony' celebrated 'eternal values' of everyday life. However the emphasis was not so much on form as capturing the spirit - the Mediterranean spirit. The Rationals interpreted the spirit of the Twentieth century: “architecture of today, perfectly modelled on the needs of today,” as the same spirit that had animated Renaissance and Classical Rome. By the same token Le Corbusier was considered a traditionalist and not a Futurist. Pagano on a visit to Pompeii noticed the housing there was 'Modern,' as if, "left temporarily unfinished by a Le Corbusier or a Mies van der Rohe, who did not yet know either iron or reinforced concrete." The Mediterranean was thus the true source of Modern Architecture. More specifically it was Rome: “Rome’s business was to conquer the world and govern it...if it is brutal, so much the worse, or so much the better.” (Le Corbusier: 1923)

In the climate of Fascist Italy, under Mussolini, the indifference could indeed prove very brutal. The preoccupation for both Le Corbusier and Mussolini was a striving for order. For Le Corbusier it was predominantly architectural order and for Mussolini primarily political order. They both appealed to ancient Rome to achieve it. That Mussolini saw himself as the rightful heir to Imperial Rome can be discerned in the following statements:

“Rome is the name that contains all of history for twenty centuries...Rome that traces streets, indicates boundaries and gives to the world eternal laws of its immutable destiny.” (Mussolini: 1920)

“...eternal Rome, the city that has given two civilizations to the world and will yet give a third.” (Mussolini: 1921)

It didn’t require great imagination to figure out which that third civilization was to be.
Mussolini wished to restore to Rome the glory it had boasted during the reign of Augustus. The tomb of Augustus was restored and he sought to resurrect the maritime port of Ostia. Although Ostia was not the most favourable of sites, for Mussolini it had to be Ostia, as it was from here that the fleets of ancient Rome had conducted businesses of its overseas empire.

Of particular interest is the competition sponsored by the regime in 1934 for its National Headquarters. The Palazzo del Littorio also had to have a museum dedicated to the Fascist Revolution. The site was opposite the Basilica of Maxentus. The entry by Terragni et al (unbuilt) [99] began by describing their response to potent historical associations of the site atop the ancient Imperial fora. The design was equal in size and height to the Colosseum. It had 1200 rooms on nine floors. The façade was faced with porphyry, making associations with antiquity and equating the Duce of Fascist Italy with the Caesars of Imperial Rome. The dominant feature of the scheme was a great curved wall more than eighty meters long and interrupted at the centre by a projecting speaker’s rostrum directly behind which was Mussolini’s own office. The only other feature on the curved façade were inscribed patterns - the modern equivalent of opus recticulatum found in ancient Rome [100].

Terragni’s program was quite simple. To establish ties with Imperial Rome, and to portray Mussolini in a favorable light. When the Duce would step out of his office onto the rostrum, everyone would be able to see him.

“He is like a God, outlined against the sky; above Him there is no one... The Duce will stand before adoring multitudes; He will belong to everyone, He will be with everyone.”

Ancient Rome was not being resurrected. Actually it had never died: merely sidetracked from its destiny. It was up to Mussolini, simply to bring it back on course and carry on.

The case of Britain is different from that of Italy. That Britain draws its strength from mixed ethnic origins, served as a popular argument in the thirties against Nazi monomania. The suggestion that the Stonehenge was originally an astronomical observatory was used to imply that the Druids were *scientifically* advanced and hence more advanced than contemporary Europeans. This knowledge of building observatories, did not come from the East, but rather its builders were ancient Britons who created and diffused the seeds of ‘higher’ knowledge to the Continent and Asia. This knowledge flowered and ultimately returned back to Britain via successive invasions, resulting in ‘hybrid vigor’ and a superior culture. The British Empire was able to take this back to its Colonies for a second time.

