

The Jungle in the Clearing:
Space, Form and Democracy in America — 1940-1949

by

Sarah Whiting

B.A. Yale University (1986)
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Submitted to the Department of Architecture
in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of
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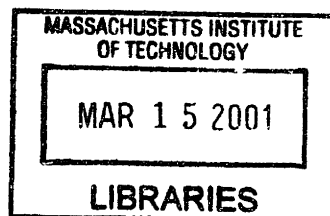
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ABSTRACT

Combining aesthetic theory with theories of the public sphere, this dissertation examines the brief appearance of a publicly empathetic civic realm in the United States during the 1940s. The argument begins with a reevaluation of the debate over monumentality initiated in modernist architectural circles, which included such figures as Sigfried Giedion, Lewis Mumford, Henry-Russell Hitchcock, and Philip Johnson. Centering on the city, this debate recast monumentality in terms more progressive than commemorative; it posited open-ended architectural and urban strategies that offered a non-restrictive yet sympathetic public resonance.

If empathy is understood as the viewer's physical and psychological engagement with an object, then the 'publicly empathetic' collects and communicates the public's individualized engagements. The term 'publicly empathetic' underscores the distinction between totalitarian consensus, exemplified by the modernism of Mussolini's fascist Italy, and what Alexis de Tocqueville identified in 1835 as America's collective individualism, which persisted in the 1940s under the umbrella of Franklin Roosevelt's New Deal. Springboarding from Ernst Cassirer and Susanne Langer's philosophies of symbolic form as unconsummated symbol, I argue that the modernism of this period did not define the public but rather expressed architecture's publicness through the recasting of form, programming, and modernism's public mandate.

The chapters of this dissertation examine in turn the texts, projects and urbanism of this empathetic modernism. The projects constituting this realm are both public and private in nature; they include Charles Franklin and

Ernest Kump's Fresno City Hall, Eero Saarinen's Demountable Social Center, Ludwig Mies van der Rohe's IIT campus, and the urbanism of Chicago's Near South Side. The specific context of American democracy in the 1940s — the complex jungle underlying what has often been read as a simple consensus born of naïve optimism — influenced an important yet often overlooked shift in modernism's reception. This shift remains particularly resonant today in light of the recasting of Jürgen Habermas's theory of the public sphere by such contemporary authors as Arjun Appadurai, Rosalyn Deutsche, and Nancy Fraser, among others. The texts and projects examined in this dissertation reveal an obscured discourse of the 1940s, which itself prefigures contemporary reflections on the public sphere.

Thesis Supervisor: Stanford Anderson

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INTRODUCTION: THE JUNGLE IN THE CLEARING

Jungle Theory

Mid-century urbanism will forever be the easy prey of the one-liner history: central cities were cleared out as American families fled to the suburbs.¹ As with all one-liners, however, this scene harbors complex realities. One goal of this study is to reveal that the clichéd mid-century tabula rasa was, in reality, an urban clearing whose space was anything but empty.² An extensive clearing did occur: the 1949 Housing Act expanded the parameters of federal slum clearance legislation that had already been initiated with the 1937 Housing Act and state legislation that had been passed during the early 1940s; this legislative sanctioning of

¹ "Cataclysmic, automotive, and suburban: these have been the pervasive characteristics of Urban Redevelopment in America.... As such, they are exactly in accord with the most persistent American myths and desires: the city is bad; tear it down...." Vincent Scully, American Architecture and Urbanism (New York: Holt Rinehart and Winston, 1969): 245.

² Recent scholarship, particularly within the field of American studies, has exposed the Blue Velvet heterotopia underlying the mid-century suburb's apparent Dick and Jane homogeneity. See, for example, Clifford E. Clark Jr. "Ranch House Suburbia: Ideals and Realities," in Lary May, ed., Recasting America: Culture and Politics in the age of Cold War (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1989): 171-191; Lynn Spiegel, "The Suburban Home Companion: Television and the Neighborhood Ideal in Postwar America," in Beatriz Colomina, ed., Sexuality and Space (New York: Princeton Architectural Press, 1992): 185-217; Georges Teyssot, The American Lawn (New York: Princeton Architectural Press, 1999); and also Sandy Isenstadt, "'Little Visual Empire:' Private Vistas and the Modern House" (Ph.D. Dissertation, MIT 1997).

clearance contributed to the erasure of large portions of America's cities.³ This legislated clearing helped to realize modernism's urban vision: the ordered, tower-in-the-park vistas idealized in Le Corbusier and Ludwig Hilberseimer's dramatic perspectives as early as the 1920s. But the resulting asphalt jungle was no less complex than its post and beam predecessor. The confluence of municipal politics, capital, and institutional agency established the genetic code of mid-century American urban dynamics. Marking a moment of transition from a national to a global stage, as well as a disciplinary transition from urban planning to urban policy, the mid-century American metropolis was a jungle in the clearing that was filled with multiple constituencies trafficking in equal doses of truth and fiction. In an interview conducted in 1976, Michel Foucault noted that spatial and geographical vocabularies necessarily overlap with political, economic,

³ While slum clearance is most often associated with the 1950s, it was already proposed as an urban "solution" in the teens (see). While the 1949 Act made it more comprehensive, that act was only the culmination of over a decade of partial legislation. The 1937 Act initiated federal slum clearance, but was restricted to public housing sites. It was at the state level that this legislation was rendered more comprehensive; these state laws, initiated first in Illinois, New York, and Michigan, paved the way, as it were, for the broader federal legislation passed in 1949 (see Chapter Three of this dissertation for more discussion on this subject): "The Congress hereby declares that the general welfare and security of the Nation and the health and living standards of its people require housing production and related community development sufficient to remedy the serious housing shortage, the elimination of substandard and other inadequate housing through the clearance of slums and blighted areas, and the realization as soon as feasible of the goal of a decent home and a suitable living environment for every American family, thus contributing to the development and redevelopment of communities and to the advancement of the

juridical, pictorial, fiscal, administrative, and strategic ones.⁴ Foucault's recasting of the spatial as territory and strategy underscores the fact that urban narratives are never simple or innocent. The spaces, forms and programs of any city at any point in time reveal the struggles behind the scenes. Social theorist Michael Hardt explains how it is possible to reconcile Foucault's reading of such territorial messiness (the jungle) with a formal reading of pristine openness (the tabula rasa) when he writes:

the "trenches" of civil society have proliferated and intersected to such an extent that they have "smoothed" [the terrain] into a vacant free space. If the space of civil society was oriented toward "position' and identity," this vacant space is characterized by "mobility and anonymity."⁵

In other words, the open and smooth geographies of the modern city reveal, upon closer examination, relationships, identities, exchanges, and effects that are constantly moving, constantly undergoing redefinition. As

growth, wealth, and security of the Nation." Housing Act of 1949, as cited in Mel Scott, American City Planning Since 1890 (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1969; 1971): 464.

⁴ "Territory is no doubt a geographical notion, but it's first of all a juridico-political one: the area controlled by a certain kind of power. Field is an economico-juridical notion. Displacement: what displaces itself is an army, a squadron, a population. Domain is a juridico-political notion. Soil is a historico-geological notion. Region is a fiscal, administrative, military notion. Horizon is a pictorial, but also a strategic notion." Michel Foucault, "Questions à Michel Foucault sur la géographie" in Hérodote 1 (1976), translated by Colin Gordon and reprinted in Michel Foucault, Power/Knowledge: Selected Interviews and Other Writings, 1972-1977 (New York: Pantheon, 1972; 1980): 68.

⁵ As cited by George Yúdice, "Civil Society, Consumption, and Governmentality in an Age of Global Restructuring," Social Text 45 (Winter, 1995): 2.

Hardt's observation indicates, this perpetual mobility necessarily imposes a reconceived understanding of civil society. This study focuses on the initial formation of the mid-century American asphalt jungle — its ordered architecture and urbanism as well as its often contradictory underpinnings — which was a coincidence of municipal and federal, as well as disciplinary and theoretical forces.

The multifaceted and increasingly complex legislative field underlying American urbanism in the 1940s dovetailed with a disciplinary revision of architectural modernism. The result was a brief period of aesthetic optimism — a time when it was believed that modernist strategies such as abstract form and cross programming could both reflect and foster a redefined civic milieu. This study will argue that during the 1940s, modernism, which until this time had played only a very minor role on the American urban stage, was given the spotlight.⁶ The modernism that garnered this central role was far from that of the *Weißenhofsiedlung* of 1927, however. Throughout the 1940s, critic Sigfried Giedion, art historian Paul Zucker, philosopher Susanne Langer, and architects Ernest Kump, Eero

⁶ Until this point, modernism's American influence had been limited to the domestic realm and to some office and factory building – see the examples displayed in the 1932 Modern Architecture exhibition at the Museum of Modern Art (Henry-Russell Hitchcock and Philip Johnson, The International Style (New York: W.W. Norton; 1932; rpt 1966).

Saarinen, and Charles Eames, among others, retheorized modernism, rendering it expressive, so that it could become what I would call publicly empathetic. Empathy theory, which emerged from turn of the century studies in psychology and aesthetics, is understood in its most general sense to mean the projection of one's bodily self onto an object of interpretation.⁷ So, for example, when one looks at a Biedermeier chair — or even a beanbag chair, for that matter — one “reads” it by imagining one’s body enveloped within its form, anticipating the give, the smoothness and the weight of the material as it meets one's own bodily weight. Similarly, in looking at a column, one reads — even if entirely unconsciously — the weight of the form as being comparable, even if heavier, to that of a human body. While this theory would seem at first to be highly individualized, given the singularity of one's body, it nevertheless provides a common language for reading objects based on corporeal experience. As Giedion's Ph.D. advisor, Henrich Wölfflin wrote in his own doctoral dissertation of 1886, Prolegomena zu einer Psychologie de Architektur, “as human beings with a body that teaches us the nature of gravity,

⁷ Detailed readings of German aesthetic theories of empathy can be found in Harry Francis Mallgrave and Eleftherios Ikonomou's introduction to Empathy, Form, and Space: Problems in German Aesthetics, 1873-1893 (Santa Monica: Getty Center Publications, 1994); Mark Jarzombek's book, Psychologizing Vision (Cambridge: University of Cambridge, 2000); and Juliet Koss, “Empathy Abstracted: Georg Fuchs and the Munich Artists' Theater” (Ph.D. Dissertation, MIT, 2000).

contraction, strength, and so on, we gather the experience that enables us to identify with the conditions of other forms," and, one can extrapolate, other beings.⁸ In this dissertation, Wölfflin broadened the definition of the empathetic to mean the projection of not only one's body but one's mood as well:

Let us go further. Musical sounds would have no meaning if we did not consider them the expression of some sentient being.... We always attribute the sounds we hear to a subject whose expression they are. The same is true in the physical world. Forms become meaningful to us only because we recognize in them the expression of a sentient soul. Instinctively we animate each object.⁹

If empathy is thereby broadened to mean the subject's emotional projection into a work of art as part of his or her interpretation of the work — in other words, if it includes the viewer's mood as well or in lieu of a sense of the viewer's corporeality — then that which I would call the 'publicly empathetic' collected and communicated the public's individualized engagements with civic architecture. The term 'publicly empathetic' underscores the distinction between totalitarian consensus, exemplified by the modernism of Mussolini's fascist Italy, and what Alexis de Tocqueville

⁸ Heinrich Wölfflin, "Prolegomena to a Psychology of Architecture," 1886, in Harry Francis Mallgrave and Eleftherios Ikononou, eds., Empathy, Form, and Space: Problems in German Aesthetics, 1873-1893 (Santa Monica: Getty Center Publications, 1994): 151.

⁹ Wölfflin, "Prolegomena:" 152.

identified in 1835 as America's collective individualism, which persisted in the 1940s under the umbrella of Franklin Roosevelt's New Deal.

The publicly empathetic should not be confused with the symbolic. I would like to make a distinction between the two as a means of calling out one of the chief attributes of this period's development of a public language of architecture. In Chapter One, I will elaborate upon this distinction, but it can be summarized in the difference between symbolism's various dependencies upon a shared referent as opposed to empathy's alliance with a more abstract, enigmatic, perceptual one. As generally defined in the fields of psychology and art history, symbolism is typically reliant upon a historical or mythical foundation; empathy, I would argue, attempts to establish a progressive or future-oriented expression. The 1940s offered a window of expression within a longer-term project of symbolism, with the latter succumbing to literalism or mysticism and myth-making at its two extremes. Both Lewis Mumford and Sigfried Giedion illustrate this unfortunate propensity to push the expressive toward the symbolic: Mumford, with his theory of symbolic forms, laid out most clearly in his book The Golden Day: A Study in American Experience and Culture (1926) and Giedion, with his increasing emphasis on what he understood as transcendental, foundational cultural truths in his writings of the late 1950s

and 1960s (The Eternal Present, 1962-64).¹⁰ During the period of this study, however, both of these authors contributed to the formation of a less nostalgic, more progressively oriented engagement between the public and the architecture of the civic realm that lacked the one-to-one correlation of symbolism, maintaining instead a directed, but indeterminate expression.

To call out the work of the forties as expressive rather than symbolic is to highlight that what is significant about this brief moment was that it was not an effort to establish a new language directly corresponding to legible iconographic materials, but instead, it more closely resembled Susanne Langer's understanding of symbolic form as an unconsummated symbol: a symbol that corresponds to a general sentiment, rather than a particular meaning. As indicated by this reference to Langer — who used the terms symbolism and expression interchangeably but who ultimately called her theory the philosophy of symbolic form — to distinguish between expression and symbolism does not imply that the term symbol was not deliberately employed during this period; it is simply an effort to acknowledge our contemporary distinction between the two terms, which I believe is useful in

¹⁰ For a discussion of Mumford's theory of symbolic form, see Casey Nelson Blake, Beloved Community (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina, 1990), especially chapter six, "Culture

understanding the potential influence of this period's thought on contemporary practice and criticism. Langer, a neo-Kantian deeply influenced by her mentor Ernst Cassirer (whose three volume Philosophy of Symbolic Form, was published in German between 1923 and 1931), taught at Columbia University and Connecticut College and was widely read by architects. Today, especially in light of the more recent legacy of architectural postmodernism, the term "symbolism" is almost impossible to disassociate from a direct referent, whereas the "expressive" permits the fluidity of meaning that Langer's theory, and, I will argue, the theories underlying the reconsideration of the public sphere in the 1940s, implied. This notion of an expressive architecture will be further explored in the dissertation.

The subject of this dissertation is modernism at what Lewis Mumford called its age of adolescence: "I don't think that anything more serious is happening to modern architecture at the present moment than that it is growing up," Mumford proclaimed in 1947. "You do not expect an adolescent to wear the same clothes as he did in babyhood. There will be

a time when even whiskers may be appropriate."¹¹ The decade sits between the European roots of twenties high modernism (the tight orthogonality and taut facades of Walter Gropius's Bauhaus of 1926 or Le Corbusier's Villa Stein of 1929) and what Vincent Scully has termed the "structural exhibitionism" or sculpturalism of the second-generation modernism of the fifties (the soaring drama of Eero Saarinen's TWA terminal of 1960 or Jørn Utzon's Sydney Opera House of 1957-65). The mid-1940s, following the war, was the moment when modernism was called upon to fulfill metropolitan programs of singular significance, such as civic centers and city halls. The period's growing pains could be summed up under one simple question: what civic urban role occupied the zone between high modernism's tabula rasa of the 1920s and postmodernism's city of signs of the 1960s? What was the modernism of the public sphere – as opposed to the modernism of domesticity – trying to express, to whom, and how?

To employ the term "public sphere" is to make direct reference to the writings of Jürgen Habermas, who coined the term with the publication

¹¹ Lewis Mumford, "What is Happening to Modern Architecture?" symposium, Museum of Modern Art Bulletin, vol. 13-17, 1947: 18. As an aside, Jean-Paul Sartre pegged adolescence or what he called "the age of reason" to be around thirteen; one could conveniently point to the Weißenhof Siedlung of 1927, le Corbusier's League of Nations project of 1928, or the first CIAM meeting of 1928, all of which would situate modernism's teen years precisely at the beginning of the forties.

of his book The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere, originally published in 1962.¹² Habermas's narrative, which established that the public realm is constituted by free and shared opinions, has been justifiably criticized in recent years for its "rise and fall" story of the bourgeoisie's loss: the public sphere of discourse was irrevocably damaged by the mass media of radio, film, and television. While I rely in part upon Habermas's groundbreaking study, these critiques by Nancy Fraser, Michael Warner, and Rosalyn Deutsche, among others, have strongly influenced this dissertation. These authors have shifted public sphere discourse from Habermas's emphasis on discursive consensus to a consideration of discursive contestation, underscoring that a true public sphere can only arise when multiple constituencies "have a voice." Additionally, they have expanded the mechanisms of this discourse to include rather than eschew modern media, recognizing the potentials underlying alternate venues of public discourse, including, for example, fashion, television, and the internet.¹³

¹² Jürgen Habermas, The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere (1962 orig.; trans. Thomas Burger with Frederick Lawrence, Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1989).

¹³ For an excellent anthology of reconsidered public sphere theory, see Bruce Robbins, The Phantom Public Sphere (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1993), which includes

The internal revision of abstract modernism that influenced its empathetic engagement had already been initiated during the 1930s, but was significantly accelerated by World War II. The highly specialized wartime industry suspended general architectural production, forcing a timely tangent upon modernism's course. At a more profound level, the horrors of the war influenced modernism's agenda. To return to Hardt's image of proliferate trenches on a smooth terrain, the period's evacuated space of architectural production was filled by writings and symposia that consistently circled around the question of what modernism meant or, rather, what it could mean. This question of signification or communication was not limited to the United States, but America's ascendancy to the political and economic international stage made it a particularly ripe territory for a reconsidered modernism. The links between architectural form and political democracy justify limiting the geographic parameters of this study to the United States. Not only would postwar production necessarily include housing and office space — two programs that had already accepted the modernist idiom — but it also invited the physical embodiment of America's new global role. Civic and cultural urban

important essays by Rosalyn Deutsche, Michael Warner, Thomas Keenan, Arjun Appadurai, and Michael Warner, among others.

programs would have to reflect American democracy's new definition. Or was it really so new? On the first page of his analysis of the political mores of the United States, Democracy in America, published between 1835 and 1840, Alexis de Tocqueville wrote, "A great democratic revolution is taking place in our midst...." Tocqueville proceeded to identify specifically significant tensions within American democracy: the effect of associations on civil society, the relationship between individualism and self-interest, and the provisional, mobile, and fluctuating quality of democratic citizens' lives.¹⁴ These same tensions resurfaced one hundred years later under America's transition to a world power in the 1940s and, I would argue, profoundly influenced architectural as well as political efforts to articulate a new public domain.

To call this dissertation "The Jungle in the Clearing: Space, Form and Democracy in America" is to acknowledge the important presence of both Sigfried Giedion (Space, Time and Architecture) and Alexis de Tocqueville

¹⁴ Alexis de Tocqueville, Democracy in America (orig. French, 1835-1840; trans. George Lawrence; NY: Doubleday, 1969): 9; 513; 525; and 611. Literary theorist Cushing Strout has analyzed the surge of interest in Tocqueville among American writers during the 1940s: "Tocqueville's hour had come because the hour of American power and of mass culture had also come. It is not surprising, given Tocqueville's image of a privatized modern age...." Cushing Strout, "Tocqueville and American Literature (1941-1971)," New Literary History, vol. 18, no. 1, Autumn 1986: 116. Although Strout's article speaks of a generalized interest in Tocqueville, I have not found parallel references in the architectural literature of the period.

(Democracy in America) and to underscore the intricate intertwining of the period's architectural and political intellectual fields. The protagonists of this story include modernist architects (many of whom emigrated from Europe to the United State to flee the war), American politicians, and American developers and businesspeople. While their circles did not always overlap, they frequently coincided, demonstrating that aesthetic, political, institutional, and corporate interests need not be at odds, but can intersect in projective, productive ways.

In the aforementioned interview, Foucault warns of the dangers of reducing the complexity of spatial forces to a reductive story of good and evil: "In reality, power in its exercise goes much further, passes through much finer channels, and is much more ambiguous, since each individual has at his disposal a certain power, and for that very reason can also act as the vehicle for transmitting a wider power."¹⁵ Along similar lines, I would argue that what has become a very predictable, formulaic critique has reduced the complexities of the urban fabric to the dialectical schematism of good-public versus bad-private, good-labor versus bad-corporation,

¹⁵ Foucault, "Questions": 72.

good-local versus bad-global, and so on.¹⁶ Part of the appeal of the 1940s is that while the discourse underlying this period can often be justifiably characterized as naïve and normative, the lines demarcating the public and private territories of this decade are not so straightforward; the public/private divide of the 1940s is more hybrid than distinct. While contemporary awareness of the public and private realms is far more nuanced, there are significant parallels between the moment of the 1940s and today: both periods are marked by efforts to constitute a publicly accessible language of abstract architectural form without resorting to historicist vocabularies or stylized appliqué. Furthermore, both periods are shaped by significant shifts in America's changing national and international position (in the 1940s, to America's postwar economic and political dominance; today, to the increasingly globalized and networked internet economy) that in the 1940s fueled an almost terrifyingly broad optimism, which would — I would argue — be most welcome today. The

¹⁶ "Oh, hey, last weekend at the CCA (I was up to see the "Viewing Olmsted" show) they staged a Public Space symposium that was mostly quite inspired (Cedric Price, Georges Teyssot) until the wet blankets in the afternoon lamenting the loss of public space and making access to public space the absolute precondition for political formation (and politics). I'm starting to grow very weary of this line of thinking and all the mini-mall bashing that goes on. I spoke up and expressed my weariness (being a "survivor" of several public space symposia) but chose to be positive and offer my antidote to this pessimism: Starbucks." Architectural critic, Ernest Pascucci, in a letter to the author, 16 November 1996.

instrumental underpinnings of this study lie in part in the value of looking back to a period that so assuredly looked ahead.

1940 & 1949

Typically, periods of cultural interest do not fall squarely within the dates that demarcate a decade, and this study does not offer an exception to that rule of thumb. Neither 1940 nor 1949 coincides with a building, event or declaration that is especially significant to this topic. Instead, they stand for two transitional thresholds in modernism's relation to the public realm in the United States. By 1940, the question as to how modernism could engage what were traditionally considered to be monumental civic, cultural and community programs in the city had been put on the table. The articulation of that question started already in the 1930s and continued through the 1940s. By 1949, the codification of the answer to this question had begun: modernist public representation began shifting from abstraction and programming to the more legible, even historicist vocabulary of attenuated classicism. The forties frame a brief period in the history of modernism in America when both architects and politicians sought a means of expressing a flexible, democratic (with a

highly interventionist New Deal twist), indeterminate public realm through the use of abstract forms and multiple programs.

The 1940s began as a bulging aggregation of influential transitions that it had inherited from the previous decade: the transatlantic migration of the European modernist avant-garde; the transformation to Keynesian political economics under Roosevelt; the maturation of the corporate economy as the country emerged from Depression; and the monumental weight of democracy that came with America's postwar global ascension.¹⁷ With the 1930s instilling a fear of totalitarianism (and, therefore, a suspicion of its architectural manifestations), the 1940s witnessed the proliferation of "democratic signatures" in both the civic and corporate environments. Ultimately, by the end of this decade, speculation about the form of America's newfound socio-political status was overshadowed by the homogenizing force of the Cold War.

¹⁷ Important sources for my understanding of the immediate history to this period include Daniel T. Rodgers's Atlantic Crossings: Social Politics in a Progressive Age (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1998); Robert A.M. Stern, Gregory Gilmartin and Thomas Mellins, New York 1930: Architecture and Urbanism between the Two World Wars (New York: Rizzoli, 1987); Warren Susman, Culture and Commitment, 1929-1945 (New York: Braziller, 1973); Michael Schudson, The Good Citizen: A History of American Civic Life (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1998); Carol Willis, Form Follows Finance (New York: Princeton Architectural Press, 1995); and Olivier Zunz, Making America Corporate: 1870-1920 (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1990).

The period from 1949 to about 1954 harbors a very different collection of transitions: the publication of Rudolf Wittkower's Architectural Principles in the Age of Humanism and Le Corbusier's Modulor signal the turn to a semantic language of humanist proportional systems; the attenuated classicism in the work of Minoru Yamasaki and Edward Durell Stone suggest that the parameters of expression grew to be restricted to the canons of history and structural prowess; and the homogenizing corporatism described by William H. Whyte (Organization Man) and Sloan Wilson (The Man in the Gray Flannel Suit) flags the onset of Cold War conformity.

Within the discipline, this period between high modernism's crest and post-modernism's naissance marks a brief but significant overlap of the empathetic – or communicative – and the autonomous — or strictly architectural. Eventually, the former strand would break down into postmodernist pastiche and the latter into post-structuralist autonomy, but for a brief moment, the two were productively intertwined.

Politicizing Style: the Avant-Garde Crosses the Atlantic

In codifying modernism as a style, Philip Johnson and Henry-Russell Hitchcock's "Modern Architecture" exhibition at the Museum of Modern Art in 1932 emphasized modernism's aesthetics to the exclusion of its political or social role. A work of architecture could be identified, they concluded, by its adherence to the tenets of the new style: "The application of aesthetic principles of order, the formal simplification of complexity, will raise a good work of building to a fine monument of architecture."¹⁸ In 1937, Lewis Mumford focused almost entirely on architecture's political and social ties when he too invoked the term "monumentality." Mumford understood his article "Death of the Monument," as nothing less than monumentality's final rites. Equating monuments with tombstones, or markers for something stable, concrete, and dead, and modernity with the realm of the living, the immediate, and the nomadic, Mumford concluded that "the very notion of a modern monument is a contradiction in terms: if it is a monument, it cannot be modern, and if it is modern, it cannot be a

¹⁸ As cited in the published catalog for the "Modern Architecture" exhibition, The International Style: Architecture Since 1922 (New York: WW Norton, 1932; rpt. 1966): 94. See Beatriz Colomina, Privacy and Publicity: Modern Architecture as Mass Media (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1994), especially chapter five, "Museum," for a discussion of the exhibition's intentions and consequences.

monument."¹⁹ Influenced by the context of World War II, however, modernist European avant-garde architects and writers – particularly Sigfried Giedion, José Luis Sert, among others – came to America with a conscious agenda of politicizing style. As will be discussed in this dissertation's first chapter, these émigrés believed that modern architecture could usher in a new phase of democracy: it could embody the people's "collective force."²⁰ The idea that modernism's functions included the definition, translation, and expression of a collective will was at the root of modernism's coming of age in the 1940s as it tried to define the parameters of that expressive role.

This avant-garde agenda should not be confused with a coincident thread of American-based communitarianism that, as Morton and Lucia White point out in their study of 1962, The Intellectual versus the City, fits into a long-established legacy of American anti-urbanism.²¹ This native lineage appears in the writings of Lewis Mumford, Catherine Bauer, Paul and

¹⁹ Lewis Mumford, "The Death of the Monument," in J.L. Martin, B. Nicholson, and N. Gabo, eds., CIRCLE: International Survey of Constructive Art (NY: Praeger, 1937; rpt. 1971): 264.

²⁰ J.L. Sert, F. Léger, S. Giedion, "Nine Points on Monumentality," originally written in 1943, first published in S. Giedion, Architecture You and Me: The Diary of a Development (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1958): 48.

²¹ Morton and Lucia White, The Intellectual versus the City (Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 1962; rpt. 1977), especially chapters ten and thirteen.

Percival Goodman and the architecture of Louis Kahn, Oscar Stonorov, and the adherents of what Mumford dubbed "The Bay-Region Style," a "native form of modern architecture."²² This California-based approach to architecture, exemplified by William Wurster and paralleling the New Empiricism movement in Britain and Scandinavia, was an attempt to "humanize" modernism through the use of "warm," regionally-specific materials, especially wood. Mumford understood this humanist approach to be an aesthetic style, but one whose specific manifestations would differ according to regional or topographical conditions: "I look for the continued spread, to every part of the country, of that native and humane form of modernism one might call the Bay Region style, a free yet unobtrusive expression of the terrain, the climate, and the way of life on the Coast."²³ Mumford, Bauer, and other critics understood this regionally inflected modernism to be one means of countering the societal and economic trends toward conspicuous consumption and rampant individualism by instilling a sense of communal, collective spirit. "They believed," as architectural historian Sarah Williams Ksiazek notes, "that over people's drive for private pleasure should be a sense of social obligation,

²² Lewis Mumford, "Bay Region Style," *The New Yorker*, October 11, 1947: 104-110.

²³ Mumford, "Bay Region Style."

that as participant [sic] in a larger community, one holds responsibilities in return for citizenship."²⁴

Idealizing the New England town as a model of communal consensus, this collectivist, humanist vision continues to influence the reading of the public sphere even today. Contemporary manifestations of this anti-metropolitan, anti-capitalist thread can be found in the writings of Habermasian-influenced scholars, including among others, the political philosophers Michael Sandel and Michael Walzer.²⁵ Lamenting that "American politics has lost its civic voice," this thread reinforces an unrealistic, even reactionary desire to move backwards in time to a moment when an agrarian economy and small town urbanism dominated the American political landscape. Architectural and urban manifestations of this lament can be traced to the Congress of New Urbanism's promotion

²⁴ Sarah Williams Ksiazek, "Changing Symbols of Public Life: Louis Kahn's Religious and Civic Projects 1944-1966 and Architecture Culture at the End of the Modern Movement" (Columbia University, 1995): 29. This dissertation provides a thorough discussion of Kahn's communitarianism and how it fit into a larger movement at this time.

For information on the California Bay Region style, British New Empiricism, and similar trends in Scandinavia happening at the same time, see Stanford Anderson, "The New Empiricism-Bay Region Axis: Kay Fisker and Postwar Debates on Functionalism, Regionalism, and Monumentality," *Journal of Architectural Education* (February, 1997): 197-207.

²⁵ See, for example, Michael Sandel's *Democracy's Discontent: America in Search of a Public Philosophy* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1996), in which he argues that postwar Keynesian economics changed the definition of "freedom" in America from a political notion of collective destiny to an economically-dominated model of profit-

of a neo-traditional esthetic.²⁶ This anti-metropolitan strain of communitarianism often goes hand in hand with an aversion to the avant-garde, an assumption that avant-garde architecture is necessarily autonomous and anti-social.²⁷

In this dissertation, I focus upon a very different strain of collective life: one of collective experience rather than collective definition that is, additionally, avowedly capitalist, democratic, and avant-garde. I would contend that it is unrealistic to disassociate architecture in the United States from our capitalist, individualist, privatized economic and political milieus. This study examines the theorists and practitioners who attempted to engage these milieus from within modernism. The figures at the heart of this action envisioned a civic sphere that was more flexible than normative, more heterogeneous than consensus-based, more animated than fixed. As I will discuss in Chapter One, in calling for a modernist monumentality,

seeking individualism. For a similar argument, see Michael Walzer's book, Obligations (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1970).

²⁶ For assessments of the importance of traditional esthetics in the New Urbanist agenda, see Paul Goldberger, "Primers in Urbanism, Written in Cast Iron," The New York Times, September 22, 1996, Section 2, p. 34, col. 1 and Penny Singer, "New Housing Based on a Colonial Tradition," The New York Times, October 25, 1998, p. 14.

²⁷ See, for example, Diane Ghirardo's attack on the American avant-garde in her article, "Two Institutions for the Arts," in Ghirardo, ed., Out of Place: A Social Criticism of Architecture (Seattle: Bay Press, 1991) as well as her critique of Peter Eisenman,

writers such as Giedion hoped to influence American democracy and “lead the people back to a neglected community life,” but this aspiration was to be achieved in the metropolis, rather than the town, and via such capitalist means as the spectacle and proactive engagement rather than contemplative humanism.²⁸

To be sure, the protagonists of this study comprise a normative elite within architecture culture. Furthermore, their agenda, while liberal, was hardly radical.²⁹ In a text linking the New Empiricist and the Bay Region styles, architectural historian Stanford Anderson contrasts the established, “imported modernism of [Mumford’s] East Coast colleagues” (the “Museum of Modern Art and its ‘International Style’ elite...”) with the “alternative,” regional work of the American west coast (and, by implication, that of their Scandinavian counterparts).³⁰ While I am sympathetic to the work of the Bay Region practitioners, it is, in fact,

“Eisenman’s Bogus Avant-Garde,” in *Progressive Architecture*, vol. 75, no. 11, November 1994: 70-73.

²⁸ The admittedly totalitarian risks of the spectacle strategy will also be discussed in Chapter One.

²⁹ Although I argue that some of the intentions of these figures prefigure the radical, discursive public sphere outlined by such contemporary theorists as Rosalyn Deutsche, Bruce Robbins, and Michael Warner — see Deutsche, *Evictions* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1999) and Robbins, ed., *The Phantom Public Sphere* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1993) — it would be wrong to claim that there is a direct lineage at play here.

“established” modernism that I wish to examine here, for I believe that this group was central to the shaping of our postwar public sphere. As shown in Chapters Two and Three, part of my argument is that this group of theorists had more influence than they are credited, for their vision of the civic realm was ultimately co-opted by corporate American practice – by “normative architecture,” as architectural theorist Joan Ockman has called it.³¹ Because of the liberal proclivities of the academy, the accomplishments and desires of the corporate world are often overlooked, or simply branded as bad. The aim of this study is to explore the possibilities, both articulated and implied, underlying these desires and their overlaps with the projective visions of adolescent modernism.

Public Private Possibilities

President Roosevelt's New Deal renegotiated the boundaries between state and federal governments; meanwhile, John Maynard Keynes's economic theories, popular among Roosevelt's economic

³⁰ Anderson, “New Empiricism”: 4, 6.

³¹ See Joan Ockman, “Toward a Theory of Normative Architecture,” in Steven Harris and Deborah Berke, eds., Architecture of the Everyday (New York: Princeton Architectural Press, 1997): 122-152.

advisors, intertwined those between the public and private realms. The war production of the 1940s made it a prosperous decade – particularly in comparison to the Depression-dominated decade of the 1930s. In order to maintain this economic stimulation, both the government and private corporations actively looked ahead to postwar production. Searching for markets to replace war-oriented manufacturing, the private realm sponsored extensive experimentation and research. Architectural manifestations of these endeavors, some of which are examined in Chapter Two, include Revere Copper and Brass's Part of Better Living series, “bringing to the American public the concepts of noted architects and designers for your home of the future,” and U.S. Gypsum's series of advertisements in Architectural Forum, documenting similarly sponsored research into possible uses for gypsum board.³² Meanwhile, as a means of bolstering the public urban realm, Roosevelt opened additional venues within the public sector for private monies, some of which will be examined in Chapter Three. While some would accuse Roosevelt of allowing the

³² Revere Copper and Brass, Revere's Part in Better Living (1942), 25-part series of booklets documenting sponsored research by such architects as Norman Bel Geddes, George Frederick Keck, William Wurster Wilson, Lawrence Perkins, Buckminster Fuller, William Lescaze. U.S. Gypsum advertisements ran in Architectural Forum throughout 1941 and 1942 and included research by George Frederick Keck, Eero Saarinen, and Lawrence Perkins, among others.

private sector to infect the purity of the public realm, in fact, his Keynesian economic platform was a two-way street, insofar as it channeled monies into research and experimentation that the private sector would never have been able to justify dispensing on its own.

These political and economic channels provided a means for fostering an empathetic public realm in America. This dissertation examines the discourse underlying these efforts, the subsequent architectural manifestations within the modernist avant-garde as well as corporate culture, and, finally, the urban repercussions of these newly charged architectural forms. Citing cultural critic Mark Lilla, Denise Scott-Brown defined public places as "those, like the shopping mall, marketplace, and beach that 'serve our shared but still private needs' whereas civic places are where we 'share places and purposes' by virtue of sharing citizenship.' In the one, we take our private enjoyment in public, in the other we act civilly and perhaps ceremonially."³³ The period of this dissertation's focus complicates this diagram. As John Burchard and Albert Bush-Brown described in their survey of 1961, The Architecture of America, "major civic surgery was needed; surgery and grafting; fantastic cooperation between

³³ Denise Scott-Brown, "The Public Realm: The Public Sector and the Private Interest in Urban Design," Architectural Design, vol. 60, no. 83, 1990: 21.

financial powers; brilliant new political machinery and courageous and foresighted politicians; in the end, it surely meant the abandonment of much private interest in favor of a greater and communal urban interest."³⁴ Transformations in politics, economics, and modernism ultimately eroded the distinction between private and public, and consequently, I will argue between civic and public, generating — to return yet again to Hardt's powerful image — an smooth terrain of proliferate, hybridized private/civic/publics.

Chapter One examines the disciplinary debates underlying modernism's internal revision as it took on a democratic agenda during the war at the beginning of the decade. Chapter Two looks at the architectural manifestations of these discussions by focusing upon the redefinition of the civic center type, often called out in the discussions of the period as the exemplary program of modernism's transformation.³⁵ The architectural and urban vision of the civic, I will argue, split into an urban, redefined public sphere on the one hand and a suburban scaled community domain on the other. If a public sphere is, as Habermas defines

³⁴ John Burchard and Albert Bush-Brown, The Architecture of America: A Social and Cultural History (Boston: Little Brown, 1961): 502.

³⁵ Sigfried Giedion, "The Need for a New Monumentality," in Paul Zucker, ed., New Architecture and City Planning (New York: Philosophical Library, 1944): 568.

it, a realm that fosters the exchange of points of view, then the subject is assumed to be one of many, part of a diverse audience. "Subjectivity, as the innermost core of the private," Habermas writes, "was always already oriented to an audience (Publikum)."³⁶ This public subjectivity was not homogenized, but, rather, was idealized as heterogeneous.³⁷ Indeed, it was through its very multiplicity that discourse was to be generated in "the public sphere as a realm of freedom and permanence:" "In the discussion among citizens, issues were made topical and took on shape."³⁸ If there weren't divergent opinions at the root of this collective discourse, there would be no reason to raise issues. Or, as C.W. Mills explains it, contrasting the definition of the public to that of the homogenized mass: "in a public, as we may understand the term, virtually as many people express opinions as receive them."³⁹ Even if Habermas may be (and has been) criticized for

³⁶ Habermas, Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere: 49.

³⁷ Habermas is here describing the public sphere of the Greek polis, which he notes was open only to landholders (hence excluding women and slaves). Habermas's promotion of the 19th century bourgeois public sphere as the most successful model of such a realm of shared discourse overlooks the inequities of that society. As Nancy Fraser points out, "Rethinking the Public Sphere," "Of course, we know, both from the revisionist history and from Habermas's account, that the bourgeois public's claim to full accessibility was not in fact realized." Fraser, "Rethinking the Public Sphere," in Robbins, ed.: Phantom Public: 9. Fraser's article recasts Habermas's theory in an effort to accommodate multiple publics.

³⁸ Habermas, Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere: 4.

³⁹ C. W. Mills, The Power Elite, as cited in Habermas, The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere: 249.

and Chapter Three examines the urban repercussions of this reconsidered civic realm by focusing upon one case study, the urban redevelopment of Chicago's Near South Side.

In conclusion, the dissertation assesses the public subject of this reconsidered modernism of the 1940s – the inhabitant of the jungle in the clearing. In his compelling article, "The Mass Public and the Mass Subject," cultural critic Michael Warner reads the postwar discourse of consumption as having affected a shift in subjectivity that multiplied the public subject: "where the subject of the eighteenth-century public sphere cannot be differentiated, consumer capitalism made available an endiessly differentiated subject."⁴⁰ As I will argue, this period offered the forms and programs that laid the groundwork for the multiplied subjectivities of our contemporary understanding of the American public realm.

⁴⁰ Michael Warner, "The Mass Public and the Mass Subject," in Bruce Robbins, ed. The Phantom Public Sphere (Minneapolis and London: University of Minnesota, 1993): 241.

CHAPTER 1: OPENING PANDORA'S BOX

Monumentality's Short-Lived Death

In 1937, cultural critic Lewis Mumford declared the "Death of the Monument," issuing its final rites in the pages of the British anthology CIRCLE. Equating monuments with tombstones, or markers for something stable, concrete, and dead, and modernity with the realm of the living, the immediate, and the nomadic, Mumford concluded that "the very notion of a modern monument is a contradiction in terms: if it is a monument, it cannot be modern, and if it is modern, it cannot be a monument."⁴¹ Mumford's text, excerpted from his manuscript for The Culture of Cities (which would be published a year later in 1938), formed part of his larger agenda to push society out of the "dead," "Paleotechnic" age of industrialization into what he called — paying homage to Patrick Geddes — the "Biotechnic" age, a period of flexibility, liberation from the mechanical, and detachment from the physicality of the past.⁴² Mumford concluded his

⁴¹ Lewis Mumford, "The Death of the Monument," in J.L. Martin, B. Nicholson, and N. Gabo, eds., CIRCLE: International Survey of Constructive Art (London: Faber and Faber, 1937; rpt. 1971): 264.

⁴² Mumford thoughtfully provided his readers with a lexicon to explain these Geddesian neologisms; "PALEOTECHNIC: Refers to the coal and iron economy...; NEOTECHNIC: Refers to the new economy...based on the use of electricity, the lighter metals...and rare metals; BIOTECHNIC: Refers to an emergent economy, already separating out from the neotechnic (purely mechanical) complex, and pointing to a civilization in which the

polemic with an entreaty for evolutionary progress: "the first condition of our survival in cities is that we shall be free to live, free to apply the lessons of biology, physiology and psychology to our use of the whole environment."⁴³ Cities would not only ensure human freedom, they too would take part in this evolutionary biological liberation process: their "physical shells" — what Mumford understood to be the inevitably perpetually obsolete urban forms of community life — would be replaced by "organic bodies capable of circulation and renewal in every part of their tissues."⁴⁴ Renewing themselves "every generation," cities would form only a small part of a larger-scaled, complex environmental organism comprised of technical, social, and cultural forces: the region.⁴⁵

biological sciences will be freely applied to technology, and in which technology itself will be oriented toward the culture of life....In the biotechnic order the biological and social arts become dominant...Improvements, instead of depending solely upon mechanical manipulations of matter and energy will rest upon a more organic utilization of the entire environment, in response to the needs of organisms and groups considered in their multifold relations: physical, biological, social; economic, esthetic, psychological." The Culture of Cities (NY: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1938; 1970 rpt.): 495-96.

