

ENGLISH

English translation by Paula Olmos

The risks of freedom

Miguel Ángel Baldellou

Franco's decease in 1975 was, in more than one sense, a real turning point in Spanish history. It was the end of a period which had lasted for forty years and in which our architectural world had been submitted to ideology.

However, the expected liberation of our restrained capacities did not take place as it should have done. The situation was rather similar in other cultural fields. In fact, during the latter years of the Regime, many of its original characteristics had vanished or were completely transformed.

Radical changes occurred in the people's convictions born out of the contacts with foreign countries through emigration and tourism and of the internal economic development. For the young generations of 1975, Franco's fascist ideology was something forsaken long time ago, something related to the historical origins of the Regime and not to its current life. The long road to democracy, a process in which 1975 is a fundamental date and which took advantage of the mentioned change of mentality to achieve a peaceful takeover, is the context in which the Spanish architecture of the latter twenty years took shape.

Along these years we have witnessed a radical division between the projects produced by the architects of the late Franco Regime and those signed by professionals who began their career in democracy.

The architects who graduated around 1965, could yet identify themselves with the European young people who led the 1968 demonstrations, although their origins, their conceptions and ideals were rather different. Just the fact of their coincidence in time made possible the illusion of their supposedly shared characteristics. But the force of the University crisis of those years was rather impressive and made possible the union of a whole generation in its fight against the oppressive circumstances which would, nevertheless, last for another decade.

In this context, we obviously expected that the death of the Regime's inspirer should bring us the liberation of the power of expression so far repressed by the political situation.

The period from 65 to 80, the years around 1975, was a time of a urgent and committed search for basic concepts in which to build a free cultural identity. Most of the architects concerned about their historical responsibility tried then to determine their intellectual sources, identify their masters among their close companions and accommodate their work to international acknowledged trends.

Their international presentation brought

with it an explicit reference to their concrete origin.

We can identify this generation, today on their mid forties or fifties, with the "Transition" period. They tried to achieve their freedom of expression either by fighting to detach themselves from previous groups or by following with respect a particular master.

In this sense, the individualistic and plural atmosphere of Madrid, encouraged this complete dispersion of aims and conceptions.

This was the generation of the "28 university teachers" of the famous "Arquitectura Bis" issue and of others that tried, in a more quiet and isolated way, to apply themselves to strengthen their conscience. Seduced by some fundamental texts by Kalu, Venturi, Rossi or Tafuri, they found themselves in front of the dilemma of having to choose between a heroic and an ironic attitude. Those just detected innovative conceptions were defended with ardour by the architects belonging to a generation which included many different tendencies.

Those graduated in Madrid's School in the latter fifteen years, on their part, have gone through their whole student period in democracy. They could, therefore, enjoy the optimistic and hopeful atmosphere of the Spanish society and also the Spanish University during those years.

On the other hand, the older pre-war generations of teachers were about to retire and the subsequent fight to occupy their posts augmented the mentioned dispersion, a permanent characteristic of Madrid's School.

This general withdrawal of the older masters was the origin of a stylistic break up and the reason of the recent architects' ambiguous filiation.

There are other significant facts in all this process. On one hand, the creation of new Schools of Architecture in Spanish soil with new groups of graduates has broken up the traditional diversity in Madrid's School and provoked the local stylistic specialization.

Once the polarity Madrid-Barcelona broken up, our School has lost in a rather apparent way the tension produced by the contribution of "peripheral" students. On the other hand, there has been a recent and widespread influence of international authors as Rowe, Frampton, Stern or Krier, who have been even invited here by their somewhat eventual disciples. The internationalization of our culture, though, has not resulted in a parallel development of our own production. One of the reasons is our probable ineptitude to develop our own culture, but the other is just the abandon of many possible directions as our architects seem to embrace exclusively figurative procedures. Thus, the proliferation

of "practical" master courses has replaced the organization of sound Doctorate Programmes.

In the middle of this general dispersion of cultural aims affecting our youngest architects, there are still, nevertheless, some nuclei grouped around particular personalities. But there is no direct relation with the older and indisputable masters whose influence has been, yet, transferred by intermediate disciples in a logically adulterated way.

The transmission chain connecting the first and second after-war generations of architects and our present students has been gradually lost by means intermediate disciples, mainly belonging to the group of graduates during the Political Transition. Thus, the most combative aspects of their message, the debate about the construction of their own identity and many other polemic issues were hopelessly forsaken.

That is probably one of the reasons of the apparent renunciation to meditate on the part of our latest architects who employ their efforts in other questions which are rather peripheral in relation to our discipline. The youngest generations are, in many senses, disoriented. They must look after themselves without any reference "against" which they could place their own production, without any immediate "models". On the other hand, this has also encouraged some amazingly fresh and independent attitudes which must be, nevertheless, considered incoherent, disconnected. There is a kind of collective bewilderment which has contaminated our undisciplined students, chased by their own desperate anxiety to achieve uncertain ends by means of intellectual short cuts and thoughtless leaps in the dark whose consequences are, in most cases, irreversible.

Certain circumstances, the euphoric and jubilee atmosphere of the latter years, have facilitated this general evasion. It is also true that this widespread amnesia has been probably encouraged by many architectural educators who tried to promote the motto "Invent, you damned, there is always something left". The ingenuous will of our students has tried to look for any kind of notoriety by means of exaggerated forms disconnected from necessity.

Of course they have indulged in letting themselves go in these comfortably troubled waters, in most cases with a conscious and planned complicity.

Some could argue that the apparent freedom with which some architects design is just the result of a natural and unaffected acquisition of the latest information. My own experience as teacher of Architectural Theory and History, makes me suspect that this widespread attitude is, on the contrary, the outcome of an excess of inarticulate information. And here we find again the mentioned complicity as a basic strategy. The ambiguous and languishing "gauche divine" has even lost its leftist quality, but not in any

inadvertent or casual manner. Maybe, these artful but mistaken designers are just using an unsuitable mix of incompatible ingredients.

And regarding the current issue of the greater cultivation or commitment of the most recent graduates, or about their greater capacity for unfettered design, I must say that I consider such comparisons completely impertinent. Our own data and the present unstable circumstances cannot allow us to keep such statements. Our latest graduates are a mass of completely heterogeneous and divergent attitudes and any attempt to assign them a common attribute is just a playful arbitrariness.

There are, nevertheless, some dominant trends encouraged by certain particular champions and some kind of general fashionable atmosphere within the profession which is apparent in architectural contests and magazines. But to say that those things so rarely built and designed by so few are representing such divergent groups is somewhat exaggerated.

Of course, in the middle of all this situation, some cases stand out for their unexpected courage. Some, even among the youngest, architects try to make their "own" voices audible, their own "though" understood. So few. But bold and excellent. Let us leave them alone without confusion. Silence and respect are, in most cases, better than untimely praise. Let us be quiet and wait, for their own and our own benefit. Let us not mix different attitudes. Because some look for their own way and not precisely for a master. Because real masters do not want to be reproduced in a shallow way and, with a deeper approach, they are completely matchless.

So, what should be the role of all these assistant teachers after the "legal" withdrawal of the masters? They have all tried to be the main character on scene and they cannot be but a numerous chorus whose distinct voices are unidentifiable.

In any case, it is very interesting to learn the opinion of the recent graduates about whom they consider their real masters. In most cases, their answers reveal an strategic but unreal attempt to look for references which their own practice prove rather equivocal or deceiving. A timely allusion is just a way to achieve a certain "pedigree", a certain affiliation with well known standards.

From a certain distance, all this just seems a desperate search for some kind of self-identity in the middle of a massive concurrence, the shielding character of prestige against a hostile society. In this sense, Porto's case, recently reviewed in this magazine, is completely different from ours. Among our architects, embracing a certain trend, means the immediate rejection of any other possible way. We do everything but try to achieve an agreement. In our School, this kind of mean conflict is rather usual. These

circumstances make almost impossible to name any dominant tendency, or to develop any coherent and rigorous discourse without indulging oneself in fruitless confrontations.

At the same time, there seems to be a certain tendency to renounce to the exaggerated forms of latter years. Necessity has forced our architects to keep to a more prosaic reality, forgetting the days of

immoderate jubilee.

We should ask Utzon, after his Australian experience, and many others who fervently defended the empire of means and forms, "What is left of the sails of yore?" Let us go back to "Institutions", let us be Kahnian. What will be left of all that "ignis fatuus"? Unfortunately, not even the memory of its propagation.

Resist, you damned

Alberto Campo Baeza

"that CREATION is more than Power and ART more than Politics. That WORKS are immortal and not wars, nor royal balls"

MILAN KUNDERA / IMMORTALITY

Those old lost 28

"Be it just for the sake of continuity, the issue you are about to read should be taken as an attempt to renovate your interest in a supposedly real School of Madrid". These were, more or less, Moneo's words at the beginning of his article "28 unlisted architects" published by *Arquitectura Bis* seventeen years ago. This supposed Madrilenian School or Maniera, a repeated attempt during the later years, has revealed itself an impossible entity. Fortunately enough, Madrid's architects were, and are will be heterodox, unclassifiable, variegated and unsubmitive. Because freedom is the indispensable basis of any creative process that is worth the name.