Sir Edwin Lutyens, writing about his impressions of the Indians wrote, “the natives do not improve much on acquaintance. Their very low intellect spoils much and I do not think it possible for the Indians and whites to mix freely and naturally. They are very different and even my ultra-wide sympathy with them cannot admit them on the same plane as myself.”

When the decision to move the administrative capital of India from Calcutta to Delhi was made, in 1911, Lutyens and Baker were made responsible for the new
The spatial form which the city took established the power structure of the Colonists on one hand and on the other, further stratified and segregated a society already having strong caste barriers. A hundred and seventy five roles were laid down, classified into sixty-one positions. Other than occupational rank, ethnic criteria played an important role. Elaborate instruments were developed to ensure that official hierarchies were known. The impact of the structure of the colonial bureaucracy on the structure of the city was telling.

The site chosen was at the highest point on a ridge and the Viceroy's palace was designed so that it not be dominated by the Jumma Masjid and the Fort, yet at the same time not be dwarfed by the ridge. The British in India were aware they had a glorious heritage to contend with and they were up to the challenge.

"We must now let him (the Indian native) see for the first time the power of Western science, art, civilization." (Lord Stamfordham)

Lutyens had visited Rome in 1909 and had been impressed by the network of ordered vistas ordered by Pope Sixtus V, with tall obelisks acting as focal points. Memories of the piazza del Popolo found their way into plans for Imperial Delhi. The three axes from the Raisina Hill where the Viceroy's Palace was located, connected the Jumma masjid, the site of Delhi's first settlement at Indraprastha and the tomb of Safdar Jang. Hexagonal pattern and symmetry of planning made reference to the politically autocratic capitals of Europe such as Karlsruhe.
and Versailles.

"...the British capital for India had to uphold a venerable tradition of Imperial governance, weaving the strands of many centuries and empires into a new whole...the British Raj would now be ranged in tangible form besides the monuments of past rulers and it was essential that it ‘quietly dominate them all.’" (Irving: 1981)  

In Delhi’s rich past, Lutyens found major historic monuments to terminate the main axes of Imperial Delhi. His sense of preservation however did not extend to smaller tombs and monuments - particularly ones which did not conform to his road layout. They were awkwardly situated and a ‘nuisance.’ As one could not imagine the Place de la Concorde in Paris with tombs anywhere and everywhere; neither could one imagine Delhi, Imperial City and a symbol of the Raj in India. Echoes of Rome were not distant:

"...it must like Rome be built for eternity." (Birdwood)  

The claims to moral and cultural superiority, and the use of the past to express political power found an extreme manifestation in Nazi Germany under Hitler. The purpose of the Third Reich clearly was to restore the superiority of German culture. Guiding ideals of Nazi cultural policy were the ‘timeless’ quality of Neo-Classical buildings to be used for key monuments and the racially pure, ‘blood and soil’ vernacular style for housing.

"The true German house like the the German peasant or soldier, was rooted in the soil like a tree." (Benton: 1977)  

On the one hand were the Jews, Bedouins, Bolsheviks, on the other siedler (settler) of Teutonic origin who were the only ones who could provide the values necessary for a new society.

"Berlin on Hitler’s birthday was almost like a Boy Scouts’ jambooree. The extreme popularity of Hitler must be recognized, as must also be the sincerity of the average Nazi. They are definitely out to do something in which they believe, which in the main is a
rejuvenation and cleaning up of Germany.” (Yerbury: 1933)\(^{15}\)

The National Government under the leadership of Adolf Hitler had undertaken the tasks of ‘purifying’ all areas of life and of showing ‘lesser privileged’ peoples the right path. The Romans had built arches of triumph to celebrate victories won by the Roman empire, while Hitler planned them to celebrate victories not yet won. He was aware of the effect of grand scale and monumentality\(^{103}\). The plan of Berlin done in collaboration with Speer couldn’t have been grander. It consisted of a three hundred and eighty foot high triumphal arch and a three and a half mile vista (two and a half times the length of the Champs Elysees). This axis connected the railway terminus to the *Grosse Halle* with a dome of two hundred and fifty meters diameter. Planned to be the eighth wonder of the world, when completed it would hold 180,000 spectators\(^{104}\). Nazi architecture had to be heroic and monumental:

![Diagram of Berlin plan](image1.png)

\(^{103}\) Leon Krier: Scale of Buildings as compared to Albert Speer’s: Grosse Halle, Berlin

\(^{104}\) Albert Speer: Proposal for Berlin
"We must build as large as today's technical possibilities permit: we must build for eternity," and,

"Without the city of Rome, there would never have been a Roman Empire." (Hitler)

Familiar themes, recurring in various guises.

For the Chinese, the past has always been a guide to morality, providing precepts for proper behavior and thought in the present. Which precepts are 'provided' is a matter of political interpretation. An official 'history office' was established in China during the Tang dynasty which controlled the accessible past. Such histories were written by bureaucrats for bureaucrats to justify present dynasty's authority. More recently it was Chairman Mao's dictum:

"The past should serve the present."

Since the Communist takeover, however, it was not just the ruler's past but the people’s past that was important. Between 1949 and 1959, Chinese archaeological interpretations were based on Russian archaeological theory. However after the Sino-Soviet rift, the Chinese rulers sought to balance Marxist scheme of world history with an attempt to do justice to cultural tradition. In 1960-61, the 'Standard Framework of Chinese Cultural Development' was formulated. Chinese pre-history and history was divided into three stages within overall paradigm of history as class struggle. Variance of opinion over details were permitted as long as there was no questioning of the conceptual framework. The evil pre-1949 past was contrasted with the glory of the present and the future. The past was not evil in itself, but rather the rulers who exploited the people were evil. It was a testimonial to the labour of the masses, who produced a great cultural heritage despite the oppressive rulers, and whose full potential was unleashed only in 1949.

Like Orwell's state, Communist China uses and manipulates the past for glorifying and justifying the
present and the future. Since the Cultural Revolution, there is room once again for Confucius, although officially ‘interpreted.’ In 1985, a cement plant where the remains of Peking Man were discovered, was closed. Though the significance of the find may anyway have resulted in measures by the International community to safeguard the site, the Chinese rulers took the opportunity to promote state ideology. A guide book to the site says that:

"The Peking man find proves that Engels and Darwin were right and that 'he' has become a symbol for the workers of China because the stone tools from the site 'prove' that he knew how to work and that he probably worked together (sic) in a sort of proto-communist state, sharing equally with his fellows."

In the preceding examples we have seen three different attitudes towards the past and ways were suggested in which they have been used to exploit the present and manipulate the future. In the case of Israel, Mexico and Italy, we have seen how nationally motivated ideologies have tried to convince the governed that those in power rule legitimately and that they have genealogical links connecting them directly to the ultimate sources of power. In Britain, its Colonies, and in Nazi Germany, we have seen how the past has been interpreted propagandistically, to advance the Nation’s 'superiority.' It has been used to justify their duty to bring culture and civilization to those less fortunate and even their 'right’ to conquer and rule. In China we have seen the past being used for the internal legitimization of a nation’s policies, actions, and ideologies. The purpose of appeal to the past is not to legitimize authority by linkage; nor to justify hegemony of a ‘superior’ people over ‘inferior’ ones; nor to claim intellectual or cultural advancement over other nations. Rather the past is viewed as a testimony to the masses in keeping with Communist ideology.
"And all rulers are heirs to those conquered before them. Hence, empathy with the victor invariably benefits the rulers... Whoever has emerged victorious, participates to this day in the triumphal procession in which the present rulers step over those lying prostrate. According to traditional practice, the spoils are carried along in the procession." (Benjamin) 19

How then does one instill a critical attitude in which the victorious do not step over those lying prostrate? A possible solution lies in the denial of 'final interpretation' and a denial of the 'meaning of history' in the metaphysical sense. If history has a meaning it is only in the existential sense - one that we choose to give it.