⁴³ Mumford "Death of the Monument:" 269-70.

⁴⁴ Mumford "Death of the Monument:" 265.

⁴⁵ For more information on Mumford's organicism, regionalism and biotechnism, see Francesco dal Co, "From Parks to the Region," in Ciucci, Dal Co, Manieri-Elia and Tafuri, eds., The American City From the Civil War to the New Deal (Italian orig., 1973; London: Granada, 1980): 143-292; Casey Nelson Blake, Beloved Community: The Cultural Criticism of Randolph Bourne, Van Wyck Brooks, Waldo Frank, and Lewis Mumford (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1990); and Dettel Mertins, ed. Walter-Curt Behrendt: Victory of the New Building Style (Santa Monica: Getty Publications, 2000).

For Mumford, the "Biotechnic" provided a means of combating the anomie of the capitalist metropolis by enabling a grassroots model of participatory democracy that foregrounded the individual who, Mumford believed, had been rendered invisible by the bureaucratization of the industrialized nation-state. Although Mumford has been depicted as an anti-urbanist (and certainly his championing of the garden city substantiates this perception), he reads the city as providing the requisite locus for individual experience and interactive exchange that constitutes the root of civic life:

It is in the city, the city as theater, that man's more purposive activities are formulated and worked out, through conflicting and cooperating personalities, events, groups, into more significant culminations. ...The undifferentiated common bond of primary association is weakened by these specialized [social] associations; but the cable of civilization itself becomes stronger through such multiform twisting into a more complex and many-colored strand. ...from a fixed mold to a dynamic equilibrium of forces...that is the path of both human and civic development.⁴⁶

It was this freedom of association that Tocqueville had warned in 1835 was the most dangerous of American liberties: "If it does not topple [a people] over into anarchy, it brings them continually to the brink thereof."⁴⁷

⁴⁶ Lewis Mumford, The Culture of Cities: 481-482.

⁴⁷ de Tocqueville, Democracy in America: 524.

Mumford's flexible, "organic bodies" of renewal depended on this very brink of anarchy for their force. Individualized anarchy, or the threat thereof, kept democracy from being annihilated by the capitalist bureaucrat and centralized government.

Operating from the same assumption that monumentality as we know it must be dead, recently arrived European émigrés Sigfried Giedion, José-Luis Sert, and Fernand Léger reached an entirely different conclusion in New York in 1943 when they collaborated on a response to solicitations they had each received from the American Abstract Artists group asking them to contribute to an upcoming publication.⁴⁸ Rather than bury monumentality, the three friends proposed its reformulation. Adopting an avant-gardist manifesto format, they produced the pithy, polemical "Nine Points on Monumentality," outlining a platform for a new form of monumentality within the context of American democratic society. Although the manifesto itself was not published until 1956 (in German; it was published in English only in 1958), it formed the basis for Giedion's widely disseminated 1944 text "A Need for a New Monumentality" and was the

⁴⁸ As an aside, Ray Kaiser (later to become Ray Eames) was a founding member of the AAA. See John Neuhart, Marilyn Neuhart and Ray Eames, Eames Design: The Work of the Office of Charles and Ray Eames (NY: Harry Abrams, 1989): 23.

basis for the eighth meeting of the Congrès Internationale d'Architecture Moderne (CIAM) in Hoddesdon, England in 1951.⁴⁹

While Giedion, Léger, and Sert came to an opposite conclusion from Mumford, they shared Mumford's faith in flexibility, lightness, and mobility: "Mobile elements can constantly vary the aspect of the buildings. These mobile elements, changing positions and casting different shadows when acted upon by wind or machinery, can be the source of new architectural effects."⁵⁰ And also like Mumford, for Giedion, Sert and Léger, the operative

⁴⁹ For further analysis of the "Nine Points" text, see Eric Mumford, The CIAM Discourse on Urbanism, especially Chapter Three, "CIAM and the Postwar World;" and especially Joan Ockman's excellent essay focusing primarily on Sert, "The War Years in America: New York, New Monumentality," in Xavier Costa and Guido Hartray, eds., Sert: Arquitecto en Nueva York (Barcelona: ACTAR, 1997): 22-45. As Mumford (Eric) points out, while it was never made explicit, the "Nine Points" essay was most likely written in direct response to Mumford (Lewis), who had criticized Sert's Can Our Cities Survive book of 1942 for lacking any attention to the civic realm. Furthermore, Mumford (Eric) points out that Giedion had received a copy of Mumford's Culture of Cities from Gropius (check). The use of the term "empty shells" in the "Nine Points" text seems, in this light, to be a direct echo of Mumford's use of the term.

The "Nine Points" text was finally published in Sigfried Giedion's collection of essays, architecture, you and me (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1958): 48-51. The American Abstract Artists volume for which it was commissioned never appeared. In his study, How New York Stole the Idea of Modern Art (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 1983), art historian Serge Guilbault notes that the resolutely avant-gardist AAA refused propagandist art in favor of abstraction as cultural expression (29-30; 36-37). In 1943, the year that the "Nine Points" manifesto was to have been published by the AAA, the association was perhaps distracted by the uproar caused by the American Modern Artists show of that same year, whose participants (including Adolph Gottlieb, Mark Rothko and Barnett Newman) defined themselves specifically in contrast to the AAA (see Guilbault Chapter Two: "The Second World War and the Attempt to Establish an Independent American Art," for a more detailed account of this controversy).

⁵⁰ José Luis Sert, Fernand Léger, and Sigfried Giedion, "Nine Points on Monumentality," 1943, in S. Giedion, architecture, you and me: the diary of a development (German orig.,

term with which they concluded their polemic was freedom: "In such monumental layouts, architecture and city planning could attain a new freedom...."⁵¹ But whereas Mumford's freedom was the freedom of the individual from the constraints of mechanization, Giedion, Sert and Léger's is the freedom of expression of "the collective force — the people."

Architectural historian Joan Ockman attributes this difference to the impact of World War II on the Europeans:

...in the nostalgic sentimentality of the old French song Après de ma Blonde that begins the "Nine Points on Monumentality," one cannot fail to sense the overwhelming feelings of dread and loss on the part of the European refugees sitting out the cataclysm of the war — however gregariously — in New York City."⁵²

1956; Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1958): 50. I prefer to list the authors as "Giedion, Léger, and Sert," for, I would argue that Giedion and Léger were more instrumental than Sert in introducing the vocabulary of new monumentality ("expression," "symbol," "luxury," etc.) into architectural discourse. While Giedion and Léger employed these terms as early as the late 1930s, As Eric Mumford suggests, Sert's 1942 book, Can Our Cities Survive? (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1942) was devoted to the quadripartite CIAM urban agenda of "Housing, Recreation, Transportation and Industry." When Mumford refused to write an introduction to the book, explaining that it lacked attention to the "the political, educational and cultural functions of the city," Eric Mumford suggests that Sert started to shift his urban focus to include those facets, in part out of a desire to attain an American university post. See Eric Mumford, The CIAM Discourse on Urbanism: 131-134. I would argue that Sert's later writings, particularly his "The Human Scale in City Planning," in Paul Zucker, ed., New Architecture and City Planning (392-412) simply parrots Mumford's Culture of Cities, even down to the example of the medieval city.

⁵¹ Sert, Léger, and Giedion, "Nine Points:" 51.

⁵² Ockman, "The War Years in America:" 34.

For these three Europeans, in other words, the horrors of the war instilled a desire to recover or redeem collective expression. As Kenneth Frampton has pointed out, however, Giedion's discourse during this period is strangely apolitical;⁵³ indeed, although the "Nine Points" text refers to "those who govern and administer the countries" it only does so in order to admonish these administrators for their lack of artistic judgement.⁵⁴ Although this political detachment could stem from Swiss neutrality during the war, I would argue that it is more indicative of the primacy of aesthetic theory in Giedion's thinking. Giedion's focus was collective subjectivity and how it was that aesthetic experience might affect such a collective sensibility. The assumption, never stated explicitly in the "Nine Points" text but glimpsed elsewhere, was that politics and economics would be engendered by a new aesthetics. In his "Need for a New Monumentality" text of 1944, for example, Giedion suggests that architecture could serve economist John Maynard Keynes's call for economic stimulation: "Why not keep the

⁵³ Kenneth Frampton, "Giedion in America: Reflections in a Mirror," in Demetri Porphyriou, ed., *On the Methodology of Architectural History* (London: Architectural Design, 1981). While Frampton's article focuses solely on Giedion, the "Nine Points" text reveals the political paucity of all three.

⁵⁴ Giedion, Sert and Léger, "Nine Points:" 50.

economic machinery going by creating civic centers?"⁵⁵ Fitting the ethos of the war into the terms of aesthetics, Giedion, Sert and Léger drew on the question of monumentality as a means of tapping into an already mature debate over modernism's capacity for expression, which I will draw out in this chapter.

Ultimately, then, what separates Mumford from Giedion is not so much a belief for or against monumentality – at the end of the day, both sides favored an architecture and urbanism that corresponded to the expression of each one's particular definition of the Zeitgeist — but, rather, the differences underlying their conception of the modernist subject and the form of that subject's public sphere: Mumford's singular public subject participated in a communal experience of civic symbols, whereas Giedion's collective subjects engaged a public sphere of abstract symbolic form.

To illustrate his ideal civic sphere, Mumford pointed to the rituals of the medieval church: "Prayer, mass, pageant, life-ceremony, baptism, marriage, or funeral — the city itself was a stage for these separate scenes

⁵⁵ Sigfried Giedion, "The Need for a New Monumentality," in Paul Zucker, ed., New Architecture and City Planning (NY: Philosophical Library, 1944): 566.

of the drama, and the citizen himself was an actor"⁵⁶ (fig. 1.1). The symbols of these rituals were scripted by collective recognition: "In one culture a rose is purely a botanical species: in another it has greater significance as an allegorical symbol of passion."⁵⁷ In contrast, Giedion, Léger, and Sert's subject, "the people," is already presumed to be a collective that would experience common reactions to the public realm: "[People] want their aspiration for monumentality, joy, pride, and excitement to be satisfied."⁵⁸ While the public sphere outlined in this short text is as orchestrated as Mumford's medieval pageants ("During night hours, color and forms can be projected on vast surfaces. Such displays could be projected upon buildings for purposes of publicity or propaganda"),⁵⁹ the shared language in this case is not a recognizable cultural language of narrative symbols, but a lyrical, indeterminate language of abstract form. Mumford, on the other hand, abhorred abstraction, seeing it as exemplifying all of capitalism's evils: "what are called gains in capitalist economics often turn

⁵⁶ Mumford, *Culture of Cities*: 64.

⁵⁷ Mumford, *Culture of Cities*: 60.

⁵⁸ Giedion, Sert, Léger, "Nine Points:" 49.

⁵⁹ Giedion, Sert, Léger, "Nine Points:" 50-51. Although in a later text Giedion pointed to the Worlds Fairs of the 1930s to illustrate this idea of collective spectacle, it is hard, as pointed out by Alan Colquhoun in conversation with me, not to think of Hitler's Nazi pageantry instead. Giedion's reluctance to politicize his position leaves him justifiably vulnerable to such accusations.

out ...to be losses [because] the new realities were money, prices, capital, shares: the environment itself, like most of human existence, was treated as an abstraction."⁶⁰

Already in 1835 Alexis de Tocqueville raised the issue of abstraction in America, which, he noted was (much like his assessment of free association) both useful and dangerous (fig. 1.2):

Democratic citizens will often have vacillating thoughts, and so language must be loose enough to leave them play. As they never know whether what they say today will fit the facts of tomorrow, they have a natural taste for abstract terms. An abstract word is like a box with a false bottom; you may put in it what ideas you please and take them out again unobserved.⁶¹

Democracy's dependence upon such looseness of language, such metaphorical boxes equipped with rhetorical escape-hatches, was all the

⁶⁰ From *Technics and Civilization* (1934), as cited in Mark Luccarelli, *Lewis Mumford and the Ecological Region: The Politics of Planning* (NY: Guilford Press, 1995): 67. And in *The Culture of Cities*, Mumford expanded on this critique of abstraction, associating it with the fragmentation of the capitalist subject: "In the natural sciences, the method of abstraction led to the discovery of units that could be investigated completely just because they were dismembered and fragmentary. ...But in society the habit of thinking in terms of abstractions worked out disastrously" (93). "In his article, "Designing Global Harmony: Lewis Mumford and the United Nations Headquarters," in Thomas P. Hughes and Agatha C. Hughes, eds. *Lewis Mumford: Public Intellectual* (New York, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1990), Lawrence Vale argues that in 1951, Mumford glimpsed some promise in the abstract forms of the United Nations complex ("the pleasures of an abstract composition that is oddly satisfactory as a symbol of the United Nations itself," Mumford wrote), indicating that a study of Mumford's specific references to abstraction and how they might have changed over time, would be an interesting pursuit.

⁶¹ de Tocqueville, *Democracy in America*: 482. See footnote 11.

more marked one hundred years after the publication of Democracy in America. Writing in 1945, literary critic Kenneth Burke — a founder of New Criticism — reiterated Tocqueville's appraisal of the strategic underpinnings of abstract, ambiguous language:

We take it for granted that...there must remain something essentially enigmatic about the problem of motives, and that this underlying enigma will manifest itself in inevitable ambiguities and inconsistencies among the terms for motives. Accordingly, what we want is not terms that avoid ambiguity, but terms that clearly reveal the strategic spots at which ambiguities necessarily arise.⁶²

In other words, according to Burke, ambiguity is not only not bad, it even captures a certain promise. It flags discursive hotspots, strategic moments of verbal negotiation. Despite Mumford's fear that abstraction was a Pandora's Box, before, during, and just after World War II, architects, writers, politicians, and economists created an entire landscape of Tocquevillian interlocking boxes with false bottoms (fig. 1.3). Between the repetitive totalization of early modernism's modules and the homogenizing sameness of late modernism's Levittowns lies a short period when abstraction resonated with the latent signifiers of "public" and democratic life.

⁶² Kenneth Burke, A Grammar of Motives (New York: Prentice Hall, 1945): xviii; emphasis his.

Although Giedion has received more scholarly attention for influencing the discussion of modernism's potential for civic expression that took place during this period, I will argue that Mumford's "politics of selfhood," to borrow historian Casey Nelson Blake's term, provided a necessary foil for that discourse's architectural effect: the adaptation of the avant-garde discursive public sphere to the physical context of the postwar American metropolis.⁶³ This chapter will first put Mumford and Giedion's discussion in the larger context of the discipline by examining three major threads of influence: the late 1930s European discourse on monumentality; the League of Nations controversy which began in 1927; and the debate over the question of style triggered by the Museum of Modern Art's "Modern Architecture" exhibition of 1932. Next, it will look at the development of the discourse regarding modernism's expression that took place during the 1940s. Finally, it will examine the terms of the public sphere engendered by this discussion.

The European Prequel

The question as to whether modernism could support "monumentality" was raised as early as the March, 1937 issue of the Swiss Werkbund magazine, Das Werk (fig. 1.4).⁶⁴ In his evaluation of competition entries for a new congress hall for Zurich, editor and architecture critic Peter Meyer asserted that the commission had put the questions of monumentality and representation on the table: "The convention center for the city of Zurich has to serve as a representative building. The question of monumental architecture is raised with inevitable urgency, but the competitors are facing it unprepared."⁶⁵ Meyer concluded that abstract architecture must find expressive forms that will, like the forms of classical architecture, succeed in establishing what he called a Staatspathos, a relationship whereby the individual understands his position as a subject to state power, but at the same time, feels himself or herself to be an active

⁶³ See Blake, Beloved Communities.

⁶⁴ For a more extensive discussion of the extended context of the 1940s modernist monumentality debate, see Christiane C. and George R. Collins, "Monumentality: A Critical Matter in Modern Architecture," Harvard Design Magazine IV, Spring, 1984: 15-35.

⁶⁵ Peter Meyer, "Der Wettbewerb für das Zürcher Tonhallen- und Kongressgebäude," Das Werk, Heft 3, März, 1937: 68. Thank you to Thomas Schroepfer and Sebastian Schmalting for their assistance in translating Meyer's relevant writings. I am especially grateful to Ákos Moravánszky for alerting me to, and underscoring, the significant role that Meyer played in the monumentality discussion in Switzerland and Sweden and for giving me extremely helpful background information on Meyer.

participant in that power. This demand for reciprocal engagement between the architectural object and subject, this attention to the act of perception and to the representability of architectural form and space, echoes the early empathy theorists of the modern movement and presages the questions at play with modernism in the United States in the 1940s.⁶⁶

The topic of monumentality, and abstraction's power to redirect it from classicism to a new direction, without ever losing the aura of its classical manifestations, continued as a dominant thread in Meyer's articles throughout his career as editor of Das Werk (until 1942). This thread resonated elsewhere in Europe; CIAM member Gunnar Sundbärg picked it up in Sweden, laying out Meyer's argument as well as his own perspective, which argued for a more mundane or popular form of monumentality, in an article simply entitled "Monumentalitet" in the Swedish magazine, Byggmästaren of 1939.⁶⁷ In a 1940 Das Werk article recounting their

⁶⁶ In an article of 1951, art historian Paul Zucker argued that these theories of form and vision were the conceptual foundation of modernism and that it was the task of mid-century practitioners and theorists to marry modernism's forms with these theories. See Paul Zucker, "The Paradox of Architectural Theories at the Beginning of the 'Modern Movement,'" Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians, vol. X, no. 3, October, 1951: 8-14.

⁶⁷ Gunnar Sundbärg, "Monumentalitet," Byggmästaren 22, 1939: 297-304. I am grateful to Meg Sibley for translating this article from Swedish to English for me.

discussion on the questions of monumentality, both Meyer and Sundbärg agreed that industrialization offered new opportunities — even demanded them — for monumental aesthetics but that the crisis of World War Two had pushed people backwards in time to the reassuring, familiar forms of classical architecture. What is interesting is where the authors disagree. Ultimately, Sundbärg believed that the distinction between monumentality and non-monumentality would disappear under the auspices of a newly defined monumentality that “will serve the people.” Sundbärg understood this possibility arising in a number of architectural programs, including parks, libraries and stadiums. As a telling aside, it is important to note that he illustrated his “Monumentalitet” article with the curious choice of the Yale Bowl (fig. 1.5). Given no explanation, one can only surmise that by 1939, any European stadium would call to mind Nazi use of sports arenas for political rallies and, hence, Sundbärg’s choice was a deliberately “democratic” setting which would highlight more positive associations of the collective spectacle (fig. 1.6). Meyer assertively countered Sundbärg’s programmatic magnanimity, advocating instead an unequivocal distinction between the monumental and the mundane:

I believe that it is a fundamental mistake for Sundbärg to think that it is possible to develop a new monumentality with modern bridges, stadiums, etc. He is of course right when he

acknowledges their 'unbelievable potential,' but...I am convinced that it would be the most terrible tragedy if one tried again as it has been tried before, to raise profane buildings to a level of monumentality, while their own beauty and dignity lies in their potential to develop and to perfect their own profane language.⁶⁸

Meyer promoted what might now be called a streamlined classical modernism, seeing "classical forms...in the highest sense as the abstract forms that they are."⁶⁹ Although he was reluctant to endorse, he did point to some recent Parisian projects as illustrations of the "Staatspathos" he advocated, most particularly in the designs of Auguste and Gustave Perret (fig. 1.7). Despite this clear difference of opinion, Meyer and Sundbärg ultimately both agreed that the world needed a new monumentality of simple, clear and harmonious forms that would have the power to create in the observer a perception of a development of power in which the observer himself feels a participant. Given that Meyer was "the most important and prolific architectural critic in Switzerland,"⁷⁰ and that Sundbärg was present at the second CIAM meeting in Frankfurt in 1929,⁷¹ it is impossible that Giedion could not have known of their arguments,

⁶⁸ Peter Meyer, "Diskussion über Monumentalität," Das Werk, September 1940: 189.

⁶⁹ Peter Meyer, "Der Wettbewerb für das Zürcher Tonhallen- und Kongressgebäude:" 73.

⁷⁰ Ákos Moravánszky in conversation with the author.

⁷¹ Eric Mumford, The CIAM Discourse on Urbanism: 42.

although neither writer's name, nor the examples they use in their articles, appears in Giedion's writings in the United States during this period.

A second, earlier European thread, though less explicitly tied to the question of monumentality and civic expression, provides a more openly acknowledged backdrop to the issue as it was posed by Giedion in the United States. Both Le Corbusier and Hannes Meyer were among the nine architects who tied for first place in the 1927 competition for the League of Nations headquarters in Geneva (figs. 1.8 and 1.9). Kenneth Frampton has argued that the two projects reveal a fissure opening up beneath modernism's taut veneer: he classifies Le Corbusier's project, which adopted a classical parti with a modernist language, as "humanist," and Meyer's strictly instrumental scheme as "utilitarian."⁷² In his introduction to the translation and reprinting of Karel Teige's "Mundaneum" (1929) and Le Corbusier's "In Defense of Architecture" (1933) in Oppositions in 1974, George Baird notes how the divergence between formalism and instrumentality that was visible in Le Corbusier's and Meyer's League of

⁷² Kenneth Frampton, "The Humanist vs. the Utilitarian ideal," Architectural Design, vol. 38, March, 1968: 134-136. For a further comparison of the two projects, especially Meyer's, see K. Michael Hays, Modernism and the Posthumanist Subject (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1992): 150-172.

Nations projects became explicit as each side was argued in these texts.⁷³ To Teige's forceful assertion that "instead of monuments, architecture creates instruments;" Le Corbusier retorted,

We are also sachlich! The drawing boards in our studio accept only disciplined construction drawings. But there reigns in the air there a will towards architecture which is the driving force, giving coherence, creating organisms. This will is the expression of a sentimental notion. It is an aesthetic.⁷⁴

Anticipating Teige's (among others) shock at this introduction of lyricism, Le Corbusier defended himself by citing his credentials as a rationalist modernist and declaring himself therefore justified in moving beyond his now fifteen-year old accumulated knowledge of architectural laws and principles into the territory of expression. Although Giedion does not reference the Teige/Le Corbusier debate directly, he illustrated his "Need for a New Monumentality" text of 1944 with Le Corbusier's League of Nations project, thereby clearly demonstrating his allegiances.

⁷³ George Baird, "Architecture and Politics: A Polemical Dispute — A Critical Introduction to Karel Teige's "Mundaneum," 1929 and Le Corbusier's "In Defense of Architecture," 1933, Oppositions 4, 1974: 80-82.

⁷⁴ Le Corbusier, "In Defense of Architecture," 1933, translated into English and published in Oppositions 4, 1974:

Two Men, Eighty-One Buildings, One Style

The first significant importation of the European avant-garde to America took place with Henry-Russell Hitchcock and Philip Johnson's mounting of the "Modern Architecture" exhibition at the Museum of Modern Art in 1932, from which stemmed their book of the same year, The International Style: Architecture Since 1922. Whether consciously or not, the book echoed Meyer and Sundbärg's call for an ordered architecture that would, through its coherence and simplicity, invariably transcend building to become what Hitchcock and Johnson termed "a fine monument of architecture."⁷⁵ Despite the authors' invocation of the term "monumental," I would disagree with George Baird who concludes that this statement demonstrates an "unequivocal embrace of monumentality."⁷⁶ Hitchcock and Johnson surveyed a wide variety of "high" and "low" building types in their catalogue — including, among other programs, two gas stations, a shoe store, and a soap factory — but this range was not at the service of an argument, like Sundbärg's, favoring a profane monumentality. Instead, it was to demonstrate the accomplishment and reach of this new style of architecture. Their laconic project descriptions — photo captions that rarely

⁷⁵ Henry-Russell Hitchcock and Philip Johnson, The International Style: 94.

⁷⁶ George Baird, The Space of Appearance (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1995): 136.

exceeded three lines — focused on materials and formal arrangements of built volumes. Even the church at J.J.P. Oud's Kiefhoek Siedlung in Rotterdam, which they point out is “a community building of specialized function which forms the high point of interest in a considerable area of standardized building” — a description which begs some consideration of monumentality, representation, or expression — is reduced to two short lines: one on the formal play of a block and a chimney, and the other a blunt dismissal of the building's lettering⁷⁷ (fig. 1.10). This survey of buildings represents less an unequivocal embrace of monumentality than a discussion of style.⁷⁸ There is a significant difference between the two, which, I would contend, affected the 1940s discussion regarding abstraction's expressionism.⁷⁹ The issue of style was rooted in the question

⁷⁷ “The subordinate rooms and the rounded chimney serve as accents to the simple rectangular block of the auditorium. Lettering poor and badly planned.” Hitchcock and Johnson, The International Style: 203.

⁷⁸ For a discussion of the exhibition's definition of a style (and how that style differed from Le Corbusier's style of everyday objects), see Beatriz Colomina Privacy and Publicity: Modern Architecture as Mass Media (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1994), especially Chapter Two, “Museum.” Note, as Colomina points out, the exhibition and the book differed: the eighty-seven buildings referred to in this chapter's section title were the subject of the book, not the exhibition (the exhibition catalog featured the work of only nine offices).

⁷⁹ This (not exactly thinly veiled) reference is to abstract expressionism, which developed within the American art world at the same time that the ideological possibilities of abstraction were, I argue, being explored in architecture. In How New York Stole the Avant-Garde (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1983), which examines American art between 1946 and 1951, Serge Guilbaut describes the development of abstraction as a critical language for artists beginning with Meyer Schapiro's article “The Nature of Abstract Art” of 1937, which, as Guilbaut writes “destroyed the illusion of abstraction's

that had concluded Henry-Russell Hitchcock's question with which he ended his book of 1929, Modern Architecture: Romanticism and Reintegration: "The most central question that lies open to-day in architecture is that of the relation between technics and aesthetic expression." A few pages later, he elaborated: "A further point which the future will clarify is the question of symbolic expression of the function use of buildings;" and, still later, "Each real style of architecture is able to express certain functions perfectly by a happy combination of direct statement and symbolism."⁸⁰ In The International Style, the discussion shifted from expression entirely to style, revealing Hitchcock's confidence that style was now "real" and that the uncertainty regarding "symbolic expression of function" was resolved. In this second book, style was determined to mean individual expression within the parameters of a defined order (what Philip Johnson and Peter Blake would refer to as "Order and Freedom" in their article of that title in the Magazine of Art in 1948, in which they argued that

independence" (25). Also see Michael Leja, Reframing Abstract Expressionism (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1993) for a discussion of the relationship between abstract expressionist art and explorations of the psychology of the individual. As Leja notes, Guilbaut's study focuses on intersections with political ideology and his own study focuses on the ideology of subjectivity (6). If I were to characterize my own understanding of the architectural avant-garde discourse of the period it would be that it necessarily engaged both a political and a psychological ideology. The overlap with Abstract Expressionism is one that deserves exploration but I do not do that here.

architectural order was an instrument for human freedom). A simple diagram explaining the difference between Hitchcock and Johnson on the one hand and Giedion, Léger, and Sert on the other would equate the style discussion with Mumford's focus on the relationship of the individual to the collective (individual variance against the "rules" of the whole), whereas the monumentality discussion is more of an attempt to find a fluid, progressive symbolism that could cohere the collective without constraining it. Both aspects would play out as modernist expression became more defined both in writing and in practice throughout the forties.

Three Émigrés, Nine Points, One Need

If Hitchcock and Johnson hoped, like Teige before them, to render modernism instrumental, Giedion, Sert and Léger's "Nine Points" text aimed instead to shift modernism from instrumental production to popular desire. Theirs was not the language of order and style that pervaded The International Style; nor was it aligned with the evolutionary individualism of

⁸⁰ Henry-Russell Hitchcock, Modern Architecture: Romanticism and Reintegration (NY: Payson and Clarke, 1929; rpt. 1970):210; 215; 216 (emphasis mine).

Mumford's bio-technic argument. Instead, they hoped to tap into public aspiration by directly posing the question of civic representation:

The people want buildings that represent their social and community life to give more than functional fulfillment. They want their aspirations for monumentality, joy, pride, and excitement to be satisfied.⁸¹

Like Tocqueville before them, Giedion, Léger, and Sert came to America and proceeded to define its democracy.

José Luis Sert and Fernand Léger fled the war by coming to the United States; Giedion was invited by Walter Gropius in 1939 to give the Charles Eliot Norton Lectures at Harvard (which would become the long-running linchpin of architectural history survey courses, Space, Time and Architecture).⁸² The animated atmosphere of New York, amplified by the 1939 World's Fair, was a powerful, energetic antidote to the war-dominated milieu of Europe.⁸³ As Joan Ockman recounts, "Léger recreated 'a kind of Parisian atmosphere' around his studio on 40th Street near Fifth

⁸¹ Sert, Léger and Giedion, "Nine Points:" 49.

⁸² For an account of Giedion's stay at Harvard, see Eduard F. Sekler, "Sigfried Giedion and Harvard University," in E.B. MacDougall, ed., "The Architectural Historian in America," Studies in the History of Art #35 (Washington D.C.: CASVA, 1990): 265-273.

⁸³ "I remember the World's Fair being held just prior to the outbreak of World War II with Nazism at its height and almost nobody at the Fair seemed concerned. People seemed oblivious to the impending catastrophe." Murray L. Lobel, Long Beach, New York, as cited in Barbara Cohen, Trylon and Perisphere (NY: Harry Abrams, 1989): 14.

Avenue, gathering Calder, Sert and Giedion ... to share impressions of the American scene and speculate about the future."⁸⁴ Summers, spent on Long Island and in upstate New York, were equally convivial.⁸⁵

The authors asserted the impossibility of providing a formula, rules, or even examples of modern monumentality. The closest "model" was Le Corbusier's League of Nations entry of 1927, which Giedion claimed (without elaborating — the assumption perhaps being that his readers would surely be familiar with the Le Corbusier/Hannes Meyer debate) "would have advanced for decades...the whole development of modern architecture towards a new monumentality"⁸⁶ had it been realized (fig. 1.11). Instead of models, the authors suggested characteristics. Echoing Baron Haussmann, and foreshadowing the urban renewal strategies of the 1950s and 60s, they called for the clearing of sites to allow for the new monuments to stand in open space. Countering classical visions of the heavy, massive monuments, they proposed instead the implementation of

⁸⁴ "The Great Flight of Culture," *Fortune*, December 1941: 102 as cited by Joan Ockman, "The War Years in America:" 26; as Ockman notes, all that was missing were cafés. Imagine their joy were they to return to Manhattan (the land-o-lattes) today.

⁸⁵ Sigfried Giedion, "Léger in America," *Magazine of Art* vol. 38, December 1945: 27 describes the summers of 1944 and 1945 that he and Léger spent in Rouses Point, New York ["with the healthy distance of two miles between our houses"] as an idyllic period of balanced productivity and relaxation.

structural and material innovations such as "light metal structures; curved, laminated wooden arches; [and] panels of different textures, colors, and sizes...."⁸⁷ Combined with this vision of light constructions were suggestions for projecting luminously transient forms and colors onto the walls of modern buildings, thus transforming monumentality from a static to a dynamic force. As a means of demonstrating the possibilities of incandescent constructions, Giedion pointed to the fireworks of the 1937 Paris World's Fair (designed by architects Marcel Lods and Eugène Beaudouin) and those of the 1939 New York World's Fair (designed by architect Jean Labatut) to illustrate the new monumentality's event quality (fig. 1.12).⁸⁸ Giedion saw such luminous spectacles as aesthetic public events that could awaken "the emotional apparatus of the average man."⁸⁹ Spectacle, events, and luxury would open a parallel world to the real one.⁹⁰ As theorized by contemporary critic Sanford Kwinter, the world

⁸⁶ Sigfried Giedion, "The Need for a New Monumentality," in Paul Zucker, ed., New Architecture and City Planning (NY: Philosophical Library, 1944): 558.

⁸⁷ Sert, Léger, and Giedion, "Nine Points:" 30.

⁸⁸ Giedion, "The Need for a New Monumentality:" 563. There is room for an interesting study on architecturally designed fireworks — an evanescent, kinesthetic form of architecture.

⁸⁹ Giedion, "The Need for a New Monumentality:" 568.

⁹⁰ In a spring, 1939 article for Focus (The Netherlands), "The Dangers and Advantages of Luxury," Giedion advocated the integration of arts as a means of accommodating the

of pleasure or "...play is directly connected to what was once the province of the sacred. ...True play is the cultivation of a radical immanence, the unfolding of cultural, aesthetic, social, and even mystico-erotic values based on no preexisting principle whatever..."⁹¹ Giedion, Léger, and Sert understood their new form of monumentality as a portal to this other world: "The most vital monuments are those which express the feeling and thinking of this collective force — the people."⁹² Unlike Mumford's referencing of the spectacle of the Middle Ages, which is a prescribed pageantry that orchestrated familiar referents, the spectacle of the play of lights against abstract forms was both speculative and non-referential: "Such big animated surfaces with the use of color and movement in a new spirit would offer unexplored fields..."⁹³ Giedion, Léger, and Sert strived to lay out the terms of a new form of expression that could unify but also project. Their language echoes that of philosopher Susanne Langer, whose influential book, Philosophy in a New Key was

inevitable desire for luxury: "To satisfy our need for luxury, splendor and beauty, we must create for (sic) our own "optical vision....Imagination is the most valuable ingredient of architecture. By imagination we mean, nowadays, a new relation and integration of the elements of architecture, as well as new discoveries of spatial planning" (excerpted and reprinted in Architectural Forum 70, May 1939): 348.

⁹¹ Sanford Kwinter, "Playing by Ear," in ANY #12, 1995: 61.

⁹² Giedion, Léger, and Sert, "Nine Points:" 48.

⁹³ Giedion, Léger, and Sert, "Nine Points:" 51.

published in 1942 and quickly made it onto the reading lists of several architecture programs. Langer's theory of symbolic form, itself derived from her mentor Ernst Cassirer's theory of symbolic pregnance,⁹⁴ is best explained with her own preferred example of music. "The real power of music," Langer writes, "lies in the fact that it can be 'true' to the life of feeling in a way that language cannot; for its true significant forms have that ambivalence of content, which words cannot have."⁹⁵ In other words, unlike a sign, which, like a word, has a single corresponding meaning (even if some words have more than one meaning. when used, most often only one meaning is intended at a time), music has an ephemeral, suggestive correspondence to its meaning. Giedion, Léger, and Sert's spectacular, atmospheric symbols similarly played with this suggestive quality of expression.

It is impossible to imagine that Giedion was not aware of the resonance that his call for spectacles had with the spectacles that proliferated in Germany under Hitler as Nazi propaganda. As Kenneth

⁹⁴ "By symbolic pregnance, we mean the way in which a perception as a sensory experience contains at the same time a certain nonintuitive meaning which it immediately and concretely represents," Ernst Cassirer, The Philosophy of Symbolic Forms, vol. 3, "The Phenomenology of Knowledge" (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1957; rpt. 1985): 202.

⁹⁵ Susanne Langer, Philosophy in a New Key (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1942; rpt. 1979): 243.

Frampton notes, "Leni Riefenstahl's documentary film of the Nuremberg rally of 1934, Triumph des Willens (The Triumph of the Will), was the first occasion on which architecture, in the form of Speer's temporary setting, was pressed into the service of cinematic propaganda." ⁹⁶ Indeed this staging of mass spectacle seems to have been precisely what Gunnar Sundbärg sought to avoid by pointing to the Yale bowl as a positive example. Perhaps, like Sundbärg, Giedion thought that the American context would automatically replace Nazism's totalitarian intentions with democratic ones. The suggestion that the spectacle would express the feeling and thinking of a collective force does not avoid the problem of singularity and the accompanying question as to who could possibly "direct" such a collective vision.

Theories of the spectacle, articulated since the 1940s, have engaged this dark underbelly to the optimistic belief in its projective powers. In his 1967 examination of what he named The Society of the Spectacle, writer and film-maker Guy Debord warned that the universe of spectacles, a by-product of capitalist society paralleling the real world, is the province of false consciousness:

⁹⁶ Kenneth Frampton, *Modern Architecture: A Critical History* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1980; rpt. 1985): 218.

The spectacle presents itself as society itself, as a part of society, and as an instrument of unification. ...It is the space of abused glances and false consciousness; and the unification that it accomplishes is nothing other than an official language of generalized separation. ...The spectacle is not a collection of images, but a social relation between people, mediated by images.⁹⁷

The "feeling and thinking" exhibited by the spectacle, in other words, was not that of the "collective force" of the "people," but, rather was the product of the "culture industry," to borrow Max Horkheimer and Theodor Adorno's censorious term. Postmodernism further amplified the association of the spectacle with the mediated realm of false consciousness. In her book, The City of Collective Memory of 1994, urban historian M. Christine Boyer writes that

A sense of theatricality has returned to the City of Spectacle [which Boyer dates as coming after what she calls "the utopic disruptions of rational town planning"] in images that confront the spectator by juxtaposing high and low art forms or by the deliberate posing of pictorialized views and constructed tableaux.⁹⁸

Indeed, as will be elaborated in the next chapter, the spectacularization of the metropolis emerged as much if not more from the commercial realm

⁹⁷ Guy Debord, La Société du Spectacle (Paris: Editions Champ Libre, 1967, rpt. 1971): 10 (translation mine, emphasis Debord's). "Writer and film-maker" does not really capture Debord who was far more aptly described in his Daily Telegraph obituary of December 10, 1994: "A professional malcontent and self-styled Docteur en Rien."

⁹⁸ M. Christine Boyer, The City of Collective Memory (Cambridge, MA, MIT Press, 1994): 48.

than it did from the civic one. Nevertheless, it is important not to dismiss the world of the spectacle out of simple allegiance to Marx's distaste for commercialism's crudités. Current theory's willingness to explore the fields of effect, expression, play and atmosphere suggest that the reductive interpretation of the spectacle with only postmodernism or commercialism is beginning to lose its dominance.⁹⁹ While Giedion, Léger, and Sert's urban spectacle was not heavily theorized, it suggested possible means of architecturally producing the metropolis's exhilarating effects that they experienced in New York:

In 1942, when I was in New York, I was struck by the publicity projections on Broadway, which swept the streets. You're standing there, talking to someone, and suddenly, everything becomes blue. The color passes, replaced by another: red, then yellow. That color, the color of the projector, is free: it is in space. It's there. ...I didn't invent it.¹⁰⁰

Lest such event-architecture be interpreted as mere frivolity, Giedion shifted attention from the Fair fireworks to Picasso's oil painting Monument en Bois of 1930 (fig. 1.13). Here, the teensy tiny figure in the lower left corner

⁹⁹ See ANY #12, devoted to the topic of play; Jeffrey Kipnis on the effect in "The Cunning of Cosmetics," El Croquis, n. 84, 1997; and Mark Wigley on "The Architecture of Atmosphere," in Daidalos no. 68, June, 1998: 18-27

¹⁰⁰ Fernand Léger, as cited in Fernand Léger, 1881-1955 (Paris: Musée des Arts Décoratifs, juin-octobre, 1956): 37, translation mine.

of the painting leaves little doubt as to the sublime effect of the projected sculpture's vast scale:

It symbolizes our attitude toward the war.... It is frightening. It tells the truth. Its forms have the terribilità that — for his contemporaries — emanated from Michelangelo's late sculptures, a threatening which Picasso translates in present day language.¹⁰¹

Form, in other words, is capable of eliciting the emotions of fear, horror, even terror in the spectator. Such a monument would engage the spectator in the emotions of war rather than merely statically commemorating the war. Color and form, in short, could physically translate and guide human emotions of freedom but also of gravity. While this minor acknowledgement of the political reverberations of the turn to the spectacle does not absolve Giedion of problematic aspects of his theory, further on we shall see how the idea of the spectacle, or play, was transformed into a more individualized rather than collective endeavor by architects such as Eero Saarinen and Charles Eames. Whether Giedion or Sundbärg, writing right at the moment when the world was becoming aware of the realities behind Nazi spectacles, could have ever theorized the spectacle without invoking this specter, is a question that merits further consideration.

Monumental Reverberations

Giedion, Léger, and Sert's invocation of the potentials of technology, new materials, light, color, scale, and form into the modernist agenda ignited a discussion that spanned multiple fora, both professional and public, across the 1940s. Paul Zucker's ambitious symposium New Architecture and City Planning, which was published as a collection of sixty-eight essays in 1944, was the first significant forum devoting an entire session to the topic of monumentality, which is particularly striking in comparison to the four other sessions that were directed to the more obviously pressing postwar problems of housing, education, planning and new materials.¹⁰² Zucker explained the inclusion of monumentality among these more instrumental topics by posing two questions: "Will the changing pattern of society create a primarily collective shelter? Or will there remain, in that future world, some room for individual creativeness?" Adopting a millennial tone, Zucker concluded that monumentality had to define the

¹⁰¹ Giedion, "Need for a New Monumentality:" 566.