The rest of that article, which showed a supposed confrontation between Madrid and Barcelona which I think rather fictitious in architectural matters was, nevertheless, an efficient encouragement for a younger group of architects which were (we were) then beginning their inescapable conflict with Society. The artist, the architect trying to make his best, on one hand. Society, on the other, often trying to prevent such a thing. The text you are now reading would also like to be a source of encouragement and reassurance for Madrid's youngest architects.

But, what happened to those 28 unlisted architects of yore whose link was, according to Moneo, "their common age, their interest in education and their critical attitude"?

Their age is still the same though time has proved himself more generous with some of them than with the others. Their works and the way they manage their lives have also been inexorably transformed by time.

And regarding their interest in education, we just can say that the members of the group have acted rather differently. Five among them became Professors in Madrid's School of Architecture: Juan Navarro Baldeweg, 1984; Alberto Campo Baeza, 1986; Manuel de las Casas, 1987; Antón Capitel, 1992 and Gabriel Ruiz Cabrero, 1995. Víctor López Cotelo became Professor in Munchen in 1995. And Juan Antonio Cortés in Valladolid in 1989. Other 10 are still teachers in Madrid's School, two of them Official Teachers: María Teresa Muñoz, 1988, who was also, from 1988 to 1991, Director of the Projects Department and Javier Frechilla, 1993. Eight more as Hired

Teachers: Ignacio de las Casas, Javier Bellosillo, José Manuel López Peláez, Francisco Rodríguez de Parterroyo, Eduardo Sánchez, Daniel Zarza, Jerónimo Junquera and Estanislao Pérez Pita.

And regarding their critical attitude, we must say that it has endured probably more than it could have born. The natural tendency to remain in a comfortable position has just been overcome by a few ones. Those who are still producing sensible architecture and profound theoretical texts. Those whose character and works have taken advantage of time itself, still resisting in this incredible trial for perseverance which is the practice of Architecture.

With a determined determination

My aim, during the later years in which I have written some texts dedicated to the younger architects, has always been that of encouraging resistance.

In 1977 I had an article published by A+U in Tokyo whose title was "7+7+7" which included a list of architects most of which appeared in Moneo's account of 28 unlisted architects published the next year by *Arquitectura Bis*. Moneo's aim, as my own, was that of encouraging Madrid's youngest architecture.

Later on, in 1985, I wrote another article for *Process Architecture*, Tokyo, whose title was "The Architecture of Madrid: An unrestrainable avalanche". Almost half of the article and of the whole issue was dedicated to Madrid's youngest generation of architects. And the same year I persisted on my aspiration with the publication of the mythical book "Young Spanish Architects" which was considered like the red book of the youngest architecture in Spain as it included examples from the whole territory.

In 1992, I harped on the subject by writing another article, this time for the well known "Arquitectos" magazine, published by the Spanish Superior Council of Colleges of Architects, whose title was "Architects for the next century" and in which, with the help of Italo Calvino and making a final "dribbling" not to reveal the names of the selected professionals I gave a new account of the issue.

I also contributed explicit references, lists

and commentaries on particular architects to special issues as *EL PAIS* Year's Books and other magazines and newspapers.

My aim has always been the same. Defend and stimulate young architects, in most cases from Madrid, in front of a Society which proves itself more ignorant and less cultivated each day in architectural matters.

The title of a new article, this time published in *EL PAIS* in 1985, "Saturn will not devour his children anymore", tried to be rather expressive about my own attitude.

But who are these architects whom I have called damned and whom I am trying to drive towards resistance? I am referring to a group of architects from Madrid whose position is now similar to that of the mentioned 28 in the days of Moneo's article. A group of young architects, all of them dedicated to educational matters, teachers of Architectural Design in Madrid's School of Architecture and with a clear critical attitude which is apparent in their works. They are like those 28 were but, we may say, even better.

Family resemblance

Although we are talking about a group of revels that do not pay homage to any older master and although their attitude in front of the previous generation is a puzzling shyness, if we investigate under mere appearance we will find a profound respect and admiration to their predecessors. We can still recognize in them some family resemblance: Sota's fineness and Oiza's boldness. Cano Lasso's spontaneity and Carvajal's correctness. Fernández Alba's erudition and Moneo's learning. Fisac's revelry and Cabrero's simplicity. And Corrales' sense of construction and Molezún's (a nostalgic homage to him) ingeniousness. All these features are present in some way or another in this new architecture.

The impressive quality of the architecture produced by the older Spanish masters, whose importance is continuously increasing, cannot be overlooked by the younger ones who are now taking the baton as in an architectural relay race.

Although we have talked about general features we can be more precise and talk about particular likenesses. At least about formal (just formal?) likenesses. We detect Sota's traits in Sancho's or Madrilejo's work. And Oiza is always present in Aparicio's. Cabrero and Cano Lasso are a subtle ghost in Aranguren's and Gallegos' projects. And Corrales and Molezún in Abalos' and Herreros'. Carvajal seems to be the favourite for the team Matos-Martínez del Castillo. And Moneo for Tuñón. Cánovas-Amann-Maruri seem to keep Fisac's character. And, thus, we could continue with our extended family looking for and, obviously, finding common traits.

Knowing, knowing how to teach, wanting to teach

All of them, as we have already said, are dedicated to architectural education. For this group of young architects their architectural design lessons in Madrid's School of Architecture are not a mere hobby. They take their time to prepare their classes, elaborate and publish their programmes and they prove thus how important it is for them this part of their architectural practice.

They comply with Julian Marías saying about good teachers: "they know, they know

how to teach and want to teach".

They know, they keep studying and thinking. They know how to teach; they are, obviously some of them more than the others, sound educators.

The most important group is precisely that formed by the youngest Official Teachers of Architectural Design: Abalos-Herreros, Aranguren-González, Gallegos, Aparicio and Sancho-Madrilejos. And we expect to receive, during the next academic year an important group of Doctoral Thesis from the rest of them. Naturally this fervent dedication and the quality and rigor of their educational methods is recognized by the pupils who want to be admitted in their groups by hundreds.

I can guarantee you that their corrections, their critical sessions in design courses have nothing to do with likings and dislikings and are based on the purest theory. All of them are skilled analyzers as their own projects reveal. And they try, and this is a most difficult thing, to avoid any formal resemblance between their own work and that of their pupils.

They know, they know how to teach and want to teach.

These are more cultivated

The later generation of the mentioned 28, precisely the generation who lived that may of 1968, came to have a solid culture many years after they left School. That old School in which the classical statues and beaux-arts drawings had been replaced by a superficial and somewhat thoughtless approach to Mies, Le Corbusier and Aalto, or at least to their forms. Without a real conscious understanding. Probably with an attitude, formal and not conceptual, very similar to that of the old-fashioned teachers.

Those in that generation which seemed to be more cultivated had in fact read a little bit more than the others. They were little erudites and big pedants as their age permitted them to be. Because to assimilate culture, one, fortunately, needs much more time. You need to enjoy, to appreciate its fruits at a certain slow pace.

Some of them, though, came to mature that cultivated wisdom, they grew with it, enjoying it and resisting in their position defined by Moneo in his *Arquitectura Bis* article as one in which the main characteristics were age, educational purposes and critical attitude.

For most of them, the doctoral thesis, in most cases a historical study, was the appropriate occasion to prove their capacity for analysis and meditation, a capacity which is the basis of any skills in architectural design. And most of them took advantage of that occasion to undertake a more profound and rigorous approach to their design lessons.

But the architects belonging to our youngest generation, that which we are introducing here, have done all these things in less time and probably with better results.

Their Doctoral Thesis are usually more related to their educational methods and general interests. And their erudition is greater from the beginning of their career. And this has made them more rigorous as professionals; architects whose projects are born out of seminal ideas, of built ideas.

As it usually happens in Spanish architecture, they are rather heterodox regarding international trends. They do not follow them, or do not like to be told that they

follow them, they reject them. There is not a single "minimalist" or "Deconstructivist" or "high-tech" architect among them. They can pick some feature here and other there but always in a most heterodox way, trying not to be classified within any particular group.

Their enlightenment and their rigor has encouraged them to write about their ideas. They write. And this differentiates them from their older predecessors. They try to explain the basis of the ideas and theories which justify their architecture. And they frequently have their texts published. All the Spanish architectural magazines have published their articles, but, sometimes, they want even more and they create their own means of expression. The better example is CIRCO, a prestigious fanzine created by Tuñón, Rojo and Mansilla in which Sancho and Madridejos published an interesting text called "The void's paradox" and in which they were replied by Abalos and Herreros with a more humorous article. All of them, in spite of their profound differences, belong to the heterogeneous group of our youngest and incredibly interesting generation of Madrid's architects.