We have seen thus far in this thesis how in history only those facts have been recorded which are sufficiently interesting to record. They must fit within a preconceived theory and aid the propagation of desirable political ends. For this reason we have argued not only for the preservation of monuments, but also for preserving the ambiance of the environment as a whole. Through an examination of cases of rebuilding and restoration we have observed attitudes towards the urban past and the different ways they have led to an interpretation of history.

Interpretations are important. They represent a point of view. It is a naive belief that historical records can be interpreted in only one way. This does not, however, mean that all interpretations are of equal merit. Some are not in keeping with accepted records, others require plausible auxiliary hypotheses, and yet others are unable to connect a number of facts and therefore are unable to explain adequately. We study the past because we are interested in it and we wish to learn from it something about our own problems. None of these purposes can be served if we try to attain an impossible ideal of objectivity. It is inevitable that we interpret, but the non-objectivity of our interpretation should not devalue it. We should not
hesitate to present history from our point of view. The main thing is to be conscious of that viewpoint and avoid unconscious and uncritical biases.

Just as there is no history of the past, 'as it happened,' there are no final interpretations of history. Every generation has a right, indeed an obligation, to frame its own interpretations. History in that sense has no meaning per se, nor any end. If we think history progresses, then we make the same mistake as those who believe history has a meaning that can be discovered, and that it should be allowed to follow a course till its predicted ends. We are justified in denying the historicist, the right to his interpretation of history in just one way and none other.

According to Popper, the history of mankind that is taught to us in schools is the history of power politics. This is nothing but the history of 'international crime' and 'mass-murder,' including some attempts to prevent them. The reply of every humanitarian can only be that there is no Universal History.

"We can interpret the history of power politics from the point of view of our fight for the open society, for a rule of reason, for justice, freedom, equality, and for the control of international crime. Although history has no ends, we can impose these ends of ours upon it; and although history has no meaning, we can give it a meaning." (Popper: 1950)

We began in the preface of this thesis with a premise. We repeat it here, as a conclusion, though with a slight variation. That variation is the accent on a word, pundits and politicians of all hues have been anxious to deny us. Although we have to carry on a certain tradition, we should have the liberty to feel when necessary, unhistorically.
Notes:

1 Allen Ginsberg, quoted in R. Buckminster Fuller: I seem to be a Verb (NY: Bantam, 1970), pp 164-5 A


8 Mussolini: Speech at Bologna, Apr 3, 1921; in Kostof: Third Rome, p 30


12 Irving: Indian Summer, p 72

13 Sir George Birdwood, quoted in Irving: Indian Summer, p 90


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[37 a,b] Rob Krier: The Street & The Square (Arch. Design, Jan 1979)


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[55] Delhi, India, Aerial View, Boundary between the new & the old city (LYNCH, Kevin: *Good City Form*, 1981)

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[59] Fez, Plan showing the new and the old cities (AKP: *Design in Islamic Cultures 3 - Adaptive Re-use*, 1983)

[60] Al-Sukkariyya hara, Cairo, Egypt, Plan (AL MESSIRI-NA-DIM, Nawal: *The Concept of the Hara*, 1979)

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[63a,b] Mosque of Al-Aqmar, Cairo, 1125, Plan & Diagram (Author’s drawings)

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[69] Amphitheatre at Arles, Italy converted to a town (*Arch. Design*, April 1978)

[70a,b] Amphitheatre at Florence, Italy, Stages of Transformation (*Arch. Design*, April 1978)

[71] Perez de Arce: Proposal for filling-in of area around the Open Hand Monument, Chandigarh, India (*Arch. Design*, April 1978)

6. The Ruin as a Monument and the Monument as a Ruin


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[86] Charles Street Meeting House, Boston, Section (ILAUD Yearbook 1984-85)
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