¹⁰² Because I have not been able to find any references to an actual symposium linked to this volume, my suspicion is that it was a paper symposium (that is, a collection of essays), not an actual event. Paul Zucker, ed., New Architecture and City Planning (New York: Philosophical Library, 1944).

line between the two options: "The evolution of a society as a whole must not only be expressed and artistically formed, but also be helped and given new impetus by architectural, city and regional planning.... To quote the already classical words by Winston Churchill, 'We shape our buildings and afterwards our buildings shape us.'" ¹⁰³ While the invocation of Churchill and the lack of any direct reference to democracy wrap Zucker's thoughts in a mantle of internationalism that suggests the influence of Wendell Wilkie's One World, published only one year earlier, the polarization of individual creativity against society's collectivity, a tension articulated by Mumford in The Culture of Cities and by Hitchcock and Johnson in the The International Style, remained a particularly American problem during these years. In addition to Giedion's "Need for a New Monumentality" text, which expanded upon the "Nine Points" manifesto, the Zucker collection included Louis Kahn's "Monumentality" — a proto-structural expressionist appeal — and George Nelson's "Stylistic Trends and the Problem of Monumentality," which reads monumentality as a means of going beyond functionalism in order to connect architecture to economics

¹⁰³ Paul Zucker, "Planning in Three Dimensions" in Paul Zucker, ed. New Architecture: 4-5.

and politics, forming a "complex organism" reminiscent of Mumford's organicist theories.¹⁰⁴

Modernism at the Service of Democracy

While Giedion, Léger and Sert influenced this discourse (Giedion's text is the most-cited one from the "Monumentality" session of Zucker's collection), it also coincided with a discussion that had already begun in America, regarding modernism's relationship to democracy. Already in 1940, architectural critic Douglas Haskell wrote in the Phi Beta Kappa journal American Scholar that "Democratic architecture must not only give every citizen his chance to have an agreeable home, but must declare its aims in emotional terms" and criticized Washington D.C.'s "rows of columns still being added to other rows [as] inferior to Hitler's in that they represent not even a bad idea." Although Haskell noted that the Italians had used modern monumentality to the wrong ends, he ultimately concluded in favor of modernism as affirming "the liberal hope of progress."¹⁰⁵

¹⁰⁴ Louis I. Kahn, "Monumentality;" George Nelson, "Stylistic Trends and the Problem of Monumentality," in Paul Zucker, New Architecture and City Planning: 577-588 and 569-576 respectively.

¹⁰⁵ Douglas Haskell, "Recent Architecture Abroad," American Scholar vol. 9, no. 3, July 1940: 377.

Architectural Record ran an editorial in 1942 entitled "Design for Democracy" which affirmed the individual's freedom, asserting that "Our part in the Design for Democracy is to plan efficiently and intelligently to provide the physical setting, the means or environment that will best serve and coordinate the needs of the people collectively and individually."¹⁰⁶ And in articles dating from 1940 and 1944, George Howe, the supervising architect for the Public Building Administration and the architect, with William Lescaze, of the Philadelphia Savings Fund building of 1932, exhibited in the "Modern Architecture" show, wrote of the possibility for modernism, which he defines as "integrated building" — that is, a combination of living and engineering — to serve as the symbol of "creative democracy."¹⁰⁷ Finally, Joseph Hudnut, dean of Harvard's School of Design, also writing in 1940 and 1943, called for an architecture of "expression" that could lead to a "collective betterment."¹⁰⁸

¹⁰⁶ "Design for Democracy," Architectural Record, vol. 92, July, 1942: 36.

¹⁰⁷ George Howe and William Adams Delano, "Two Architects' Credos: Traditional versus Modern," Magazine of Art, April, 1940: 234-35. Also see George Howe, "Monuments, Memorials and Modern Design — an Exchange of Letters," Magazine of Art, October, 1944: 202-207.

¹⁰⁸ Joseph Hudnut, "Architecture and the Modern Mind," Magazine of Art, May, 1940: 290-293 and "Architecture after the Peace," Magazine of Art, April, 1943: 123-127.

As evidenced by the emphasis on democracy, all of these articles are deeply marked by the United States's entry into World War II. Although there are clear similarities to the positions of Giedion, Léger, and Sert, the terms being used here are less spectacular and emotive than they are serious and patriotic. The underlying tone is a civic republican one of "a return to fundamentals" and the common good.

Expressions and Subjectivities

By 1944 and 1945 there was a perceptible shift in tone regarding the definition of architecture's expression, most visible in the art press. Fundamentals and truths were replaced by play, luxury, and empathy. In "Modern Architecture Comes of Age," in Magazine of Art, Anneke Reens claimed that the now noticeably "warmer" modern architecture reveals "personal taste and artistic expression." The expression in question is that of the individual personality of the artist or architect: "besides having reasoned personal opinions, we also want to relax once in a while, we want to have fun; we have an indestructible instinct for doing

unreasonable things."¹⁰⁹ In Art News, Philip Johnson condemned the propensity to plan for utilitarian war memorials such as bridges or parks as a residue of American Puritanism and called instead for "concrete symbols of a power outside [man's] own lonely consciousness." Pointing to a war memorial envisioned (but, alas, never built) by Marcel Breuer and Lawrence Anderson for the Cambridge (Massachusetts) Common, Johnson advocated a form of monumentality that would engage the active viewer:

The approach of these two men to the problem is unusual in that they assume that the spectator will read the names while standing rather than while reclining on the ground or sitting on a ladder. The names constitute a band running at eye level along one-inch thick slabs of unpolished glass. These frameless slabs, seven feet high, are embedded in the pavement following a rectilinear pattern reminiscent of the paintings of Mondrian. The horizontal, semi-transparent quality of the memorial does not disturb the leafy serenity of the setting; and its location in the center of the Common, away from automobile traffic yet straddling the main pedestrian thoroughfare, is fitting because it is at the same time accessible to, and separated from the cultural and business life of the city.¹¹⁰

Reens's engaged producer and Johnson's engaged subject are the key players of Paul Zucker's writings of this period. Citing the empathy theories of such 19th century writers as Theodor Lipps and Adolf Hildebrand, Zucker

¹⁰⁹ Anneke Reens, "Modern Architecture Comes of Age," Magazine of Art, March, 1944: 89-93.

claimed that architecture's effect was directly linked to our reading of mass in direct ratio to our own dimensions: "When we look at them, we feel that they share in our reality. Unconsciously, our eyes trace imaginary lines from ourselves to the buildings...."¹¹¹ This empathy that the subject feels vis-à-vis the building (or sculpture, or urban space) is at the root of Zucker's call for a "humanist" architecture that does not reproduce historical style but instead maintains a sense of "order." Zucker once again concluded by turning to Churchill: "We shape our buildings and our buildings shape us."¹¹² The architect and the architectural subject are unavoidably engaged by architecture as built form.

By 1944 Zucker had added an interesting twist to his empathy theory of modernism. In a rather grandly entitled article, "The Role of Architecture in Future Civilization," Zucker noted that "the relationship between the 'producer' and the 'consumer' of architectural values will be defined rather by the consumer than by the producer. The consumer, the general

¹¹⁰ Philip C. Johnson, "War Memorials: What Aesthetic Price Glory?" *Art News* 44, September, 1945: 25.

¹¹¹ Paul Zucker, "The Aesthetics of Space in Architecture, Sculpture, and City Planning," *Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism*, vol. 4, no. 1, September, 1945: 14.

¹¹² Paul Zucker, "The Humanist Approach to Modern Architecture," *Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism*, vol. 2, no. 7, 1942: 21-38.

public, will decide precisely what it is going to consume...."¹¹³ This recognition of the role of consumption in the empathetic relationship between the subject and the object by the end of the war was underscored by a magazine advertisement of 1944, described by Richard Fox and Jackson Lears in the introduction to their book of 1983, The Culture of Consumption: "Three years after Roosevelt's 'Four Freedoms' — freedom of religion and speech, freedom from want and fear — the Hoover [vacuum] ad urged that 'the Fifth Freedom is Freedom of Choice.' Preserving democracy meant not just destroying fascism or abolishing poverty, but protecting the consumer market."¹¹⁴ The recognition that the public consumed architecture expanded the drive for modernist expression beyond forming the public's collective desire to forming the public itself.

Publics

Giedion recognized the monument's role in actively shaping the public when he wrote that "The demand for a decent social life for everybody

¹¹³ Paul Zucker, "The Role of Architecture in Future Civilization," Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism, Special Issue: Art in a Post War World, vol. 3, no. 9-10, 1944: 30.

¹¹⁴ Richard Wightman Fox and T. J. Jackson Lears, The Culture of Consumption: Critical Essays in American History, 1880-1980 (NY: Pantheon, 1983): ix.

has finally been recognized after a fight of more than a century. The demand for shaping the emotional life of the masses is still out of the picture. It is regarded as unessential and most of it is in the hand of speculators."¹¹⁵ Giedion's text reflects the inherited stamp of a hierarchicized view of society intersecting with a wish for a socialist one. He distinguished an elite — albeit a cultural rather than aristocratic or political one — and he then directed the work of that elite towards the masses, traditionally the lower or working class. Giedion's text reveals that although he embraced his American context, he could not discard the European lens through which he observed it.

As historian Warren Susman has noted, American critics adopted a similar interest in democratic constituencies during this period, but they articulated that interest and that vision in terms of a middle, not lower class. Susman quotes Kenneth Burke's 1935 address to the American Writers' Congress, in which the term "public" was distinguished from "worker" or "masses:"

In suggesting that 'the people,' rather than 'the worker' rate highest in our hierarchy of symbols. . . I am suggesting fundamentally that one cannot extend the doctrine of revolutionary thought among the lower middle class without

¹¹⁵ Giedion, "Need for a New Monumentality:" 561.

using middle-class values . . . The symbol of 'the people' also has the tactical advantage of pointing more definitely in the direction of unity.¹¹⁶

America's middle class outlook focused less on political democracy or public festivals for invigoration, and more on economic opportunity and material accumulation. The proliferation of rags to riches stories in the media during the forties, for example, reflected, and also compounded this particular mindset by "presenting consumerism as a mechanism of assimilation in a classless and family-centered way of life."¹¹⁷

Such foregrounding of the economic — in middle class terms — was present in architectural criticism of the period as well. James Marston Fitch concluded his book, American Building: The Forces that Shape It, of 1947, with a chapter entitled "Toward a Democratic Esthetic" in which he noted that modern industrial capitalism had rendered the building process so complex that the public could no longer understand it. "The average man," Fitch wrote, "is wretchedly informed as to what performance he has a right to demand of buildings; and it has been the central purpose of this book to

¹¹⁶ Kenneth Burke, address to the American Writers' Congress, 1935, as quoted by Warren I. Susman in Culture as History (NY: Pantheon, 1973; rpt. 1984): 211. Also see the symposium — in which Burke participated — "What is Americanism? A Symposium on Marxism and the American Tradition" as published in The Partisan Review, vol. 3, no. 3, April, 1936: 3-14.

¹¹⁷ W. Graebner, The Age of Doubt: American Thought and Culture in the 1940s (Boston: Twayne, 1991): 11.

explain what he should demand and why."¹¹⁸ Accusing Le Corbusier of "emotional aridity,"¹¹⁹ Fitch contended that the "laymen ask something more of buildings...the quality is sentiment [and] it must come through form and through a synthesis with the other arts."¹²⁰ Although Fitch never mentioned monumentality, his proposal echoed Giedion's description of the impact of new monumentality, although in Fitch's schema, the modern subject is not the mass public, but the individual consumer who needs to be informed in order to make his selection.¹²¹

That information came through books like Fitch's, which were aimed beyond the professional audience, popular magazines, and museum exhibitions, catalogues and symposia, most particularly at New York's Museum of Modern Art.¹²² In her introduction to the catalog for the 1944

¹¹⁸ James Marston Fitch, American Building: The Forces that Shape It (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1947): 366.

¹¹⁹ Fitch, American Building: 363.

¹²⁰ Fitch, American Building: 366.

¹²¹ Note that Fitch's conception of the "democratic" as a collection of individuals in this chapter coincides with and parallels a reinterpretation of de Tocqueville's writings in literature which understood society to be made up of a collection of individuals "shuttling to and fro between a desire for order and a desire for freedom, a responsibility to the self and a responsibility to society." cf. Cushing Strout, "Tocqueville and the Idea of an American Literature:" 115.

¹²² For examples, see Talbot Hamlin's "Architecture in America Today," The New Republic (August 4, 1941: 156-57); Science Digest's excerpt of José Luis Sert's "Can Our Cities Survive?" (May, 1943: 25-28); and Lewis Mumford's "Skyline" column in The New Yorker (1935-1963).

exhibition, "Built in USA, 1932-1944," curator Elizabeth Mock recognized the need to inform a public that was inherently suspicious of modernism:

People had long found it convenient to disregard Frank Lloyd Wright, but the newest way of building they found positively offensive. ...This was the honest reaction of people who had never learned to look directly at a building, or a painting for that matter, without the intervention of a story.¹²³

MoMA took on the telling of that story. The "Built in America" exhibition brought the question of modernist expression to the public's attention when Mock concluded her essay by laying out the current questions in architecture. After mentioning those related to housing and highways, she noted "But there is another, fervently discussed by everyone who believes in the art of architecture, and that is monumentality."¹²⁴ Mock's tone clearly implied that anyone reading this text who wanted to be someone, should and would take note that it was necessary to treat this question seriously. Mock described the need for a democratic monumentality in opposition to the Nazi and Fascist expression of the "omnipotence of the State," by again pointing to the issue of the individual's relation to the collective: "There must be occasional buildings which raise the every-day casualness of living to a higher and more ceremonial plane, buildings

¹²³ Elizabeth Mock, Built in USA, 1932-1944 (NY: Museum of Modern Art, 1944): 13.

¹²⁴ Mock, Built in USA: 25.

which give dignified and coherent form to that interdependence of the individual and the social group which is of the very nature of our democracy."¹²⁵ Mock pointed to Saarinen, Saarinen and Swanson's winning entry to the Smithsonian Gallery of Art competition held in 1939 to illustrate her point (figs. 1.14 and 1.15). Like Giedion's referencing of Le Corbusier's League of Nations project, Mock does not explain why the building serves as a good example; she simply implies it (again, as with Giedion, perhaps the implication was that anyone who was someone would be aware of the flap caused by the modernist scheme). Like Le Corbusier's design, the building is an example of user-friendly modernism: it is restrained, gently asymmetrical and its axes and cross axes do not disturb the balance of its massing. While not a project of spectacular urbanism, as envisioned by Giedion, Léger, and Sert, it was "factory-like" enough in appearance to prevent the Smithsonian Commissioners from agreeing to the jury's decision and was, as a result, never built.¹²⁶

Mock and Giedion's efforts to form the public were only part of a more generalized acceptance of the tenets of public relations. While

¹²⁵ Mock, Built in USA: 25.

¹²⁶ See Travis C. McDonald, Jr., "The Smithsonian Institution Competition for a National Gallery of Art," in James D. Kornwolf, ed., Modernism in America: 1937-1941: A Catalogue

Beatriz Colomina has demonstrated that public relations have underpinned modernism for a long time, certainly since Le Corbusier, "public relations" did not become a field until after World War I and did not really enter common parlance until the early 1930s, when Fortune magazine sponsored a series of roundtables on the subject.¹²⁷ An article in Pencil Points (the precursor to Progressive Architecture) from 1940 that billed itself as a "check-list" for architects interested in improving the profession's public image (suggestions ranged from issuing postage stamps to campaigning to guarantee that architects get credited for buildings mentioned in newspapers – a practice that is still not instituted today) implies that an effort to found a national campaign to educate the public about architecture was being considered.¹²⁸

The discourse of public relations, I would argue, both at this explicit level but also at the level of curators', authors' and architects' generalized attention to the importance of the public's interpretation of architecture, helped to shift the discourse of the 1940s from the civic republican ideal of

and Exhibition of Four Architectural Competitions (Williamsburg, VA: College of William and Mary, 1985): 177-223.

¹²⁷ See Michael Schudson, The Good Citizen: A History of American Civic Life (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1998): especially pp. 192-202.

the "civic realm" (fig. 1.16) to the liberal-individualist model of the "public realm" (fig. 1.17). The discourse's focus on democracy that marked the early years of the 1940s shifted to a more instrumental, flexible, and more frankly commercial notion of the public in its later years. Zucker's judgement that the consumer would determine the direction of art indicates that a corresponding shift occurred from the idealized Kantian subject to the subject as consumer. The category of choice was added to Kant's ethical categories, just as the freedom of choice was added to Roosevelt's 'Four Freedoms.'

Public Ameobae

Even in his choice of terminology, Jürgen Habermas's theory of the public sphere cannot help but impose a fixity upon what should be a realm of fluidity: a sphere has a geometric purity and wholeness that the actual public realm cannot. If the earlier texts regarding monumentality and expression tended, like Habermas, toward this kind of idealization, the later texts came to adopt a vocabulary that more closely resembled Susanne

¹²⁸ D. Knickerbacker Boyd, "Public Relations: Summary of a Program for Architects," Pencil Points, 21, May, 1940: 325-26.

Langer's ambivalent symbolic form, suggesting a public realm that was perhaps more amoebic than spherical.¹²⁹ By 1948, when The Architectural Review published a symposium entitled "In Search of a New Monumentality," the term had become even more elusive. All of the invited participants — including Giedion, Walter Gropius, Henry-Russell Hitchcock, William Holford, Gregor Paulsson, and Alfred Roth — noted the enigmatic nature of monumentality's definition; ultimately, all but Paulsson (who contended that monumentality and modernism were wholly incompatible) concurred with Hitchcock who pluralized the term almost to the point of meaninglessness when he claimed that it meant 'durability,' 'solidity,' 'dignity,' 'unity,' 'large scale,' and 'emotional expression.'¹³⁰ Perhaps the Review's claim that "we have lost our innocence" was, in addition to serving as a reference to the war, an acknowledgement of the strategic possibilities that Kenneth Burke had seen in ambiguity; in other words, that the uncertainty was deliberate.¹³¹ Mumford resisted this abstract ambiguity to the end; in a supplement to the Review's symposium, published seven

¹²⁹ See Sarah Whiting and Ron Witte, "Amoebic Space," in ANY 7/8 (1994): 62.

¹³⁰ Henry-Russell Hitchcock, "In Search of a New Monumentality: A Symposium," The Architectural Review, September, 1948: 123.

¹³¹ "For better or worse we have lost our innocence and must rebuild in the uncomfortable, if stimulating light of self-consciousness." Editorial statement, "In Search of a New Monumentality:" 118.

months later, Mumford tried once again to shift monumentality away from the ambivalent symbol to a fixed linguistic sign. In response to the list of terms raised by the symposium, he said,

Unfortunately these terms are almost as full of insidious meanings as monumentalism, and are as capable of being misunderstood. Perhaps the best way to restate Giedion's thesis would be to say that it is not enough for a modern building to be something and do something: it must also say something. ...modern architects have mastered their grammar and vocabulary and are ready for speech.¹³²

But even Mumford could not fix architecture's public expression. His advocacy of an organic, personal and subjective expression was only a different path to public fluidity.

Giedion, Mumford, and Mock, among others participating in this debate, subscribed (consciously or not) to Ortega y Gasset's notion of an elite guiding the masses (or the workers, or the public). As Joan Landes, Geoff Eley, and Nancy Fraser have pointed out, a public sphere that is composed of associations for discourse — civic, professional, and cultural — is never without exclusions. With that caveat, I would argue nonetheless that the ambivalent symbolism at the basis of modernist expression, as it was defined in these varied discursive spheres during the forties — print,

¹³² Lewis Mumford, "Monumentalism, Symbolism and Style," The Architectural Review, April, 1949: 173.

forums, and exhibitions — provides a suggestive (Cassirer would say “pregnant”) formal parallel to Fraser’s own vision of a rethought public sphere. Defining the public as an “interimbrication” of the privately organized capitalist economy with the state, Fraser argues that “the ideal of participatory parity is better achieved by a multiplicity of publics than by a single public.”¹³³ The play between the individual subjectivities of the consumer and the public subjectivities of the civic realm results in what I would call the public individual, whose world is symbolized by the ambivalent, ephemeral, and abstract forms of modernism. The next chapter will examine the attempts in the civic, architectural and speculative realms to articulate what Tocqueville would have called an entire landscape of interlocking boxes with false bottoms, the world of an indeterminate public sphere.

¹³³ Nancy Fraser, “Rethinking the Public Sphere: A Contribution to the Critique of Actually Existing Democracy,” in Bruce Robbins, ed., *The Phantom Public Sphere* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1993): 18.

CHAPTER 2: DESIGNING DEMOCRACY

Commercializing The Civic

Everybody is susceptible to symbols...newly created civic centers should be the site for collective emotional events, where the people play as important a role as the spectacle itself, and where a unity of the architectural background, the people and the symbols conveyed by the spectacles will arise.¹³⁴

Sigfried Giedion concluded his article of 1944, "The Need for a New Monumentality," with an emphatic endorsement of the civic center as a programmatic genre that was particularly useful in the search for an empathetic modernism. His belief in the symbolic power of the civic center echoed the aesthetic politics underlying John Dewey's Art as Experience of 1934, in which Dewey traced the continuities between art and everyday life, describing art as a complex organism (that is, as internally differentiated yet unified) that helps to foster a communicative basis for collective community. "Works of art," Dewey wrote, "are the only media of complete and unhindered communication between man and man that can occur in a world full of gulfs and walls that limit community of

¹³⁴ Sigfried Giedion, "The Need for a New Monumentality," in Paul Zucker, New Architecture and City Planning (NY: Philosophical Library, 1944): 568.

experience."¹³⁵ Giedion was less interested in the man to man than in the collective as a whole; nevertheless, he understood architecture, particularly when combined with art and urbanism, to be the paradigmatic communicative work of art, the best means for fostering a community of experience. Anticipating that the construction of civic centers may appear economically frivolous after the Depression and during the war, Giedion turned to the then-popular theories of British economist John Maynard Keynes, who supported large-scale expenditures as a means of circulating money and maintaining employment.¹³⁶ Specifying that civic centers should not be profit-making enterprises but should be financed from a public fund (so that their public objectives would not be compromised), Giedion reasoned that the construction and operation of civic centers can "keep the economic machinery going."¹³⁷ The realignment of modernism with such symbolic charge was intended to stimulate the economy and foster a new postwar civic community.

Employing almost identical wording, Giedion had introduced the idea of a modernized civic center already in 1939 in the Charles Eliot

¹³⁵ John Dewey, Art as Experience (1934): 110.

¹³⁶ John Maynard Keynes, The General Theory of Employment Interest and Money (London: MacMillan, 1936).

Norton lectures he delivered at Harvard. Published in 1941 as Space, Time and Architecture, here too Giedion had concluded with a section entitled "A Civic Center:" "in the great city of our age, there will be a civic center, a public place which, like the agora of Athens, the Roman forum, and the medieval cathedral square, will be the community focus and popular concourse."¹³⁸ While his 1944 article included a small variety of examples — most notably Le Corbusier's project for the League of Nations as well as Marcel Lods's and Jean Labatut's firework designs for the World's Fairs of 1937 and 1939 — the civic section of Space, Time and Architecture focused on only one: New York City's Rockefeller Center, a built work that Giedion felt almost uncannily exemplified modernism's objectives (fig. 2.1): "[The RCA building,] this slab, so close to our own investigations, stands on its site like an immense rectangle — a form impossible of realization in any other period"¹³⁹ (fig. 2.2).

According to Giedion, functionalism — the cornerstone of the speculator's as well as the modernist's vision — dictated the RCA building's

¹³⁷ Giedion, "Need for a New Monumentality:" 566.

¹³⁸ Sigfried, Giedion. Space, Time and Architecture (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1941): 569.

¹³⁹ Giedion, Space, Time and Architecture: 571.

abstraction: "The shape grows naturally out of purely technical and economic considerations."¹⁴⁰ These "considerations" were a much different functionalism than that epitomized by Hannes Meyer who wrote in 1928 that "in this world all things are a product of the formula: (function times economy)," however. In his analysis of the RCA slab, Giedion began to articulate the terms of an emotive functionalism, one that paved the way for an expressive modernism. Although Giedion observed that the building's engaging qualities stemmed from its surfaces, he did not elaborate the crucial shift from prism to surface. Only in his later texts that specifically took up the questions of expression and monumentality would Giedion be able to articulate the provenance of these intangible qualities. Even Space, Time and Architecture hints that the slab's ability to engage the spectator comes from an excess that extends beyond functionalism — the setbacks are only "in some respects" functional.

This excess was theorized a decade later when Susanne K. Langer published her book Feeling and Form: A Theory of Art, which furthered the discussion of symbolism she began in her book, Philosophy in a New Key of 1942. As Langer explained in 1953, it is not abstraction per se that is capable of evoking human sentiment, but the "freeing of a form from

¹⁴⁰ Giedion, Space, Time and Architecture: 570.

common use to be put to new uses. ...Herein lies the 'strangeness' or 'otherness' that characterizes an artistic object. The form is immediately given to perception, and yet it reaches beyond itself; it is semblance, but seems to be charged with reality."¹⁴¹ My invocation of Langer is not to suggest that abstraction is problematic, but, rather to underscore that the RCA's "feeling of hovering" emanates not only from its abstraction, but also from its atmosphere. Looking at the photographs published in Space, Time and Architecture, it becomes evident that it is the building's setbacks peeling away from the mass of the core like strips of fossilized plywood, the impurity of the slab's abstraction — which Giedion excuses as being "at least in some respects justified" — that animate the slab, giving it "a certain feeling of hovering, of suspension, emanate[ing] from the surfaces."¹⁴²

Between Giedion's hesitating references to "a certain feeling" and

¹⁴¹ Susanne K. Langer, Feeling and Form: A Theory of Art (NY: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1953): 52. Also see p. 59 where Langer does argue the importance of abstraction in raising art to this level of expression: "An articulate form, however, must be clearly given and understood before it can convey any import.... Hence the paramount importance of abstracting the form, banning all irrelevancies that might obscure its logic, and especially divesting it of all its usual meanings so it may be open to new ones." Given that Langer's book was written a good decade after the publication of Space, Time and Architecture, I certainly do not want to imply that it influenced Giedion (though it would be interesting to find out what exchanges did take place, if any, between the two figures — Langer was teaching at Columbia during the years that Giedion was spending much time in New York, but I have not investigated their possible encounter). Rather, I believe that Langer, considered a "popular philosopher," here successfully pinpoints the root of the modern movement's shift from a functionalist to an expressionist desire.

¹⁴² Giedion, Space, Time and Architecture: 573.

Langer's articulation of its possible provenance, lay a decade of experiments in figuring — without fixing — emotion through abstraction, especially the collective emotions that were understood to underlie civic metropolitan programs. Giedion's writings in the 1940s introduced the terms of this experimentation, but also revealed its tensions.

Rockefeller Center's geometry was not its sole qualification for garnering it the plum role of capping off Space, Time and Architecture; Giedion additionally believed that it epitomized his space-time thesis: "Its buildings, which instead of facing existing streets are conceived in coordination as a unit, introduce correspondingly new and original plastic elements."¹⁴³ It is this elastic coordination of a plastic ensemble, strangely invisible in the Center's plans, that fascinated Giedion: "Nothing new or significant can be observed in looking over a map of the site. The ground plan reveals nothing."¹⁴⁴ Giedion's noting of nothing noteworthy is itself revealing. Although he read the plan's insignificance as demonstrating a shift away from a Beaux Arts prioritization of the plan to a modernist focus on function ("Thus it is apparent that it was not through vision but through an effort to adjust design to changing necessities that the development

¹⁴³ Giedion, Space, Time and Architecture: 570.

¹⁴⁴ Giedion, Space, Time and Architecture: 573.

gradually took its final shape — [including] the module of twenty-seven feet as optimum for well-lighted rooms..."),¹⁴⁵ he subsequently proceeded to describe the project precisely in terms of vision. Still vital, vision only shifted from the planimetric to the experiential — that is, to the effect upon the pedestrian moving through Rockefeller Plaza at ground level. The spectator, assumed to be a mobile rather than fixed subject, could never (and would never even want to) grasp the order of the whole. Instead, she is propelled into the Center's parallel universe — the drama created by its buildings and spaces.

Rockefeller Center was designed as a superblock — it is at once part of Manhattan's grid and, at the same time, overrides it with its own urban logic. Its forms and spaces create an effect that Giedion compares to a glitter ball whose facets reflect and throw light every which way onto the dance floor:

The interrelationships which the eye achieves between the different planes give the clearly circumscribed volumes an extraordinary new effect, somewhat like that which a rotating sphere of mirrored facets gives to a ballroom when the facets reflect whirling spots of light in all directions and into every dimension. Such a great building complex presupposes not the

¹⁴⁵ Giedion, Space, Time and Architecture: 574 (emphasis added).

single point of view of the Renaissance but the many-sided approach of our own age.¹⁴⁶

The effect of the whole is not an alienating one of disorientation, but, rather, a reorientation, an orchestrated sensibility. The organization is both familiar and unexpected (fig. 2.3). For example, the four small buildings that front 5th Avenue — la Maison Française, the British Empire Building, the Palazzo d'Italia and the small International Building — appear at first glance to form four equal independent pavilions. Upon entering the complex, however, it becomes apparent that the two northernmost buildings actually serve as the base of the entire International Building and therefore the pedestrian's original orientation is reconfigured. What was an A-A-A-A configuration becomes an A-A, B-B arrangement, further complicated by West 50th Street, which divides the four into two groups of two. This shifted understanding of the arrangement of the pavilions is not abrupt or shocking; instead, it unwinds. As Giedion noted, in contrast to "private patrician fortresses [which] rise up magnificently, in a single view.... [a]t Rockefeller Center the human eye...has to pick up each individual view singly and relate it to all others, combining them in a time sequence. Only thus are we able to understand the grand play of volumes and

¹⁴⁶ Giedion, Space, Time and Architecture: 577.

surfaces and perceive its many-sided significance."¹⁴⁷ While the order of the whole can never be grasped, its meaning can. The Center's dynamic organization, its formal complexity, spatial interrelationships and multiplied perspectives were, for Giedion, analogous to the civic — or even civilization — that this Center embodied.

This optical multiplicity was valuable not only for revealing the many-sidedness of the world; it additionally revealed subjectivity's many-sidedness: the manifold public of the contemporary city. In an earlier section of Space, Time and Architecture, Giedion argued that the Renaissance invention of linear, one-point perspective fostered the modern notion of individualism. His description of Rockefeller Center's multiple and simultaneous vantage points suggests, in turn, a form of new collectivity.¹⁴⁸ In other words, the reorientation at play not only redirected the individual's perception of form and space; it also altered the perception of one's relation to other individuals within that space. Spatial interrelationships were analogous to personal ones. As David Loth observed in his chronicle of Rockefeller Center, The City Within a City, "The Center has become one of

¹⁴⁷ Giedion, Space, Time, and Architecture: 578.

¹⁴⁸ See Giedion, Space, Time and Architecture: 31 for a discussion of linear perspective and its relation to modern individualism.

the world's major tourist attractions, and also about the nearest thing to a village green or community center that New York can boast."¹⁴⁹ Loth returned to this point in his conclusion: "The Center was a little slow in recognizing its unusual open spaces for what they really are. It had been so long since the city had anything like it that people were slow to realize its potential. Its character developed gradually, and all of a sudden everybody said 'why, of course, it is New York's village green.'"¹⁵⁰

What was, of course, particularly unusual in suggesting that Rockefeller Center could be New York's "village green" is that it is a commercial and corporate center, not a civic center in the typical definition of the term (that is, relating to civil affairs). In addition to office space, Rockefeller Center's twelve acres include restaurants, shops, public observation decks, seven rooftop gardens, television studios, and, of course, the oft-mythologized Radio City Music Hall. Rockefeller Center's thoroughly commercialized program gave Giedion pause: "Obviously, it can be objected that such a commercial composition does not constitute a civic center. It is a private enterprise arising from private initiative and

¹⁴⁹ Loth, David. The City Within a City: The Romance of Rockefeller City (NY: William Morrow, 1966): 144.

¹⁵⁰ Loth, City within a City: 149.

carried out as a private speculation, based, as Raymond Hood says, on pure calculation of cost and return."¹⁵¹ For Giedion, the scale of the project — it was designed, as he said, at the scale of the city's parkways and other infrastructural marvels — its complex formal composition, and its multiple programming overwhelmed its commercial nature, bestowing it with the stature of a civic center and making it a model for future urban development. Its commercial and corporate components ultimately only added to its overall complexity.

So, if Rockefeller Center provided Giedion with the perfect illustration of the new space-time environment and also of the contemporary civic center, why did it not appear in either the "Nine Points on Monumentality" text of 1943 or the "Need for a New Monumentality" text of 1944? The 1944 edition of Space, Time and Architecture — and every one since then — retained the first edition's Rockefeller Center finale. Was the project worthy of being called "civic" but not "monumental" because of its commercial underpinnings? Museum of Modern Art's curator Elizabeth Mock did not seem to think so. In the exhibition Built in USA she wrote, "the bold conception and convincing urbanity of the whole have captured the public's imagination and Rockefeller Center has become not only a

business center, but a civic monument."¹⁵² Her only complaint, echoing Giedion's, is that the setbacks and the "minor structures" at the ground level disturbed the Center's "geometric splendor" which Mock exclaimed, employing rather uncharacteristic hyperbole, would have otherwise "rivalled the Pyramids."

That Giedion maintained his conclusion to Space, Time and Architecture in every edition would caution one against making too broad a speculation as to why he would disregard the commercial in his monumentality texts. Nevertheless, the rather snobbish rhetorical questions Giedion asked at the end of "The Need for a New Monumentality" — "Can the emotional apparatus of the average man be reached? Is it susceptible only to football games and horse races?"¹⁵³ — underscore the reality that Giedion's civic realm is more orchestrated than spontaneous, more cultural than commercial.¹⁵⁴ In addition to allying Giedion with Peter Meyer, rather

¹⁵¹ Giedion, Space, Time and Architecture: 578.

¹⁵² Elizabeth Mock, Built in USA: 1932-1944 (NY: Museum of Modern Art, 1944): 102.

¹⁵³ Giedion, "Need for a New Monumentality:" 538.

¹⁵⁴ Giedion refers to a cultural form of monumentality when he writes "In the United States, where modern architecture has had up to now a rather limited influence...it may be too early to speak about these problems. But...in countries where it has been recently called upon for solutions of museums, theaters, universities, churches, or concert halls, modern architecture has been forced to seek the monumental expression which lies beyond functional fulfillment." "Need for a New Monumentality:" 552.

than Gunnar Sundbärg — who had in fact included a football stadium as a site of potential monumentality (see Chapter One)¹⁵⁵ — these questions place Giedion squarely within a Habermasian understanding of the public sphere. Jürgen Habermas, who coined the term “public sphere” with the publication of his book The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere, originally published in 1962, emphatically separated the economic, commercial sphere from the civil or public one.¹⁵⁶ Habermas’s narrative, which brilliantly establishes that the public realm is constituted by free and shared opinions, falters in its adherence to a “rise and fall” narrative structure. He recounts how the nineteenth century liberal bourgeoisie founded a discursive public sphere through such means as newspapers, clubs, and voluntary associations, but lost it to the powers of consumerism and the mass media: “When the laws of the market...also pervaded the sphere reserved for private people as a public, rational-critical debate had a tendency to be replaced by consumption, and the web of public

¹⁵⁵ See Peter Meyer, “Diskussion über Monumentalität,” Das Werk (September 1940): 189 and Gunnar Sundbärg, “Monumentalitet,” Byggmästaren, vol. 22 (1939): 297-304.

¹⁵⁶ Jürgen Habermas, The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere (1962 orig.; trans. Thomas Burger with Frederick Lawrence, Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1989). Regarding the separations of the public and economic spheres, see especially Chapter 18 “From a Culture-Debating to a Culture-Consuming Public.” For the best secondary source on this significant publication, see Craig Calhoun, ed., Habermas and the Public Sphere (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1992), which includes influential essays within public sphere studies written by Nancy Fraser, Seyla Benhabib, and Geoff Eley, among others.

communication unraveled into acts of individuated reception, however uniform in mode."¹⁵⁷ Both Habermas's depiction of a cultural elite (he did not acknowledge that not everyone was granted the opportunity to volunteer for even voluntary associations, for example)¹⁵⁸ and his assertion that commercialism polluted the purity of the public sphere, place him firmly in a critical lineage that originated with Alexis de Tocqueville and perhaps most famously includes Thorstein Veblen. These critics of "the hypocrisy of luxury" (Tocqueville) and "conspicuous consumption" (Veblen) complained that consumerism invariably led appearance to gain sway over reality.¹⁵⁹

Giedion's ambivalence over the role of the commercial in the monumental or civic sphere and Mock's blanket acceptance of it opens the door to what I see to be an extremely fruitful recasting of Habermas's model that, I would argue, was then developed as a hybridized commercial/cultural civic sphere in the work of a group of architects during

¹⁵⁷ Habermas, Structural Transformation: 161.

¹⁵⁸ This point lies at the root of much of the criticism levied against Habermas, even among those who otherwise respect his theory. See Bruce Robbins, ed., The Phantom Public (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1993).

¹⁵⁹ Alexis de Tocqueville, Democracy in America (orig. French, 1835; trans. George Lawrence; NY: Doubleday, 1969): 468. For Tocqueville's discussion of consumerist evils, see especially Part II, Chapter 11 "In What Spirit the Americans Cultivate the Arts" and Chapter

the 1940s. I do not want to suggest that Giedion anticipated Habermas or even that these architects consciously followed Giedion. Rather, I would like to point to this work as productively illustrating, even if only schematically, a proto-schema for a form of public life that would find a different manifestation in Habermas's theorizing of the public sphere twenty years later.¹⁶⁰

Giedion's definition of monumentality embraced, rather than eschewed appearance. In advocating spectacles, colored projections, and expression, Giedion read the conspicuous as being discursive rather than consumptive. When the world of appearance is given depth within the superficial, it has the potential to generate the expression of collective sentiment. While Habermas would argue that appearance only fosters the individual, at the expense of the collective, if appearance is understood along the more engaged lines of spectacle, style, and expression (see

14 "The Industry of Literature." Also see Thorstein Veblen, The Theory of the Leisure Class (1899; rpt. NY: Modern Library, 1934).

¹⁶⁰ In speaking of a "redefined public sphere," I am making specific reference here to the writings of a series of contemporary theorists who have recast Habermas, most particularly Oskar Negt and Alexander Kluge, Arjun Appadurai, Nancy Fraser, Miranda Joseph, Michael Warner, Thomas Keenan, and Rosalyn Deutsche. Negt and Kluge, Appadurai, Fraser and Joseph in particular have engaged the question of admitting economics into Habermas's model. See Calhoun, Habermas and the Public Sphere and Robbins, The Phantom Public Sphere. Where this material has fallen short, in my opinion, is that it has, with some valuable exceptions, prioritized questions of space to the obfuscation (space, as these theorists

chapter one), then the individual subject is provided with enough agency to navigate within the collective and, furthermore, even to cultivate additional, overlapping collectivities. Even if Giedion's description of the public sphere of a new monumentality ultimately does not provide any means for individualized expression or even multiplied collectivities, he, like Habermas, nevertheless helped to introduce the terms of engaged subjectivity that were then furthered by others. Placed within this environment, the subject becomes, as literary theorist Terry Eagleton has described it, "a diffuse network of passing libidinal attachments" rather than "a self-directing agent."¹⁶¹ In other words, through an interplay of engagement with other subjects and with objects, each individual is continuously redefined, redirected, and in turn redefines and redirects.

In this light, the subject gains agency and the object, for its part, gains complexity; singular representation is replaced by combinatory expression, along the lines of Susanne Langer's theory of symbolic expression. This alternative to Tocqueville's clean division of appearance

point out, can be absolutely opaque) of those of form and has thereby, I would contend, left much territory untapped.

¹⁶¹ Terry Eagleton, *The Ideology of the Aesthetic* (London: Basil Blackwell, 1990): 377. Admittedly, not only is Eagleton talking here about the subject in a postmodern environment but he is furthermore deliberately exaggerating the two "sides" in order to

and reality is beautifully illustrated by contemporary French novelist Marguerite Duras when she suggests that there are at least two ways to view a white metal railing, a seemingly minor, but potentially highly charged — politically charged, because it defines accessibility and ownership — component of a larger network of waterway infrastructure:

We watched the white rail lining the barges along the Seine, its derisory thinness contrasting with its function of preventing access to the water. I said that the whiteness of this rail extending infinitely along the water's edge was for me a problem without end, without depth. You said that the river was controlled and contained by the grid of the railing—the blue-black water held in place by its white milkiness.¹⁶²

The economic, social, and political relations that “drew” this thin white line are inextricably linked to its material and functional qualities. The growing commercialization of the civic realm during the twentieth century can similarly be viewed as a problem without depth — a “scrim” of appearance that has the potential to be rendered productive.

Giedion introduced the terms of appearance in his monumentality texts of the forties and his conclusion to Space, Time and Architecture welcomed the role that the commercial realm had within that world of

make the point that it is false to frame the world in such extreme terms. I am borrowing his exaggeration as a marker for a point that merits further development.

¹⁶² Marguerite Duras, Emily L. (Paris: Éditions de Minuit, 1987): 63 (my translation).

appearances. It was within the realm of practice, however, that this world of appearances actually began to materialize through the manipulation of form, the experimentation with materials, and a broadening of program.

This chapter treats Giedion's incipient empathetic public sphere as a significant thread that has influenced the development of our postwar metropolitan civic realm. Before tracing this thread through a series of projects located in the public and private sectors, however, it is important to take note of a second thread that has also impacted the civic realm: the American civic center movement, which had its roots in progressivist communitarianism, and which continues to manifest itself today in the form of localized, place-based community movements on the one hand and New Urbanism on the other. While these two threads — what I will call the empathetic and the communitarian — have at times overlapped to the point of becoming almost indistinguishable, I will argue that the tendency to equate the American civic realm only with the latter has obscured a productive model for an empathetic architecture of expressive forms, engaging programs, and spectacular effects.

'Civitas'

The terms "civic center" and "civic landscape" were loosely employed during the 1940s to denote a municipality's city hall, community center, recreation hall, and/or even its commercial center. A reinvention of an institutional type that had initially emerged around 1910, the civic center played a symbolic as well as pragmatic political role as the "site" of postwar democracy in the United States.

According to Werner Hegemann and Elbert Peets, the American civic center movement stemmed from the World's Fairs, but this origin was more firmly allied with the formal pageantry of Chicago's White City of 1893 than the ephemeral, spectacular fireworks that would so influence Giedion in the 1930s.¹⁶³ Indeed, the civic center project described in Daniel Burnham's Plan of Chicago of 1909, whose order and appearance were influenced by its European counterparts, was just the opposite of what Giedion would later advocate in his "Need for a New Monumentality" text: A "composition representing the dignity and importance of the city from the administrative point of view," Burnham's

¹⁶³ Werner Hegemann and Elbert Peets, "American Civic Centers," in The American Vitruvius: An Architect's Handbook of Civic Art (1922; rpt. NY: Princeton Architectural Press, 1988): 133.