Looking after themselves

They are not yet advertising chairs, as Gehry, and even less yoghurt as Bofill but they know that they must present themselves to the public. An architect enclosed in a chest is sure to be moth-eaten soon, or even demented or dead. The question is not just the necessary communication with others required by any creative process. There is something else, no clients means no work to be done. If you do not work, do not build, there is no architecture. Have you ever seen anything more ridiculous than a demonstration bullfight? Without the bull, there is nothing left.

These architects know it but too well. And they try to make their works known. To proclaim once and for all that Architecture is still possible. And if they have to show themselves in a somewhat extravagant mood, they do it. As great masters do.

Le Corbusier was always very conscious about, for example, the pictures taken in his Ville Savoie. He wanted them to express the fabulous architecture contained by that Pandora's box. And, if he thought necessary to put a listless hat and some glasses on a certain table, he just put them. As in Palladio's age there was no photography, he wrote his four books to spread his own ideas and works. And Utzon, in the era of photography, shows his moving hands drawing a synthesized image of his monument for Sidney.

Our architects do as they did. They know they cannot be secluded. And that the best way of looking after themselves is looking towards the audience.

Competitius interruptus

"I am really traumatized by competitions. I am full of scars and even open wounds. I am not the only one in such a situation. I have seen many friends, the contestants and their collaborators, in a lamentable state even months after the final submittance. There will be a time in the world of architecture when will even die for the sake of competitions... You have to live for yourself what it is to work in a team for several weeks, for months sometimes. You have to feel that passion, that enthusiasm with which work is undertaken.

The quantity of lost work. And the final humiliation when, in some way or another, the verdict is not an equitable one. It is a lost project and you have nothing but your lonely tears, and you try silently to forget it and you drink... it is like losing someone dear to you. Some of those projects haunt you for your whole life. It is an obsession and they come and come again to tell you they are still alive in you".

These were Jean Nouvel's terrible words in 1984. But just after displaying such a sour testimony, he began his Arab Centre in Paris and has been working and building continuously ever since.

Because competitions, so hard when you lose them and so glorious when you win them are still the best chance for the youngest.

That is, while many older architects who still feel young enough, keep running, there are also lots of youngsters who despising competitions just dedicate themselves to sign denigrating projects.

But our group of young architects, all of them teachers in Madrid's School of Architecture, do not only participate in competitions, they even win them. Aranguren-Gallegos (European, Bentaberría), Abalos-Herreros (M30 Madrid, RENFE Madrid, Palencia, Usera), Sancho-Madridejos (Paris Opera, San Sebastián de los Reyes, San Fernando de Henares), Aparicio (Madrid's Congress, Venice Biennial), Cánovas-Maruri-Amann (Zaragoza, Cadalso de los Vidrios), Tuñón-Mansilla (EL AGUILA, León) and Matos-Martínez Castillo (Palladio). And many other which we cannot list. Of course there is something beyond all that success, something difficult to forget. Many other competitions, most of them lost, wasted time, wasted money and wasted enthusiasm and creative spirit.

I can still remember very clearly how Clorindo Testa, the great Argentinean architect, put it: "if you could make a line with all the architects participating in the competition I have just lost, you will fill the whole Rivadavia Avenue in Buenos Aires". And he complained about that cruel dissipation. But I am afraid that the young architects we are talking about have still so much enthusiasm they can easily throw themselves into the burning volcano of the latest announced contest: that for the enlargement of the Prado Museum in Madrid. They are really incombustible.

And, there is even more, there is no guaranty at all that the winning projects will be erected. No institution accepts the deal. I once wrote a long article about that issue and I called it "Competitius Interruptus" trying to make an appeal regarding the unrewarded positive results of our contestants. If we follow Clorindo's method, we could fill another one of those Argentinean avenues with the forgotten winning projects.

Names, names

But, who are these architects we can stop talking about? They make up a group, which is beginning to be rather well known, of young architectural educators with a critical determination.

Maria José Aranguren and José González Gallegos, Iñaki Abalos and Juan Herreros, Jesús Aparicio and Juan Carlos Sancho are, all of them, Official Teachers in Madrid's School of Architecture. All of them under forty. They are the "Pièce de resistance" of the group.

Aranguren and González Gallegos who began with a somewhat more formalistic approach have proved the capacity to be rigorous and have purified their forms into projects full of spatial sense.

Abalos and Herreros, whose position is closer to a technological approach to architecture can be connected either with Herzog and de Meuron or with the best Goldsmith of SOM.

Aparicio is still obsessed with his radical option for the most primeval architecture; his dense forms which are nevertheless beginning to raise themselves.

Sancho and Madridejos have succeeded in putting into practice, with a surprising coherence, their theories about the void as the basis of architectural space and present temperate projects full of light.

The School of Architecture is very lucky to have such a group among its newest official teachers. All of them excellent professionals and prestigious educators whose renown is both based on their coherent practice (theoretical and designing) and their constant dedication to teaching.

Some of them are already doctors, as Gazapo; other are about to finish their thesis, as Matos, Martínez Castillo, Cánovas, Maruri, Amann, Tuñón, Mansilla, Sobejano, Nieto and Ruiz Barbarán. That academic requirement to become official teachers is being for them an opportunity to continue their intellectual labor in order to improve their education and their own private works.

There is a greater group in that same situation. People already working in their thesis or about to begin them, looking desperately for the necessary time to undertake their research: Soto, Colomé, De la Mata, García Gil, Gómez García, De Blas, Pardo,

Soriano. And Corrales, Herrera, Lapuerta, Moure, Santamaría, Mera-San Vicente, Maroto, Lleó, Revillo, Torrelo, Burgos, Vaquero, Feduchi, Cano Pintos, García Pedrosa, Pieltain. And the most recent ones, Garrido, Torres, Ulargi, Pesquera and De Miguel.

Drilling history

This story, whose latest chapter we are trying to relate, is just the continuation of that old one about the 28 and I would also like to mention an older precedent: Carlos Flores' "Arquitectura Española Contemporánea" whose splendid, extensive and profound text revealed for us the age of the masters.

As it happens with History, we cannot talk about closed circles but about segments of an spiral which is continuous and has no defined parts and in which the elements in the curve meet once and again. And, as any spiral, it can drill History as a carpenter's brace.

And, if that 28 had somewhat undefined common features as a group, I would say that our present group of architects, those for the end of the millennium, are in some way a better delimited bunch. They are all profoundly cultivated people. They believe in Architecture as an act of creation. They show themselves coherent enough when putting into practice their own theories in their built works. They are idealist, they beget ideas which can be built. They are free, they suffer that difficult freedom suitable for creative architects.

And if I should encourage these damned artists, so cultivated, so coherent, so idealist and so free in order to prevent their surrender I would just concentrate my whole strength, that contained within this text, and will utter just three words: RESIST YOU DAMNED!

Madrid, citizens and architects

José Manuel Sanz y Sanz

Maybe, those who will read these brief comment would deem it too general and including too many diverse aspects to be considered a reflection about architecture. Even more if we take in account that it refers to a city like Madrid.

Architecture, though, has always been something closely related to society. The nature of its production as a general first necessity, its inevitable relation with the economic and political instances which promote it, have always resulted in a greater involvement with real life on the part of architecture in relation to the other arts. Although I just want to point out certain aspects of the architectural world I am particularly interested in, I consider essential to make a brief analysis of the actual development of the profession and the social changes affecting our architecture. I will take the risk of being considered too schematic as the issue is not an appropriate one for a brief account.

I am sure that, for any normal citizen, completely absorbed in his cogitations while taking a bus or driving his own car, the city is

nothing else than a confused and changing background, without any distinct profile, of which he just perceives the sun, the rain and some of its most bothersome nuisances. He cares but little, at least in a conscious level, for the buildings along his quotidian route. Most of the ingredients of that confused scene are not, in fact, consciously present in his daily script.

I do not want to talk about a progressive detachment from architecture on the part of the general public because I am rather sure it has never been any closer to it. On the contrary, this is probably the reason for the progressive detachment from the general public on the part of architecture. From the beginning of the Modern Movement the gap has just grown wider.

We should therefore try to characterize this citizen, the user and potential client of architecture; and, precisely now when the millennium is about to finish. How is the average citizen of Madrid?

Any inhabitant of our city must undertake a daily battle against two particular circumstances which affect him: the specific

problems at work and the environment in which the latter take place. The instability of employment compels him to work harder but he has a natural need for a simpler and quieter life, focused on his own self-development.

The battle takes place within the city, in a particular and defined term. The result is usually just stress.

The scene is then perceived as another obstacle, as an indistinct enemy.