Civic Center marked the "center of gravity, so to speak, of all the radial arteries entering Chicago" (fig. 2.4).¹⁶⁴ The center was expected to represent the dignity of government while "vivifying" and "unifying" the entire composition of the city's new plan.¹⁶⁵

The idea that a city would unify its civic functions within a ceremonial center of unity, gravity, and dignity was not exactly novel; after all, the Acropolis did just that. Where the American civic center movement differed from its historical precedents, however, is that it professed far less interest in form than in occupation. As early as 1912, for example, the University of Washington published a small pamphlet whose seemingly straightforward title, The Social and Civic Center, was accompanied by a telling footnote:

The term 'civic center,' as used in these pages [the footnote read], refers to a public place where citizens gather for consideration of public matters or for any common purpose of their civic life. It has no reference to that other modern use of

¹⁶⁴ Daniel Burnham and Edward H. Bennett, Plan of Chicago (orig. 1909; rpt. NY: Princeton Architectural Press, 1993): 115.

¹⁶⁵ The civic center plan's text states "This plan indicates a possible orderly and harmonious arrangement of public buildings grouped for the purpose of administration, near the center of population. The central building is planned not only to dominate the place in front of it, but also to mark the center of the city from afar, and it is in part a monument to the spirit of civic unity." Burnham and Bennett, Plan: Plate CXXX.

the term, in a physical or architectural sense, which has reference to the grouping of public buildings.¹⁶⁶

The buildings mattered far less than their purpose. This interest in the users, in the public occupation of the civic, is precisely where empathy and communitarianism overlap, even if the former was absolutely wed to form. Throughout the teens and twenties, the American civic realm continued to be defined along the primarily anti-urban communitarian lines of such thinkers as the "Young Americans:" Randolph Bourne, Van Wyck Brooks, Waldo Frank and Lewis Mumford.¹⁶⁷ Social reform movements such as the Community Movement and Social Center Movement — themselves influenced by the late 19th century Settlement House movement (Jane Addams's Hull House, for example) — sought to provide what then governor of New Jersey Woodrow Wilson called "civic centers of the community...places of common resort."¹⁶⁸ In contrast to the decidedly

¹⁶⁶ Edwin Start, The Social and Civic Center, Bulletin of the University of Washington University Extension Division, Bureau of Civic Development, Seattle: September, 1912: 3.

¹⁶⁷ See Casey Nelson Blake, Beloved Community: The Cultural Criticism of Randolph Bourne, Van Wyck Brooks, Waldo Frank and Lewis Mumford (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1990).

¹⁶⁸ Woodrow Wilson, "The Need of Citizenship Organization," in American City, November 1911: 265 (emphasis added). Also see Eduard C. Lindeman, The Community: An Introduction to the Study of Community Leadership and Organization (NY: Association Press, 1921); B.A. McClenahan, Organizing the Community: A Review of Practical Principles (NY: The Century Co., 1925); Arthur E. Morgan, Small Community: Foundation of Democratic Life (NY: Harper and Brothers, 1942); and Jay B. Nash, Philosophy of Recreation and Leisure (1953).

bourgeois nineteenth century public sphere, the communitarian reformers of the early decades of the twentieth century tried to establish a public sphere in the United States that would cut across social and economic boundaries by establishing shared collective values.

With the onset of World War II, the American “common resort” movement took on more urgency and a more overtly political edge; these social centers became sites for propagating a new postwar democracy, a common theme that threaded through architectural publications of the period as well. The wartime period’s civic malaise is underscored in an annotated bibliography of community centers, published in 1946, which states:

The dramatic disintegration of unity in the United States following the recent war is a symptom of the lack which community centers are intended to supply. In industrial strife, in a resurgence of Old-World nationalist controversy between groups of American citizens, in the deepening of ideological cleavages reflected in bitter political feuding, our current social union is revealed as a fact which must be faced and dealt with.¹⁶⁹

Community centers had to foster a countrywide Americanism, strong enough to discourage competing allegiances within the different international communities that constituted the nation’s melting pot. Urging

the American public not to repeat past mistakes, the bibliography's author, historian James Dahir, explained that a similar opportunity had presented itself right after World War I, but that the absence of "a community structure within which the new energy could flow" had weakened patriotism and had led to social, political and economic disquiet. Community centers could serve to uphold American democracy by forming allegiances to locale rather than to ethnic heritage. The relationship between the civic and the period's germinating cold war ideology comes out most forcefully in Dahir's conclusion: "Many believe that here [in community centers], if anywhere, may be found the only adequate safeguard against the dangers of totalitarianism and overcentralized controls in an automatic machine age."¹⁷⁰ In highlighting the civic center as an effective magnet for an otherwise ill-defined surrounding population, Dahir went against advocates of extreme decentralization, including, Lewis Mumford or Ludwig Hilberseimer who was, at this same time, drawing up diagrams of urban dispersal as a response to fears of bomb attacks on the United States.

¹⁶⁹ James Dahir, Community Centers as Living War Memorials: A Selected Bibliography with Interpretive Comments (NY: Russell Sage, 1946): 8.

¹⁷⁰ Dahir, Community Centers: 8-9.

If the University of Washington pamphlet of 1912, The Social and Civic Center, could explicitly exclude the architectural or formal characteristics of the civic, by the 1940s those considerations had taken on primary significance. This affirmation that architecture was inherently tied to the civic, was accompanied, however, by an acknowledgement that that relationship could no longer be articulated, as Giedion had noted, by using a classical or Beaux Arts idiom. The symbolically-charged program of the civic center was faced with the challenge of accommodating the increasingly dominant non-symbolic abstract canon of modernism. In short, the quest for a newly articulated democratic urban symbolism that Giedion raised during his stay in the United States already had a parallel counterpart in the political and social discourse of the period. "If the cities fail," Clyde Eagleton, a law professor from New York University wrote in 1942, "democracy fails. ...we must keep in mind the principles of social development which are now appearing."¹⁷¹ But if Giedion's weakness was to succumb to a nationalist discourse of unifying — even if flexible — symbolism, the language of civitas was equally homogeneizing and equally patriotic, though at a much more localized scale.

¹⁷¹ Clyde Eagleton, "If the Cities Fail in Their Duties, Democracy Fails," American City, vol.

Constructing Community

The community strain within the civic architectural genre has by definition tended to focus upon the local unit of place. These place-focused programs are inherently more concretizing than the broader, more metropolitan scale of the civic, for they foreground a public's particular place-based attribute. They define a community by symbolizing its cohesion; the civic center serves a metropolitan community but cannot define it because it is necessarily heterogeneous.¹⁷² Community centers designed during the 1940s constituted a casual environment of informality and flexibility within which exchange and camaraderie could be enhanced. In 1946, an Architectural Record Building Types study on "Community Buildings" compared an old and a new community center project, concluding that "the older version is compact, symmetrical, monumental. The newer version is informal, rangy, meant to put people at

57 (December, 1942): 43-44.

¹⁷² Identity politics has influenced a body of work that has focused on the positive attributes of this identifying quality — see, for example, Dolores Hayden, The Power of Place: Urban Landscapes as Public History (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1995). Without discounting the importance of this body of work in revealing the urbanisms of populations that are often ignored by scholarship, this study is biased toward models that neither exclude populations nor feature a particular contingent.

ease."¹⁷³ Materials, building technology, and space planning were all means of forming a new, postwar community.

During the second half of the decade, a strain of small-scaled civic centers, known as "living memorials," began appearing (fig. 2.5). These projects aimed to form a postwar community less through flexibility and informality than through a form of projective commemoration. In an article entitled "The Monument Does Not Remember," published in The Atlantic magazine in September, 1945, then dean of Harvard's architecture school, Joseph Hudnut encouraged his readers to accept "the actuality of a universe in evolution." He proposed serviceable monuments that would provide communities with "dignified" programs, that is, parks, playgrounds, theaters, libraries, etc, "which lift the communal life out of the narrow business of getting and spending."¹⁷⁴ Hudnut highlighted the obsolescence of narrative or realist monuments and suggested the possibilities offered by modernism's simple, "pure," forms. Hudnut's argument did not convince everyone. While Hudnut's article seems to echo Lewis Mumford's "Death of the Monument," by advocating "living monuments," Mumford himself

¹⁷³ "Planning a Community Building," Architectural Record (May 1946): 101.

¹⁷⁴ Joseph Hudnut, "The Monument does not Remember," The Atlantic (September, 1945): 55.

came out against the drive for utilitarian monuments in 1945. Arguing that monuments should possess "permanence, conspicuousness, eloquence, and imagination," he offered some very specific ideas, including planting a grove of trees where "each tree should be dedicated to a single person, whose name and birth and death should be commemorated on a tablet, preferably of bronze or even hardwood."¹⁷⁵ The choice of the monument, its materials, and even its inscription offered would result from community consensus. While Lewis Mumford and Philip Johnson probably shared very few opinions (I suspect that they would have enormous troubles coming to a consensus on a war memorial design, revealing one of the weaknesses of Mumford's argument that relies upon consensus), Johnson, too, came down on the side of the anti-useful, though for very different reasons. Writing in Art News, Johnson described with scorn those (including, he noted, the Dean of Architecture at Harvard University) who had fallen victim to Puritanical utilitarianism, French rationalism and English materialism and advocated that architects embrace man's need for "concrete symbols of a power outside [man's] own lonely consciousness."¹⁷⁶

¹⁷⁵ Lewis Mumford, "Monuments and Memorials," Good Housekeeping, (January, 1945): 108.

¹⁷⁶ Philip Johnson, "War Memorials: What Aesthetic Price Glory?" Art News (September, 1945): 10. See chapter one for a more extensive reference to this article.

Johnson's voice, ultimately calling for the possibility of exploring style fully liberated from the constraints of function, was in the minority, however.

What style these "living memorial" centers had adopted tended to vary from the rustic vernacular to the moderne. Despite an almost universal unwillingness to explore new possibilities of form, technologies and materials, all of these projects did promote modernist programming ideals of flexibility. An article in American City, aptly titled "Memorial Recreation Center to Have Everything," notes that a Burlington, North Carolina community center's planning report lists "thirty-one types of sports and games, twenty kinds of social activities, seventeen varieties of conventions and gatherings, and thirty types of musical, dramatic, and art activities that are feasible in the building."¹⁷⁷ So while the shells of these buildings often retained stylistic echoes of traditional types, the interiors were innovative in their openness and flexibility.

"Living" war memorials provided additional opportunities for the communitarian movement to form its constituency. House Beautiful posed the link in very direct terms in their January, 1945 issue with a headline reading: "Do you believe that your town can afford to build

¹⁷⁷ "Memorial Recreation Center to Have Everything," American City (June, 1947): 91.

an imposing monument to World War II while just around the corner children are playing in the street?"¹⁷⁸ Creating a useful memorial was the perfect selling point for the community center movement. As the sponsors of the Milwaukee County Memorial Center exclaimed: "It will be no dull, lifeless statue. It will be a warm, vibrant, throbbing, living community center where all Milwaukee County's sons and daughters will learn to live by more than bread alone."¹⁷⁹ This lively description was less oriented to leisure than it was to formation. As early as 1939, WPA Recreation Consultant Eduard Lindemann published a study entitled Leisure: A National Issue – Planning for the Leisure of a Democratic People in which he observed that

as the crisis of democracy deepens, we come to see more clearly that democracy is not merely a form of government but that it is essentially a way of life, a pattern of living. ...it may very well be that our best chances for developing democratic habits will arise through leisure.¹⁸⁰

Following the war, similar studies, including the National Recreation Association's pamphlet, Emergency Recreation Services in Civil Defense,

¹⁷⁸ Janet Darling, "What is an Appropriate War Memorial?" House Beautiful (January, 1945): 42.

¹⁷⁹ "Milwaukee's Proposed Memorial Center," Architectural Record (November, 1947): 75.

¹⁸⁰ Eduard C. Lindeman, Leisure: A National Issue — Planning for the Leisure of a Democratic People (NY: Association Press, 1939): 24.

continued this rhetoric of democratic formation, noting that "community recreation resources...help to build morally and physically strong young citizens..."¹⁸¹ (fig. 2.6). The fact that the many magazine articles on these smaller scaled civic and community centers do not emphasize architectural style or even exterior elevations (the memorial recreation center in North Carolina that was "to have everything," for example, is illustrated with a large, detailed plan, but only a small exterior perspective drawing, where the building is largely obscured by trees and shrubs), reveals that it is still the occupation and not the container that remains most significant in these community scaled projects (fig. 2.7). While the rhetoric (and the provision) of flexibility was central to their descriptions, their modernism remained more stylistic than engaged.

Constructing The Civic

Writing in 1944, MoMA curator Elizabeth Mock identified Charles Franklin & Ernest Kump's Fresno City Hall (built in 1941) as perfectly encapsulating both the achievements and the challenges faced by the more urban-scaled civic type during the 1940s (figs. 2.8, 2.9, and 2.10).

¹⁸¹ National Recreation Association, Emergency Recreation Services in Civil Defense (NY: National Recreation Association, Inc., 1951): 5.

"Looking back to the dubious position of modern architecture in this country in 1932," Mock stated, "it seems incredible that it took only nine years to penetrate to that stronghold of American conservatism, the city hall." When describing the building, Mock qualified her praise somewhat, noting that "The heavy symmetry of the building is an anachronism partially justified by the fact that modern architects have not yet developed any popularly intelligible substitute for traditional forms of monumentality. A city hall has a social importance," she concludes, "which must somehow be symbolized."¹⁸² The anachronism here does not stem solely from what Mock considers an outdated symmetry; Mock's own calls for a future-oriented, or progressive symbolism, as well as for a democratic or pluralist unity were themselves anachronistic concepts that were being put forth as new venues for modernism. Despite its symmetry and heaviness, Franklin and Kump's city hall points in the direction that Mock indicates; in an almost exaggerated display of public accessibility, it was designed with no stairs, only broad ramps.¹⁸³ Inside, then, it is not symmetry that dominates,

¹⁸² Mock, Built in USA: 91.

¹⁸³ An interesting comparison could be made between this project and the Office for Metropolitan Architecture's project for the Jussieu Library in Paris, a building that is itself one single ramp that, according to Rem Koolhaas, almost imperceptibly internalizes the flânerie of the boulevard (so that one could go window shopping on the boulevard, turn the corner and suddenly find oneself in the HT169s right after eyeing a window of Prada

but rather openness, visibility, and accessibility, all traits belonging to a New Deal period of government.

Eight years later, in 1952, the architect of Fresno's City Hall, Ernest Kump, elaborated upon Mock's anachronistic call for an expressive civic modernism in the introduction to the section on 'Civic Architecture' for Talbot Hamlin's encyclopedic series, Forms and Functions of 20th Century

Architecture:

True monumentalism can be expressed only through an architecture which combines into an aesthetic organic unity the basic principles of integrity, order, and simplicity. The realization of this unity today will result in creative forms that are fundamentally new — forms which in themselves are symbolic of vigorous, progressive, democratic communities, the true goal of our present social order.

To assume that the functional requirements of modern town and city halls, expressed truthfully, cannot be embodied in forms that give a sense of dignity and beauty is a false premise and must be discarded.... The new requirements have merely illuminated the pathway to new goals — goals within a new potential gamut of expressive forms in civic architecture, goals that we must achieve in order to realize the joy of successful fulfillment.¹⁸⁴

Kump's statement reveals his faith in form as a harbinger of democracy.

Somewhat immodestly, Kump brought his text to a close by reprinting in full

clothing...). Fresno is less linked to the commercialism of the boulevard than it is to the everyday of the street.

The Architectural Forum's coverage of his Fresno City Hall. The excerpt exposes the two tensions that dominate Kump's text: one between functionalism and expression; and another between authority and collectivity. While the building is described almost entirely in terms of its use, the accompanying photographs reveal the multiple symbolisms behind these utilitarian design decisions. The council room, for example, projects out from the building "to accommodate the Mayor's desk" (fig. 2.11). In the photographs, the authority of this heavy, symmetrical projection, whose centrality on the façade is further accentuated by a large, centered clock, is called into question by the fact that it rests rather precipitously on a broad band of thinly mullioned windows. What Mock sees as anachronisms resulting from the sometimes awkward transition from a traditional vocabulary to a modern one perhaps are, in the end, perfectly representative of America's nebulous democracy, rather than illustrative of a falsely constructed communitarian unity. Traditional symmetries, knocked slightly off balance, carry multiple implications, suggesting fragility but also perpetual change and redefinition. Kump's conclusion demonstrates that this ambivalent symbolism was not at all intentional. He ends on a hopeful

¹⁸⁴ Ernest J. Kump, "Town and City Halls," in Talbot Hamlin, ed., Forms and Functions of 20th Century Architecture, Vol. III: Building Types (New York, NY: Columbia University Press, 1952): 802-803.

note, believing that a functional expressionism can foster a democratic environment: "Tomorrow's town and city halls, under the guiding hand of architects who possess a true comprehension of function as ordered emotion and not merely utility, will become creative forms of lasting beauty and inherent efficiency — really great monuments of a free and creative people."¹⁸⁵

Centered Civics

In large cities, the programmatic equivalent to the local community center or the smaller city's city hall was the urban civic center, which typically included the city hall, an auditorium, municipal offices, and space for group meetings. Like its smaller countertype, this type was similarly challenged by the directive to articulate a postwar democracy and, like the city hall at Fresno, many examples met this challenge with a modern vocabulary. In light of the dispersing context of decentralization, these cultural and civic complexes (the two were frequently combined as a means of justifying enormity and maximizing parking garage use) were

¹⁸⁵ Kurnp, "Town and City Halls:" 811.

envisioned as counter-magnets that could provide a symbolic centralizing network within the city.

The Chicago Plan Commission's unrealized Civic Center scheme of 1949, for example, shares the scale of its 1909 Burnham prototype, but offers open siting, accessibility, efficiency, spaciousness, and diverse, flexible programming, including private as well as government offices (fig. 2.12). Sited along the river, it projects a tabula rasa, or new beginning, a renewal of Chicago's downtown in light of burgeoning suburban flight. Modernist forms – maximal in size and minimal in articulation – were asymmetrically arranged on top of the tabula, like objects arranged on a coffee table. The space between and around these forms was as formed as the buildings themselves. The project's presentation emphasized these public spaces, suggesting that spectacles could take place in its expansive plaza and that more personal exchanges would result from the project's various social functions, such as its restaurant and shops (figs. 2.13 and 2.14). The openness of the planning, as well as the absence of traditional ornamental references were part of an effort to foster and symbolize what Giedion had referred to as "communities of experience,"¹⁸⁶ but the

¹⁸⁶ Giedion, "Need for a New Monumentality:" 568.

communities of this civic center was based less on shared values than they were on programmatic necessity and cultural interest.

It is not insignificant that when the Chicago Civic Center project went dormant after failing to secure the land east of the river, it was revived five years later for a site north of the river, under the auspices of a privately funded business venture, led by developer Arthur Rubiloff. "The Fort Dearborn Project" (even its name shed the governmental emphasis implied by "civic center") formally resembled the 1949 project (figs. 2.15 and 2.16). Programmatically, it maintained the civic center's municipal and juridical functions, but also included significant additional programs, such as a Chicago campus for the University of Illinois. (As an aside, that campus was eventually realized west of the river in the 1960s. Remarkably, the University of Illinois Chicago campus site is exactly that of Burnham's 1909 Civic Center.) Like the 1949 project, Fort Dearborn was also never built, because Rubiloff could not acquire the necessary land. Ultimately, the realized Federal Center and Civic Center, designed by Mies van der Rohe and C.F. Murphy respectively, which were built in the 1960s, dropped much of the programmatic complexity and "event-potential" of these previous schemes.

The conflation of public and private in these projects — most evident in the Fort Dearborn project, but even visible in the Chicago Civic Center project, which included shopping and restaurant facilities — was almost obligatory in the face of the large urban scale of these schemes. Like Rockefeller Center, they were “cities within the city.” While this designation may imply for some a fortress-like condition, I believe that these large campus-like insertions necessarily included the larger city within their borders, or, to put it differently, the boundary between the city and the city within were rarely exclusionary, particularly in the case of these primarily public institutions. Chapter Three will examine this particular interweaving of the public and private in an even larger scaled, and more resolutely private project that was realized on Chicago's Near South Side during this decade.

Privately Sponsored Publics

Even at a much smaller scale, the most innovative civic projects of this period stemmed from private initiatives. Private sponsorship, from developers and building manufacturers, fostered research in materials and technologies. This chapter will conclude by looking at three of these

sponsored projects, each one of which had an impact on the public realm: a social center by Eero Saarinen, dating from 1942; a city hall by Charles Eames of 1943; and X-City, a large-scale, Rockefeller Center-like development from 1946 developed by William Zeckendorf. While none of these projects was realized, each one furthered modernism's definition rather than simply employing it as a style or as a functional planning strategy.

While Rockefeller Center had beautifully embodied Giedion's Space-Time theories and, additionally, fulfilled most of Giedion, Sert, and Léger's "Nine Points on Monumentality" — even ideally so in the case of certain points such as those calling for large scale siting, open space planning, and incorporation of natural elements (fig. 2.17) — it fell flat on number nine, which suggests a second reason, beyond its commercialism, why it may not have been included in Giedion's monumentality articles. The heaviness of Rockefeller Center's otherwise animate slabs kept it from fulfilling this point: "Modern materials and new techniques are at hand: light metal structures; curved, laminated wooded arches; panels of different textures, colors and sizes; light elements like ceilings which can be suspended from

big trusses covering practically unlimited spans."¹⁸⁷ In lieu of architectural weightiness, the authors proposed light, flexible, patterns of potential.

While Giedion emphasized that the cost of his envisioned civic centers should be borne by the community as a whole (echoing Mumford's suggestion that living memorials should stem from a unified community), the architectural speculations that transformed the social tabula rasa of the prewar avant-garde into a hybrid socio-economic foundation, fully prepped for development, had its roots as firmly embedded in the private sphere of business as it did in the public sphere of the civic realm.

Developers, corporations and architects redefined the material terms of architectural expression with the hopes of physically capturing a democratic future predicated on being ephemeral, fleet, and adaptable, instead of fulfilling a memorial obligation founded on the heaviness of cultural lineage. Prophets of profit, building manufacturers understood the civic to provide a needed, alternative market after the inevitable postwar production slowdown. In preparation for this shift, several companies initiated research agendas during the war years. Both U.S. Gypsum and Revere Copper and Brass, for example, commissioned architects to

¹⁸⁷ José Luis Sert, Fernand Léger, and Sigfried Giedion, "Nine Points on Monumentality," 1943, in S. Giedion, architecture, you and me: the diary of a development (German orig., 1956;

conduct research studies, encouraging them to develop new uses for the companies' materials, particularly within the housing market. The manufacturers then took out multi-page advertisements in architecture journals to publicize the fruits of this research as a means of familiarizing the architectural community with these new possibilities.

These projects perfectly, albeit surely unconsciously, illustrate Giedion, Léger and Sert's call for a civic architecture that would be based in new materials and techniques. For U.S. Gypsum, Eero Saarinen designed a frame-like "Demountable Space" in 1942, a social center that was both flexible and functional (its central column doubled as a crane for its construction and, even further, served as a heat and exhaust stack) (fig. 2.18). Saarinen's project did not use gypsum in a particularly innovative way, but it did use it all over: for the roof deck, flooring panels, interior partitions, acoustical treatments, and the exterior wall panels, which were made of gypsum faced with plywood and painted canvas.¹⁸⁸

Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1958): 30.

¹⁸⁸ Other projects in this series, which ran as monthly advertisements in The Architectural Forum through 1941 and 1942, used gypsum in much more innovative ways. See Sheila Kennedy, Hollow Wall Studio, GSD studio books, forthcoming, for more information on these projects.

Similarly, the Revere Copper and Brass series varied wildly in its material investigation. Many of the projects barely mentioned copper and brass (or simply noted that they were

Saarinen's floating, expandable box could serve as a single space or could be divided into an auditorium, gym, conference rooms, meeting rooms, nursery, and/or kitchen, as needed. Even the building's envelope was rendered impermanent – its lightweight panels could be easily be moved around, allowing for varied options of opacity and transparency. The façade is understood not as a revelation of internal functions but as a scrim, a thin layer that reflected the social center's ambiance as well as its functional requirements. Raised off of the ground on pilotis and held in tension with a single mast (or several; the social center could be expanded by multiplication), Saarinen's project appeared poised simply to walk away at any moment, illustrating the ephemerality, or the changeability of the social itself.

The advertisement presenting Saarinen's research begins with a child-like narrative explaining "the need" (dismountable space) and "the solution" (dismountable space) with short, direct descriptions, emphasizing the project's flexibility and ease of construction, interspersed with cartoons illustrating its points (fig. 2.19). The depicted scenarios emphasize a relaxed atmosphere of play, leisure, and even a little air of romance on the dance

included in the specifications, chosen for their durability), although a few domestic projects (particularly "The Living Kitchen" by J. Gordon Lippincott, did offer some more

floor. The text furthers this atmosphere by comparing the colorfully paneled suspension structure to a "circus tent," thereby rendering what might otherwise appear to be a very foreign object both familiar and fun.

Like Giedion, Léger and Sert, then, Saarinen emphasized atmosphere, animating the project's renderings but also depending on its flexible and colorful forms to convey a specifically playful mood. Designed only shortly after the end of the Depression and at the height of the war, the project does not exude an aura of luxury — the description carefully emphasized its economies — but it did not equate thrifty functionalism with puritanical austerity, offering instead an emphatically lively vision of the future. This modified modernism fulfilled many of Giedion's criteria for a new monumentality, but it altered them by carrying flexibility into its conception of the constituency as well as of the building. Although the description suggests that the center is suitable for such community group functions as lectures, conferences, and other social activities, the rendered section depicted individuals or small groups rather than a collective crowd (fig. 2.20).

futuristic, Jetson-like suggestions, such as microwaves embedded in countertops, etc.)

While it is easy to categorize an architecture of doodles and circus tents as mere fluff, Saarinen's social center projected a deliberately proactive vision. Unlike William Lescaze's "Citizens Country Club or Leisure Center," designed under the sponsorship of Revere Copper and Brass during the same year, the "Demountable Space" project did not strive to unify its collective under a banner of American singularity. Lescaze, in contrast, asserted that his Citizens Country Club (fig. 2.21):

... could supply work for a livelihood and work on a common interest, which would serve to unite all classes and factions. In your town, The Citizens Country Club or Leisure Center, could materially maintain 'the American concept of life.' It would be the recreational and social background for pleasant day-by-day contacts and for the making of those lasting friendships which evolve when mutual interests can be enjoyed in appropriate settings.¹⁸⁹

The Country Club's architecture homogenizes; as the captions note, the drawings show the "cohesiveness" of the Center (figs. 2.22 and 2.23). The butterfly roof, already a modernist cliché by 1942, softens the severity of the gymnasium's glass box and the gently undulating wood-sided auditorium both centers and anchors the plan. These friendly forms belie rigid prescriptions. While the spaces of the Country Club flow effortlessly, each room is, nonetheless highly defined: "the young are made happy —

¹⁸⁹ William Lescaze, "A Citizens Country Club or Leisure Center," Revere Copper and Brass, *Revere's Part in Better Living*, 1942 (emphasis Lescaze's).

encouraged in their creative bents — with a room designed for carpentry and painting. A room for hot lunches is provided. ...And too, there is one isolation room." The Citizens Country Club sharply contrasts with Saarinen's demountable space, which had no fixed rooms. The Country Club description's passive tone and underlying rhetoric of control presage the suffocating conformity of Cold War complacency.

While community-oriented programs were particularly ripe for serving such ideological purposes, Saarinen's "Demountable Space" and some other examples from this period offer an alternative notion of "community" that has not received much attention in studies of wartime and postwar architecture.¹⁹⁰ The animated, circus-like flexibility of Saarinen's project, which is far from the two very different versions of conformity evident in Lescaze's project and Giedion's writing, appears in another research project from this same period, Charles Eames's "City Hall," designed as a sketch project for The Architectural Forum's "Buildings For 194X" issue, which appeared in March, 1943. Eames, who studied and taught at Cranbrook

¹⁹⁰ While the subject of cold war complacency has been examined in American domestic modernism [see Mark Jarzombek, "'Good-Times Modernism' and Beyond: The American House in the 1950s and 1960s: A Commentary," Cornell Journal of Architecture vol. 4 (Fall, 1990): 76-93, 208 and Patricia Gray Berman, Judith Hoos Fox and Martin Brody, "Cold War Modern," Davis Museum of Art, Wellesley College (2000-2001)], these studies have focused primarily on the 1950s and 1960s. Furthermore, little or no work has been done on the topic of its civic counterpart, which began appearing already in the very early 1940s.

and worked part time for Saarinen, Saarinen and Swanson between 1938 and 1941, maintained a life-long passion for the circus. An Eames lecture from 1974 indicates that the world of the circus, while non-conformist, is hardly one where "anything goes" (fig. 2.24):

The circus is a nomadic society which is very rich and colorful but which shows apparent license on the surface ...Everything in the circus is pushing the possible beyond the limit. Yet within this apparent freewheeling license, we find a discipline which is almost unbelievable. ...There is a quality of beauty which comes from appropriateness to a given situation....The concept of "appropriateness," this "how-it-should-be-ness," has equal value in the circus, in the making of a work of art, and in science.¹⁹¹

The circus's easy appearance belies control, but a very different form of control from that exhibited by Lescaze's Country Club: in the circus, the structure created the possibility for a variety of performances; in the Country Club, the various rooms have fixed or staged "performances." As architectural historian Beatriz Colomina has pointed out, "this is what Eames thought architecture was — the ongoing theatrical spectacle of everyday life, understood as an exercise in restrictions rather than self-expression. ...If design was not the self-expression of the designer it was the occupant's

¹⁹¹ Charles Eames, "Language of Vision: The Nuts and Bolts," Bulletin of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences (October, 1974), as cited in John Neuhart, Marilyn Neuhart and Ray Eames, Eames Design: The Work of the Office of Charles and Ray Eames (NY: Abrams, 1989): 91.

daily life that would leave its mark on the house."¹⁹² This image recalls Philip Johnson and Peter Blakes "Order and Freedom" article in the Magazine of Art in 1948, in which they argued that architectural order was an instrument for human freedom. According to this logic, to say that "life's a circus," like saying that it is a jungle, evokes multiple possibilities but does not preclude design. Even a circus has the qualifier of "appropriateness."

Eames's city hall project, designed with Arts and Architecture editor John Entenza, does not present a circus atmosphere (that would not be "appropriate" for a government building), but, like Saarinen's center, it does offer a frame for flexible occupation (fig. 2.25). A series of interconnecting bar buildings, the complex houses facilities for a small city government: a jail, courtrooms, various municipal offices, as well as an auditorium, restaurant, and exhibition space. The building's form integrates and equalizes these varied programs, not as a way of masking the less pleasant events taking place in the courtrooms and the jail, but, rather, as a means of familiarizing the public with the entire program, unmasking, as it were, municipal government. In the accompanying text, Eames and Entenza deflate the myth of participatory democracy: "In a typical

¹⁹² Beatriz Colomina, "Reflections on the Eames House," Diana Murphy, ed., The Work of Charles and Ray Eames: A Legacy of Invention (NY: Harry Abrams, 1997):128.

American community with 70,000 people, about 27,000 are registered voters. In 1943 only 12,000 voted in a municipal election."¹⁹³ Their project aimed to rectify this failure of public participation. Like Habermas, Eames understood dialogue to be essential in fostering a successful public sphere: "A city government should — must — be housed as the center of a mutually cooperative enterprise in which the government talks to the people and the people talk to the government."¹⁹⁴ The building itself was an exercise in programmatic dialogue; as Eames pointed out, for 'the system' to work, the juvenile court could not exist in isolation from the Board of Education, the children's clinic. The auditorium — which was not an anchor, as in Lescaze's scheme, but instead formed the beginning of the complex, from which the bars unwound — provided a venue for open forums, further underscoring the importance of public dialogue. In her monograph on Charles and Ray Eames, architectural historian Pat Kirkham also emphasizes the role of the circus but additionally describes Eames's work in terms of the carnival, another significant influence on the designers: "In contrast to the circus, where the viewer takes pleasure from watching performers such as clowns in disguise, the carnival directly involves

¹⁹³ Charles Eames, "City Hall," The Architectural Forum (March, 1943): 89.

¹⁹⁴ Eames, "City Hall:" 89.

participants in acts of disguise and transformation which open up possibilities for behaving differently."¹⁹⁵ While it would require a stretch of the imagination to describe this project as being carnivalesque, nevertheless, the public realm of Eames's city hall project is less a circus-like spectacle — the emphasis is not on putting municipal government on display — than an effort to engage the participants in offering possibilities for behaving differently and, equally, for enabling government to behave differently. Both this city hall and Saarinen's "Demountable Space," unlike Lescaze's Citizens Country Club, offered the setting for such a redefined civic.

Bananas Out Of Peanuts

A third project from this period, equally speculative but at a much greater scale, originated in the private sector, but offered a similarly animated and participatory public vision for a scheme that was referred to as the East Side's Rockefeller Center: developer William Zeckendorf's grand

¹⁹⁵ Pat Kirkham, Charles and Ray Eames: Designers of the Twentieth Century (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1995): 150.

vision for what he called "X-City" (figs. 2.26, 2.27, and 2.28).¹⁹⁶ If Sigfried Giedion made one tactical error in his campaign to redefine architectural monumentality in the early 1940s, it was that he did not select Zeckendorf — who was once singled out by Le Corbusier as "the man who has done more than anybody else for architecture in America"¹⁹⁷ — to be his running mate. Zeckendorf, who stood well over six feet tall and weighed more than 250 pounds, was a brash, ebullient developer who, depending on his gastronomical mood, claimed that he could make "grapefruit out of lemons" or "bananas out of peanuts."¹⁹⁸ He was a champion of the city, an enemy of the suburbs, and he advocated projects that were as flamboyant as he was. Collected together, these projects constitute an

¹⁹⁶ William Zeckendorf with Edward McCreary, The Autobiography of William Zeckendorf (NY: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1970): 68.

¹⁹⁷ As Zeckendorf, a man of no small ego, recounts in his autobiography: "I was a guest at a Columbia University dinner honoring Le Corbusier. In due time Le Corbusier rose to make some remarks and at some stage paused and asked, 'Is Bill Zeckendorf here tonight?' I put up a hand, 'I'm here, Corbu.'" Zeckendorf then reflected upon Le Corbusier's compliment, ruminating with characteristic aplomb, "This was enormously flattering. Unfortunately, it was also true. In commercial architecture, Webb & Knapp was a lone and lonely pioneer for many years." Zeckendorf, Autobiography: 238.

¹⁹⁸ "Big and Bold Deals Zeckendorf Forte," New York Times, October 10, 1953, 12:2. Zeckendorf continued the epicurean metaphor in a talk he gave at the Harvard School of Design in 1951 in which he blamed the FHA's financing criteria for the proliferation of buildings that "look as though [they] came out of an oven, baked, according to a stenciled plan." His solution was to found a Department of Architectural Research, headed by I.M. Pei. William Zeckendorf, "Baked Buildings," The Atlantic Monthly (December, 1951): 46-49. Zeckendorf later referred to his hiring of Pei as being like "the modern Medicis...hiring the modern Michelangelos and Da (sic) Vincis," Zeckendorf, Autobiography: 97.

almost ideal portfolio of Giedion's call for a new monumentality. They all employed new materials, new technologies, and new effects to create the atmosphere evoked by Giedion, Sert, and Léger's "Nine Points" manifesto. Collectively, they parallel the 1940s and 1950s development of the civic center rather than that of the community center; although firmly planted within the private domain, like Rockefeller Center, they aimed to recast the public sphere of the central city.

While hardly a rags to riches tale, Zeckendorf's story epitomizes the myth of the self-made American businessman. Although he never graduated from college, by 1938 he had become a partner in the real estate brokerage house of Webb & Knapp where he quickly proceeded to buy and sell his way across America. Zeckendorf's description of his technique reads as if it had been lifted from a David Mamet script. Although he repeatedly emphasized his work's "nothingness," its intricacies reveal the strategic gamesmanship behind speculative real estate:

Nothing to it. One time we had a property in Detroit that cost \$100,000. It didn't look like it was going to make any money. So we swapped it for another piece in Brooklyn and a second one in Camden, N.J. and took on a \$60,000 mortgage. We exchanged the mortgage for a building in Rockland, Mass. Then we sold that for \$60,000. We still weren't getting anywhere. So I gave the Camden property and \$80,000 for a piece in Trenton, N.J. We raised a \$100,000 mortgage on that and about the same time sold the Brooklyn piece for \$77,000.

Then we got out of the Trenton deal for \$30,000 and a building on 161st Street, Manhattan, sold that for \$20,000 and finally we had the Detroit turkey off our hands and \$50,000 in the bank. Simple.¹⁹⁹

One would think that he had dollar signs imprinted on his retinae. When he wasn't thinking about money, he was thinking about Zeckendorf, as indicated by I.M. Pei's description of his design for Zeckendorf's private office: "I came to the conclusion that he is a showman, and that it would be ridiculous to create any environment for him other than one consisting exclusively of himself."²⁰⁰ While descriptions of Zeckendorf make him out to be a most entertaining one-man show, Pei's conclusion overlooks that an audience is required for any showman; ultimately, all of Zeckendorf's energies were directed at affecting an audience: the public. After all, if no one is in the audience to applaud, even bananas made out of nuts can grow stale.

X-City, like Rockefeller Center, would have provided an entirely new landscape to Manhattan's East Side. As Zeckendorf described his concept of 1946, "I visualized a great, flat, rectangular platform, stretching from the elevation of Tudor City east to the river and then north to where we stood

¹⁹⁹ As cited in Sellmer, "The Man Who Wants:" 74.

²⁰⁰ As cited in "Big and Bold Deals Zeckendorf Forte:" 2. Praising the office, which was featured in all of the architectural journals, as "possibly the most remunerative investment I

on Beekman Place. From this raised platform would rise great modern buildings, with cleanly designed plazas between them."²⁰¹ He hired Wallace Harrison, one of the few Rockefeller Center architects still living and even still young, to design the project and Hugh Ferriss to render it in his signature, evocative charcoal perspectives. X-City, as the project was soon nicknamed (both because of the figure formed by its primary buildings, and because it formed a city within the city in Manhattan) was to provide a new home for the New York Opera, a convention hall, a marina, a floating nightclub, as well as residential and office space. The convention center provides a telling contrast to the massiveness of Rockefeller Center, completed only seven years earlier. Almost ephemeral, its glazing barely separates inside from out. An entire ecosystem occupies the interior: tall, slender, trunk-like columns compliment the swaying palm trees dotting artificial hills.

Rather than a tabula rasa for social change, Zeckendorf described this platform as a stage upon which human dramas would unfold, and suggested that the combination of the project's size (two 55 story towers —

ever made," Zeckendorf lovingly compared it to "the lone turret of that famous Civil War ironclad, the Monitor," Zeckendorf, Autobiography: 99.

²⁰¹ William Zeckendorf, Autobiography: 59, 66.

one an office tower and one a hotel — three 30 story cross-shaped apartment towers, and four 30 story office slabs), its scale (an eight block site in Manhattan which could conceivably float off and become its own city), and its siting (with the backdrop of the city on one side and the moonlit water on the other) would elevate these dramas to a higher realm, paralleling the spiritual elevation he had once experienced at the ruins of Teotihuacán in Mexico. Forever destined to be a site belonging to the end of the alphabet, X-City was never realized and instead became the U.N. In order to guarantee that the institution would not be located anywhere else in the United States Zeckendorf (a zealously loyal Manhattanite, even though, or perhaps because he was born in Paris, Illinois) sold the land to the Rockefellers who then donated it to the United Nations.²⁰² A drawing by Harrison indicates that there was even some thought of adapting the U.N.'s functions to X-City's forms.

The atmosphere of X-City is visible at a much smaller scale in the renovation of the lobby of Zeckendorf's own office at 383-385 Madison Avenue, finished in 1952 (figs. 2.29, 2.30, and 2.31). Large plate glass

²⁰² See Victoria Newhouse, *Wallace Harrison, Architect* (NY: Rizzoli, 1989): 109-114 and Zeckendorf, *Autobiography*: Chapter 6 for details of this story.

windows frame the lobby's spectacular ceiling, which The Architectural Forum describes in terms more theatrical than functional:

Appropriately named Rollo-Color, the [ceiling] system borrows stage lighting techniques to focus attention in the desired direction and to produce and control mood. ...More than 500 shades of color combined in various patterns make possible a virtually limitless range of effects. Warm colors in the winter, cool ones in the summer, cheerful patterns or placid, slowly changing solid colors can be 'played' to affect everyone in sight of the lobby.²⁰³

One can practically hear a chorus of "Nine Points" playing in the background. The Rollo-Color system even had a mechanism to guarantee against discordant patterns by automatically selecting harmonious juxtapositions and regulating brilliance. Even though this project was an entirely private sector enterprise, it provided a constantly changing street theater to the passing public.