Trying to simplify his moves, he concentrates on his daily most imperative problems. But this process just narrows his views and then, his own problems seem greater as they occupy a considerable portion of his own conscience. Any impediment is seen as something dramatic, although, in most cases, it is just a simple circumstance. This reduction has eliminated some indispensable elements of human balance: conversation, reading, observation, walking, theatre, movies, concerts, museums, etc. Any demanding activity is put aside in favor of those conceived for passive spectators. Our supposedly indispensable Television, for example, in which our thoughts and conclusions are replaced by others', circumscribing any possible response to acceptance or rejection (that terrible "interactive" system seems to be the most debased procedure of the kind).

But the mentioned neglected elements are precisely the offer of the cities for our personal balance.

Just a few are succeeding in escaping from this situation. The most common result is personal instability or just apathy. Most try to elude it.

A critical society has been replaced with a passive and non creative society. We can identify the mentioned elements required by balance, though, with the lack of time, the lack of silence. Citizens have the opportunity to recover that fruitful time and silence in their leisure time, on weekends. But then they leave the city because they do not think it may have any capacity for redemption, any allure. Citizens escape from the city, towards their own closed homes or the surrounding villages, leaving the traditional stage of civilization an history completely deserted. The city is just left to the young people who need a place which is not their own house to develop a social life. Their yet shallow roots do not permit them to have a memorable relationship with the city. They are also escaping, towards silence. They unfold, though, a veil of noise between themselves and reality. I am not sure if for better or for worse. I do not know if they are an even more unconscious or apathetic generation or just people less contaminated by reality itself.

What is then the role left to the city? A city which is a daily oppression and entirely dispensable during weekends.

The answer could be something as widening the city for work and narrowing the inhabited city. In Madrid, hundreds of dwellings within the city centre are emptied while the Tertiary sector grows in this same area.

The proposed urban planning for Madrid in the latter years is, though, somewhat ambiguous and questionable. After the terrible error of restraining the development of new urban land that provoked an incredible and historical raise of the prices, the present proposal contemplates the other extreme, that is, the offer of an enormous amount of new land for dwellings, something which, on my

own view, is somewhat preoccupying.

Such an offer will probably make land, and subsequently housing, cheaper and affordable for young people. I am not sure, though, that the reduction would be as important as it is required, because prices have been too high for too many years and developers are accordingly spoiled. But I am even more worried about other issues. I am haunted by the image of young couples with their prams or elderly people walking through the wind in deserted and under-urbanized areas, which will remain thus for ages because the money for substructures, benches, gardening, lampposts, litter bins, etc., and the wardens to take care of all this and of them all was never raised. And also the terrible circumstance of having to meet at shopping centres, sports clubs or just on the occasion of the children's birthdays.

I am worried about such imported habits, provoked by certain kind of diluted urban fabric so common in colder climates which do not encourage the creation of open social spaces, where the streets are just the trace of the cars and the turning rings cannot be mistaken for piazzas. This process is a solemn renunciation to everything that was dear and characteristic in our cities.

What we remember about a place, a city, about our own district, what remains in our memory, is precisely the most characteristic, those things which we feel are our own. The scene and obviously its architecture are indispensable elements of our memory. If the city is not in it, there is no city at all.

That city made out of colored patches on a paper plan whose buildings cannot conform any recognizable space is something distressing for me. The indispensable identity born out of differentiation cannot be created by means of innumerable parameters and monotone geometries just seen by birds. Singular buildings, gardens and housing blocks must be conceived as part of an urban context, must create it, create humanly scaled spaces as perceived from our own point of view, taking in account our climate and habits, learning from traditional examples. We are forcing our citizens to change their habits just for the sake of certain kind of "modernity". I do not think there is anything more modern than trying to achieve people's happiness. But the described type of city, already proved and rejected in other countries, certainly does not encourage it.

The rhythm of life, the working habits of the current society are obviously spreading certain international procedures, and this is, probably, what urban designers are weighing instead of trying to exploit the possibilities of architecture for the construction of the city or waiting for the future changes brought by technology.

But we should, at least, assimilate these imported theories, adapt them to our own habits, to our understanding of the city or we will end up with a sensation of complete uprooting, of being nowhere at all.

And regarding the buildings themselves, I must say our citizens are just able to perceive certain superficial features and they tend to find them puzzlingly divers.

It is not easy to assume that confusing variety of solutions to apparently similar problems found in such common projects as are housing blocks or offices.

Materials and forms, even styles, seem to be just something added to the conceptual

scheme of the buildings. Sometimes, though, there is not even anything behind. What we see is just the outcome of accident and arbitrariness instead of a profound process of research which would have resulted, for sure, in something more modest, more anonymous and certainly more cultivated.

We must say that Madrid's private initiative is not usually producing quality architecture, although there are some exceptions. This modality of construction, though, is the most common in rather visible and essential areas of the city. Public developments are usually more conscious about architectural issues but this type of work is usually disseminated about dull and almost empty areas.

Private developers usually try to force the architect's conceptions to comply with their own economic and commercial criteria. Sometimes, the lack of experience and interest on the part of the best professionals in these issues (there are some notable exceptions) have made them unsuitable for this kind of commission. The lack of urban culture of most of our managerial class has made the rest.

Public projects were, during a certain period, possible thanks to a relative liberation of the public funds. But the complete freedom of design has produced contradictory results: some good architecture and a bunch of fatal errors. Our Administration was not always capable of distinguishing among them.

Architects have been blamed for everything. Sometimes they were guilty and sometimes not, or not completely. The subsequent distrust has dictated new regulations and procedures in which the architect is separated from the completion of the building process. He is just a piece in the whole procedure and has less and less control over the architectural quality of the final product.

Our most celebrated architects, the intellectual elements of our profession, have been or are yet related to education through Madrid's School of Architecture. Many of them have designed interesting and significant buildings within our city.

What has been the educational value of these particular buildings? And, moreover, what has been the role of the (scarce) architectural critic in promoting these values? I must say that I am also puzzled by the variety of criteria in this particular field.

There is a widespread sense of secrecy and hermetism. Each one develops his own work in a completely detached way from the rest of his colleagues. Communication is rather difficult and there is a certain indifference, mainly due to ideological motivations, in relation to the others' work which makes impossible any attempt to discuss common interests.

Some groups, persuaded about the unique quality of their own truth, just play with it without any theoretical justification.

With the same natural gesture with which they receive foreign personalities (mainly the international stars of photographed paper architecture), praise them and even get some nice project for them, any serious reflection on the development of our own architecture is carefully avoided and eluded.

We should not forget that a timely operation in which one of these prestigious architects is invited to participate is, politically speaking, rather beneficial. This is precisely the main argument in Llatzer Moix's essay

"The architects' city".

Sometimes I suspect our country has the dubious honor of receiving many of their "workshop models", uprooted and autonomous examples of their genius. Luckily enough, some of their projects are excellent works of architecture.

We must mention the role played by architectural magazines and other publications in this process. Urged by commercial problems, some have indulged in the easy and suggestive world of images and simulation. As Oscar Tusquets pointed out in a recent article, the images displayed and those carefully hidden by photography are not only a trick for architectural advertising and diffusion, they are even taking part in the very process of architectural creation.

But, what magazines do not show is precisely this creative process, its origins, conditions and requirements. We cannot guess this process through the displayed images which are not even enough to have a clear idea of the building's form. Sometimes, there is not even a brief account or explanation about the project.

This publications tend to neglect their didactic potential trying to offer instead a carefully detailed and "perfectly" finished product. This is as bad for those professionals who are still interested in learning as for the students who are fervid consumers of these publications. These latter are denied precisely those things they need more: the principles of design, the process' conditions and limitations, the real key to the project comprehension, what could help them to understand the final result and learn from the others' expertise. Editors, obviously, think that nobody takes the trouble to read the texts or analyze the images in order to reconstruct in their mind the building's real form. And they just replace proper information with dazzling images. The essential role of magazines in architectural diffusion is, thus, completely distorted.

From incomplete images, just apparent gestures, "tics", can be taken. Fundamental issues are hidden and neglected, everything is disregarded in favor of a supposedly cultivated and erudite simulation. It is rather easy to trace the different fashionable gestures. I suppose they will not reduce architecture to a matter of fashion design, but it is rather dangerous to induce people to mistake worthless things for valuable ones by offering them insufficient bits of information with which they cannot judge for themselves.

The way in which some particular examples are praised and valued is also rather confusing. They usually consist of an unbearable mix of fashionable images and combined technologies in which forms seems to emerge without any cultural root, any reference to their time and place, any order (in Kahn's sense), any recognizable building language; as if "originality" was the only possible value and "culture" just the suitable pretext. I do not want to refuse anyone the right to investigate and experiment during the process of his personal professional development. But, at least for educational purposes, I would like to point out the apparent differences between a trial and a mature and grounded project.

The lack of recent significant examples of our main architectural masters in our city has produced a kind of void in which we cannot find anymore any clear model to which refer

our work.

Meanwhile, architects must face an economic but also structural crisis.