Civic Speculations

The topic of 1940s civic modernism is not without contemporary relevance, or, I would even argue, contemporary urgency for architects. Frustration with the contemporary social, political, and economic landscapes has

²⁰³ "Lobby of Light," unsigned article, The Architectural Forum (January, 1952): 118.

renewed interest in the civic realm, but the terms of that interest have most frequently been articulated very narrowly, effectively shutting down what could be a productive field of practice as well as discourse. Social geographer David Harvey warns (and I would agree with him) that a healthy dose of skepticism must be maintained when faced with communitarian arguments that hearken back to a lost civic realm. To cite Harvey,

Urban living can be radically improved, made more authentic and less placeless, it is argued, by a return to concepts of neighborhood and community that once upon a time gave such vibrancy, coherence, continuity, and stability to urban life. Collective memory of a more civic past can be recaptured by proper appeal to traditional symbols. [But while such arguments are full of good intentions, their underlying] conservatism, communitarianism, and refusal to confront the political economy of power blunt their revolutionary potential."²⁰⁴

But even Harvey falls victim to equally dangerous simplifications when he condemns modernism as having been solely interested in "privileging spatial forms over social processes."²⁰⁵ His call for an urbanization "as a group of fluid processes in a dialectical relation to the spatial forms to

²⁰⁴ David Harvey, "The New Urbanism and the Communitarian Trap," in Harvard Design Magazine (Winter/Spring, 1997): 68

²⁰⁵ Harvey, "New Urbanism:" 68.

which they give rise and which in turn contain them," come: close to describing a few of these civic experiments that took place during the forties, when modernism and democracy were both undergoing redefinitions. By separating out the communitarian thread of the civic realm from what I would call the "public" one, it is possible to avoid the communitarian trap which Harvey so rightly outlines, but it is also possible to glimpse the promise of a fluid urban realm.

Public sphere theorist Arjun Appadurai provides a closer theorization of the public sphere to what emerges from the practices of figures like Saarinen, Eames and Zeckendorf, when he writes of a world dominated by images and imagination:

The world we live in today is characterized by a new role for the imagination in social life. To grasp this new role we need to bring together: the old idea of images, especially mechanically produced images (in the Frankfurt School sense); the idea of the imagined community (in [Benedict] Anderson's sense); and the French idea of the imaginary (imaginaire), as a constructed landscape of collective aspirations....²⁰⁶

While Appadurai's "imagination as a social practice" is derived from his observations of the contemporary global, postmodern world, I would argue that within the postwar world — a time of incipient globalization — the

²⁰⁶ Arjun Appadurai, "Disjuncture and Difference in the Global Cultural Economy," Bruce Robbins ed., Phantom Public: 273.

image and the imagination were both cultivated in the hopes of expanding the discursive public/private sphere to render it collective, but fluid and ephemeral all the same.

CHAPTER 3: BAS-RELIEF URBANISM: CHICAGO'S FIGURED FIELD

... if only the ideal world for which Mies designs his buildings corresponded more closely to the real one. In sum, Mies designs for the golden climate of Plato's Republic, though he builds in Mayor Kelly's Chicago.... The fact is that he accomplishes his ambition of an absolute purity of form only by doing exactly what Plato did – that is, by ruthlessly disregarding many of the dictates of social and physical reality.²⁰⁷

James Marston Fitch

James Ingo Freed: ... his detractors as well as his admirers have paradoxically materialized him, this maker of the most abstract, the most immaterial of architectures! It is a kind of reification at work.... He was the one who brought the light to these young people.... Small wonder they could not separate form from principle, for to do so would necessitate striking out into the darkness again....

Franz Schulze: There is darkness and there is darkness. What you say suggests another image: Mies as a great black hole. He sucked everything and everyone into his gravitational field.

James Ingo Freed: Yes, his absolutist field.²⁰⁸

²⁰⁷ James Marston Fitch, Architecture and the Esthetics of Plenty (New York and London: Columbia University Press, 1961), 166–70 (I have taken the liberty of changing Fitch's "Miës" to "Mies").

²⁰⁸ "Mies in America: An Interview with James Ingo Freed Conducted by Franz Schulze," in Mies van der Rohe: Critical Essays (New York: MoMA, 1989), 187. Freed was a student at IIT under Mies and then served as Dean of the College of Architecture at IIT from 1975 to 1978.

Even fans of Mies van der Rohe's campus for the Illinois Institute of Technology (IIT, 1939–58) can be heard to describe the project as an autonomous island, a tabula rasa that disregards its physical and social context. Such an interpretation is only reinforced by Mies's presentation collages, which ruthlessly eliminate one hundred acres of the city's dense urban fabric in order to make way for the expansive, low-density campus (fig. 3.1). While it is true that Mies as a figure and IIT both as a project and as an academy became institutionalized over the years, architectural culture has itself played a significant role in isolating them from their context and turning them into "absolutist black holes" or icons of modernism. While the campus has been recognized for its structural integrity and elegance, as well as for its innovative approach to American campus design, it has yet to be recognized as a productive urban model. When studied in the context of Chicago's Near South Side of the 1940s, however, another, more effective reading of IIT emerges: rather than a singular black hole, the campus forms an integral component of a larger, more complex and multifarious field. Mies's plan for IIT initiated a new form of modern urbanism; at once figural and abstract, figure and ground, the IIT campus proffers what I propose to call a bas-relief urbanism. This new approach to urbanism was, I would argue, part of a larger reconceptualization of

modernism that ultimately redefined the urban subject, creating a public subject that actively engaged the urban fabric. A member of a collective field, the postwar American urban subject was simultaneously individualized as an urban consumer. The urbanism of the bas-relief itself constantly vacillates between these two scales of shared field and articulated figure. The modulated topography of the Near South Side's urban bas-relief offers an example of the publicly empathetic at a large, urban, scale. Furthermore, the site's combination of institutional and public programs, combined with public and commercialized sites of recreation and shopping, demonstrate that the publicly empathetic's public sphere additionally modulates the line separating the public from the private, creating a civic scale to the city that addressed multiple constituencies simultaneously.

To understand IIT and the Near South Side of Chicago as a horizontal bas-relief of interconnecting and overlapping superblocks is to highlight Mies's empathetic urban project for the campus, which has been obscured both by the initial process of land clearance that made the project possible and by the architecture eventually installed there. The bas-relief inflects the horizontal ground plane, permitting the surface itself to exhibit its socio-economic contours. It is a figural landscape, but not a

figurative one: while the figures that it forms are not recognizable as typical urban forms, they are nevertheless differentiated, unlike the homogenous uniformity of a grid. The urban bas-relief ultimately unfolds the oppositional structure between modernism and its Beaux-Arts counterpart, for Mies's reintroduction of a figural urbanism does not represent a Beaux-Arts redemption or an overthrow of the modernist field, but a combination of the two that is itself parallel to the bas-relief's blending of figure and ground.

Although the trope of the bas-relief is most striking as a formal analogy, it additionally operates as a diagram of political overlaps and economic contingencies. Rather than understanding Mies's gravitational force as an absolutist black hole, Chicago's Near South Side Plan forms a gravitational field of interdependent urban influences, each emanating from one of the area's institutions. From the late 1930s through the early 1950s, Chicago's Near South Side, just below the Loop, was developed into a collection of institutions whose frequently coincident corporate boards suggest that what might look to be separate superblocks in the urban fabric were in fact largely overlapping (fig. 3.2). Despite James Marston Fitch's claims to the contrary, the political vision of this new urban landscape corresponded less to Plato's authoritarian republic than to a

Keynesian-influenced New Deal/Great Society America. Beginning with IIT, and later including Michael Reese Hospital, the Chicago Housing Authority, Mercy Hospital, and several private-housing developments, a group of institutions collaborated to plan and execute one of the first large-scale modern urban plans in the United States. This seven-mile-square plan paved the way for federal slum clearance, redevelopment, and urban renewal legislation, including the Housing Acts of 1949 and 1954. In addition to Mies and Ludwig Hilberseimer from IIT, key figures involved in the promotion of the Near South Side Plan included Walter Gropius, planners Reginald Isaacs and Walter Blucher, real-estate developer Ferd Kramer, IIT President Henry Heald, and University of Chicago sociologist Louis Wirth, among others.

While the Near South Side Plan inaugurated an era of large-scale urban renewal and redevelopment, it could only have occurred given the larger context of American urbanism in the 1940s. The story of how suburbia sapped America's urban cores is by now a familiar tale. Factors that contributed to the rapid and seemingly irreversible decline of the nation's cities were the Great Depression, the Second World War, the increasing obsolescence of urban industrial production, and the aging of urban infrastructure. By the late 1940s, the convergence of all these factors had

created sufficient pressure to impel change. In 1942, for example, Harvard held its first conference on urbanism, entitling it The Problem of the Cities and Towns. Participants included architects, economists, planners, and mayors (fig. 3.3).²⁰⁹ Already drained by the war effort, however, municipalities could not afford to address the increasingly evident crisis of the inner city alone. Although cities are not under federal jurisdiction in the United States, a federal-state-municipal-corporate alliance began to take form during the latter half of the 1940s as a means of addressing the crisis of the postwar American city.²¹⁰

The terms of this postwar urban alliance reflected John Maynard Keynes's redefinition of classical capitalist ideology. First published in Britain in 1935, Keynes's economic treatise The General Theory of Employment Interest and Money had immediate and broad appeal in the United States. In contrast to Say's Law, the classical economic theory that claims that

²⁰⁹ Alvin Hansen and Guy Greer, The Problem of the Cities and Towns (Cambridge: Harvard Graduate School of Design, 1942).

²¹⁰ For example, the Lanham Act, passed by Congress in 1940, inaugurated federally-funded housing and community facilities, including public works projects, for defence workers at military bases, thereby alleviating the strain that the war production effort was putting on local resources. For more information on American federal, state, and municipal relations during the 1940s, see Thomas W. Hanchett, "Federal Incentives and the Growth of Local Planning, 1941–1948," American Planning Journal (spring 1994), 197–208; Kenneth Fox, Metropolitan America: Urban Life and Urban Policy in the US, 1940–1980 (New Brunswick, N.J.: Rutgers, 1985); and M. Christine Boyer, Dreaming the Rational City: The Myth of American City Planning (Cambridge, Mass.: The MIT Press, 1983).

supply and demand will always balance, Keynes argued that supply frequently exceeded demand, and that underconsumption and unemployment had harmful social and political as well as economic repercussions. Replacing laissez-faire with aidez-faire, Keynes suggested that state intervention should be a necessary component of capitalism. Despite the fear that restrictions to the free market would lead to socialism or communism, American New Dealers recognized that Keynes offered an answer to the question that had dominated the war years, that is, how could America prevent the return of the Depression once war production came to a halt? Politicians, policy-makers, planners, and CIAM members – most notably Sigfried Giedion – embraced the economist's suggestion that federal intervention in the private sector was essential in order to stimulate consumption and maintain a stable business cycle.²¹¹ By the 1940s, federal, state, and local governments had joined forces with corporate capitalists, civic leaders, architects, and real-estate developers under the powerful umbrella concept of "cooperative federalism." Urban planning,

²¹¹ In his text "The Need for a New Monumentality," Giedion turned to Keynes to bolster his argument that more civic centers needed to be built. The construction and operation of civic centers can "keep the economic machinery going," Giedion claimed, echoing the economist's claim that large-scale expenditures are necessary in order to circulate money and to maintain employment. Sigfried Giedion, "The Need for a New Monumentality," in New Architecture and City Planning, ed. P. Zucker (New York: Philosophical Library, 1944), 566.

traditionally a realm of aesthetic ordering (epitomized, for example, by the City Beautiful movement), was slowly supplanted by urban policy or legislation. While the best-known effect of such policies was massive suburban growth, facilitated by such emerging federal programs as the Federal Housing Authority (FHA), Keynesian economics also directly affected the city center. Carefully merging New Deal collectivity with free-market individualism, Keynes's theory rewrote public policy to encourage urban development through tax breaks, guaranteed mortgages, subsidies, and the power of eminent domain, all of which had direct implications for the local socio-political context.

Although the terms of this legislative alliance were primarily fiscally oriented, the country's urban crisis was as symbolically significant as it was economically urgent. Influenced by Keynes, American urban policy became, I will argue, the foundation for a new form of architectural development that consciously sought to reflect this complex alliance of public and private domains. By reintroducing urban difference into modernism's urban field, this alternative planning strategy redefined metropolitan order, as can be seen in the example of Chicago's Near South Side. First, the formal terms of this plan's order were more field- than object-derived. Unlike modernism's field, however, this postwar field was

not homogeneous, but variegated – it maintained rather than eliminated gravitational forces. Second, what could be called its foreground or monumental buildings were devoted not to civic or ecclesiastical programs, but rather to private and semi-private institutional ones that nevertheless actively engaged and redefined the postwar public realm.

Reflecting new economic alliances, the Near South Side Plan also projected a protean synthesis of otherwise autonomous social, political, and aesthetic tableaux. In so doing, the public-private Plan offered a new visual and spatial language for America's postwar democracy (fig. 3.4). As the United States adopted a significant global role during the 1940s, it sought physical manifestations of its self-assigned status as the flag-bearer of democracy as well as the engine of the world's economy.²¹² The appropriate means for depicting this role were not immediately obvious, however: in order to reinforce the country's future orientation, the representation of postwar America had to be contemporary, and therefore could not rely upon classical democratic motifs. Further, architecture and urbanism had to promote collectivity without succumbing to the specter of

²¹² The domination of the global economy by the United States was cemented by the establishment of the dollar as the capitalist world's principal reserve currency at the 1944 Bretton Woods conference. Cf. Barry Bluestone and Bennett Harrison, The Deindustrialization of America (New York: Basic Books, 1982), 118.

totalitarian collectivism. This speculative image had to depict a flexible, variegated unity. The city provided an ideal canvas for this new image; as Illinois planner Arthur Fitzgerald passionately declared in his article of 1947, "First Principles for Rebuilding American Cities": "This new frontier affords a challenge for a new kind of service. We shall either fall prey to world collectivism or emerge as world leaders setting the standard for a better world civilization. Our cities will be a measuring stick of how well we succeed."²¹³ Poised as a symbolic gateway to America's western frontier, Chicago had already adopted the role of metropolitan measuring stick with the Columbian Exposition of 1893: its City Beautiful "White City" became the model for early twentieth-century urbanism across the country. The urban strategy that unfolded on the Near South Side during the 1940s similarly promoted a new metropolitan model. Formally antithetical to Daniel Burnham's City Beautiful, it nevertheless built upon a legacy of civic and commercial collaboration that had begun with the Commercial Club's underwriting of Burnham's 1909 Chicago Plan.

²¹³ Arthur Fitzgerald, "First Principles for Rebuilding American Cities," American City 62 (November 1947), 99.

Flatland: The Impenetrable Density Of Chicago's Near South Side

The gridded urban fabric of Chicago's Near South Side, untouched by the Great Fire of 1871, had constituted Chicago's original "Gold Coast," but by the 1920s, the area was characterized more by its burgeoning industries, which took advantage of the area's rail and water access, than by its residential splendor²¹⁴ (fig. 3.5). In the June 1947 Museum of Modern Art bulletin Two Cities: Planning in North and South America, Ada Louise Huxtable described the Near South Side in dramatic terms of irreparable decay and stifling density (fig. 3.6):

The inflexible gridiron pattern of the narrow streets, a misguided attempt to create urban order, encloses the crowded old houses with heavy, hazardous traffic. Relics of past grandeur, these ghost-houses have been divided and re-divided into cramped, dark, slum apartments, dangerously overcrowded with a constantly increasing, largely Negro population, which is confined within a limited zone because of present restrictive covenants. Scattered throughout this residential squalor are

²¹⁴ See Wim de Wit, "The Rise of Public Housing in Chicago, 1930–1960." in Chicago Architecture and Design, 1923–1993, ed. John Zukowsky (Chicago and Munich: Art Institute of Chicago and Prestel-Verlag, 1993), 234.

The nouveau-chic north side unseated the south side and appropriated the "Gold Coast" appellation, which still holds today. For a detailed depiction of life on the early north side, see Frank Norris's realist novel The Pit: The Epic of Wheat, written in 1903.

dingy industrial areas, and surrounding the whole is the random network of railroads.²¹⁵

Chicago's black population began increasing during the First World War, largely due to migration from the Southern states. Restrictive covenants made it difficult for blacks to purchase property other than on the South Side, which was how the narrow strip of land between the railroads and the industrial areas south of the Loop to 39th Street acquired the nickname "The Black Belt."²¹⁶ Unbearable odors, sharply accentuated during Chicago's humid summers, wafted over the Belt from the Keeley Brewery to the north and the stockyards to the west. As the neighborhood's elite moved out, many of the former mansions were divided into small flats,

²¹⁵ Ada Louise Huxtable, Two Cities: Planning in North and South America (New York: MoMA, 1947), 13. Similarly, Simone de Beauvoir exclaimed in her travel diary of 1947, "never in any other city had I felt surrounded by such an impenetrable density." L'Amérique au Jour le Jour, published in English as America Day by Day, trans. P. Dudley (New York: Grove Press, 1953), 302.

²¹⁶ These covenants were rarely upheld by municipal courts and were eventually struck down by the Supreme Court in 1948; nevertheless, frequently unchallenged, they generally defined neighborhood constituencies. For an excellent description of the Black Belt, see Daniel Bluestone, "Chicago's Mecca Flat Blues." Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians 57:4 (December 1998), 391. See also Reginald Isaacs, "A Hospital Plans," Town Planning Review (January 1951), 347 n. 1: "The Negro population in Chicago has grown from some 30,000 in 1900 ... [to] 278,000 in 1940 to well over 400,000 in 1949 (Estimate of the Chicago Community Inventory). The area of Negro settlement has grown to include practically all of the Central South Side seven-square-mile area surrounding Michael Reese Hospital.... As a result of the poor economic and social conditions generally prevailing in Southern states, and an expected revolution in Southern agricultural techniques, it has been predicted that some three or four million Negroes will migrate northward in the next decade; Chicago's proportionate share would more than double its present Negro population."

increasing the area's density. In contrast to the decline of the neighborhood's building stock was the rise of a vibrant social scene unique to the Black Belt. With the closing of New Orleans's Storyville in 1927, many jazz and blues musicians – including Louis Armstrong, Bessie Smith, and Leadbelly – relocated to Chicago; by the 1930s, the section of State Street between 31st and 35th streets was dubbed "The Stroll." In depicting this period, corporate histories of the institutions on the Near South Side romanticize the Black Belt's music scene for its exoticism, but also criticize it for its influence on morals, claiming that many of the clubs violated Prohibition laws, were linked to bootlegging rings, and condoned drug use, gambling, and prostitution.²¹⁷ While a sincere desire to ameliorate slum conditions fueled the drive for urban renewal, a genuine fear that this moral underbelly, combined with the deterioration of the area's building

²¹⁷ "By the late thirties the decline in the physical character of the neighborhood was complete. The jazz-age glamor which had pervaded the whole area and imbued it with a certain romance was gone making only more obvious the old and decaying facades. The once elegant houses had been split into tiny dark flats and the neighborhood, now flanked by railroads and industrial and commercial buildings, had degenerated into one massive sium. The courageous decision of Illinois Institute of Technology to remain in the neighborhood ... started a movement which was to reverse the course of neighborhood blight." Irene Macauley, The Heritage of Illinois Institute of Technology (Chicago: IIT, 1978), 68–70. See also Sarah Gordon, All Our Lives: A Centennial History of Michael Reese Hospital and Medical Center (Chicago: Michael Reese Hospital and Medical Center, 1981), 127–30. For an excellent discussion of this milieu, see Mark Haller, "Policy Gambling, Entertainment, and the Emergence of Black Politics: Chicago from 1900 to 1940," Journal of Social History 24:4 (1991), 726.

stock, would multiply and spread across Chicago, provided the immediate impetus to act (fig. 3.7).

The reformists' drive to improve the Near South Side was fueled by the political, economic, and social conditions of the postwar American metropolis: the aging of infrastructure, the poverty of the 1930s, a developing economy of consumption, and the nation's morally puritanical and ideologically pragmatic backbone. The tabula rasa clearing of the slums was not so much a new beginning, as it had been for Le Corbusier's utopian visions of 1920s; instead, it resembled an endgame, a confirmation that the Depression was history, as if a specific medical operation could be prescribed with certainty for the ailing American city. As Yale professor Maynard Meyer noted at the Harvard Problem of the Cities conference in 1942, it was imperative to examine the blood stream to find the cause of a skin blemish, rather than merely "putting salve on the exterior of the skin where the blemish occurs"²¹⁸ The renovation of the Near South Side was similarly described as "surgery for a city." (fig. 3.8) The shift from a general (topical) to a specialized (surgical) urban practice during these years reflects the desire to get at the root of the problem, to fix it once and for all.

Recognizing that the city's urban ills provided a means for tapping into Roosevelt's federal work-relief program, the Chicago Plan Commission initiated a land-use survey for all of Chicago, documenting the condition and use of every structure in the city.²¹⁹ Conducted between 1938 and 1941, the survey collected information on building stock and additionally documented "community background, vital statistics, and juvenile delinquency assembled from other sources."²²⁰ Already within this survey project one can find the seeds of the powerful, albeit often unbalanced, Keynesian triumvirate of federal policy and monies, private monies and

²¹⁸ Maynard Meyer, "Letter on the Approach to Planning," in The Problem of the Cities and Towns: Report on the Conference on Urbanism, Harvard University, 5-6 March 1942, ed. Guy Greer (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1942), 35.

²¹⁹ "There is an opportunity now to finance this survey which if not promptly utilized will be irrevocably lost.... Why not secure these data while federal government money is available to pay the cost?" Colonel A. A. Sprague, "Proceedings of the Thirty-fourth Meeting of the Chicago Plan Commission, June 21, 1935," Chicago, Ill., Plan Commission Annual Report, 1572. See also Helen Whitehead, The Chicago Plan Commission: A Historical Sketch 1909-1960 (Chicago: City of Chicago, 1961), 15. One year earlier, in the beginning of 1934, Harold Ickes initiated the Real Property Inventory, "a general survey of residential properties in 64 cities selected to give a reasonably good geographic and industrial representation of the urban areas of the nation." Mel Scott, American City Planning Since 1890 (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1969), 321. This survey, conducted by the Federal Civil Works Administration, with the cooperation of the Department of Commerce, provided a clear precedent for Sprague's idea for a Chicago survey. By 1938, the CPC had indeed secured a plump Works Progress Administration grant of \$1,500,000; the actual surveying, which was divided into two phases (residential and industrial/commercial), continued through 1941. All in all, 990,000 residences, spread over 20,000 city blocks, were tabulated. The editors of Pencil Points in collaboration with the Chicago Plan Commission, "Chicago Plans Today for Tomorrow," The New Pencil Points (March 1943), 35.

²²⁰ "Annual Report of the Chicago Plan Commission, 1940," Chicago, Ill., Plan Commission Annual Report, 8.

interests, and social interests and ends that would define urban planning – particularly large-scale municipal improvements – until the advent of economic recession of the 1970s. Business was neither willing nor able to spend its own money on such research; the federal, state, and even municipal governments, meanwhile, lacked the resources and the special interest to undertake it. Using federal money, the Chicago Plan Commission (CPC), a private organization comprised primarily of the city's most prominent businessmen, could afford to assess Chicago for its own private interests as well as for an abstract larger public good.

The conclusion of this statistical analysis (which employed the urban sociology methods promoted by Robert Park and Louis Wirth at the University of Chicago beginning in the 1910s and 1920s)²²¹ was that the Near South Side was the largest area of blight in Chicago, and perhaps in the whole of North America (fig. 3.9). Consequently, in 1941, the CPC

²²¹ Given that Homer Hoyt was the Director of Research for the CPC, the direct precedent for the CPC's land-use survey was likely Hoyt's seminal study One Hundred Years of Land Values in Chicago: The Relationship of the Growth of Chicago to its Land Values, 1830–1933 (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1933), which demonstrates a close relationship between the Chicago School's urban sociological interests and methods and the private interests of the real-estate market. Hoyt, who explicitly acknowledges his debt to the Department of Sociology at the University of Chicago (x), explains that he undertook this project "because the knowledge of the past movement of land prices seemed to me to be indispensable for any rational real estate investment policy" (vii). For an introduction to the overlaps between the Chicago School and modern urban planning, see John D. Fairfield, "Alienation of Social Control: The Chicago Sociologists and the Origins of Urban Planning," Planning Perspectives 7 (1992), 418–34.

adopted a comprehensive policy "outlining a suggested program for clearance and redevelopment of slum areas" focusing, among other sites, on an area between 26th and 31st streets, Lake Park Avenue, and the Rock Island Railroad/New York Central lines, denoted by a red square (a particularly damning reference in the context of Cold War America) in one of the Near South Side Planning Board's brochures (fig. 3.10). Exactly one week after the CPC adopted its slum-clearance and redevelopment policy, the Illinois State Legislature passed the Neighborhood Redevelopment Corporation Law, which was "designed to enable private enterprise to do much of the job of rebuilding Chicago's older neighborhoods."²²² This law broadened measures introduced by New Deal legislation, such as the 1937 Housing Act, which had initiated federal assistance to cities for slum clearance.²²³ Although its constitutionality was eventually challenged on the grounds that it promulgated racial segregation,²²⁴ the Illinois Neighborhood Redevelopment Corporation Law

²²² "Annual Report of the Chicago Plan Commission, 1941," Chicago, Ill., Plan Commission Annual Report, 15.

²²³ The 1937 act enabled federal assistance to states for low-income housing. The 1934 Housing Act also initiated a federal role; by improving and ensuring mortgage lending practices, this act, like its more famous 1949 counterpart, encouraged suburbanization. See Scott, American City Planning, especially chapters 5–7.

²²⁴ As early as 1935, federal housing policies, introduced under Roosevelt's New Deal legislation, maintained that it was important to respect existing racial and ethnic neighborhood definitions: "Called the Neighborhood Composition Rule, it was formulated

(which was quickly emulated in other states, notably New York and Michigan) would eventually pave the way for additional state and, more significantly, federally mandated, privately assisted slum-clearance legislation, including the Federal Housing Act of 1949.²²⁵

Manifest Destiny: IIT and The Urban Frontier

At IIT's request, the CPC's Near South Side site was expanded to include the area between 31st and 35th streets and Lake Michigan and the

by Secretary of the Interior Harold Ickes, and provided that a housing project would not be permitted to alter the racial character of its neighborhood." Devereux Bowly, Jr., The Poorhouse: Subsidized Housing in Chicago, 1895-1976 (Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 1978), 27. See also Martin Meyerson and Edward C. Banfield, Politics, Planning, and the Public Interest: The Case of Public Housing in Chicago (New York: Free Press, 1955), esp. 20-21. For the most compelling and thorough analysis of the racial repercussions of urban policy, see Arnold R. Hirsch, Making the Second Ghetto: Race and Housing in Chicago 1940-1960 (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1983). For a specific case study, focused on the Mecca building (site of the current Crown Hall on the IIT campus), see Daniel Bluestone, "Chicago's Mecca Flat Blues," Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians 57:4 (December 1998), 282-403.

²²⁵ "The Congress hereby declares that the general welfare and security of the Nation and the health and living standards of its people require housing production and related community development sufficient to remedy the serious housing shortage, the elimination of substandard and other inadequate housing through the clearance of slums and blighted areas, and the realization as soon as feasible of the goal of a decent home and a suitable living environment for every American family, thus contributing to the development and redevelopment of communities and to the advancement of the growth, wealth and security of the Nation." Public Law No. 171, "Housing Act of 1949," Title I, Sec. 101 (b), 2; cited by Scott, 464.

railroad tracks.²²⁶ That this request was subsequently heeded reveals the extent of IIT's significance in the area. Indeed, IIT's campus-planning strategy both emerged from and simultaneously engendered slum-clearance measures that later facilitated municipal, state, and federal legislation. The deterioration of the once-fashionable neighborhood of the Near South Side had been noted by the institutions sited there long before the CPC ever considered conducting its survey. As early as 1933, the Armour Institute of Technology (AIT, to become IIT when it merged with the Lewis Institute of Technology in 1940) had begun looking to move away from the area. But by 1937 the Institute had decided to stay put. As AIT treasurer James Cunningham put it:

It is axiomatic that when something has gotten to the very bottom the only direction it can go is up, and this is just the conclusion of the Committee.... It is proposed to purchase about 30 acres of property adjoining the [Institute's current] 9 acres. In other words, to extend the boundaries of the campus from 31st Street to 35th Street along State Street and back to the Rock Island [Railroad] tracks, comprising in all approximately 40 acres.... What better start toward the rehabilitation of this district could there be than to have the Institute lead off with improving a 40 acre site with modern buildings and an attractive landscaped campus?²²⁷

²²⁶ Annual Report of the Chicago Plan Commission, 1941," Chicago, ILL., Plan Commission Annual Report: 16.

²²⁷ James Cunningham, report to the Board of Trustees, Armour Institute Board of Trustees Minutes (1934–40) (IIT archives, bound volume), addendum 2 (17 May 1937), 6.

AIT president Willard Hotchkiss reiterated the same point in succinct terms that referenced Manifest Destiny more than altruism, proclaiming "now is the time to move forward and possess the land."²²⁸ During these few mid-century decades between the closing of the western frontier and the opening of space as the "final frontier," it was the urban interior that Americans dreamed of conquering.

While we tend to associate AIT/IIT's tabula rasa plan with Mies, the school's expansion plan, consolidating multiple city blocks, actually stemmed from decisions that predated Mies's arrival in Chicago in 1938. The decision to maintain the existing site was largely mandated by the much-publicized blighted condition of the neighborhood; the Institute could ill afford to purchase land elsewhere for what it would get from selling its holdings.²²⁹ Resigned to staying, the Board of Trustees shifted its concern from moving to remodeling what facilities the school already had.

²²⁸ Willard E. Hotchkiss in Armour Institute Board of Trustees Minutes (1934–40), addendum 2 (17 May 1937), 11.

²²⁹ Despite Cunningham and Hotchkiss's resolve, efforts to move the school out of the Near South Side did continue throughout the 1930s. In May of 1935, for example, all arrangements had been finalized for the campus to move into an office building in the Loop that faculty member Alfred Alschuler had built only eight years earlier. But funding for acquiring this property fell through at the last minute, and, yet again, the Institute decided to stay on the Near South Side; see Armour Institute of Technology, A New Home for

Six apartment buildings on Federal Street that had been acquired during and after the First World War were turned into classroom and lab buildings for the physics department, but it was obvious that more land was needed.²³⁰ A state-of-the-art facility would not only improve conditions for research, but would also make the Institute competitive with other engineering schools for attracting new students as well as faculty.

When the Institute began its expansion campaign, slum clearance laws were not yet in effect, and so the school had no recourse to state or federal aid. A letter of 5 March 1941 from President Henry Heald (who succeeded Hotchkiss in October 1937) to the school's property-investment advisor, Chicago realtor Newton Farr, reveals that Heald shared the frontier-conquering mindset of his predecessor: "I would like to proceed with the wrecking of the Cunningham properties as soon as possible and if McClellan can be instructed to try to get the tenants out, I shall ask Spaeth to let a wrecking contract. There may be some other properties which

Chicago's Center of Education in Engineering and Architecture (May 1935), booklet bound into the Armour Institute Board of Trustees Minutes (1934-40).

²³⁰ James Clinton Peebles, A History of Armour Institute of Technology, 144, Unpublished histories of IIT, IIT Archives, Paul V. Galvin Library.

should also be wrecked at this time."²³¹ An additional assessment of all of the site's properties itemized those not already owned by AIT according to construction type (brick, frame, or stone) and condition (good, fair, poor, gutted) (fig. 3.11). This information was used in determining negotiation ranges for purchasing. Properties that were abandoned and tax delinquent were bid for in foreclosure suits and sheriffs' sales, or, to keep prices from rising, purchased through third parties.²³² The maps and charts that summed up these surveys and assessments were graphic abstractions where the strongest markings, entirely blacked-in blocks, indicated the school's holdings. The most striking of these maps is a veritable pattern-book of property holdings dating from 1947 (fig. 3.12). In representing the properties in this abstract manner, the Board of Trustees translated site conditions into raw, two-dimensional data. Mies's campus, which would

²³¹ Letter from Henry Heald to Newton Farr, 5 March 1941, Heald papers, Box HB5, folder 2, "Correspondence with Trustees," IIT Archives, Paul V. Galvin Library.

²³² Board of Trustees Executive Meeting Minutes, 7 May 1937, Addendum 2, 7. See also Bluestone, 394: "In 1938 the board's secretary, Alfred L. Eustice, acting as a private citizen, bought the Mecca from Franklin Pember's estate for \$85,000 ... [and in 1941] deeded the property to the institute." Money for the campus expansion was raised from donors, but also came from the selling-off of the Institute's investment properties, rent supplied by the Institute's Research Foundation, transferred money from the general fund to the development fund, the attainment of tax-exempt status, and even the backing of the board members themselves, who did not put up money for land purchases themselves, but served as guarantors for the transactions.

ultimately occupy that field, eventually re-dimensionalized the site by reintroducing the z-axis.

Two initial campus schemes designed by AIT faculty members were used by the development committee to raise funds for land purchasing.²³³ The first, dating from 1937, was by John Holabird of Holabird and Root (fig. 3.13); the second, of 1940, was by Alfred Alschuler of Alschuler and Friedman (fig. 3.14). Documentation does not indicate whether the dimensions of the campus and the general site strategy came from a Board of Trustees directive or were simply the limits imposed by other properties surrounding the school.²³⁴ What is clear from the Board

²³³ In the minutes of the 5 April 1937 meeting of the Armour Institute of Technology Executive Committee of the Board of Trustees, it is noted that Jerrold Loebel, who was a member of the faculty as well as a Board of Trustees (but not an Executive Committee) member, "displayed a sketch showing a proposed development for ... an area embodying the present location of the Institute, extending from 31st to 35th Streets, between State Street and the New York Central tracks [also referred to as the Rock Island Railroad tracks], with an additional strip extending both sides of 33rd Street from State to Michigan Avenue. This includes a total of approximately 50 acres." Hotchkiss papers, Box H84, folder "Executive Committee, Board of Trustees," IIT Archives, Paul V. Galvin Library. The sketch in question is not included in the minutes and is not located anywhere else in the IIT archives, Loebel's archives, the Chicago Historical Society's Archives, or the Burnham Library's Archives. Given that Holabird was not a member of the Board of Trustees (he was elected later that fall), it is possible that Loebel was showing the committee the Holabird proposal of 1937 that I describe later in this paragraph. I presume, however, that the sketch was Loebel's own scheme, given the improbability that Holabird, a faculty member in the Department of Architecture, would not present his own proposal to the Committee. One can easily imagine that all of the Institute's architecture faculty members were vying for the commission (Alschuler's drawings were not presented until the Board of Trustees meeting of 7 October 1940).

²³⁴ The Chicago Housing Authority, for example, had before the war planned the site for Dearborn Homes, located directly north of IIT's campus, and the site south of IIT (now

discussions and the Holabird and Alschuler schemes, however, is that the idea of housing the Institute in a series of freestanding buildings on a large campus did not originate with Mies, who became director of the School of Architecture in 1938.²³⁵ While the Holabird and Alschuler plans may have implemented a campus-planning order, unlike Mies they did not optimize this organizational strategy in order to rethink the city.

Both firms centered the campus symmetrically along a transverse axis at 33rd Street, which they transformed into a ceremonial boulevard. Both also placed the student union and the library at the center of the scheme, formalizing the entrance to the campus by placing the two identical buildings symmetrically on either side of 33rd Street. The Holabird scheme focused more on landscaping than on buildings. It includes a series of distinct courtyards, some formal, others with informal, meandering paths. Each court forms a world unto itself; the campus as a whole is seen in absolute isolation from its surroundings. The Alschuler scheme separates the

Stateway Gardens) was slated for use as an on-ramp for the expressway. Bowly, Jr., 61. For indication of the expressway, see the drawing for the campus plan in Technology Center: Today and Tomorrow (Chicago: IIT, 1947), IIT Files, MvdR Archives, MoMA.

²³⁵ Upon the recommendation of the Advisory Committee on Architecture, Mies's appointment was authorized in a Board of Trustees Executive Committee meeting 1 June 1936. See Hotchkiss papers, Box H84, folder "Executive Committee Board of Trustees," IIT Archives, Paul V. Galvin Library. After lengthy negotiations, Mies finally accepted the position in 1938. No documentation in the IIT archives indicates whether or not Mies was familiar with the Holabird and Alschuler schemes.

school from its surroundings by siting a series of laboratory buildings, designed in a moderne vocabulary, along State Street, which, like the rail line to the west, provides a buffer between the heart of the campus and the city. The campus interior consists of administrative and communal buildings in a stripped-down, classical style, surrounding unimaginatively landscaped courts. While both of these schemes are sited in the gridded field of Chicago's Near South Side, they adopt a City Beautiful, Beaux-Arts sensibility, complete with axes terminating in significantly programmed buildings. The awkwardness of inserting this Beaux-Arts logic into the relentless grid reveals the challenge of IIT's design: how to give the campus an identity while making the design work with the urban layout of Chicago. To understand Mies's solution to this challenge, it is helpful first to assess Chicago's urban orders.

Points and Fields: Chicago's Urban Orders

Traditionally, monuments (whether civic, cultural, or institutional) act as 'foreground' buildings within an urban plan – that is, they provide anchors within a more generalized fabric of domestic, commercial, and industrial 'background' buildings. Pope Sixtus V in Rome and Baron Haussmann in

Paris both relied on point urbanism as a strategy for early urban renewal: monumental edifices provided the coordinates for an arterial logic that cut through an existing medieval fabric. Chicago, platted in 1830, was originally a field city, composing a grid that facilitated real-estate transactions (fig. 3.15). In 1909, Daniel Burnham adopted the point approach for transforming Chicago's speculative grid into a City Beautiful²³⁶ (fig. 3.16). "The aim of the architects in arranging the proposed civic center was two-fold," explained Wacker's Manual of the Plan of Chicago, a primer on Burnham's plan, which beginning in 1912 became an obligatory component of the Chicago Public School District's eighth-grade curriculum, thereby directly influencing a generation that would hold positions of civic and corporate responsibility after the war. "The basic idea was to provide direct ways of reaching the city's center and of unifying the street system. The secondary thought was to express by means of mounumental [sic] buildings, the pride, dignity, and importance of Chicago."²³⁷ As illustrated in one of Jules Guérin's bird's-eye-perspective

²³⁶ Platted in 1830, Chicago's grid form was derived from, as John Reps notes, real-estate speculation: "for land speculation [the grid] was, of course, the ideal pattern. The mania for buying and selling town lots that spread across the country was nowhere wilder than at Chicago." John W. Reps, The Making of Urban America: A History of City Planning in the United States (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1965), 300.

²³⁷ Walter D. Moody, Managing Director, Chicago Plan Commission, Wacker's Manual of the Plan of Chicago (Chicago: Chicago Plan Commission, 1912; 3rd reprint, 1920), 118. The

washes, Burnham's civic center was envisioned as a focal point for a series of diagonal streets that would fan outwards, extending out to the city's suburbs.

The historic hegemony of the "point" model was challenged perhaps most famously by Le Corbusier and Ludwig Hilberseimer, who shifted urbanism from the point to the field. Le Corbusier's towers marched uniformly across Paris in an even 400-by-400-meter grid; the slabs of Hilberseimer's vertical city similarly disappeared into the horizon.²³⁸ The endless orthogonality of these systems was encapsulated by Hilberseimer's simple assertion of 1923: "Developing the plan of the city on lines corresponds to the fundamental principles of all architecture. The straight line, the right angle have always been its most elegant elements. Does not

Chicago Plan Commission's awareness of the importance of educating/indoctrinating Chicago's young population and its success in making urban and civic planning a required element of the school curriculum are two extremely interesting topics within the larger field of urban reform and publicity. See Thomas J. Schlereth whose article, "Burnham's Plan and Moody's Manual: City Planning as Progressive Reform" (*American Planning Journal* [January 1981], 70-82) provides a good introduction to this subject. Of particular note is Schlereth's comment that Moody was influenced by "German educators who had been instructing children in urban planning since the 1880s" (73), which suggests that the links between Chicago and German urban studies extends beyond urban sociology.

²³⁸ "The architectural possibilities gained by concentration and high density have been explored by Le Corbusier; those resulting from low density and the mixed type of dwelling by L. Hilberseimer. As different as their approaches are, both have the same aim. They have the same trend towards openness and both use freestanding buildings." Ludwig Hilberseimer, "City Architecture: The Trend Toward Openness" (1960), in *In the Shadow of*

the clearness of the straight line better correspond to our current sensibility, to our organizing spirit rather than the arbitrariness of the curved line?"²³⁹ The homogeneous repetition of these Cartesian systems was more polemical than real – Le Corbusier's proposal for Paris maintained certain "points," including the Arc de Triomphe; once placed within an orthogonal system, however, these points become aberrations rather than destinations – but the effect upon the city's organization was that monumentality was either called out as something entirely different from the system or was transferred from the individual edifice to the entire city. Repetition itself was monumentalized.

The most immediate means of understanding the differences between the point and field urban models lies in their privileging of certain vantage points. The directed and controlled view of the point city is consistently affirmed by ground-level one-point perspectives, whereas the infinitely expansive field city is predicated upon an overhead, planimetric view of the urban carpet. The subject whose cone of vision is restricted by the given axes of the point city is simply erased from the flattened,

Mies, ed. R. Pommer, D. Spaeth, and K. Harrington (Chicago: The Art Institute of Chicago, 1988), 109.

²³⁹ Ludwig Hilberseimer, *Sozialistische Monatshefte* (June 1923), 355; cited by Christine Mengin, "The Architecture of the Großstadt," *Rassegna* 27 (1986), 37.

planimetric landscape of the field city. Information, seemingly objective, is all that resides upon a flat, cartographic surface; its volumeless plane leaves the viewer without a space to occupy. The subjects of both models have only limited agency within the terms of the metropolis. They lack the possibility of urban empathy – that is, the possibility of a reciprocal engagement with other urban subjects, an urban, heterogeneous, but collective subjectivity. In his recent book Psychologizing the Modern, architectural historian Mark Jarzombek notes that “the modern notion of empathy allowed for a more fluid and covert sequence of transfiguration of subjectivity to take place. It also stresses the importance of the interaction between people based not on the purely emotional, as one might think, but on the combination of the self-reflective and the social.”²⁴⁰ I would argue further that an empathetic environment promotes an engagement with the city itself, whereby the subject can affect as much as be affected by her urban environment.

Even when the field city was presented three-dimensionally, its non-empathetic aura was maintained. When drawn in perspective, Le Corbusier's *Cité Contemporaine* of 1922 places the horizon line at the top

²⁴⁰ Mark Jarzombek, The Psychologizing of Modernity (London: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 59.

of the cruciform towers (fig. 3.17). The point of view is thereby lifted above the typical eye level, which places the horizon at five feet above the ground. One senses a similar tension over how to position the subject in Ludwig Hilberseimer's haunting Hochhausstadt drawings of 1924 (fig. 3.18). These perspectives are cut away to reveal the city's section, thereby forcing the viewer to float, separated from the city by a gulf of space. Cars and people are flattened and miniaturized as tiny two-dimensional black silhouettes, suggesting that this distanced viewer would have to be peering at the scene through powerful binoculars. All of these drawings reveal at once an affinity with and a critique of the one-point perspective. Although Hilberseimer deliberately chose to render his gridded Großstadt perspectively, after 1938, when he moved to the United States, he abandoned perspective in favor of plans and axonometrics, drawings that dislocate the viewer altogether, thereby prioritizing the field or objective city to the exclusion of all subjectivity.²⁴¹

²⁴¹ Although it seems at odds with the Großstadt project, Hilberseimer chooses to represent it perspectively. As Marco de Michelis notes in his article "Portrait of an Architect as a Young Man," "What is surprising about the radical emotionlessness of these projects is the absolute predominance of the recourse to perspective representation. The communication of synthetic essentiality is entrusted to the most formal and illusionistic type of representation. Sections and axonometrics are absent, the very plans, when they happen to be available and this is not the general case, fulfill a merely diagrammatic function of typological definition of the dwelling units." Rassegna 27 (1986), 16. According to K. Michael Hays (conversation with the author, 16 September 1999), Hilberseimer stopped producing perspectives after 1938.

When Daniel Burnham's Chicago Plan was depicted in a bird's-eye view in 1909, the airplane (invented only in 1903) was still a rarified luxury if not a futuristic dream. By 1938, when Mies arrived in Chicago, that dream was becoming attainable. Air travel, though still rare, had become a reality (the first transatlantic service for mail and passengers was inaugurated in 1939). Aerial photographs of the IIT campus – and there are many – show it in perspective, not in plan (fig. 3.19). Well above typical eye level, this angle had nevertheless become plausible. The aerial view was charged with additional significance following the bombing raids of the Second World War. In a conference address of 1956, planner and architect E. A. Gutkind read the vastness of the synoptic aerial view as simultaneously all-powerful and humbling: "today we can look at the world with a God's-eye view, take in at a glance the infinite variety of environmental patterns spread over the earth, and appreciate their dynamic relationships.... Everything falls into a true perspective – even man himself as a part of the whole."²⁴² The aerial view revealed the order upon the land, but also suggested the relationships constructing that visual order. Read from the sky, institutions are both singular and relative; this particular angle

²⁴² E. A. Gutkind, "Man's Role in Changing the Face of the Earth" (1956); cited by Denis Cosgrove, "The Measures of America" in Taking Measures Across the American

introduces the possibility of mediating the gap between the point and the field, allowing for identity without determinacy.

From the air, horizontals become tableaux – the horizontal and the vertical become coincident rather than oppositional. The significance of the horizontal vista as seen from above was discussed by Sigfried Giedion, José Luis Sert, and Fernand Léger in their short manifesto "Nine Points on Monumentality" of 1943, which outlined a platform for reclaiming monumentality within the context of postwar America:

Man-made landscapes would be correlated with nature's landscapes and all elements combined in terms of the new and vast facade, sometimes extending for many miles, which has been revealed to us by the air view.... Monumental architecture will be something more than strictly functional. It will have regained its lyrical value. In such monumental layouts, architecture and city planning could attain a new freedom and develop new creative possibilities....²⁴³

The "new and vast facade" operates as both a monumental insertion into the city and a piece of the urban fabric emerging from the landscape.

Underlying Giedion, Sert, and Léger's text was a desire to redefine

Landscape, ed. James Corner and Alex MacLean (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1996) 4.

²⁴³ José Luis Sert, Fernand Léger, and Sigfried Giedion, "Nine Points on Monumentality" (1943), in Architecture Culture 1943–1968, ed. Joan Ockman (New York: Columbia Books of Architecture and Rizzoli, 1993), 30.

monumentality so that it could actively and prophetically engage the future rather than merely passively commemorate the past. The "Nine Points" manifesto initiated a decade-long discussion that reverberated across numerous symposia, exhibitions, and publications. Although Mies did not participate in these discussions,²⁴⁴ his design for the IIT campus – and, I would argue, the subsequent collaborative design for the Near South Side – resonate with a similar sensibility. Giedion's writing and Mies's project can be linked under the broad rubric of the urban empathic: both sought to articulate a modern architecture that could remain abstract while simultaneously engaging its individual and collective audiences in an active as well as activating manner. This engagement stemmed from indeterminate formal and spatial relations, which allowed for multiple forms of inhabitation by projecting upon surfaces, thereby animating the

²⁴⁴ In the early 1940s, Mies's command of English was not good enough for him to have engaged actively in American architectural discourse. By 1946, however, he was "quite fluent," according to Myron Goldsmith (in conversation with Kevin Harrington, 16 May 1996, tape 4, CCA Oral History Project). Whether he was still not comfortable enough with the language to participate in this particular discourse, whether he was at all interested in doing so, or whether he was given the opportunity to do so (the monumentality debate took place primarily in publications and at MoMA in New York) are unanswerable questions.

environment, and by combining programs to enhance levels of activation.²⁴⁵

The American context was receptive to attempts at redefining the urban realm: in the 1940s, a period under the influence of the Depression of the previous decade and then further marked by both the horrors and the victories of the Second World War, American politicians, businessmen, planners, developers, and architects were possessed by a similar desire to found a progressive context for democracy – one that was forward-looking rather than nostalgic, iconographic, or stylized. Modernism's mutual recasting of these seemingly incompatible ideological platforms – the objective and the symbolic – affected both the production and the reception of buildings as well as the terms of urban space. For Giedion, Sert, and Léger, that reception was to be choreographed: the public's "aspiration for monumentality, joy, pride, and excitement" would be fulfilled through the use of new materials and techniques, the integration of open space, and by animating surfaces with projections, color, and

²⁴⁵ See Sert, Léger, and Giedion, "Nine Points;" also see Sarah Whiting, "Opening Pandora's Box: Postwar Modernism in the United States," in *Tra Guerra e Pace*, eds. Patrizia Bonifazio, Sergio Pace, Michela Rosso, and Paolo Scrivano (Milan: FrancoAngeli, 1998), 290–301.

movement "for purposes of publicity or propaganda."²⁴⁶ For Mies, the focus was more on sequence than public spectacle, but there was a similar desired effect of engaging the subject. Speaking with Kevin Harrington about his experience working on the campus design with Mies, George Danforth noted the importance of the emotional resonance of the spaces and sequences:

So I think it was a matter of passing through a space, spaces that were varying in dimension and height.... You have a different psychological feeling when you come into a space with a high building versus one with a low building. So I think Mies was very careful when he studied these things abstractly in blocks, cut pieces of wood.... I was aware, yes, of what kind of space he was creating and what the effect was going to be by being in it.²⁴⁷

If Giedion, Sert and Léger emphasized the facade quality of their "new monumentality," Mies concentrated more on its experience. Like them, he sought a new lyrical value, a new freedom, new creative possibilities, but even if IIT was frequently depicted from the air, the effect that Mies sought

²⁴⁶ Giedion, Sert, and Léger, "Nine Points," 30.

²⁴⁷ Citation edited slightly for clarity; the exact text as transcribed is: "So I think it was a matter of passing through a space, spaces that were varying in dimension and varying in scale of height between buildings, length You have a different psychological feeling when you come into a space with a high vis-à-vis a low, and vice-versa, building. So I think he was very careful, just in studying these things abstractly in blocks, cut pieces of wood....I was aware, yes, of what kind of space he was creating and what the effect was

was from the ground. The aerial photographs were used by the school for promotional material; Mies's depictions of the campus were primarily ground-level perspectives. IIT is less a horizontal facade than a horizontal bas-relief composed of buildings of different heights, spaces between buildings, and overlapping programs and visual axes.

Mies's IIT: Bas-Relief Campus

Not really a mean between two extremes as much as a third alternative, the campus urbanism of Chicago's Near South Side combines the gravitational determinism of the point model with the dispersed logic of the field model. This strategy inserts what one could call quasi-figures into the field model, creating not points but overlapping zones of significance (fig. 3.20). The projects of the Near South Side are not singular, isolated, massive buildings and are not constructed of the materials and forms that underlie the codified vocabulary of traditional monumental civic architecture. Nor are they programmatically typical traditional monuments: the structures that comprise the Near South Side Plan are neither civic nor

commemorative, but are instead private institutions that partially engage the public and thereby require a "public presence" within the city. In this particular example, a group of institutions – IIT, Michael Reese Hospital, Mercy Hospital, and the Chicago Housing Authority – worked together in an unusual form of voluntary political, economic, and urban collaboration in order to create overlapping influences over the entire Near South Side. IIT both initiated this collaborative, bas-relief urbanism and, simultaneously, was itself engendered by the new policy and planning legislation ushered in by this urbanism.

The potential for a bas-relief to engage a viewer had been theorized already in 1893 in Adolf Hildebrand's book The Problem of Form in the Fine Arts, which, as he stated in the text's introduction, "concerns the relation of form to appearance [Erscheinung], and its implications for artistic representation [Darstellung]." Hildebrand distinguished between two modes of perception: from far away, the viewer perceives an object as a two-dimensional surface, what Hildebrand calls "pure scanning," wherein the third dimension can be perceived only through contrasts, such as light versus dark; when close, the viewer cannot perceive the object in a single glance in this manner, but has to move her eyes from point to point, reconstructing the entirety of the object in her mind – what Hildebrand

refers to as "purely kinesthetic eye activity." "This whole exists for the eye only in the form of effects that translate all actual dimensions into relative values; only in this way do we possess it as a visual idea," Hildebrand elaborates.²⁴⁸ Understanding IIT and the Near South Side projects within such a framework, there is similarly a global, aerial view that reveals each project to be a significant insertion within a larger context, and a close view, a kinesthetic view, which is that of the individual within each campus. As indicated by an interview that appeared in the magazine Modern Hospital in 1945, Mies understood planning and architecture to be a combination of these two points of view. First, he saw the process as if he were looking down at a plan from far above, from whence he could get an objective, comprehensive view:

The home has its various elements and the furnishings must be assigned to the elements in which they are to function appropriately. So it is with cities ...; they must be located by plan; nothing must be accidental. The various elements of community life must be composed in the plan and then all new buildings may rise unashamedly in the right places.²⁴⁹

²⁴⁸ Adolf Hildebrand, "The Problem of Form," in Empathy, Form, and Space: Problems in German Aesthetics, ed. Harry Francis Mallgrave and Eletherios Ikonomou (Santa Monica: Getty Center for the History of Art and the Humanities, 1994), 235.

²⁴⁹ Ludwig Mies van der Rohe and Mildred Whitcomb, "Only the Patient Counts," in Modern Hospital 64:3 (March 1945), 67.

But while Mies envisioned the world as a planar, field-like order where everything had its place, he also introduced a form of subjectivity into this composition. His desire for order reflected not simply a compositional drive, but also a concern for the user's psychological well-being. Continuing his analogy, Mies noted the anxieties that can be brought on by a lack of order: "You are not really living in a house or an apartment on Moving Day, with the entire load of household effects dumped into a single room.... You plainly, if not silently, suffer there until furniture and equipment are put into their rightful places."²⁵⁰ Everything has its rightful place, but urban order is experienced, not just surveyed. Mies's combination of objective and subjective siting techniques at IIT merged the ultra-perspectival characteristics of the point city and the ultra-planar characteristics of the field city.

In contrast to the entirely abstract view of the high modernist plan diagram, Mies's bas-relief reintroduces a certain point of view, or subjectivity, though not the singular or constricted subjectivity that corresponds to the one-point perspective. While a plan view can be grasped immediately and does not depend upon a specific angle of vision, a reading of a bas-relief changes, even if only slightly, as the viewer

²⁵⁰ MvdR and Whitcomb, 67.

changes position or as contextual conditions change, altering shadows, forms, and spatial relations. A bas-relief collapses distinctions between an abstract field and a figural object. In the friezes of the Parthenon, for example, figures emerge from the plane of the frieze, but still belong to that plane (fig. 3.21). In other words, because it introduces the z-axis, the bas-relief suggests subtle modulations, subtle differences across an otherwise even field. The bas-relief is at once field-like and figured: depending on the observer's viewpoint, a figure can be seen emerging from the field, but it never separates completely from that field so as to become an independent object. Oftentimes, only the rendered shadows of Mies's axonometrics and perspectives offer any distinction between the campus's verticals and horizontals. In her essay "Narrative Time: The Question of the Gates of Hell," art historian Rosalind Krauss notes that in bas-reliefs "information was also supplied, and increasingly so throughout the nineteenth century, by the intentional use of actual shadows cast onto the relief ground by the raised figurative elements.... Forms are marshaled so that the shadows they cast will direct the viewer's attention to the buried and unseen sides of the figures."²⁵¹ Likewise, for Mies, despite the very precise and mathematical determination of the campus grid and the

scientific attention to programmatic requirements, the power of the images that he drew of IIT lies in their shadows, in the part of a drawing that most suggests experience of the space. It is the shadowy realm, the inexplicit, that conveys the most critical information – this shaded area is what turns the field into a figured field.

Upon the foundation of public and private investments, concerns, and speculations, a modulated empathetic topography – that is, a continuous but figured field – was put in place at IIT, which combined the perspectival and the planometric. The empathy of this bas-relief urbanism should not be confused with the humanism that was reappearing on the architectural stage at about the same moment. The figuration that the bas-relief introduced to the field was not related to the human scale or history, but to human vision and psychology – the 'figures' were not legible representations, but differentiations in the abstract field that elicited differing and multiple visceral reactions to that field. This dispersed monumentality oscillated across multiple scales: beyond the built scale of the projects themselves, it included federal and local urban and economic policy as well as the network of relations that existed among urban

²⁵¹ Rosalind Krauss, "Narrative Time: The Question of the Gates of Hell," in Passages in Modern Sculpture (Cambridge, Mass.: The MIT Press, 1977), 21–22.

institutions. A re-examination of the notions of collective engagement that are raised in the forms, programs, and interconnections of these modernist yet monumental projects from the 1940s reveals a means of encouraging such engagement without programming it.

Contrary to what one might assume, once Mies was officially asked to design the campus, he did not start by designing the plan. Instead, he began by studying the program, which was just being developed (and which would continue to be developed over the twenty years that Mies directed the project). After considering and testing various alternatives, he determined that a 24-foot-square module could be used to accommodate the programs of classroom buildings, lab buildings, and office spaces. Rough volumes were established and wooden blocks were cut, with gridded elevations pasted on, and then Mies and his associates played with the blocks on the site: a large piece of paper, gridded with the same 24-foot module²⁵² (fig. 3.22). Although Mies once claimed that he did

²⁵² "We then also, as Mies got the program from the various departments of the school, we made wood blocks of the volume of the building, and on a plot of the whole site I drew up, he would work those out in some arrangement within the spaces of the buildings, having had that plot from – what was it? – 31st Street down to 35th, State Street over to the tracks to the west, drawn up in a modular system that he had found workable for the contents of the program." George Danforth in conversation with Kevin Harrington, CCA Oral History Project.

not think that site was “that important,”²⁵³ the combination of the gridded background and the gridded blocks gives the impression that the blocks protrude from the paper – that the figures of the buildings emerge from the field of the ground plane as the grid flips up 90 degrees from a horizontal to a vertical surface. Although the decision to divide the school’s program into several individual buildings predated Mies’s arrival at IIT, and although this choice was probably driven largely by economic concerns (it was easier to raise money for individual departments and easier to proceed slowly if the process was broken down into pieces), this decision was also the mechanism that allowed the design of IIT to be as much the design of a campus (or quasi-urban) space as it was a design of buildings. Mies’s method of moving blocks about rather than working only in plan, demonstrates to what extent he recognized the problem of the campus design to be a three-dimensional spatial issue.

At the scale of the campus, the ‘ceremonial’ or communal programs (the library and the student union), are given significant sites, but do not serve to centralize or focus the campus as they would had they been conceived along the lines of a traditional point-oriented city plan. Rather

²⁵³ Interview with Katherine Kuh, published in Kuh, The Open Eye: In Pursuit of Art (New York: Harper and Rowe, 1971), 35.

than occupying the center of the central courtyard space, these programs define its edge, as well as the edge of what is referred to as Mies Alley. Presentation drawings also reveal the campus's accessible institutional identity, or new monumentality. Rather than converging onto one significant point or feature, Mies's perspectival views tend to draw the outsider into the campus; their multiple side axes promise endless possibilities lying just around the corners of the drawn buildings. When the perspectives do focus upon a building's entry, the ground plane slips through the door into the lobby, suggesting a continuum rather than a boundary (fig. 3.23). In the earliest schemes, many of the buildings were on pilotis; it was Mies's dream that the entire ground plane could be one surface, interrupted only by the glass walls of the lobby spaces and stairs, smoothly taking people up into the buildings above. Each building would then have a transitional, public/private space between the exterior, public, world and the interior, private or academic, world. Even if budget considerations eventually forced the elimination of the pilotis, the continuum was stressed: once the decision was made to put the buildings on the ground, Mies put them directly onto the ground, aligning the ground

floor slab with the ground itself²⁵⁴ (fig. 3.24). Even the detailing of the doors does not interrupt the flow of space between outdoors and indoors, as demonstrated by the centered, pivot-hinge doors to Lewis (now Perlstein) Hall: the door handles are kept vertical and in alignment with the doorframe, avoiding any interruption of the view (fig. 3.25). Given that the campus plan was designed as if the field and the figures were one and the same – the gridded blocks emerging from the grid of the ground plane – it was not necessary for the ‘ground level’ of the buildings and of the landscape to remain level zero: the ‘ground’ is sometimes at grade and sometimes raised above grade, as with Crown Hall, where the main level is half a level above street level. Even the lower levels that get used – Crown, the Commons, and Alumni Memorial Hall – are more like a ground plane that has dipped downwards rather than a basement. The use of half-levels, high clerestory windows, ramps, and shallow, wide, and unenclosed stairways turn the experience of this modulated ground plane into that of a continuous horizontal surface.

²⁵⁴ Safety considerations were an issue as well: as George Danforth notes, had the buildings been built in this manner, the stairwells would have been filled with a dangerously crushed crowd of students at the beginning and end of each class. (George Danforth in conversation with Kevin Harrington, 9 April 1996, CCA Oral History Project.)

Unlike the initial schemes, the final scheme is often represented with a view that looks northeast, from the campus's 'back door,' as it were, prioritizing the central court and IIT's proximity to the Loop rather than the State Street forecourt (see fig. 3.1). One could easily understand how IIT could be read as a black hole rather than a gravity field, for it seems to cut into the urban fabric of the South Side. This reading is contradicted by a telling aside. In 1942, Heald wrote a letter to Mies suggesting that, for aesthetic and security reasons, a wall be erected around the perimeter of the campus. In a particularly insensitive gesture toward those displaced by the demolition, Heald even suggested building the wall of recycled materials culled from former homes: "It has been suggested that a brick wall might be used, built from brick salvaged from some of our wrecking operations."²⁵⁵ While no reply is documented, Mies's answer is suggested by the campus's permeability.²⁵⁶ Just as the courtyards are not closed off with four walls, as on traditional university campuses, the campus as a

²⁵⁵ Letter from Henry Heald to MvdR, 30 July 1942, Heald papers, Box 17, folder 4, IIT Archives, Paul V. Galvin Library. Thank you to Phyllis Lambert for kindly pointing me to this reference.

²⁵⁶ It has been argued that Mies's open perimeter depended upon an urban "wall" of *poché*, formed by the context around the campus; see Kevin Pierce, "IIT at a Crossroads," *Competitions* 8:2 (summer 1998), 5. Given that Mies was cognizant of IIT's expansionist desires and land-purchasing efforts, I would be surprised that he would base his logic upon the campus's immediate context. Second, given that the landscape of the campus deliberately extends to the public realm, I hold to my reading that Mies envisioned it extending as far as it could.

whole is open. The field upon which IIT's buildings sit extends out from the centermost courtyards to the very edges of the campus. With such moves, Mies deliberately redirected the city grid in a positive way and at two scales: that of IIT itself, where he replaced the tabula rasa of the land-clearance program with a modulated abstraction, and that of the entire Near South Side, which would follow Mies's design lead.

If the point city corresponds to the one-point perspective and the field city to the flat plan view, what modes of representation emerge from an urbanism that fit neither of these categories – an urbanism that tried to be simultaneously objective and subjective? That Mies constantly shifted between a larger, planar scale of order and a smaller, more-immediate scale of personal experience can be seen from his design development drawings for the IIT campus. Plans, axonometrics, and models – all of which were used to organize the buildings by ordering them within the space of the campus – were complemented by perspectives that situated the user directly in the campus. Unlike the one-point perspectives of the point city model, Mies's are mostly two-point constructions that lead your eye off the page, away from any central focus (fig. 3.26). Foliage and people often frame the right and left sides, but rather than closing the image inward, they suggest its continuation ad infinitum. Clusters of buildings or clumps of

trees, for example, are almost always cut off by the edges of the sheet, but the viewer completes them in her mind, thereby extending the composition. Adjacent buildings and surrounding trees also give depth to the campus design, for they help to define multiple pathways heading off in different directions (fig. 3.27). These exterior 'hallways' create a series of layers in the drawings, thereby rendering more visually complex the space foregrounding and surrounding the buildings, all the while suggesting multiple possibilities for experiencing that space.

One-point perspectives of the campus were drawn up because they highlighted a specific building; they were often used to raise money, as evidenced by a series of drawings in the Mies archives of a single building whose name changes from iteration to iteration, reflecting potential donors. But even here, they do not fall into the one-point conventions of the Haussmann or Burnham plans discussed above. In the IIT one-point perspectives, when a single building does occupy the center of the page (the vanishing point), the asymmetrical spatial planning of the campus keeps the building from being fixed: they are never framed by background buildings that hold the vanishing point. Instead, as with the foliage and walkways in the two-point perspectives of the campus, the view is teased away from the center. Even when the building's entrance is centered on

the building's facade and provides the vanishing point for the perspective, that point does not form the center of the image, which either extends further to the left or further to the right, but never the same amount in both directions. Similarly, what framing elements do exist are always uneven: a cut-off building to one side whose amputated lines pull you as much away from the vanishing point on the center of the page as toward it; or a carefully though asymmetrically composed array of dark figures forming graceful albeit mysterious shadows whose opacity competes with the almost spectral, lightly-penciled buildings behind them (fig. 3.29). Their irregular arrangement suggests a game of tag: countering the pull of the perspective's vanishing point, the shadowy figures beg the viewer to dart among them, criss-crossing the building's forecourt. The asymmetrical campus plan, as conveyed through these representational devices, offers an urban type that is neither foreground nor background but both; when multiplied, it provides zones rather than points within the larger field of Chicago's grid.

Contours of Proliferation: Chicago's Near South Side

Chaired by IIT's president, Henry Heald, and initiated jointly by IIT and Michael Reese Hospital, the South Side Planning Board (SSPB) was formed on "June 11, 1946 as an inter-racial community planning organization which was incorporated as a not-for-profit agency with the objective of inaugurating and guiding an orderly redevelopment program for the Central South Side community as a better place to live and work and do business."²⁵⁷ As an organization of interested private individuals, the SSPB put itself forth as a mediator between the public (municipality) and private (institutional and corporate, as well as individual) realms, as well as those of the municipal and state governments and the community. Beginning in 1947, the Board began to produce a series of pamphlets presenting easy-to-grasp graphic analyses and boldly rendered planning proposals, including mile-square superblocs, mixed-rise blocks composed of row houses and skip-stop slabs, and an extensive array of community facilities, including parks, beaches, and museums (fig. 3.30). The Board primarily represented the institutions and businesses that had interests in the area

²⁵⁷ SSPB News Release draft, 1, Heald papers, Box 62, SSPB folder, IIT Archives, Paul V. Galvin Library. Note: although it was titled the South Side Planning Board, the group focused only on the Near South Side area; later in the 1950s, they turned their attention further south to redevelopment in the Hyde-Park neighborhood.

south of the Loop. Although sometimes accused of pushing African Americans out of the South Side, the SSPB, unlike other planning organizations of the time, aspired to racial integration. The Board's Vice Chairman was the black columnist Willard Townsend from the progressive black newspaper the Chicago Defender, who supported the SSPB in his columns on race and redevelopment.²⁵⁸ The Board had no official status in Chicago, but it did overlap with such powerful organizations as the Chicago Plan Commission,²⁵⁹ the Metropolitan Housing and Planning Council,²⁶⁰ and the Chicago Land Clearance Commission.²⁶¹

Looking at the board memberships of these various organizations reveals many otherwise hidden alliances. Henry Heald, for example, was vice-chairman of the Chicago Land Clearance Commission. Another

²⁵⁸ For Townsend's defense of the SSPB on the issue of race and the SSPB's goals, see Willard Townsend, "Southside Planning Board Gets Airing," parts 1 and 2, Chicago Defender (29 November and 4 December 1948).

²⁵⁹ Formerly the Merchants Club, it became the CPC after the 1909 Burnham plan.

²⁶⁰ The MHPC was another civic-oriented organization of Chicago business leaders, consisting primarily of the heads of commercial and corporate interests in the Loop. It was more homogeneous than the SSPB's constituents yet without the municipal authority of the CPC. For an excellent discussion of the MHPC, see Arnold R. Hirsch, Making the Second Ghetto: Race and Housing in Chicago, 1940-1960 (Cambridge; N.Y.: Cambridge University Press, 1983).

²⁶¹ The CLCC was formed after the Illinois State Blighted Areas Redevelopment and Relocation Acts were passed in June of 1947, which, combined, formed a precedent for the 1949 Federal Housing Act. The 1947 Acts authorized the CLCC to acquire blighted land, relocate the families there, and sell the land below cost to developers.

notable tie existed between the Chicago Housing Authority (CHA) and Michael Reese Hospital. In addition to the heads of both being members of the SSPB, a complex liaison was forged between them that enabled the hospital to acquire land for its expansion (fig. 3.31). After the hospital acquired some adjacent properties through public auction, it became clear that it would have trouble obtaining the land that it needed to fulfill its vision of an expansive campus complex. Under the provisions of an amendment to the Illinois Cities and Villages Act of 1945, the Housing Authority had the power to condemn slum land for redevelopment purposes that did not necessarily have to include housing. Taking advantage of this authority, the hospital advanced the CHA \$675,000 and agreed to pay the full cost of land assembly, relocation, and overhead for a four-block area adjacent to their property.²⁶² The deal looked as good to the CHA as it did to Michael Reese Hospital: slums would be cleared and housing provided, which even if it was private (for hospital employees)

²⁶² Bowly, Jr., The Poorhouse: 58–59. See also Reginald Isaacs, "Progress Report," Michael Reese Hospital Planning Board (August 1945–December 1946), 12. In "A Hospital Plans," Isaacs takes note of the CHA's power of eminent domain: "The [Chicago Housing] Authority has the necessary power, through eminent domain if necessary, to assemble property, tear down slum structures detrimental to the welfare, health and morals of the public, and dispose of the property by sale or lease to public or private redevelopers who submit plans in conformance with proper land use and community requirements" (338).

rather than public housing, nevertheless promised to improve the general quality of the neighborhood.²⁶³

In addition to the mixed-rise campus of Michael Reese Hospital, designed with help from consultants Walter Gropius and Walter Blucher, the Near South Side Plan included IIT's campus, designed by Mies between 1939 and 1958; Lake Meadows, a mixed-rise, private housing development designed by Skidmore, Owings, and Merrill between 1950 and 1960, which was built on the first land parcel to be appropriated by the Chicago Land Clearance Commission; the mid-rise towers of the CHA project, Dearborn Homes, designed by Loeb, Schlossmann, and Bennett and completed in 1950; the combined-height buildings (elevator buildings, two-story buildings, and row houses) of Prairie Courts, another CHA project, designed by Keck and Keck in the early 1950s; and the five private-housing slabs of Prairie Shores, also designed by Loeb, Schlossman, and Bennett in the later 1950s (see fig. 6.2).²⁶⁴ In addition, the Near South Side Plan envisioned the development of a light industrial park situated at the northern end of the

²⁶³ Bowly, Jr. *The Poorhouse*: 59.

²⁶⁴ According to Ferd Kramer (conversation with the author, 20 November 1998), whose firm Draper and Kramer developed Lake Meadows, Gropius was a much more influential figure in the South Side Planning Board meetings than either Mies or Hilberseimer.

Near South Side, between the Loop and the proposed housing projects, which would help to stabilize the area economically.

A prosaic green carpet provides a common denominator to the entire plan – the field for the area's bas-relief (fig. 3.32). In the same way that Central Park has been understood as New York's lungs, these green spaces introduced light, space, nature, and fresh air into Chicago. Green space had a long tradition as public land in Chicago, dating from 1835 when the stretch of lakefront from Randolph to 11th street was decreed "Public Ground – A Common to Remain Forever Open, Clear and Free of any Buildings, or Other Obstruction Whatsoever." As described in the AIA Guide to Chicago, Grant Park (the northern half of the lakefront) "was designed as a series of symmetrical spaces, or 'rooms,' defined by paths and plantings, with small enclosed spaces for passive recreation and large open areas for active pursuits."²⁶⁵ While the modern greenscapes planned on the Near South Side were anything but symmetrical, they nonetheless shared Chicago's legacy of public green space and also often combined more-intimate sitting spaces with larger event areas.

²⁶⁵ Joan Pomaranc, "Grant Park and Burnham Park," in AIA Guide to Chicago, ed. Alice Sinkevitch (New York: Harcourt Brace, 1993), 40.

In addition to clearly denoting public accessibility, landscaping was a quick and effective way to demonstrate progress in what was otherwise a very slow process. The aesthetic of the landscape design set the stage for the modern architecture that would come in due course, as suggested in a letter from IIT Business Manager R. J. Spaeth to Brandt Brothers, a Chicago landscaping service: "You may know that the Illinois Institute of Technology has a development program under way which calls for the rehabilitation of the entire area bounded by 32d, State, and 34th streets, and the New York Central [Railroad] right-of-way. Because of the war, building operations have had to be suspended. We are anxious, however, to begin in a small way on the landscaping of the area."²⁶⁶ The Near South Side Plan's seemingly infinite park was proffered as public space, accessible to all: as at IIT, none of the projects was fenced off; nothing but the public streets and the footprints of the buildings interrupted the carpet's verdant horizontal plane – the urbanized horizon of a redirected manifest destiny (fig. 3.33). Michael Reese Hospital's campus even provided a deliberate transition between the 'man-made landscape' of Chicago's grid and the 'natural landscape' of the lakeshore: the hospital's buildings shift their

²⁶⁶ R. J. Spaeth, letter to Brandt Brothers Landscaping, 30 January 1943, Gilbert Force papers, 10F1 Building and Grounds, "Building and Grounds Pardhun Correspondence to 1948," IIT Archives, Paul V. Galvin Library.

formal allegiance from one to the other as one moves eastward across the site. The correlation of man-made and natural landscapes was three-dimensional as well, establishing a new, spatial, organic order within the city. In The Survival of Capitalism, Henri Lefebvre draws a distinction between nature and a "second nature." If nature is destroyed to found urbanism, then urbanism must, in turn, reconstruct nature. This second nature, an urban nature, is space: "the town, anti-nature or non-nature ... produced space, the urban."²⁶⁷ The space provided by the green carpet, combined with the volumes of space designed as voids within each one of the Near South Side's campus designs, was a new urban nature as significant to Chicago's development as Burnham's development of the lakeshore and the innovation of landfill had been in the early part of the century. It offered a physical and public correlation to the political and economic overlaps among the Near South Side's institutions.

What could be called 'inner-city landfill,' or land acquisition, was the keystone to all development on the Near South Side, for every project within the plan depended on a tabula rasa in order to construct its envisioned campus. Until the passage of the Illinois State Blighted Areas

²⁶⁷ Henri Lefebvre, The Survival of Capitalism, trans. Frank Bryant (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1976), 15.

Redevelopment Act in 1947, land-acquisition strategies for private institutions were limited to IIT's method of third-party buying and Michael Reese's tactic of engaging the CHA. Attesting that "neither the demolition nor repair of an occasional building changes the character of a blighted neighborhood," the act made the acquisition of large parcels of land available through purchase, the powers of eminent domain, and "the use of public funds to squeeze the water out of the inflated values of land and structures."²⁶⁸ This legislation thoroughly transformed the dynamics of urban development in Chicago, and furthermore served as a model for subsequent federal legislation that would enable large-scale urban-renewal projects throughout the country during the 1950s (fig. 3.34).²⁶⁹

The first project to be developed under the auspices of the new act was Lake Meadows, an integrated private housing development on 101 acres just south of Michael Reese Hospital along Lake Michigan. The

²⁶⁸ John McKinlay, Chairman, Chicago Land Clearance Commission, Redevelopment Project Number 1: A Report to the Mayor and the City Council of the City of Chicago and to the Illinois State Housing Board (March 1949), 5–6.

²⁶⁹ A diagram, replete with dynamic arrows denoting fast action, depicts the process underwritten by the act: based on information gathered via surveys and studies, the Chicago Land Clearance Commission (CLCC) determined what properties should be condemned and how they should be redeveloped, subject to the approval of the City Council and the State Housing Board. Reflecting a Keynesian influence, the CLCC's powers of land acquisition, tenant relocation, demolition, construction, and sale were funded by city bond issues and money allocated from the state; federal support was included after the Federal Housing Act was passed in 1949.

Chicago Land Clearance Commission (CLCC) acquired and cleared the land of its 741 residential structures (originally containing 1,127 dwelling units; by 1949 these had been divided to create 2,782 units), and then sold it at cost to the New York Life Insurance Company, which developed a 1,404-unit apartment project consisting of 13 buildings on the site designed by Skidmore, Owings, and Merrill.²⁷⁰ Low-income residents displaced by the project were relocated to the 800-unit Dearborn Homes, the above-mentioned CHA project located immediately north of the IIT campus; once so cleared, the site formed a tabula rasa landfill within the dense Chicago grid. Almost every Near South Side project profited from the CLCC's powers: in 1953, Michael Reese Hospital petitioned for and received land for housing to the west of its campus, and in 1955, land between State Street and Michigan Avenue was made available to IIT for purchase to develop student and faculty housing.²⁷¹

Although the famed Chicago grid was respected in the SSPB's proposal, it was nonetheless loosened: "redevelopment," according to the

²⁷⁰ John McKinlay, Chairman, CLCC, Redevelopment Project No. 1: A Second Report, The New York Life Insurance Company Redevelopment Plan (July 1950), 10–18. According to the CLCC Progress Report of 1955 (Chicago: CLCC, 1955), "Of the 725 parcels in the area, 562 were obtained by negotiation" (10), which suggests that the other 163 were obtained via forcible eviction.

CCLC, "should change the outmoded street pattern and provide open spaces for grass and trees, parks and playgrounds."²⁷² The SSPB Plan replaced Chicago's dense blocks with half-mile-square superblocks (figs. 3.35 and 3.36). As at IIT, each superblock's perimeter was left permeable, thereby maintaining public accessibility – sometimes visual and sometimes physical – across the entire 7-square-mile area. Also in keeping with the model put forth by IIT, the ratios of footprint to ground plane were kept low (for example, Dearborn Homes covered only 10 percent of its site), leaving large, open, landscaped areas for pedestrian and recreation use. Higher building heights allowed planners to create open space while still accommodating the necessary population densities, although the plan never aspired to replicate the extreme population density of the housing that it replaced.²⁷³ Unlike earlier modern examples of superblock planning, the figured fields of the envisioned South Side Plan mixed densities, programs, and heights in order to diversify the urban experience of the block.

²⁷¹ Michael Reese Hospital, A Community Apartment Homes Project (1953) and CLCC, Site Designation Report for Slum and Blighted Area Redevelopment Project (11 October 1955).

²⁷² McKinlay, Redevelopment Project Number 1: A Report to the Mayor, 5.

²⁷³ "The percentage of building coverage in the area [Near South Side before redevelopment] is 31% of the net buildable area (not including streets, alleys, and

This emphasis on diversifying the blocks marked Elizabeth Wood's tenure as executive secretary of the Chicago Housing Authority from its inception in 1937 to her ouster in 1954 (ostensibly for "incompetency," but more likely for her firm integrationist stance). It was only after 1954 that repetitive high-rise slab structures or towers became the CHA norm. George Frederick Keck and William Keck's Prairie Courts, designed between 1951 and 1956, epitomize the Wood years²⁷⁴ (fig. 3.37). Sixty-eight two-story row-house units provide direct access to the site's landscaped park. The project's high proportion of low-density housing is compensated for by two seven-story and one fourteen-story slab structures, providing 274 smaller units. Architectural Forum praised the project when it was finished: "This well-rounded-community type of housing is of course more intricate to design than pure high rise or row housing, but it is a solution which avoids monotony and gets a good word from everyone."²⁷⁵ Later, as economics pushed ideology out of the forefront, the high-rise CHA project became

sidewalks, which is almost twice the percentage for the city as a whole." McKinlay, Redevelopment Project Number 1: A Report to the Mayor, 14.

²⁷⁴ "My defense of row houses starts with the assumption that one designs good living space for families with regard for functions other than just cooking, eating, bathing and sleeping," Elizabeth Wood argued in "The Case for the Low Apartment," in Architectural Forum 96:1 (January 1952), 102. "These other important functions relate in general to social, recreational, physical and creative activities."

²⁷⁵ Wood, "The Case for the Low Apartment:" 106.

the cost-effective solution for addressing Chicago's housing shortage. Under Wood, however, the CHA projects were extruded from the ground at differing levels (even if many were remarkably bare, even brutal, in their lack of detailing), creating a diverse landscape rather than a homogenizing backdrop of towers and slabs. Additionally, the programs of the early CHA projects called for programmatic diversity, incorporating educational and community facilities in the housing superblocks. Ultimately, budgeting eliminated almost all of this variety. The desire for a diversified scale, arrangement, and programming was, as at IIT, meant to create an environment that provided visual variety for the individual moving through its spaces. And, also as at IIT, the green carpet that underlay the campus unified the block. As public housing abandoned this varied schema for a more repetitive tower-in-the-park strategy, the sameness of the towers made the carpet's unifying role redundant and, further, eliminated the potential for "kinesthetic" perception, reducing the individual's mode of perception to the "pure scanning" mode noted by Hildebrand.

Private development projects were more successful at maintaining the model of the mixed campus. Skidmore, Owings, and Merrill's Lake Meadows had two twenty-three-story slabs, five twelve-story apartment towers, and ten two-story garden apartments (comprising a total of 1,400

units), a community recreation center and a shopping center, all of which were placed so as to define a specific mini-urbanism for its 68-acre site, while also responding to the site's immediate context (fig. 3.38). Low-rise row housing was insulated from the parkway by the other programs and was placed closer to the lake, while the slab housing obtained the lake view from a higher vantage point inland.²⁷⁶ The commercial complex occupied the corner of 35th Street and South Parkway, the primary traffic arteries and therefore the most public portion of the site. In short, the planning resembles that of the IIT campus; placement is determined by function (traffic), view, and a desire for variety. The expansive green lawn surrounding and connecting all the buildings created a fluid urbanscape.

The diversified, mixed-rise community idealized in the Near South Side Plan and exemplified in some of its projects was not an attempt to reproduce a suburban context within the city, despite suburbia's postwar hegemony. Suburbanization of the urban is precisely what the Chicago Plan Commission's 1941 proposal for the Near South Side had suggested, in a vain attempt to harness the illusory garden city 'panorama' that was

²⁷⁶ The SSPB hoped that the Illinois Central railroad tracks, which divided the site from the lake, could someday be covered over, thereby creating direct access to beaches and the water.

sapping the city during those years²⁷⁷ (fig. 3.39). The SSPB not only saw such neighborhood planning as an impractical and nostalgic vision unrealistically harkening back to rural America: they also feared that this idyllic vision was often used to manipulate urban racial demographics. In 1948, board member Reginald Isaacs, who was also the planning director of Michael Reese Hospital, asserted that defining neighborhoods along racial or religious lines – a common proposal among subdivision adherents – was no different than prescribing ghettos and preventing the social mobility of minority groups. Isaacs concluded his argument with a critique of suburbia's homogenization that echoes Thorstein Veblen's Theory of the Leisure Class of 1899 and presages contemporary arguments regarding the politics and neuroses underlying popular consumption: "The notion that man is happier if he shares the same values as his next door neighbor is peculiar – John Doe living in suburb 'A' shares the same keep-up-with-the-

²⁷⁷ For an analysis of the CPC's proposals, particularly in terms of its "neighborhood definition," see Bruce Blossat's Remaking Chicago, a reprinted series of articles published in the Chicago Daily News 13 February to 6 March 1945, especially page 15, which provides a "before and after" analysis of a southwestern Chicago neighborhood, depicted in grid form in the "before" image and in curving streetscapes in the "after" image. See also a similar evaluation in The Chicago Sun: "The Sun Looks Ahead to Postwar Chicago," by Milburn Ackers, who notes that "In those unoccupied subdivisions on Chicago's fringes, the commission projects a type of development that would give the city many neighborhoods similar in design to the best found in the suburbs. It suggests the amendment of the city's building code in a manner permitting the substitution of the curvilinear for the rectilinear or gridiron development." Chicago Sun reprint, September-October, 1943: 6.

Jones ideal as neighbor John Smith in their Veblenian state of 'conspicuous leisure,' vying with each other in 'conspicuous consumption' – and in constant anxiety."²⁷⁸ Isaacs's concern for the psychological well-being of the urban dweller resembles Mies's story of moving day: both men sought an urbanism that tried to mitigate and ameliorate rather than flee from the conditions of the modern metropolis.