The scarcity of commissions, the changes in the way these commissions are gained and the spectacular increase in the number of concurrent professionals, has resulted in a rather upsetting situation in which the small practice is being gradually replaced by large corporations while many try to survive by looking for new ways to exert their capacities.

Our incorporation within the European Community will, probably encourage the tendency to organize Architectural Contests as a way to obtain any public commission. Juries and those who select them will have to take important decisions. Their "jurisprudence" will probably define certain dominant trends for our future architecture. If this procedure is widely adopted, it will be necessary to establish some kind of counterbalance in order to extend the benefits to larger sectors of the profession and thus avoid the useless efforts and economic charges produced by the present massive contests.

Public Administrations should, in this case, achieve an agreement with the representatives of the architects in order to elaborate new regulations for architectural public contests, establishing progressive phases and open or restricted modalities, the first ones with a free submission system and the latter with a fixed compensation.

I also want to point out the dangerous but progressively common practice of transforming Public Contests in dazzling exercises of graphic design in which architectural proposal is no longer recognizable.

And, while all these challenging transformations take place, what kind of training are receiving our students who are supposed to face them soon?

It seems that funds for the University are still rather scarce. Curricula are reduced in order to make them cheaper and money is just invested in creating smaller centres in many more places. This process can just result in the poorer quality of our higher education just when the challenge of the free circulation of professionals within the European Community will demand of our new graduates a convincing response.

The new educational plans are just a way to face this new situation. That for Madrid's School of Architecture has been recently approved. It complies with the official regulations regarding the maximum number of credits and lecture hours.

But its contents have been elaborated in a somewhat biased way. I must say that, in my opinion, too much stress has been put on the issue of the relative importance and power of each area and each particular department instead of trying to achieve an agreement on the basic educational strategies.

But the Plan has revived many old habits and has produced renewed expectations and some extra tension. And the School required some of these. The Plan is not precisely what we were expecting but it means some progression, though. Most of the subjects, for example, will be available from the first courses, including Architectural Projects.

The Projects' Department has always been considered the central core of the Architectural studies. It was, thus, supposed to coordinate the knowledge acquired in the rest of the subjects. The rest of the departments,

persuaded about this necessary convergence, tended to transform their proposed practical exercises into real architectural projects but without giving the pupils the opportunity to develop them in the minimum conditions. Students have suffered for years the accumulation of too many, completely independent, exercises of the kind. Most of them have employed too many years in finishing their studies.

But learning means some kind of personal development and this also requires time. That is, we should recover some time for the students to work outside the School, to design in a quiet way and try to incorporate their new knowledge within their projects. And also to lead some kind of life independent from the School, to learn from reality and perceive those elements of equilibrium we have already mentioned.

There is, at least, a common target which is "coordinate" the programmes of the different departments, trying not to force the students to repeat the same exercises. A complete integration is our aspiration for the future in order to build a coherent and unique global programme for Architectural studies. This will be so if our bad habits do not prevent it.

The opportunity to get credits by working in professional practices is a rather interesting novelty of the plan. It is a way to get the studies closer to the real world of work.

We should be careful, though, about the new three-year degrees, defining in a careful way their professional attributes and competencies. Because a complete architectural education is just possible after the completion of the whole curriculum and we should be careful about making mistakes which can be irremediable in the future.

The challenges of the professional world are upsetting for thousands of students in our Schools and not only for our architects.

It is essential to diversify the kind of work an architect is prepared to undertake. But it is also important to establish the different specialized curricula as containing, all of them a global understanding of the architectural process. Any other thing would just distort the nature of our profession and, in this case, the word "architect" would have no meaning at all.

There are many ways to serve architecture from many different personal situations and convictions. An architect employed in the Public Administration or by a private corporation as director or supervisor can still think as an architect and try to use architectural criteria when doing his managerial work. When this happens everything goes better. His labour can be as important as that of the designer because thanks to his own capacity and discernment, an interesting work of architecture can also be rendered possible.

We must leave behind the old confrontation between the artist-architect and the technician-architect. A genuine architect is only possible if he has both capacities. The optional subjects within the new curriculum will try to respond to each one's personal likings and professional expectations.

Nowadays, the work of the most prestigious architects which is repeatedly published and reviewed (and comprises a minimum percentage of the profession) is seen as something completely detached from the more common practice of the rest of the professionals. These latter are much more

involved in the commercial world and the real-state business and have a better knowledge about the requirements of the market, official regulations and administrative procedures. Their labour is in most cases that of obtaining the most profitable conditions for their clients. Architecture as an objective is something completely neglected and the city suffers from this situation. We must think about it and, in some way or another, try to enter this world and prepare ourselves to meet its demands. It is not naturally incompatible with Architecture. Trying to obtain this kind of post or commission without neglecting architecture and thus improve our city is a real challenge for our present students. Madrid's School of Architecture graduates many excellent architects who prove their mastery, even in

their student years, in numerous public contests.

There is still hope for the city. When new technologies would not blind us anymore and we would get accustomed to them and use them just as serviceable tools, we will learn how to save time. We will save displacements and work at home. We will save useless efforts and expenses. Our politicians and economists will have to think about it in order to obtain from technology something different from unemployment. If this is so, we will not desert the city and our increased leisure will make us use it willfully. We will recover our balance and be citizens again. Maybe then, the Architecture and the architects themselves will also feel balanced and will be able again to build the spaces for all to meet.

Architectural drawings and architectural picture-drawings

Helena Iglesias

As everybody knows, there is a complex variety of interconnections between a built work of architecture and the drawing (or drawings) which represents and replaces it, precisely due to this replacing play between both.

The first consideration we should make regarding architectural drawings is always their usefulness, their function in the creative or construction processes. Thus, we should first of all consider them just as tools to represent architecture, a tool useful to conceive architecture by means of the manipulation of codified graphic elements, and also to build it, to erect it, bringing formal information about its details to the different sites where the successive processes take place.

That is, the graphic element which is the drawing bears every kind of data about an architectural work, mainly those which are the most important and easy to be grasped through such a means, that is, the formal data.

A detailed graphic description of the form, the external spatial and volumetric form as well as the internal constructive form, has always been the most important element in the images found in architectural drawings.

Architectural drawings present, therefore, an accuracy in which each point, line or surface represents a point, line or surface of the real architecture which is its object and its main "raison d'être".

I want to be clearly understood when I say "detailed graphic description", I do not precisely mean that this description should always be explicit.

Graphic descriptions are often essentially indefinite, that is, they have a lower "representational density". We usually call these kind of drawings sketches.

These sketches keep that mentioned connection between their elements and the real object's form. They simply have less graphic elements and less connections. It is not a matter of loss but of selection.

Now, it is not possible to make

architectural graphic documents, even though their main function is to represent and replace real architecture without taking into account the particular characteristics of the means used, their structure and rules.

And this individualized study of the graphic method, leaving aside its functional use, makes us see the matter from different points of view inevitably adding other meanings (different from its formal characteristics) to the architectural drawing.

These other meanings are usually related to their perception as architectural works and permit us study them as autonomous objects.

Thus, architectural drawings acquire their own particular meaning which is no longer the formalistic one of being a substitute to the represented object, and become "talking" drawings. Drawings that talk about architecture, telling stories about it, symbolizing and narrating it, bringing with them information about its contents and meanings, be them functional, stylistic, iconographic, psychological, historical or belonging to any other category besides formal.

If we begin to look for these "added" meanings, trying to analyze in a more profound way architectural drawings, we will be revealing the particular structure of the graphic language and, thus, encouraging a less formalistic approach to architectural representation and a more conscious use of non-technical procedures, transforming architectural drawing skills in architectural picture-drawing ones.

An architectural picture-drawing is a mixed image, a diagram which represents and replaces architectural works but which also symbolizes, narrates, defines and alludes to it, placing it inside its own context and establishing with it relationships unthought of by someone like Gaspar Monge.

It should be always capable of transmitting the required information about the architectural object but it also aims at bearing other contents, delivering other messages unrelated to or, anyway, distinct

from simple form, including the cultural information given by the forms themselves.

An architectural picture-drawing is always an architectural document but has an added value, a cultural value sometimes even independent from that of the represented object, though, in most cases, the cultural value has much to do with its adequation to the object, its capacity to complete it.

That is why it is also a "designed" document. These type of documents talk us about two projects, or two design processes, clearly differentiated though closely related to each other. We have, on one hand, the project of the architectural object and, on the other, that of the drawings in which the object will be represented. And both are, as we have said, closely related because the drawings' project is moulded, using a selected graphic structure, in order to deliver certain messages about the non-formalistic qualities of the designed architectural object.

A good example of architectural picture-drawing is Währing and Otto Wagner's drawing of the Cemetery's Church, made in 1898 and which was exhibited that same year in the Secession's Pavilion in Vienna (1).

Its structure is that of a vignette, that is, it bears its own framing. This is a technique to introduce some ornament or aesthetic value in an otherwise technical document. But it is also a way to move the image away, to isolate it and make something of it, something comparable to a work of art, a painting.