Although Alan Colquhoun has argued that a superblock can never play a representational role within the city, the figured fields of the Near South Side, following IIT's lead did – I would argue – forge a new form of symbolic urbanism.²⁷⁹ The Near South Side Plan makes space rather than buildings representational. In the original scheme for the Lake Meadows project, for example (3.40), the street 'facade' of the development resonates as a public front: a formal space is captured as a cube between the two large residential slabs (and further underscored by the more formal landscape treatment in this part of the project). In contrast, space flows

²⁷⁸ Reginald Isaacs, "Are Urban Neighborhoods Possible?" NAHO (National Association of Housing Officials) Journal of Housing (July–August 1948), 178.

²⁷⁹ "The superblock is more (and less) than a building. It has implications of size and complexity but also of the lowering of architectural voltage, because, unlike the representational buildings of the past, it is unable to acquire the status of a metaphor." Alan Colquhoun, "The Superblock" (1971), republished in Colquhoun, Essays in Architectural Criticism: Modern Architecture and Historical Change (Cambridge, Mass.: The MIT Press, 1981), 98.

freely around the lower-scaled, asymmetrically-placed row houses, in the project's 'backyard' area closer to the lake. Space can become symbolic without being turned into a literal metaphor along the classical lines of representation. As Peter Smithson has commented admiringly, it is space and not the mega-structure that maintains IIT's entire ensemble: "That Space itself can be the matrix of a conglomerate ordering is a statement about this kind of making."²⁸⁰ The Near South Side's landscaped "new frontier" – the "new and vast facade" advocated by Giedion, Sert, and Léger and rendered topographical by Mies – flows across the multiple campuses of the Near South Side Plan, representing "a new freedom" of accessibility and publicness and an implication of total flexibility and movement.

The visual representation of accessibility suggested the accessibility of the planning process itself. "It is easy in a big city for people to sit back and take a cynical, hopeless attitude toward politics and community problems," Arthur Hillman and Robert Casey concluded in Tomorrow's Chicago. "Democracy has been compared with a sleeping giant who occasionally wakes and flexes his muscles or at least scratches his back...."

²⁸⁰ Peter Smithson, February-April, 1991, "Functional to Passage," ILA and UD Year Book, 1991–1992 Urbino, in Changing the Art of Inhabitation (London: Artemis, 1994), 62.

When the stakes are big, the going is tough. But, as the record of Chicago shows, people are not helpless. Citizens can see the effects of their influence. Public improvements on a planned basis have become realities when competent leadership has been matched by strong public support."²⁸¹ Or, as Reginald Isaacs explained, "Through [community participation], the people will become confident that the area will be rebuilt according to a comprehensive plan, democratically determined by the people themselves, and not, as is often the case, by the technician and the official alone."²⁸² Because they had to operate in the messy milieus of metropolitan policymaking, planning experts, whose role (as noted above) was rendered indispensable by metaphors of medical emergency, required public support. The CLCC's approval by the City Council and State Housing Board, for example, was subject to public hearings. Therefore, in addition to advocating new urban legislation in order to achieve their new urban visions, planners also had to concentrate on public relations. Exhibitions, newspaper and magazine articles, free pamphlets, and even radio broadcasts were all employed to inform and

²⁸¹ Arthur Hillman and Robert J. Casey, *Tomorrow's Chicago* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1953): 164.

²⁸² Isaacs, "A Hospital Plans," 352.

garner public support²⁸³ (fig. 3.41). This new recognition of the urban resident as a political consumer was an additional result of the city's Keynesian transformation. As David Harvey has written,

urban politics had to change its spots. The success of the Keynesian project depended upon the creation of a powerful alliance of class forces comprising government, corporate capital, financial interests, and all those interested in land development. Such an alliance had to find ways to direct and channel a broadening base of consumer sovereignty and increasing social competition over consumption and redistribution.²⁸⁴

As Colquhoun remarked, superblock planning restructured urban politics, concentrating power in corporate capital: "much of [the modern city] consists of large pieces of real estate, each of which is financed and organized as a single entity ... [with] one common factor: the enormous reserves of capital that exist in the modern economy which enable either private or public agencies, or a combination of both, to gain control over,

²⁸³ To cite one instance, "The Metropolitan Housing Council sponsored and prepared with the assistance of the Housing Authority, Planning Commission, State Housing Board, Institute of Design, Cook county Highway Department, Mayor's Race Relations Committee, and the U of C, a 'Chicago of the Future' exhibit. The exhibit was held during the summer in the Marshall Field & Company's department store." *AIP Bulletin* 1:1 (January 1945), 3.

²⁸⁴ David Harvey, *The Urbanization of Capital: Studies in the History and Theory of Capitalist Urbanization* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1985), 208.

and make a profit from, ever larger areas of urban land."²⁸⁵ Given the displacements that resulted from urban renewal, it would be false to imagine that the speculative development that occurred on Chicago's Near South Side represented consumer power. A transcript from a trial in which residents being displaced by the Lake Meadows project appealed the CLCC designation of their neighborhood as blighted reveals how difficult it was for individual landowners to oppose the CLCC's requisitely large-scale land parceling. When challenged by the residents' attorney, urban sociologist Louis Wirth, brought in by the CLCC to support its definition of blight, had to admit that the "sum of the area was greater than the parts of its individual blocks." Even if a block was surveyed as being "100% okay" in terms of its own structures, it could be designated a blighted area if "contiguous or contingent to other blocks which are blighted, if in a state of occupancy which makes it a menace to health or morals, or if the health rate or delinquency rate are far above ordinary in negative aspects."²⁸⁶ The inevitable consequence of such loosely worded

²⁸⁵ Colquhoun, "Superblock:" 83.

²⁸⁶ Louis Wirth testimony, *CLCC vs. Inez White: State of Illinois, County of Cook, September 26, 1951*, n.p., Frances Loeb Library, Harvard University, special collections. One of the rhetorical highlights of this trial came when the residents' attorney challenged the court's right to use Wirth as an expert witness: "A further objection is this, that the basis of the training and background of the doctor [Louis Wirth] suggests himself as an expert of a

legislation was that many perfectly "healthy" structures were wrecked to enable the Near South Side's tabula rasa or "second nature." It was not until 1953, when the Community Conservation Act was passed, that efforts to preserve sound structures were given official recourse.

Despite the uneven politics between the consumer and the corporate entity— the residents and the institutions – that so marked the Near South Side, I would nevertheless posit that Mies's understanding of the subject as being at once part of a collective – part of a planar logic – and also an individual – part of a perspectival logic – reveals the shift from the bourgeois public sphere to a consumerist mass subject, laying the groundwork, as it were, for the multiplied subjectivities of our contemporary understanding of the public realm. In an article entitled "The Mass Public and the Mass Subject," public sphere theorist Michael Warner reads the consumer sovereignty identified by Harvey as having been instrumental in the redefinition of the public sphere. If the "modern" public sphere, as theorized by Jürgen Habermas, was an abstract entity whose anonymity was one means of guaranteeing the citizens' disinterested concern for the public good, the postwar public realm is one that is mediated by the

theory of theories. That being true, the only testimony that he can give according to his foundation and his training is theoretical."

discourse of consumption: as individual and collective consumers, we make symbolic identifications in a field of choice. In other words, where the subject of the 18th century public sphere cannot be differentiated, consumer capitalism made available an endlessly differentiated subject.²⁸⁷ While some of the Near South Side Plan's components may strike us today as rather naïve responses to this transformation of the metropolitan or modern subject, and while the Plan did not erase the iniquities between the residents and the institutions, it nevertheless represents a collective attempt on the part of these institutions to foster a new public realm.

At its most successful, this new realm, as defined on the Near South Side, depended upon two forms of bas-relief, one formal and one programmatic. Ultimately, however, the variations of scale that rendered the Prairie Courts project so successful, or the spatial complexity and programmatic variety underlying the IIT campus (which had a library and student union, as well as lab and classroom buildings) or in the overall plan (which called for extensive shopping venues, as well as museums, community centers, and recreational facilities along the lakeshore) were compromised. The idealism that fueled the vision of the new postwar realm

was strong enough, in short, to tie the institutions together during their land acquisition period, but it began petering once these parcels were fixed. The collective programs that transcended the boundaries of a particular institutional superblock gradually dropped away from the Near South Side Planning Board's agenda. As Colquhoun has remarked, superblock planning restructured urban politics, concentrating power in corporate capital: "much of [the modern city] consists of large pieces of real estate, each of which is financed and organized as a single entity ... [with] one common factor: the enormous reserves of capital that exist in the modern economy which enable either private or public agencies, or a combination of both, to gain control over, and make a profit from, ever larger areas of urban land."²⁸⁸ Even if the figured superblocks of the Near South Side were part of a larger, collective field, they nevertheless remained powerful enough to dominate specific zones of that field.

²⁸⁷ Michael Warner, "The Mass Public and the Mass Subject" in Bruce Robbins, ed. *The Phantom Public Sphere* (Minneapolis and London: University of Minnesota Press, 1993): 234-256.

²⁸⁸ Colquhoun, "Superblock:" 83.

Rethinking the Gravity Field

It is no secret that the story of the Near South Side Plan does not have a fairy-tale ending. But this is a complex story, not something onto which you can tag a Disney-scripted celebration, complete with picket fences and children playing in lawn sprinklers. It is a story that embodies the complexities of urban renewal, canonical modernism, postwar economics, and the particular circumstances of Chicago – the grid, the lakefront, the politics, and its changing racial makeup. Nevertheless, storytelling has a tendency to simplify and when this tale gets told, it is cast as a tabula rasa spreading from IIT to the Stateway Gardens, the notorious high-rise, low-income housing that runs alongside the Dan Ryan Expressway south of the campus (fig. 3.42). The complexities underlying the planning of the entire area, however, reveal that blame for failure or credit for success can hardly lay with a single figure, a single institution, a single scheme, or a single legislative act.

Between 1939 and 1958 (when Mies retired from IIT, by which time Henry Heald had left IIT for New York University, Reginald Isaacs had left Michael Reese for Harvard, and Elizabeth Wood had been ousted from the Chicago Housing Authority), the Near South Side's urban bas-relief wove together the different institutions sited there, differentiating the seemingly

neutral and totalizing traits normally ascribed to the Chicago grid or to canonical modernism. The topography that the early Plan threw into relief included the multiple layers of networked relationships among the institutions, the architects, the planners, and the agencies involved, as well as the formal terms of the space itself.

If the bas-relief of the Near South Side failed in certain respects, that does not warrant a total abandonment of what was a prescient if naive urban strategy. Its prescience lies in its susceptibility to the complexities of urban space and its complicity in the different networks that it spun within that space: its effort to engage the collective and the individual simultaneously, to link institutions with institutions, local politics to federal politics, private economies to public ones. IIT works because it is like a mini-city where mixed uses and scales figure space in order to provide for an empathetic, variegated, and animated public sphere. The figured fields of the campus superblocks provided a means of balancing the individualism of the real-estate parcel with the collectivity of the shared public realm. Beginning with IIT, the Near South Side Plan pulled the lakeshore's green belt inland, creating a nexus of semi-public open spaces funded by a Keynesian combination of municipal, state, and federal politics with private, local institutions. The topography of this ground plan – the

seemingly inert 'park' of the 'tower in the park' – becomes instead a charged, infrastructural carpet, reflecting the complex relations underlying the entire area.

But this modulated topography constituted a fragile web: even if the story cannot be attributed to a single person or moment, individuals did strengthen its filaments, as evidenced by the roles of figures like Mies, Heald, Isaacs, and Wood. The fragility of the personal relations that underpinned institutional ones is particularly visible in the example of Wood at the Chicago Housing Authority; upon her dismissal, the precariously balanced terms of urbanism in the Near South Side were stretched to the point of snapping: the mid-rise, mixed-use complexes such as Prairie Courts were replaced with homogenizing high-rises such as Stateway Gardens. These CHA projects of the 1950s, which consisted of undifferentiated housing towers combined with no other programs, returned the bas-relief to a field condition: the figures of these towers sit directly on top of an unactivated tabula rasa. One would be hard pressed to find ground-level perspectives of these projects because there is no ambiguity, no differentiation in the experience of their spaces and therefore no need to place the individual within their sites.

In forging a partially figured field at IIT, Mies projected an urbanism that lacked the easy identity of the point or field approach – an urbanism that mirrored the complex topographies of postwar Chicago. Franz Schulze is correct in saying that Mies “sucked everything and everyone into his gravitational field,” but that does not make Mies a “great black hole.” The tabula rasa that resulted from the land clearance of the Near South Side was given formal, programmatic, political, economic, and social contours from the “everything and everyone” that both constituted and surrounded it. For a short while, while the web of the South Side Planning Board was most intact, Mies's gravitational field turned the tabula rasa into a bas-relief of susceptible but provocative semi-figures, thereby transforming modernism's homogeneous field into an articulated, proactive network.

CONCLUSION: CIVIC SPECULATIONS / SPECULATIVE PUBLICS

While it is easy to assume that the writers and the practitioners of the 1940s each formed their own separate and isolated public spheres, an unsigned article from The Architectural Forum — “the architectural magazine of building” — of November, 1948 reveals that the theorists’ discourse of emotion, expression and effect was thoroughly familiar to the professional world at large. Opening with a citation from the 19th century empathy theorist, William Worringer, the article, “Esthetics: The New Technology Has Freed Architecture From Dishonest Symbolism; How Far Can It Be Used As The Basis Of A New Art?,” makes breezy references to Gestalt theory and emerging trends in studies of the psychology of form. Like Mumford’s “Death of the Monument” article of 1937, this text also points to the overwhelming impact that the machine has had both on architecture and on society at large. But instead of turning away from mechanization and standardization, the author sees the mechanical as a given and as such, advocates turning it to aesthetic advantage by learning “how standardized parts can be assembled into wholes of considerable diversity,” and how the release from the hegemony of the structural frame can be formally liberating. Echoing the same thread of thought that one

can trace through Giedion, Léger, Sert, and Langer as well as Saarinen, Eames, Zeckendorf, and Mies, the article concludes that "the most important job of the architect is to create an emotional effect."²⁸⁹

The language of this Architectural Forum article is one of flexibility and ephemeral expression. Rather than imply that there is a single meaning to modernism or a measure for esthetic performativity, it speaks of 'diversities,' 'patterns of motion,' and 'a combination of intuition and experience.' By 1953, however, articles appear writing of "The Meaning" of modern architecture, as if there were only one, and Forum publishes an article reducing the expression of form to simplistic cold war rhetoric ("Architecture makes a good ambassador: note the pretentious classicism of official Soviet architecture abroad, then compare it with the clean and friendly embassies, consulates, information centers and staff apartments now being built by the U.S. in many parts of the free world.)"²⁹⁰ What happened?

²⁸⁹ "Esthetics: The New Technology Has Freed Architecture From Dishonest Symbolism; How Far Can It Be Used As The Basis Of A New Art?" The Architectural Forum (November, 1948): 143-147.

²⁹⁰ "U.S. Architecture Abroad: Modern Design at its Best Now Represents this Country in Foreign Lands," The Architectural Forum (March, 1953): 102-103.

Two answers to this question have themselves played a role in the eclipse of this period from serious scrutiny. The first would be the Habermasian rise and fall narrative: a period of innovative experimentation, fluidity, and expression was brought to a halt by the media's transmittal of a homogenizing cold war message. The second would be the Foucaultean critique of the forces of control that were (are) constantly present in the territories of politics and economics, the wizards in the land of Oz. The market, seemingly open and ever changing, is, in reality, rife with controlling influences. Even Zeckendorf recognized the restrictions and weaknesses that constrained expressive innovation in the building industry. While he did not employ Foucault's militaristic vocabulary, he nevertheless provided a similar message of control to Harvard architecture students in 1951, in a lecture deliciously entitled "Baked Buildings,"

The builder says, "I'm not going to take a chance and build something more beautiful than that, something revolutionary. Maybe I do like a more modern design. But when I take that into a lending institution and they say to me, "What is this plan here? We've never seen that before. We'll discount that by 25 per cent in the amount of a loan you've asked for" — well that puts me out of business. I'm not that kind of builder." And he speaks for 95 per cent of the boys.²⁹¹

²⁹¹ William Zeckendorf, "Baked Buildings," *The Atlantic* (December, 1951): 47.

Similarly, while laws and regulations could enable the development of Chicago's Near South Side, they could simultaneously restrict it, certainly define it.

But Foucault himself warns of the danger of reducing analysis to a formula.²⁹² Both the rise-and-fall narrative and the forces-of-control narrative have become all too rote a means of reading space, form and urbanism. A sophisticated understanding of the mechanisms of control underlying the laws, codes of behavior, and the media should not prevent an appreciation of the possibilities offered by the urban realm's sites of production and reproduction, including commerce and consumption.

If liberal academia has restricted the reading of the commercialized civic as a speculative public sphere (in both senses of the term speculative), this realm has been equally suffocated on another front. Writing in The Atlantic Monthly magazine in 1996, political theorist Michael Sandel pinpointed what he saw to be the cause underlying America's postwar transformation from a political economy of citizenship to a political economy of growth and distributive justice:

²⁹² Michel Foucault, "Questions à Michel Foucault sur la géographie" in Hérodote 1 (1976), translated by Colin Gordon and reprinted in Michel Foucault, Power/Knowledge: Selected Interviews and Other Writings, 1972-1977 (New York: Pantheon, 1972; 1980): 72.

As Keynesian fiscal policy took hold,... the civic strand of economic argument faded from American political discourse. Confronted with an economy too vast to admit republican hopes of mastery, and tempted by the prospect of prosperity, Americans ... found their way to a new understanding of freedom... [which depended] not on our capacity as citizens to share in shaping the forces that govern our collective destiny, but rather on our capacity as persons to choose our values and ends for ourselves.²⁹³

The rampant, profit-seeking individualism that replaced the political economy of citizenship has led, such arguments go, to an urban landscape of suburban sprawl: a consistent, low-density fabric of individual homes punctuated only by the parking lots and warehouses of big box retail.

Lamenting that "American politics has lost its civic voice," historical accounts such as Sandel's reinforce an unrealistic, even reactionary New Urbanist-laced desire to move backwards in time, to a moment when an agrarian economy and small town urbanism dominated the American political landscape, providing an environment intimate and dense enough for everyone to know everyone else – a time when economic and political structures encouraged collective rather than individualized civic life.

Ultimately, it is more productive — and admittedly it is certainly more instrumental — to highlight the proactive threads of the 1940s jungle than

²⁹³ Michael J. Sandel, "America's Search for a New Public Philosophy," *Atlantic Monthly* (March, 1996): 64.

either to try to sort them all out, carefully categorizing them and pinning them down in a restrictive chronology and terminology of territories and control, or to lament the lost world of either the 1940s or the (fictive) collective sphere that it supplanted. As public sphere theorist Arjun Appadurai notes, in analyzing the global market of late twentieth century capitalism,

As group pasts become increasingly parts of museums, exhibits and collections, both in national and transnational spectacles, culture becomes less what Bourdieu would have called a *habitus* (a tacit realm of reproducible practices and dispositions) and more an arena for conscious choice, justification and representation, the latter often to multiple and spatially dislocated audiences.²⁹⁴

Already in Space, Time and Architecture, Giedion recognized the possibility offered by the commercial realm of Rockefeller Center. While the struggles over the definition of civic and public expression during the 1940s (and since) reveals how problematic it might be to accept these very possibilities, I would argue that a definition of the civic that encompasses not only the public sphere of discourse but the private spheres of commerce and of conscious choice enables an exploration of what Appadurai has called 'imagination as a social practice' and grants us

²⁹⁴ Arjun Appadurai, "Disjuncture and Difference in the Global Cultural Economy," Bruce Robbins ed., Phantom Public: 289.

access to the depths of appearance and expression without succumbing to postmodernism's superficialities. The challenge facing the development of a modernism of the publicly empathetic was, ultimately, as focused upon the subject as it was upon the architecture's space and form, for the subject had to be retheorized as a collective of individuals rather than an individual collective. Giedion and others opened the door to an instrumentalization of the spectacle and an appreciation of the possibilities that a market-imbued publicness might offer. Eames and others helped further this understanding of the world of the spectacle, of appearances, and of the imagination, in such a way that Giedion's subject — the collective public (fig. 1.16), all facing the same direction, watching the same spectacle — has been replaced by Eames's multiplied individual subjects (fig. 1.17) occupying the modulated topographies of Mies's Near South Side.

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Fig. 1.1. "Florence. Holy procession, winding about the streets and marketplaces, finally to enter the Cathedral for the culminating ceremony. The slow irregular order of the procession contrasts with the brisk mechanical order of the march: the difference between them is that between two civilizations, and this fact is recorded in the whole design of the city. In the medieval city, of the less geometric type of plan, the tortuous and the unexpected, infinite variety without spatial progression, are characteristics of design. In the later baroque city visual axes and straight lines are urban counterparts of mechanical movement toward a fixed goal: the street to the right of the Campanile shows the new mutation. In the present procession note the relative absence of lookers-on: ritual, like drama in the medieval city, is arranged for participants, who both see and do."

Lewis Mumford, Culture of Cities (NY: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1938): 36.

Fig. 1.2. "Democratic citizens will often have vacillating thoughts, and so language must be loose enough to leave them play. As they never know whether what they say today will fit the facts of tomorrow, they have a natural taste for abstract terms. An abstract word is like a box with a false bottom; you may put in it what ideas you please and take them out again unobserved."
Alexis de Tocqueville, *Democracy in America*, trans. George Lawrence, ed. J.P. Mayer (New York: Doubleday Anchor, 1969): 482.

Drawing: Ron Witte, 1997.

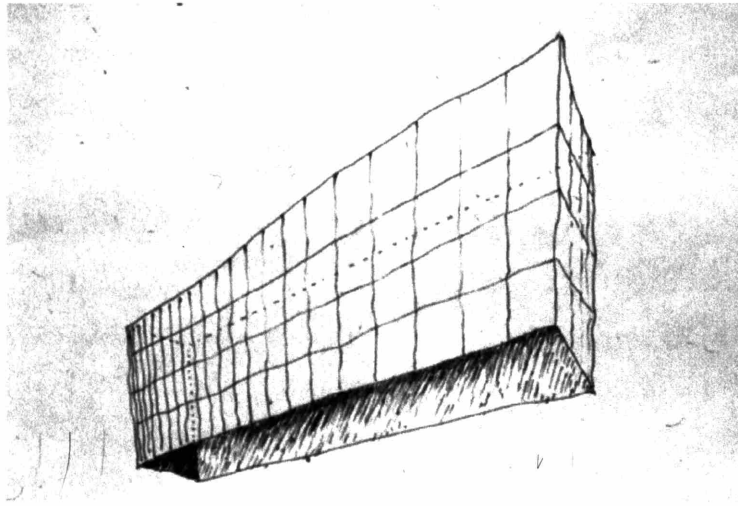
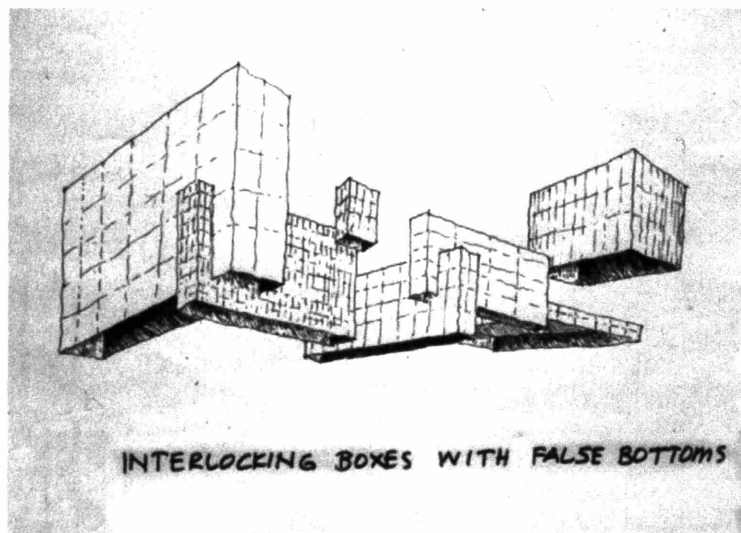
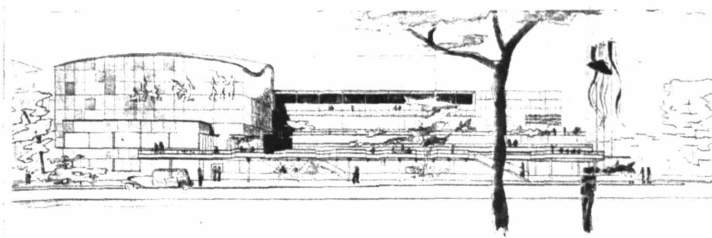


Fig. 1.3: Landscape of boxes with false bottoms.

Drawing: Ron Witte, 1997.





1. Preis oben: Perspektivische Ansicht der Südseite vom Ossa. hier unten: Perspektivische Ansicht vom Ossa; links Alpenquai, angrenzende Terrassen des Tagestaurants, Hof, Rindfleisch mit Festterrasse, schmaler Gartenhof und Eingang von der Claridenstrasse, im Hintergrund der Kongresssaal

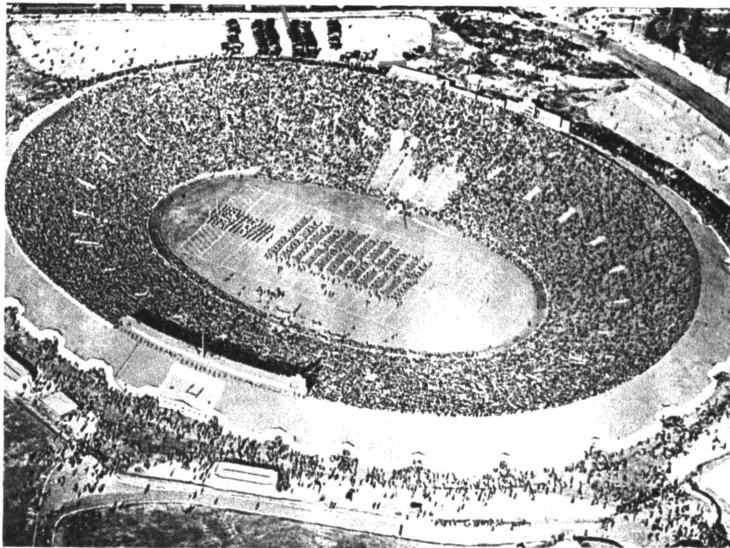
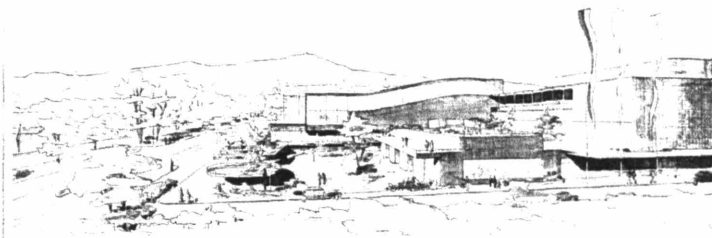


Fig. 1.4: Two perspectives of the winning scheme for the Zurich Kongresshalle competition, 1937 - M.E. Haefeli, W. M. Moser and R. Steiger, architects.

From Peter Meyer, "Der Wettbewerb für das Zürcher Tonhallen- und Kongressgebäude," Das Werk, vol. 3, March, 1937: 69.

Fig. 1.5: Yale Bowl, New Haven, CT

From Gunnar Sundbärg, "Monumentalität," Byggmästaren 22, 1939: 301.

Fig. 1.6: Hermann Göring announcing Hitler's Four Year Plan at the Sportspalast in Berlin, October 28, 1936.

From Elaine S. Hochman, Architects of Fortune: Mies van der Rohe and the Third Reich (NY: Fromm International, 1989; rpt. 1990): 280.

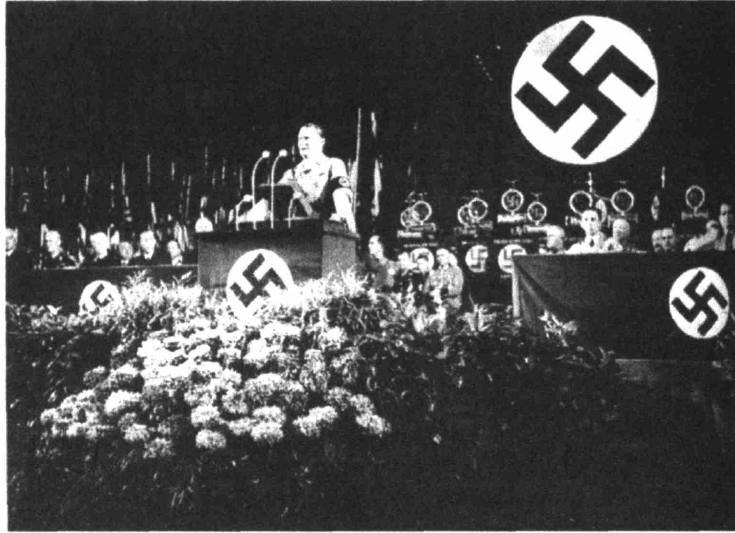
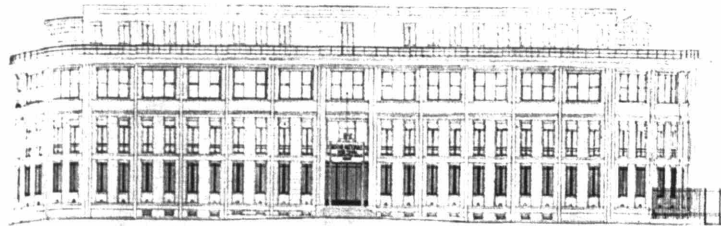


Fig. 1.7. Auguste und G. Perret, Marine-Bauamt, 1930, Paris, Bvd. Victor.

From Peter Meyer, "Diskussion über Monumentalität," Das Werk, vol. 7, July 1940: 191.



Marine-Bauamt, Paris Blvd. Victor
Auguste und G. Perret Paris 1930. Südseite

Ansichten sind erschienen in Werk 1937, S. 88-89

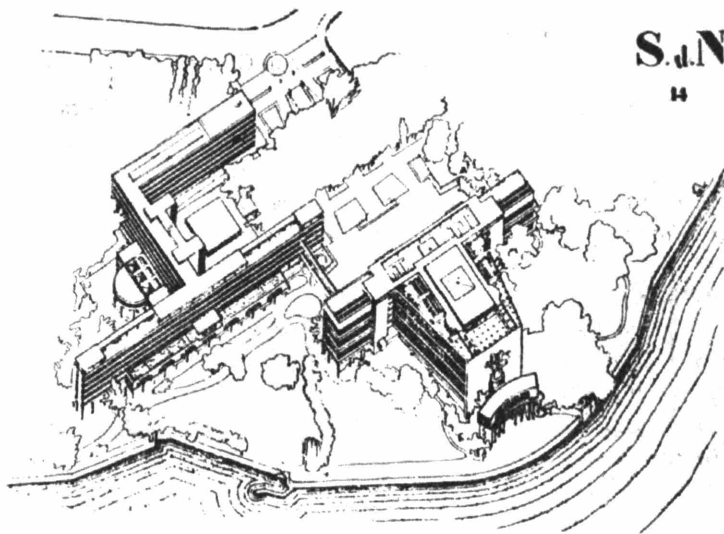


Fig. 1.8. Le Corbusier and Pierre Jeanneret: Scheme for the Palace of the League of Nations at Geneva. 1927.

"The whole development of modern architecture towards a new monumentality would have been advanced for decades if the officials could have understood its quality."

From S.Giedion, "The Need for a New Monumentality," P. Zucker, ed., New Architecture and City Planning (NY: Philosophical Library, 1944): 558.

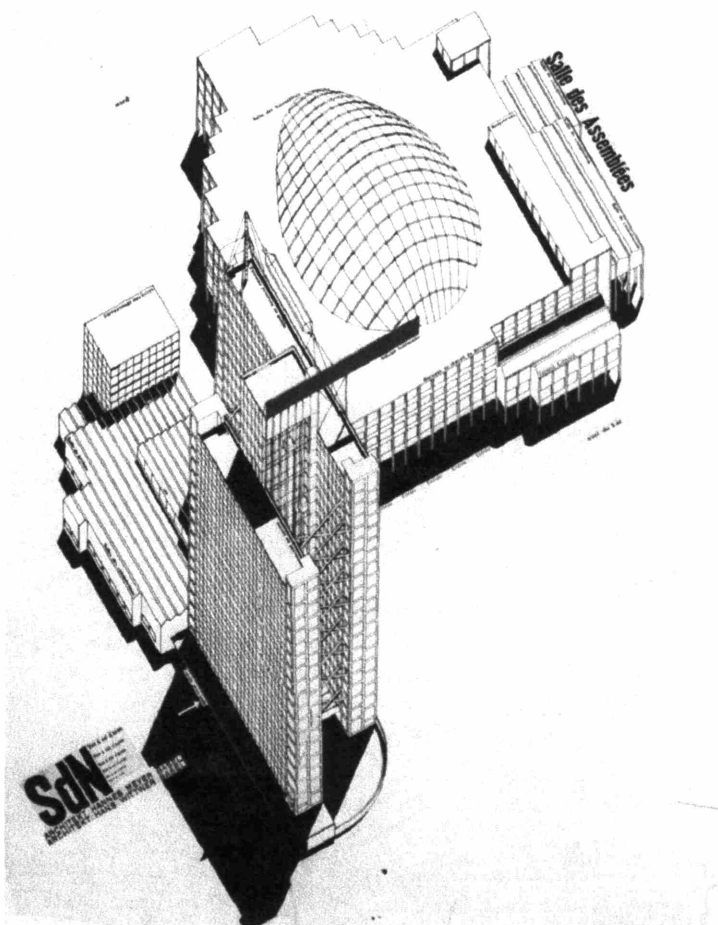


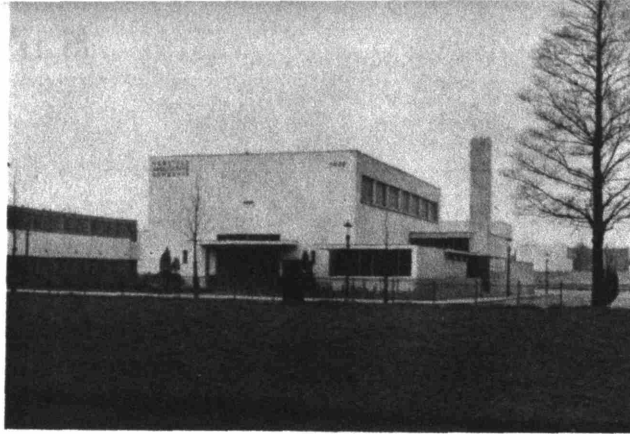
Fig. 1.9: Hannes Meyer, League of Nations project, 1926-1927, axonometric.

From K. Michael Hays, Modernism and the Posthumanist Subject (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1992): 163.

Fig. 1.10: J.J.P. Oud Siedlung Kiefhoek, Rotterdam, 1928-1930 Church.

"A community building of specialized function which forms the high point of interest in a considerable area of standardized building. The subordinate rooms and the rounded chimney serve as accents to the simple rectangular block of the auditorium. Lettering poor and badly placed."

From Henry-Russell Hitchcock and Philip Johnson, The International Style (NY: W.W. Norton, 1932; rpt. 1966): 203.



J. J. P. OUD: SIEDLUNG KIEFHOEK, ROTTERDAM. 1928-1930. CHURCH

A community building of specialized function which forms the high point of interest in a considerable area of standardized building. (See general plan on page 200.) The subordinate rooms and the rounded chimney serve as accents to the simple rectangular block of the auditorium. Lettering poor and badly placed.



Fig. 1.11: Paris Exhibition 1937. Light and sound at the River Seine. "Le fête lumineuse du 18 juin 1937." Architects E. Beaudouin and M. Lods.

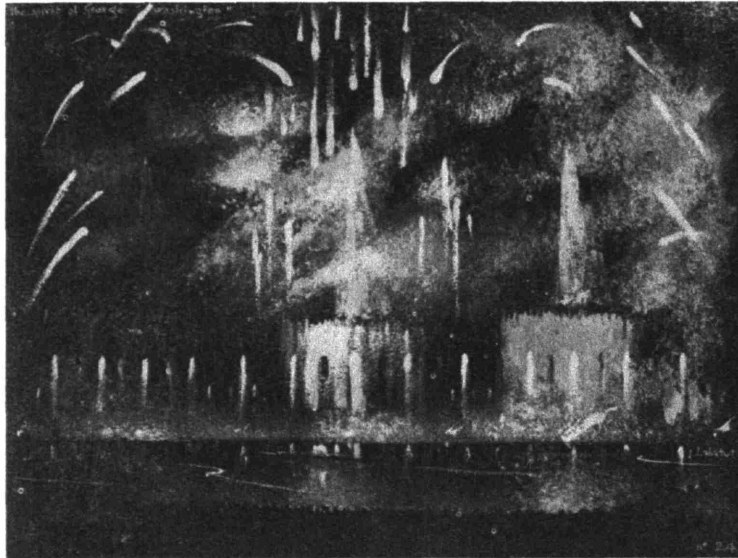
Fig. 1.12: Final [sic] of the Fountain Spectacle "The Spirit of George Washington." Designed by Jean Labatut, New York World's Fair, 1939-40.

"We are aware of the fact that spectacles of "Ephemeral Architecture," as the modern form of fireworks were called, require a sequence representing the development in time of the different stages. The sketch in itself does not give more than a hint, it just indicates what is happening at one particular moment.

These spectacles form one of the rare events where our modern possibilities are consciously applied by the architect-artists. They use the structural values of idfferent materials as the medium to intensity the emotional expression, just as the cubists liked to introduce sand, fragments of wood, or scraps of paper in their paintings. In this case, the architect made use of different "structural" values:

incandescent and mercury light, gas flames, colored by chemicals, firework, smoke, water-jets, painted on the night sky and synchronized with music. To give insight into how this method works, a description of a specific case may follow: "The Spirit of George Washington" represents the symbol of the American Flag by three colors: red, white, and blue. To get the maximum of luminosity and depth in the colors, the red was obtained by interference of red glass between incandescent light, water-jets and smoke (which gives it volume and scale). The white was obtained by a combination of incandescent and mercury light. The blue was formed by the interference of blue glass over mercury light only. The three national colors were given additional force by means of gas fires into which chemicals were blown and proper grouping of red, white and blue firework shells."

From Sigfried Giedion, "The Need for a New Monumentality," Paul Zucker, ed., New Architecture and City Planning (NY: Philosophical Library, 1944): 562-563.



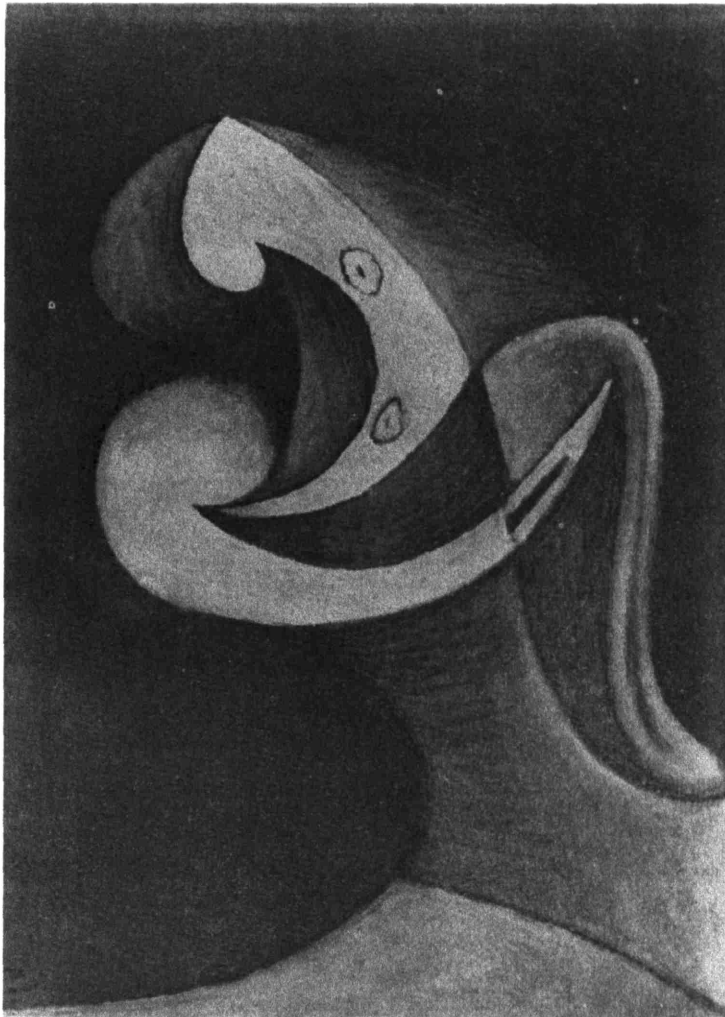


Fig. 1.13: Pablo Picasso: Monument en Bois, 1930. Oil Painting.

"Sketch for a modern sculpture of enormous scale (the human figure at the lower left corner may indicate the approximate dimension). ...Picasso did not specify for what purpose his studies for a monument in 1930 were meant. But it is now clear that these sketches forecast the reality and that the inherent significance of the symbol has not revealed itself until today.

It symbolizes our attitude towards the war. It does not glorify war in a heroic gesture as the Napoleonic "Arc de Triomphe" on the "Place de l'Etoile." It stands as a memorial to the horror of this period and of its tragical conflict: to know that mechanized killing is not the way to solve human problems, but that it has to be done nevertheless.

It is frightening. It tells the truth. Its forms have the "terribilità" that-for his contemporaries-emanated from Michelangelo's late sculptures, a threatening which Picasso translates in present day language."

From Sigfried Giedion, "The Need for a New Monumentality," Paul Zucker, ed., New Architecture and City Planning (NY: Philosophical Library, 1944): 562-563.

Fig. 1.14: Saarinen, Saarinen and Swanson, Smithsonian Gallery of Art, 1939, model photo.