Moreover, the vignette is off centre in relation to the frame. That is, the composition is not classical but modern, asymmetric.

Within the frame, above and below the image we find the key to the drawing, an integrated text written in a very characteristic "fin de siècle" style. Above: "Die Moderne im Kirchenbaum" (notice the importance of the term "moderne" which is included in the title). Below, different data about the project, including the church's capacity (3000 "personen").

In the upper left corner we find some decoration allusive to the modern character of the work. But the most interesting part is that to the right of the frame.

We have here a line drawing representing a forest by a river or a lake which is not really drawn but suggested by an enormous quantity of water lilies and other aquatic plants. The forest is firch with large trees of fine and elongated trunks surrounding a clearing in which a young lady turning her back to the spectator has suddenly interrupted her reading (she has a book in her hand) to look towards the church whose neat vignette is broken by her profile.

That is, the frame represents the site of the church. But it is also a means to communicate the peace and quietness of a natural space (we must remember that it is, in fact, a cemetery...)

And, across the drawing's diagonal, ignoring the frame and the vignette, the branch of a cherry tree, a highly detailed piece with a distinct volume and form and which even throws its shade on the frame and the vignette as proclaiming its deeper realism.

It is a play of increasing realism determined by the use of different graphic techniques (the purest line, the volume, the shades). The branch full of blossoms is the most realistic entity and, at the same time, the most symbolic (eternal life, the spring's

annual revival, etc...)

The church, whose graphic definition is not so accurate (placed under the branch and enveloped by it), is an intermediate element, it is a future object, a project of reality. Finally, the forest clearing, a real site in fact, is just a faint line, has the slightest graphic strength...

An inverted play between reality and graphic expression added to the very drawing's narration, the story told by it. It is a way to say that just art, what is created and devised by man is, in fact, most real. Not forgetting the strict architectural representation.

This is a 19th century example. A sufficiently clear example but, maybe, somewhat distant to modern, contemporary aesthetics and with narrative intentions that can be considered anachronistic nowadays.

But, are these narrative intentions, really, so anachronistic as they seem to be? Are contemporary architectural drawings (specially some of them) so free of spurious intentions as those of trying to emphasize the building's character, or conferring unto it fantastic qualities which should call up another reality provoked by the new work?

Let us look at this particular point. If we examine what has happened with the drawing production in the later years, we must admit that the main determining fact has been the development of the architectural drawing market. Architectural drawings are now being highly priced. They are exhibited in galleries as works of art.

The origins of this phenomenon are, as usually happens, manifold.

We can point out as a possible starting point the "only drawings" production of some architects or groups of architects in the late sixties and early seventies, as the British Archigram Group and the Italians Aldo Rossi or SuperStudio (2).

But the real revolution in the architectural drawings market was the circumstance of the celebration of the U.S.A. Bicentennial (3), in which the American nationalist conscience drove the authorities to exhibit every antiquity which could have any relation with 1776. As everybody knows, buildings are the most appreciated among this type of antiquities and, why not, also the documents about them, specially those which made their construction possible.

We should not forget that two years before the date there was a kind of general rehearsal with the celebration of Philadelphia's bicentennial and that, during the intermediate year the Beaux-Art Exhibition took place at the MOMA.

Both celebrations and the mentioned exhibition gathered and exhibited the most important collection of architectural drawings never dreamt of. They were old drawings, of course, some 17th century and most 18th and 19th centuries and they were being treated and considered as real antiquities, as worthy objects.

The enormous quantity of publications about these "works of art" talk us about the social importance of this graphic invasion. Moreover, the new appreciation showed for the drawings of Paris' Ecole de Beaux Art exhibited in the MOMA and the publication of Drexler's book (4) are other examples of this phenomenon.

This new value conferred on Academic productions was also fostered by the immense success of Louis I. Kahn works in

his last five years (5). A really international success as he spent those years travelling around the world to receive the homage of the academic institutions (6). And we mention him because the international critique appreciated his work precisely describing it as belonging to a Neo-Academic or Beaux-arts style. But I am not exactly talking about his built works, but about the drawings which represented them.

But the new fashion of the architectural drawings began with the old ones and, in this sense, I would like to tell you about my own experiences in this field.

The hiper-pricing phenomenon within the antiquities market, a very flexible and sensible market, was soon brought to Spain (in a somewhat limited way of course). I clearly remember the first time I was asked in Madrid's Rastro with Antonio de Lucas for a moderate price in exchange for just one of the drawings in a box when, up to that moment, the practice had been just ask for a trifle for the whole lot.

From that moment on, they began to sell architectural drawings piece by piece and ask for increasingly high prices in exchange. And this began to happen also with the first editions of 20th century architectural books (which so far, had just been sold by weight) and this provoked the desertion of the less wealthy buyers (7).

Almost at the same time contemporary architectural drawings began to be a highly appreciated item though they were not yet available in the market.

The thing began with exhibitions in museums and galleries as the famous one that took place around those years in the MOMA under the title Five Architects.

Moreover, in just four or five years, it became almost impossible to find an official institution's exhibition programme which would not include an architectural show with important graphic materials. In the most important cities specialized art galleries were opened to the public which organized at least two or three architectural exhibitions per season (8).

The phenomenon was soon a general fashion. Private and public collections of architectural drawings began to be gathered and the already existing ones were impressively enlarged.

The "Museums of architecture" with their impressive graphic collections began to be a common phenomenon (9). At the same time, some of these institutions undertook an important labor, sometimes with rather cunning strategies as that of the Avery Library on the occasion of its anniversary, in order that the graphic collections should prosper in an appropriate way.

Obviously, this fashion would not have been possible without the continuous labor during those years of the drawing architects. That is, this passion for architectural drawings could never have been soothed by the strict working plans produced during the fifties and first sixties (11). These would have never found enough devotees and buyers and the receptive attitude of the market would have been wasted.

But from the mid sixties and during the seventies, the production of high quality architectural drawings realized with different techniques and belonging to diverse styles was a current trend. In fact, there was a kind of movement which claimed the relevance of

drawn or theoretical architecture ("paper architecture") within the architectural world.

In the last fifteen or twenty years, though, the attitudes in front of this matter of architectural graphic expression have been so varied that any classifying attempt would surly fail. In any way, one of the most common features in all these drawings is the shameless and apparent intention of incorporating within the graphic document all sorts of details, stories or allusions either related to the architecture represented by them or, most commonly, to other graphic documents (what we call "quotations").

These "quotations" establish relationships between graphic documents belonging to different authors in such a way that, these allusions confer onto the, thus, related drawings a new literary quality.

Some of these "quotations" are the result of an ideologic or stylistic agreement (12). That is the case of the relationships established between the drawings by Rob Krier, Rita Wolff, Leon Krier and the pupils of the, so called, School of Brussels and also between Aldo Rossi's drawings and Massimo Scolari's.

But in most cases the "quotations" are just the result of an unconscious contamination of capricious affinities occurred by mere chance as the similar ruins or craggy lands from which both Krier's and Isozaki's buildings seem to emerge. Or the axonometric views of simplified elements visible as well in Koolhaas' as in Ungers' graphic documents.

In addition to these added elements, be them visual or architectural objects, which are usually intermingled with the main represented item creating a complicated net, another common feature in the later production is the sophisticated relationship established between the drawing and its subject based on the ideas or sensations produced in the observer by the drawings and related to the subjects.

It is not strange to find drawings in which the information about the object's size and scaling is distorted in such a way that the graphic representation becomes like a literary metaphor of the real thing by means of techniques rather similar to those analyzed in relation to Otto Wagner.

If we should mention a term that would express the most common function of contemporary architectural drawings as regarding their relation with the architectural object represented by them, that would be "disguise".

And we could even make an attempt to complete our characterization with other terms that would supplement the mentioned concept. We could say, for example, that recent architectural drawings are "bewitching", "mystifying", "alluring"... as they are mere suggestions alluding the proposed buildings, they aim at convincing the clients of certain qualities present in them so, in some way, their function is not representative of but persuasive about a series of merits, some of them merely fictitious.

The relation between architectural objects and their corresponding drawings is thus a rather peculiar one in which the importance of both elements is inverted in such a way that the drawing seems the main component in the process of architectural design.

In most cases, the real architectural object, supposedly built according to the drawings, is seen as a secondary element or at least, its qualities and their public recognition have nothing to do with the respect due to the story and the particular features present in the drawings.

One of the main promoters of this conception, and perhaps its creator was Aldo Rossi, who was an extraordinary and rather prolific designer.

He has been the author of some of the most radically innovative drawings, some of the most original and influential of the last twenty years. And many of these were excellent examples of that mentioned deceptive quality regarding the built objects.

We can mention, in this sense, many of his graphic documents, most of them conceived as representing architectural real objects and yet whose deliberate radicalism in the use of graphic techniques makes architecture appear as merely secondary. But I will just refer to the well known example of Segrate's Town Hall Piazza, which is a most significant one.

The drawing, representing the plan combined with the elevation of the piazza, placed in an equivocal position, is rather famous and has been selected for the cover page of a recent publication dedicated to Rossi (13). We could also mention that well known drawing representing the shades of a typical "Rossian" chimney and a grid building shed over the piazza and just revealed in their very absence.

I will not talk about the pictures of the colored scale models against black backgrounds realized for this same project but I would like to mention the famous drawing known as "American Cathedrals", related to the same piazza and whose subject is the representation of simple volumes free from any stylistic perversion.

These documents, these graphic images have a certain reality that the built object will never be able to transmit. Those who have observed them know very well what I am talking about. The spectator, whose state of mind switches from disillusion to unbelief, is finally persuaded of the secondary quality of Segrate's real Piazza, embracing instead its "representative reality" embodied in the graphic images he finds in his reminiscence.

This effect, the negation of the built work on behalf of the drawing representing it, is very common in contemporary architectural graphism and the means to achieve it are varied and rather ingenious.

One of the most usual procedures is the use of highly detailed and sophisticated techniques, including shades which are usually exaggerated, what makes the drawing appear as representing an oneiric ambience.

The aim is to make of the drawing a kind of literary account of the building's magnificence, recreating it on a deceptively larger scale, exaggerating its shading capacity and isolating it from its real context.

This type of account is usually supported by the way in which the different views or projections of the object are intermingled on the paper. Compositions including the plans, elevations, perspectives etc... all of them placed in a most capricious way on the drawing's plane are something rather usual.

This is of course a way to prevent a traditional reading of the document and the sensation achieved is that of a conceptual

play related in some way or another to a proposed building. The use of multiple simultaneous projections, moreover, gives us the possibility to build with the same elements perceptions and images impossible to find in the finally built object.

A curious variant of the mentioned "literary account" related to the object has been born out of the use of computerized design.

In most of these documents, the sensation of hiper-realism achieved by the use of textures and colours deliberately unrelated to the real ones, increases the virtual quality of the image.

This way of producing drawn documents was firstly due to the inefficacy of computerized methods, which were incapable of imitating reality and thus, gave way to completely unreal pseud-realities.

But the style is now a current and accepted one and the "virtual reality" technology applied in architecture is something rather different from the one used, for example, in movies, which could be, obviously, available for both. And, thus, while the Dinosaurs of Jurassic Park, become really credible creatures, the images of Eisenman's Bio-Centrum in Frankfurt or Hadid's House in Berlin, are completely implausible.

Another possibility within this play of real/unreal, object/representation, is the tendency to reproduce, to build, the originally implausible images created in drawings. That is, make an attempt to confer on to the real building the austere quality, the lack of concretion and materiality (of thickness) and the unthinkable textures and colours of the dream-like images.

We can mention, in this sense, Tschumi's constructions in La Villette, as they tend to be identified with their own drawings in their attempt to reproduce their qualities, including an impossible kinetic principle.

As we have seen, the intentions analyzed in Otto Wagner's drawing, his attempt to build a new "reality" around his proposed building, are not so anachronistic or old-fashioned as they seemed to be. In fact, most of the contemporary architectural drawings use the same procedures to achieve similar effects, although modern drafting techniques are completely different. We can still recognize that story-telling quality, the symbolizing and suggestive intentions of the images which make them become real "picture-drawings" of architecture.

NOTES:

(1) Figure No. 14 in the Third Volume of Otto Wagner's monograph: "Einige Skizzen, Projekte und ausgeführte Bauwerke", edited by Anton Schroll & Co., Vienna. Within the same volume, we find a photograph of the panel at the exhibition with six other drawings belonging to this project.

(2) When I am talking about an "only drawings" production, I refer to those intervals with no building commissions in which an architect or team of architects dedicate mainly to the production of drawings. In the Archigram Group, these periods, occupy their whole existence.

(3) The preparation of the Bicentennial Festivities are maddening the whole U.S.A. I think there is not a single paper or document of the epoch that will escape exhibition.

(4) The mentioned exposition took place in the MOMA from the 29th October 1975 to the 4th January 1976. The book is "The Architecture of the

Ecole des Beaux-Arts", edited by Arthur Drexler, Secker & Warburg, London 1977.

(5) The success of Louis Kahn can be illustrated by that of the exhibition, dedicated to his work which took place in Zurich's "Polytechnic Institute" in 1969 and then travelled around Europe, visiting Delft, Stuttgart, Venice, Parme, Brussels, Paris and Vienna, not to mention the innumerable magazines and other issues about his architectural works.

(6) That same year of 1969, he received a medal from the University of Connecticut and another decoration in his own city, Philadelphia. In 1970, he was awarded the AIA Chapter's Golden medal in New York and that of the Royal Society in London. He also received the degree of Doctor honoris causa at New York's Bard College. In 1971 he won the Undivided Golden Medal of the AIA, he received the degree of Doctor H.C. in Penn and that of fellow of the Franklin Institute. In 1972 he received the R.I.B.A.'s Golden Medal, he became a member of the Royal Institute of Architects of Ireland and the degree of Doctor H.C. of the University of Tulane, New Orleans, etc...

(7) I have no idea of the prices of these architectural drawings in the market because I have no longer such a terrible vice. But the first editions of twentieth century architectural books are something completely unaffordable besides not being even available. I will just mention the 15000 francs paid in 1994 for "Apres le Cubisme" which is just a leaflet in low quality paper (it was almost 7000 pesetas per page), or Chernijov's "Architectural

Fantasies" which, in april 1995, was worth a million pesetas.

(8) Madrid also has its own "specialized" Galleries like the "Sala Ynguanzo" and sometimes the "Galería Gamarra & Garrigues".

(9) Architectural Museums usually have photograph and book collections in addition to their drawings. Some of them though, have so many drawings that many scholars get tempted to make their studies just using the collection of one particular museum which can sometimes result in the partial character of their own work. That is the case with Frankfurt or Munchen.

(10) The intelligent Mrs. Angela Giral, "librarian" of the Avery, conceived the astute strategy of requiring from different architects drawings on the occasion of the Library's Anniversary, as a result of which, the institution considerably expanded its collection without higher expenses. The outcome of all this procedure was exhibited and the Avery Architectural and Fine Arts Library together with Pomegranate Artbooks published, in 1991, a book called "Contemporary Architectural Drawing".

(11) With the exception of some drawing architects as Scarpa, Le Corbusier, Alvar Aalto or Kahn, that is a period of strict technical plans with no graphic personality.

(12) Sometimes, as in the mentioned case, the ideological and stylistic proximity is reinforced by the family ties.

(13) The front page of "Architektur des Rationalismus".

París

Mónica Pidgeón

Paris is a city where whole new areas have been, or are being, developed with imagination and on a very large scale, despite the recession. Star architects are involved but lesser ones have also made stylish contributions, especially in the field of housing. The work shown here is a sampling of some of the city's most interesting recent architecture, including Grand Projects.

Three developments are bringing architects from all over the world to gaze in admiration: the Louvre extensions by I. M. Pei, the Jardin André Citroën by Alain Provost, Patrick Berger et al, and the American Center by Frank Gehry. These, along with earlier contenders, are included below, but the National Library by Dominique Perrault has been omitted because it is not yet completed.

The buildings are listed in their respective 'arrondissements', with the name of the architect, the address and the name of the nearest Metro station (M) or fast railroad (RER).

1st ARR

■ Le Grand Louvre, 1987-1994

Rue de Rivoli.

M. Palais Royale.

I. M. Pei.

Pei very cleverly designed access to all the galleries of the Louvre from a lobby below the Cour Napoleon, day-lit from above by a glass pyramid surrounded by fountains. In the Richelieu wing fronting the Rue de Rivoli, the Cours Marly sculpture courts have been glazed over. And most recently a labyrinth of underground shopping and exhibition spaces

has been opened beneath the Place du Carusel, day-lit by an inverted glass pyramid.

1. Pyramid in Cour Napoleon
2. Below the pyramid, access to all galleries.
3. Inverted pyramid under Place du Carusel.

■ One of the covered Cours Marly. Les Halles, partie public des équipements, 1979-1985

M. Chatelet-les-Halles
CHEMETOV/BORJA HUIDOBRO

Following the demolition of Baltard's pavilions, architecture was put underground (beneath a garden and shopping arcade). It includes an Olympic swimming pool, sports centre, auditorium, etc and connects to the Metro and RER railway. 5-7. Massive concrete construction was required.

3rd Arr.

■ Centre Georges Pompidou, 1977-1982.

Rue du Renard

M. Rambuteau

PIANO & ROGERS

Won in competition, the building is wildly popular and the forecourt is always crowded. 8. The main facade with the escalator 'tube' rising up the front. 9. Inside the escalator tube. 10. The rear of the building carries all the services.

5th Arr.

■ Institut Arabe, 1986

Quai St Bernard opposite Pont Sully

M. Jussieu
JEAN NOUVEL, with **P. Soria**, **G. Lezenes**
 and **Architecture Studio**.

This cultural centre is in two parts linked by a patio and a top-level. The entrance facade on the south side faces the Sorbonne across a great space, and pays lip service to Arab geometry (the mushrabiya).

11. View from Pont Sully.
12. The south facade is made up of aluminum panels of Arab geometry, with 24,000 diaphragms that open and close, operated by photo-electric cells, to control the strong light.
- 13, 14. Details of the panels from outside and inside.
15. Behind the south facade panels.
16. View through the all-aluminum structure, the staircases and lifts

11th Arr.

■ **Opera Bastille, 1989**
Place de la Bastille
M. Bastille
CARL OTT

Won in competition, the building houses the "people's opera".

17. Exterior.
18. Main entrance.

12th Arr.

■ **Ministère de l'Economie et des Finances, 1988**
Boulevard de Bercy/Quai de la Rapée
M. Bercy or Quai de la Gare
CHEMETOV/BORJA HUIDOBRO

The enormous building bridges the Quai de la Rapée and dips its feet in the Seine alongside the Pont de Bercy.

19. Entrance front on Blvd de Bercy.
- 20, 21. The extension over the Quai and into the Seine.

Nouveau Bercy

The city is developing to the south-east on both sides of the river between the Pont de Bercy and the Pont Nationale. On the south side the national library by Perrault is rising fast. On the north side, is an area called Nouveau Bercy. Here are to be found Frank Gehry's American Center, the Palais Omnisports, 1984, by Andrault et Parat with Jean Prouve, and the Parc de Bercy by Bernard Huët, 1994.

■ **American Center, 1994**
Rue de Bercy/Parc de Bercy
M. Bercy
FRANK GEHRY

Opened in May 1994 by President Mitterand, the Center combines exhibition and performance spaces with retail and residential accommodation. Recognizably a Gehry design, the building shows a different concern for each facade.

22. The approach from rue de Bercy.
23. View from the Parc de Bercy. The main entrance under the dipped zinc roof.
24. The main entrance.
25. View through to entrance lobby.

13th Arr.

■ **Social housing, 1979**

Rue des Hautes Formes

M. Nationale
CHRISTIAN DE PORTZAMPARC

Eight blocks of varying size and type and ranged along a street that recreated an earlier thoroughfare.

- 26, 27. Views

■ **Social housing**
120 rue de Chateau-des-Rentiers and rue Nationale.

M. Nationale
CHRISTIAN DE PORTZAMPARC

Near the rue des Hautes Formes, the architect is refurbishing high blocks of flats and has added some small blocks.

- 28, 29. Small blocks in front of slab blocks.

■ **Le Grand Ecran, 1993**

Place d'Italie
M. Place d'Italie
KENZO TANGE

The building is so-called because of the cinemas it contains, along with a hotel, offices and other commercial content.

30. The building faces the Place d'Italie.
31. The atrium.

14th Arr.

■ **Fondation Cartier, 1994**
Blvd Raspail, opposite Montparnasse Cemetery.

M. Denfert Rochereau
JEAN NOUVEL

An all-glass building surrounded by a small garden, with a glass screen that maintains the continuity of the street frontage. Above are offices and below ground are storage and car-parking. The double-height ground floor and first basemen contain changing exhibition of contemporary art.

32. The street front.
33. Detail of glass screen.
34. The open gate reveals the entrance.

15th Arr.

■ **Parc André Citroën, 1993**
Rue Balard
M. Balard
ANDRE PROVOST, PATRICK BERGER & VIGUIER/JODRY

Provost designed the landscape but it was Berger, together with engineers Peter Rice/RFR, who designed the various glass-houses.

35. Two glass-houses face down the park.
36. They are separated by a forest of computer-programed fountains.
37. Several small glass-houses, echoes of the large ones, line the east side.
38. An exit from the park to the north is flanked by stepped concrete tree containers. Meier's Canal Plus building is visible beyond (see 41-44).

■ **Cité des Artistes, 1992**
South-western corner of Jardin André Citroën.

M. Balard
MICHEL KAGAN

The building contains flats and studios for artists and terminates the north-south axis through the Parc Citroën.

39. It consists of four white-painted concrete blocks linked by an access deck. The park acts

as a garden to the flats.

40. Corner view of both sides of the curving building.

■ **Canal Plus, 1992**
Quai André Citroën
M. Javel

RICHARD MEIER

The headquarters of the TV company Canal Plus faces the Seine next to the Parc Andre Citroën. The exterior is clad entirely in white enameled aluminum panels.

41. River-facing facade.
42. North-east corner.
43. Main entrance at river-end of east facade.
44. Entrance lobby.

■ **Australian Embassy**
Quai de Grenelle

M. Bir Hakeim
HARRY SEIDLER

The Embassy has a primer site facing the Seine and forms an S-curve.

45. View of the double curve.
46. Main entrance facade.
47. A carriage-way behind the giant 'piloti' leads to the entrance.

■ **Addition to Musée Bourdelle, 1993**
6, Ave Antoine Bourdelle

M. Montparnasse
CHRISTIAN DE PORTZAMPARC

The museum contains sculptures by the late Antoine Bourdelle. The addition is at the rear and has no external facade. The transition from the original gallery is marked by a change to heavier structure in stone and concrete, with filtered light and flowing space the main features.

- 48-50. General views.

19th Arr.

PARC DE LA VILLETTE

Between Ave de Corentin-Carriou and Ave Jean Jaurès.

On plan the park is a meeting point of three systems: ordering landmark points (the Follies), movement and walking (lines, 'passerelles' or covered ways) and action (the surfaces between). The design of the park was won in competition by Bernard Tschumi.

■ **Follies and 'passerelles', 1977-1994+**
Parc de la Villette

M. Porte de la Villette or Porte de Pantin.

BERNARD TSCHUMI

51. East-west passerelle alongside the Canal Ourq which bisects the park.

52. North-south passerelle ends in front of the Cité de Musique.

- 53, 54. Tow of the many Follies which establish a north-south and east-west grid across the park.

■ **Musée National des Sciences des Techniques et des Industries, 1986**

Ave Corentin-Carriou
M. Porte de la Villette

ANDRE FAINSILBER

The Science Museum was converted from a disused slaughter-house at the north end of the Parc de la Villette.

55. North side of the Museum.
56. South side of the Museum.
57. Inside, two long escalators face each other.

58. The Geode, the largest semi-circular cinema ever built, with a circular 100 m. screen. The reflecting sphere of polished metal appears to float on the water which surrounds it. It is seen here from the Museum.

■ **Cité de la Musique, 1991-1995**
Ave Jean Jaurès

M. Porte de Pantin
CHRISTIAN DE PORTZAMPARC

The City of Music comprises two buildings facing each other at the south end of Parc de Villette. The west block, occupied in 1991, contains the national Conservatoire with its own concert halls and music rooms individually expressed. The east block, soon due for completion, contains a large public concert hall.

59. South facade of Conservatoire and main entrance.
60. East side of Conservatoire.
61. West side of Conservatoire.
62. The entrance to the east block. The top of the ovoid concert hall can be seen.
63. View along Ave Jean Jaures from rear of east block.

■ **Social housing, 1993**
Rue de Meaux
M. Bolivar or Colonel Fabien
RENZO PIANO

Halfway up the rue de Meaux is this group of 200 flats and duplexes, round a garden court planted with silver birch trees and spikey ground cover. Terracotta tiles clad solid areas of the exterior of the building. Fixed louvres front the stairs and parts of balconies.

64. Street facade.
- 65, 66. Inside the garden court.

■ **Communist Headquarters, 1971-1980**
Place du Colonel Fabien

OSCAR NIEMEYER

A symphony of concrete and glass, the buildings is wearing well.

67. The curving glass facade of the administration block and the concrete dome of the underground spherical hall of the Central Committee.
68. Below the admin block, the cultural and exhibition areas are treated in rough cast concrete.
69. Sculpture marking the entrance.

LA TEETE A TÊTE DÉFENSE

■ **La Grande Arche de la Défense, 1983**
Place de la Défense

RER. Place de la Défense

JOHANN OTTO VON SPRECKELSON

In 1956, the Défense area heralded a modern business district beyond the city limits (the arrondissements) and formed an extension to the east-west axis (Louvre, Tuileries, Concorde, Champs Elysées, Etoile). A small Manhattan is the result, build on a plateau over the RER railway and the Peripherique motorway. The pearl in the crown is La Grande Arche won in competition by Von Spreckelson. A large cube 100 x 100 m, it houses two the eastern pedestrian esplanade.

70. The Grande Arche seen from the eastern pedestrian esplanade.
71. The 'cloud' and the suspended lift shafts designed by Peter Rice/RFR.
72. View from the Grand Arche to l'Etoile.