Fig. 1.15: Saarinen, Saarinen and Swanson, Smithsonian Gallery of Art, 1939, model photo.

"Eliel and Eero Saarinen and J. Robert F. Swanson: Model of their prize-winning design in the 1939 competition to select an architect for the proposed Smithsonian Gallery of Art, to be erected on the Mall in Washington, D.C. It is expected that the building will be executed immediately after the war."

From Elizabeth Mock, Built in USA 1932-1944 (NY: MoMA, 1944): 24.

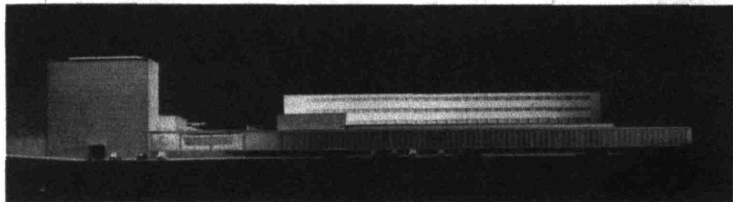
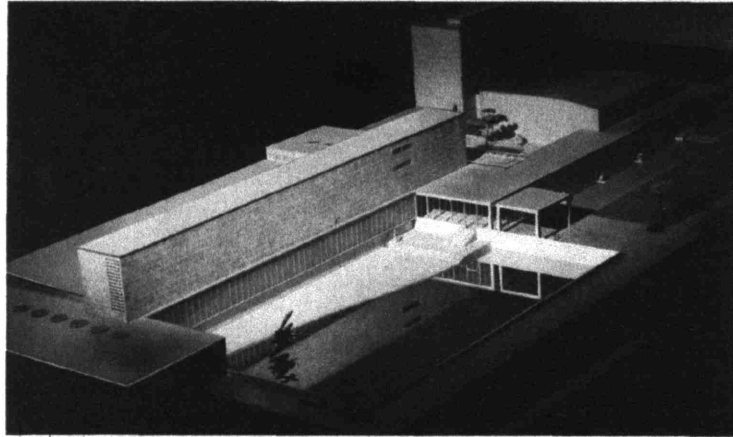




Fig. 1.16: "Spectators at a Sports Event," Martin Munkasci, from the Crowd Series, 1933.

From Sigfried Kracauer, The Mass Ornament, trans. Thomas Y. Levin (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1995): 142.



Fig. 1.17: "Een goed idee ontwerpt zichzelf" (a good idea to do yourself), Gebr de Jong, 1998.

From postcard from "Standpunten: 10 Jaar Vormgeving in Nederland," Kunsthal, Rotterdam, The Netherlands, 1998.

Fig. 2.1: "Rockefeller Center, New York City, 1931-39."

"Air view. The various buildings spread out openly from the highest, the R.C.A. Building, like the vanes of a windmill. Their slablike form represents a revolt against the old type of skyscraper, the imitation of the Gothic tower or the enlargement of the normal four-story block to extreme height, without consideration of new conditions."

From Sigfried Giedion, Space, Time and Architecture (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1941; rpt. 1944): 568.

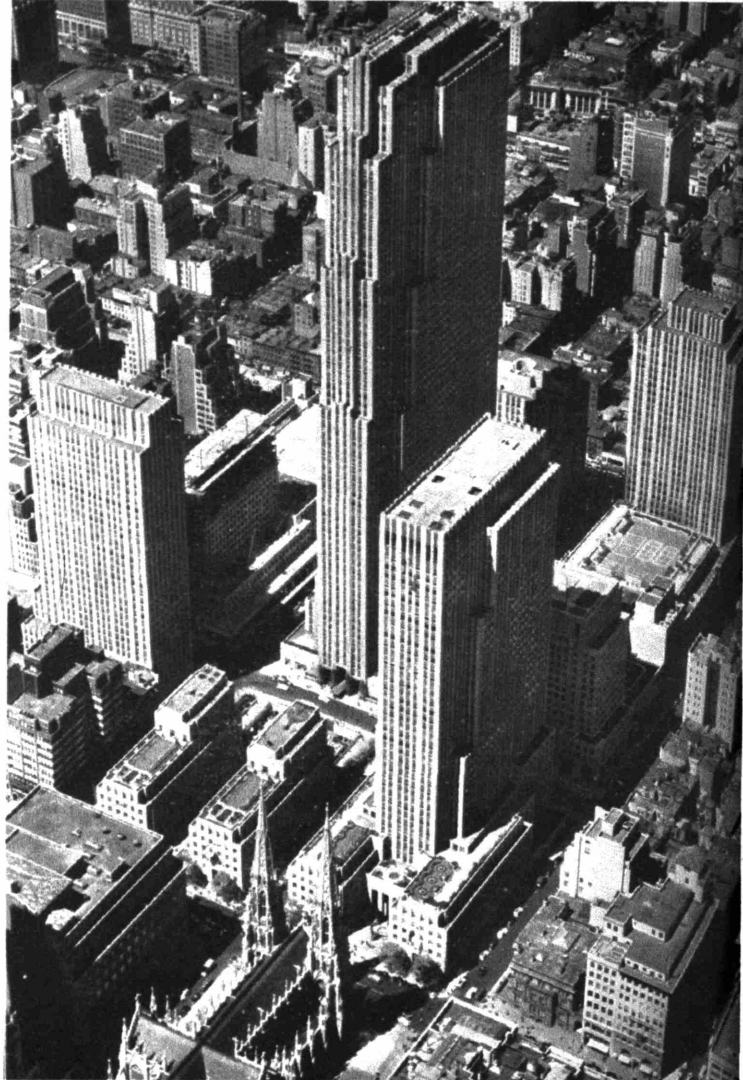




Fig. 2.2: "The slablike skyscraper: R.C.A. Building, Rockefeller Center, New York, 1931-32."

"Seventy stories and 850 feet high, this slab is based on the principle of 27 feet of optimum light for working area around a core containing the elevators and service space."

From Sigfried Giedion, Space, Time and Architecture (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1941; rpt. 1944): 572.

Fig. 2.3: "Rockefeller Center, New York, N.Y. Reinhard & Hofmeister, Corbett, Harrison & MacMurray, Hood & Fouilhoux, architects. 1932-1940."

"If the profiles of the earlier skyscrapers were less blurred with 'set-backs' and superfluous ornament and the ground less cluttered with minor, often symmetrically disposed structures, the result would rival the Pyramids in geometric splendour."

From Elizabeth Mock, Built in USA, 1932-1940 (NY: MoMA, 1944): 102-103.



Fig. 2.4: Daniel Burnham, Chicago Civic Center, 1909.

From Burnham and Bennett, Plan of Chicago, 1909 (NY: Princeton Architectural Press, 1993 rpt.): 112.

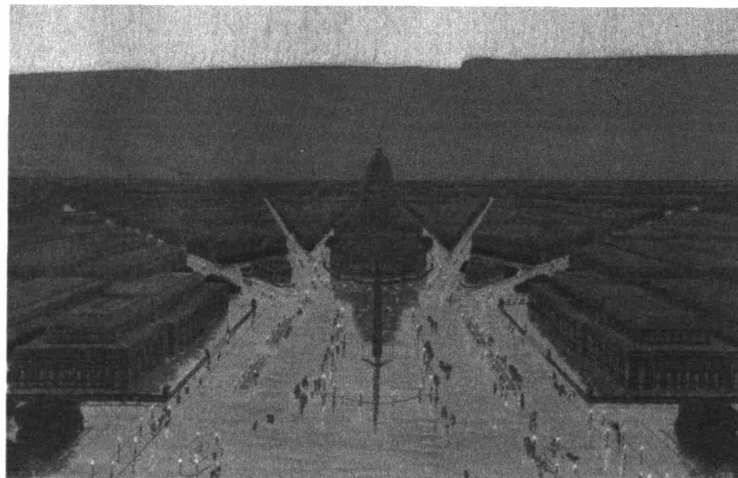
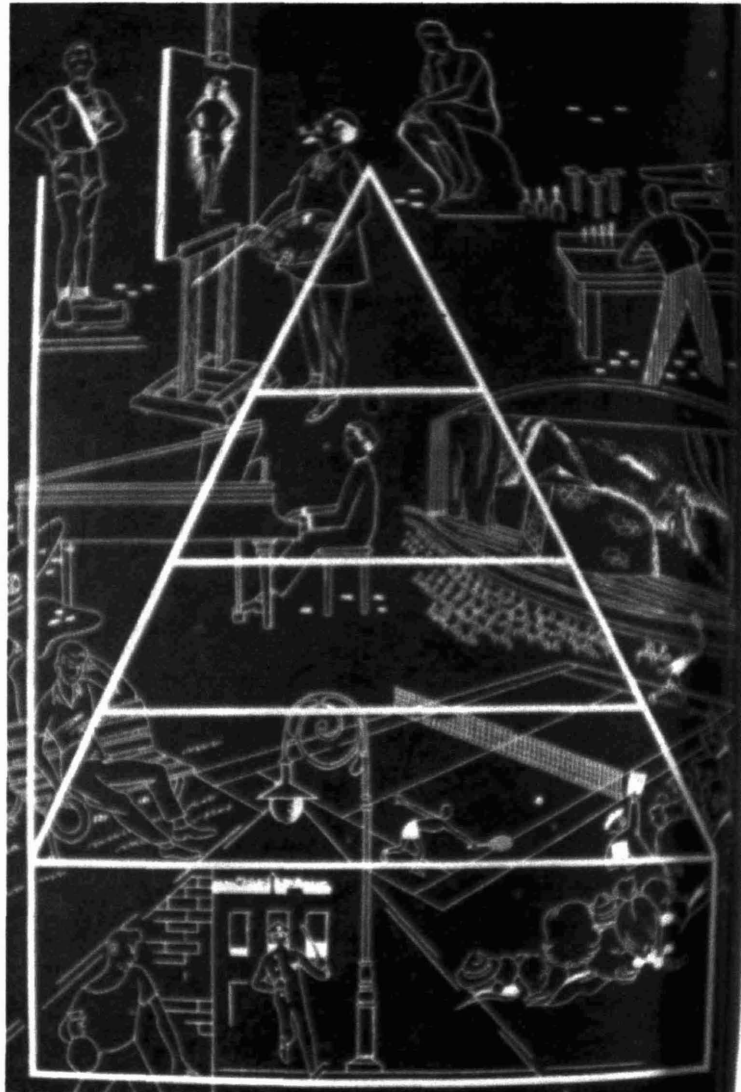




Fig. 2.5: "Memorials That Live" pamphlet cover, 1944.

From George M. Trautman, Memorials That Live (Columbus, OH: American Commission for Living War Memorials, 1944): cover.

Fig. 2.6: Philosophy of Recreation and Leisure, Jay B. Nash, 1953.



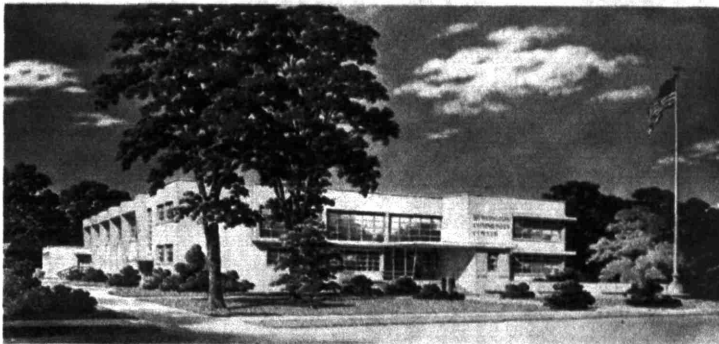


Fig. 2.7: Memorial Recreation Center, F. Ellwood Allen Organization, Park and Recreation Planners, Burlington, VT, 1947.

"Memorial Recreation Center to Have Everything"

From The American City, June, 1947: 91.

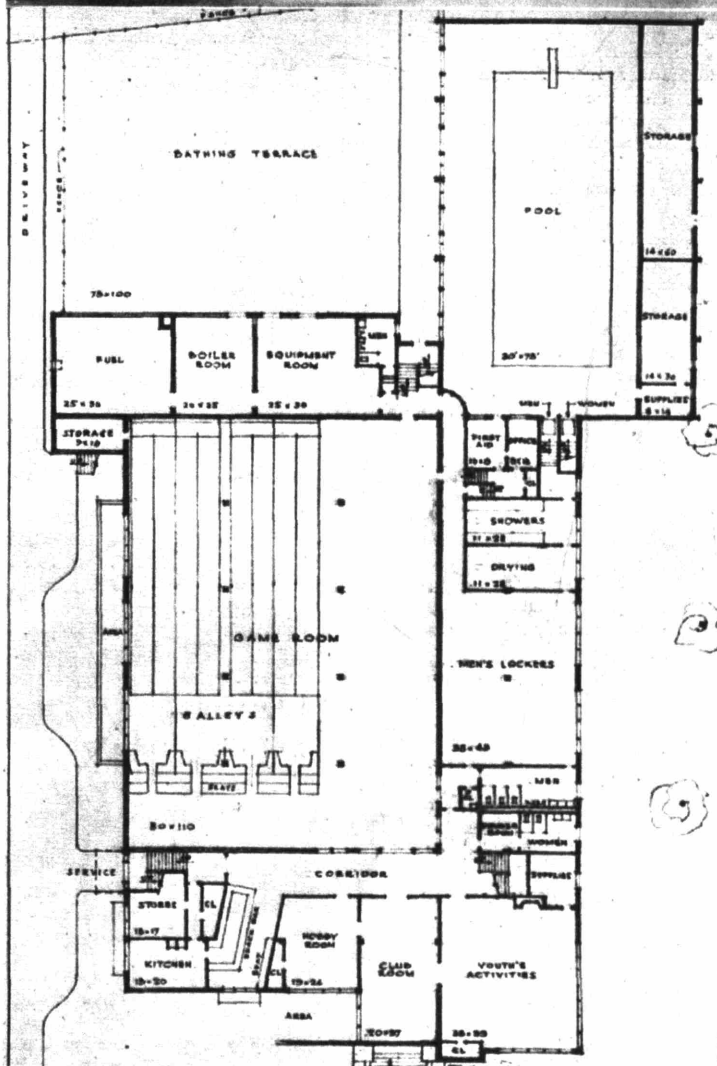


Fig. 2.8: Franklin & Kump and Associates: City Hall, Fresno Street, Fresno, California, 1941.

"Entrance Lobby."

From The Architectural Forum, June, 1944: 71.

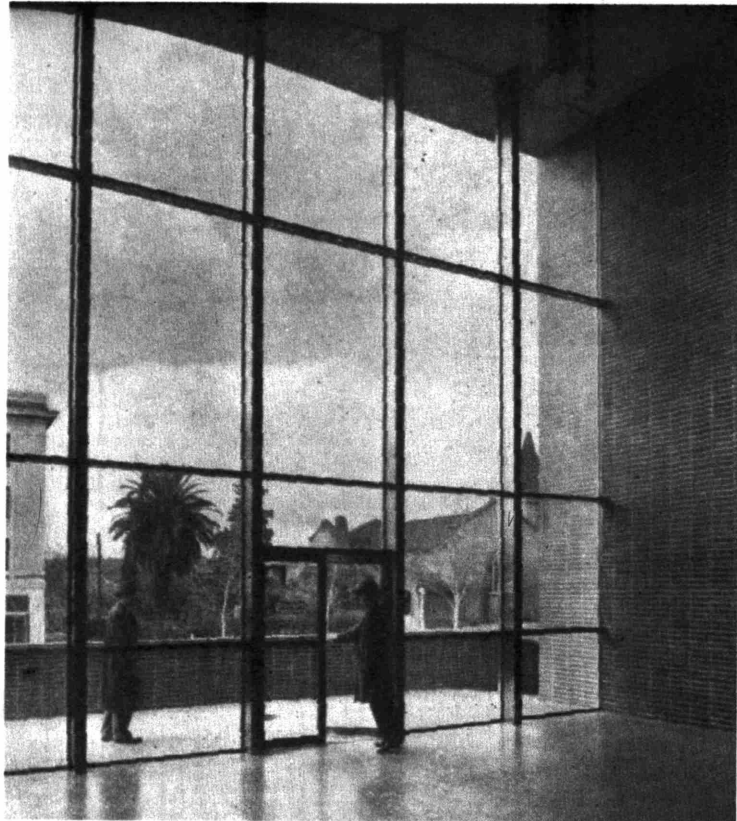


Fig. 2.9. City Hall, Fresno, California. Franklin & Kump & Associates, Architects.

"A city hall has a social importance which must somehow be symbolized."

From The Architectural Forum, June, 1944: 70.



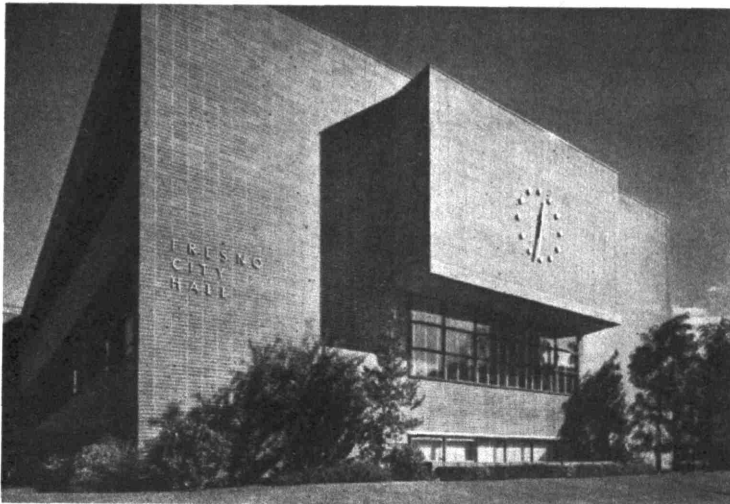


Fig. 2.10. City Hall, Fresno, California. Franklin & Kump & Associates, Architects.

"A cantilevered projection adds extra space to the council chamber."

From The Architectural Forum, June, 1944: 75.



Fig. 2.11. City Hall, Fresno, California. Franklin & Kump & Associates, Architects.

From The Architectural Forum, June, 1944: 67.

Fig. 2.12: Chicago Plan Commission, Civic Center, 1949 (Harry Weese, principal designer).

From Chicago Plan Commission, Chicago Civic Center, March, 1949: 17.

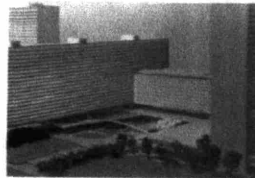


Fig. 2.13: Chicago Civic Center Plaza, 1949.

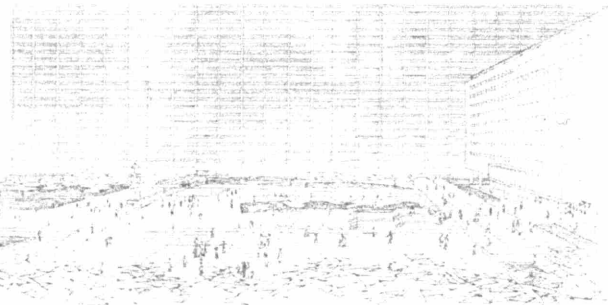
From Chicago Plan Commission, Chicago Civic Center, March, 1949: 29.

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in the conveni-
the government
the elevators.
and its direct
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vels of govern-
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The Plaza staff photograph



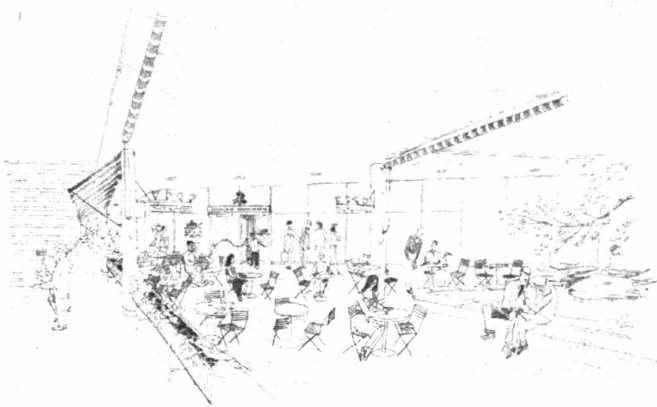


Fig. 2.14: Chicago Civic Center, Restaurant on the Roof of the Courts Building, 1949.

From: Chicago Plan Commission, Chicago Civic Center, March, 1949: 33.



Fig. 2.15: The Fort Dearborn Project, Arthur Rubiloff, 1954, perspective.

From: Chicago Tribune, 1954.

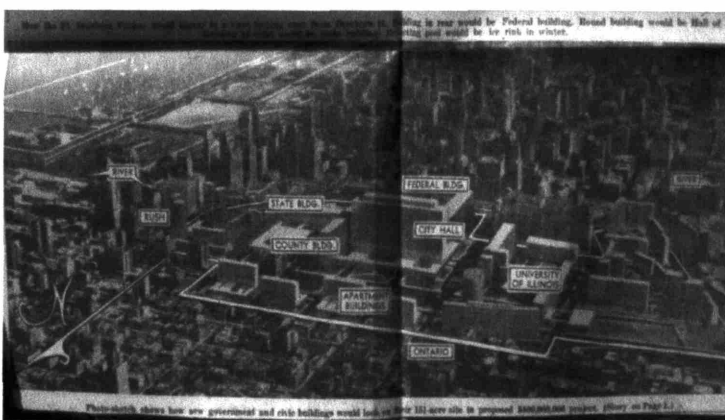


Fig. 2.16: The Fort Dearborn Project, Arthur Rubiloff, 1954, aerial.

From: Chicago Tribune, 1954.

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Fig. 2.17: "Cutting the lawn at Rockefeller Center in Manhattan."

From The New York Times,
Sunday, August 15, 1999 (Jeffrey A. Salter, photographer).

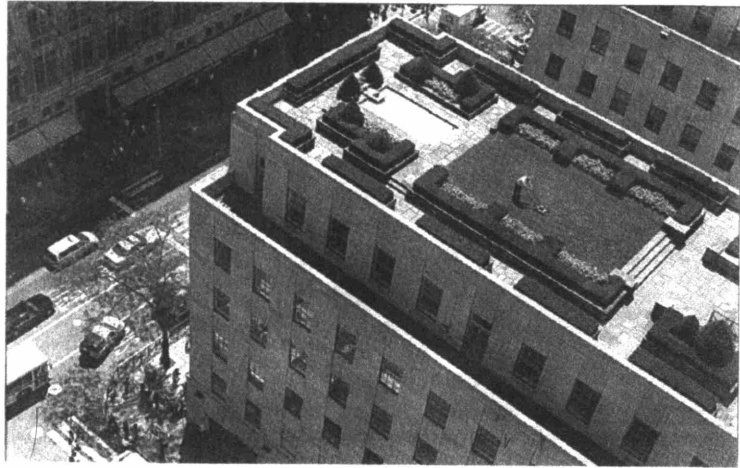




Fig. 2.18: "Demountable Space," Eero Saarinen Social Center, model photograph, 1942.

From U.S. Gypsum Co. Advertisement, The Architectural Forum, March, 1942: p. 2 of ad.

Fig. 2.19: "Demountable Space," Eero Saarinen Social Center, 1942.

From U.S. Gypsum Co. Advertisement, The Architectural Forum, March, 1942: p. 1 of ad.

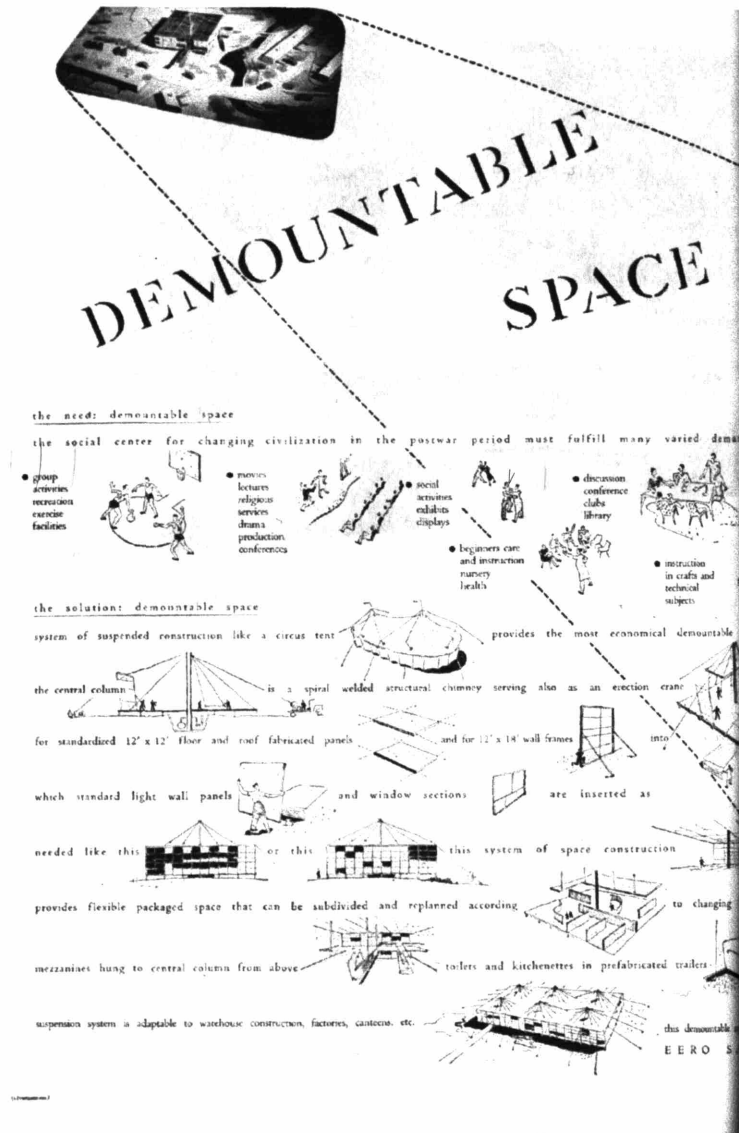
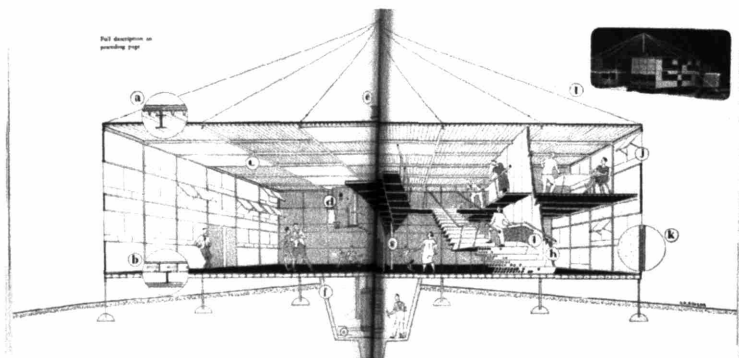


Fig. 2.20: "Demountable Space," Eero Saarinen Social Center, section, 1942.

From U.S. Gypsum Co. Advertisement, The Architectural Forum, March, 1942: p. 4-5 of ad.



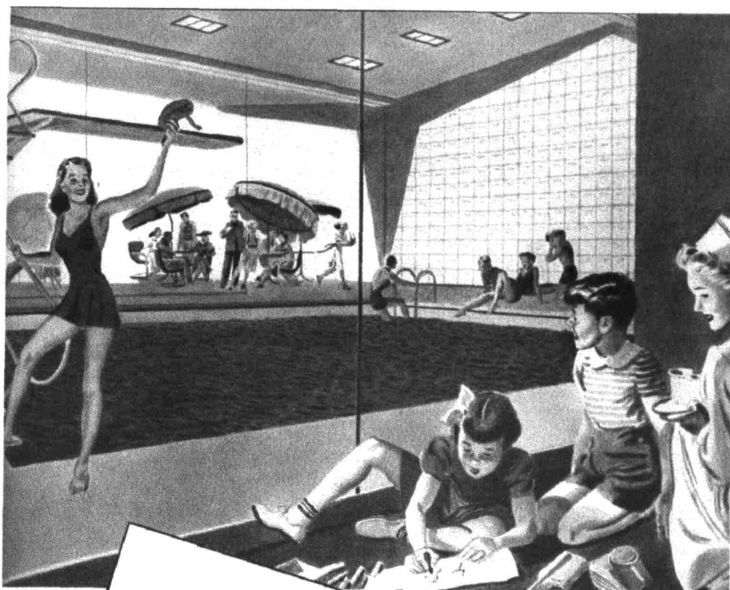


Fig. 2.21: "A Citizen's Country Club or Leisure Center," William Lescaze for Revere Copper and Brass, 1942, cover.

From: Revere's Part in Better Living series, 1942.

*A
Citizens Country Club
or
Leisure Center*

Fig. 2.22: "A Citizen's Country Club or Leisure Center," William Lescaze for Revere Copper and Brass, 1942, plan.

From: Revere's Part in Better Living series, 1942.

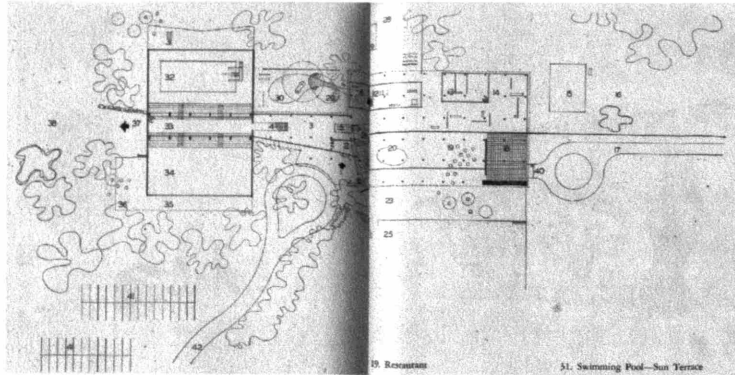


Fig. 2.23: "A Citizen's Country Club or Leisure Center," William Lescaze for Revere Copper and Brass, 1942, perspective.

From: Revere's Part in Better Living series, 1942.

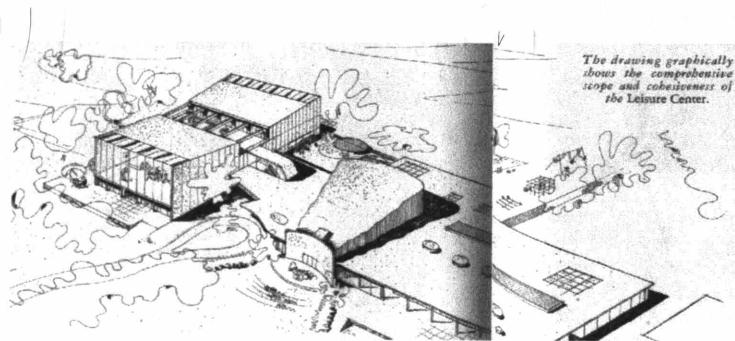




Fig. 2.24: "Circus" slide show, Charles Eames, presented at his 1970 Norton Lecture at Harvard.

From John Neuhart, Marilyn Neuhart, and Ray Eames, Eames Design (NY: Harry Abrams, 1989): 35.

Fig. 2.25: City Hall, Charles Eames, 1943.

For The Architectural Forum, "Buildings for 194X" issue, May, 1943; reprinted in Arts & Architecture, June, 1943.

From John Neuhart, Marilyn Neuhart, and Ray Eames, Eames Design (NY: Harry Abrams, 1989): 36-37.

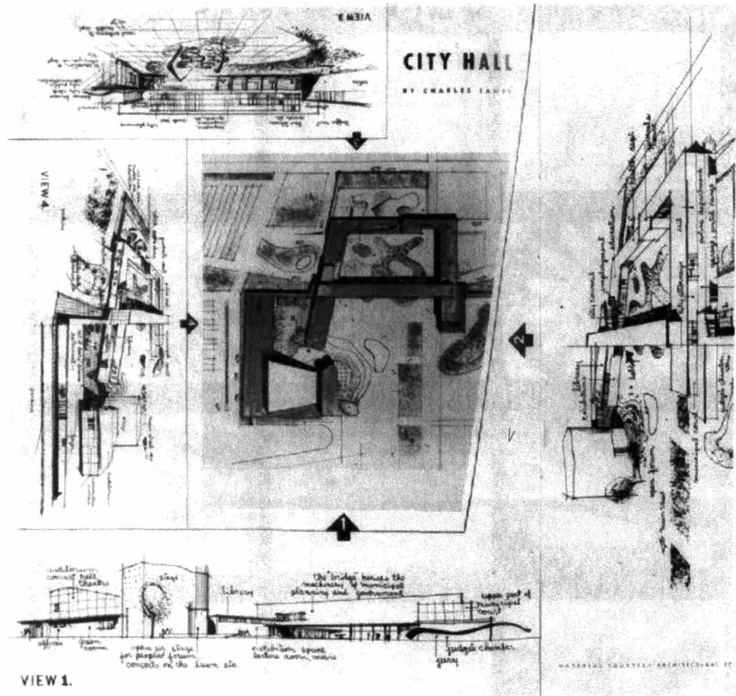
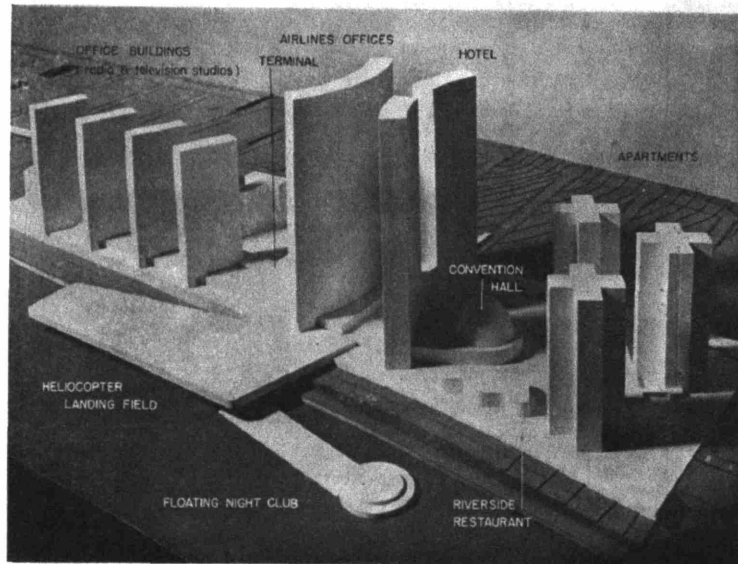


Fig. 2.26: X City, 1946

"Webb and Knapp float an island of towers on huge river-front platform"

From The Architectural Forum, October, 1946: 9.



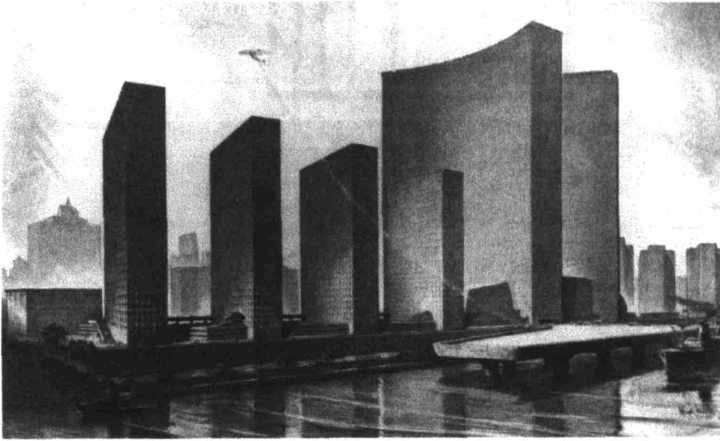


Fig. 2.27: X-City, Wallace Harrison and William Zeckendorf. Rendering by Hugh Ferriss, December, 1946.

From Victoria Newhouse, Wallace K. Harrison, Architect (NY: Rizzoli, 1989): 107.

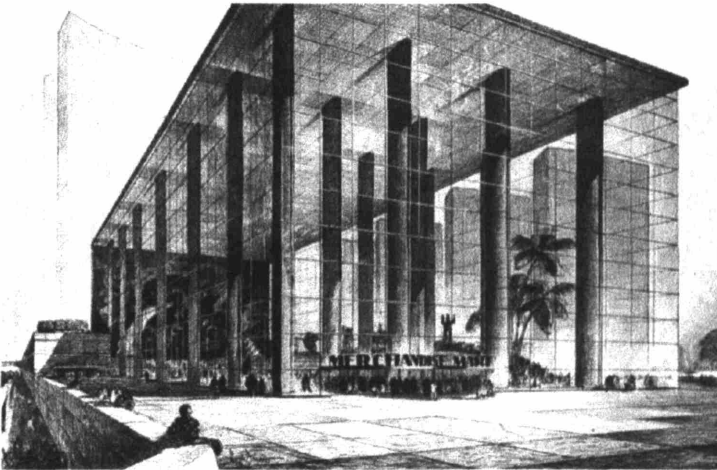


Fig. 2.28: X-City, Convention hall, Wallace Harrison and William Zeckendorf. Rendering by Hugh Ferriss, December, 1946.

From Victoria Newhouse, Wallace K. Harrison, Architect (NY: Rizzoli, 1989): 108.

Fig. 2.29: Lobby of Light, 383 Madison Avenue, Albert W. Lewis and Rudolph C. P. Boehler of Webb & Knapp, Inc., Architects, 1952.

"Cellular ceiling, sloped up for better display, is lighted with single color or...may be covered with constantly shifting patterns of colored squares and stripes."

From The Architectural Forum, January, 1952: 119.



Fig. 2.30: Lobby of Light, 383 Madison Avenue, Albert W. Lewis and Rudolph C. P. Boehler of Webb & Knapp, Inc., Architects, 1952.

"Workers installing hexcrate ceiling hung below banks of colored lights."

From The Architectural Forum, January, 1952: 120.

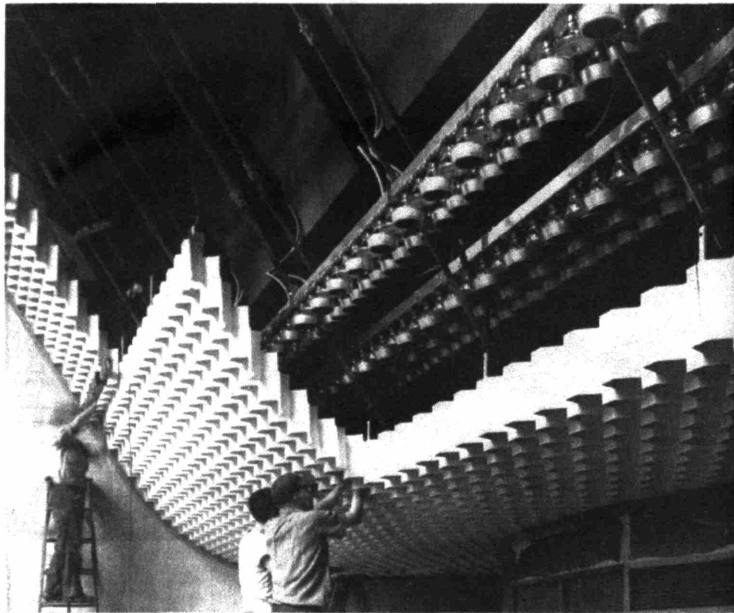




Fig. 2.31: Lobby of Light, 383 Madison Avenue, Albert W. Lewis and Rudolph C. P. Boehler of Webb & Knapp, Inc., Architects, 1952.

"Inventor Williams at contrast panel (above) shifts settings to achieve different harmonizing colors. Below: He checks miniature viewing panel which reproduces colors and patterns seen from the street."

From The Architectural Forum, January, 1952: 120.

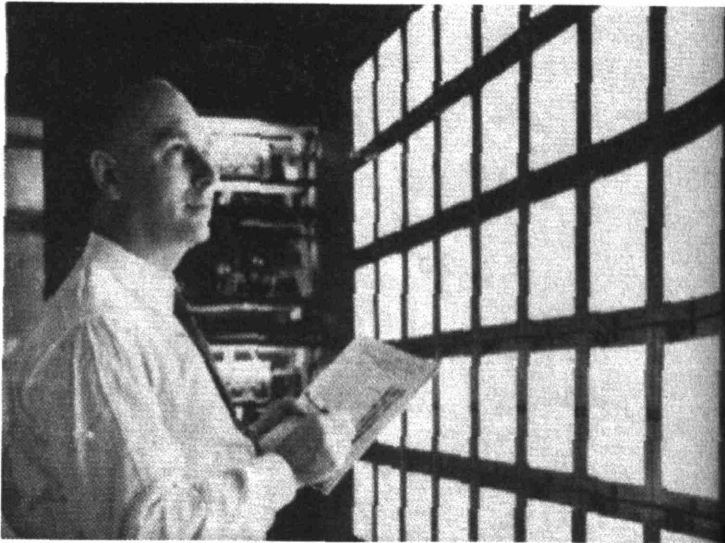




Fig. 3.1: Aerial photomontage of third Mies van der Rohe scheme for IIT, 1942. Kaufman & Fabry Co., photographer

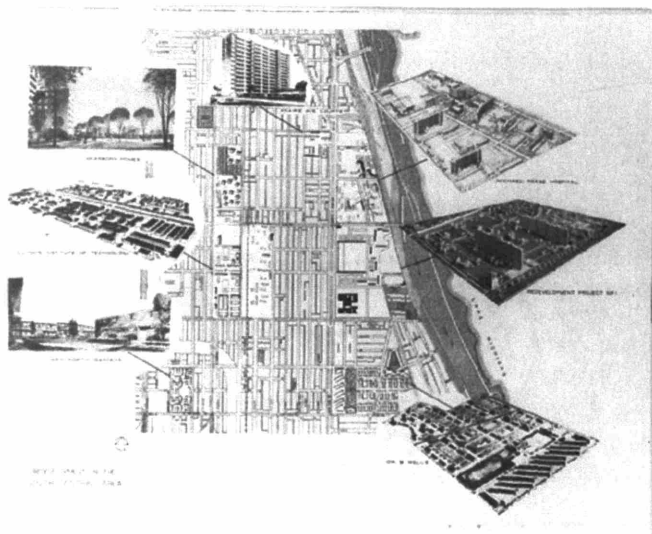
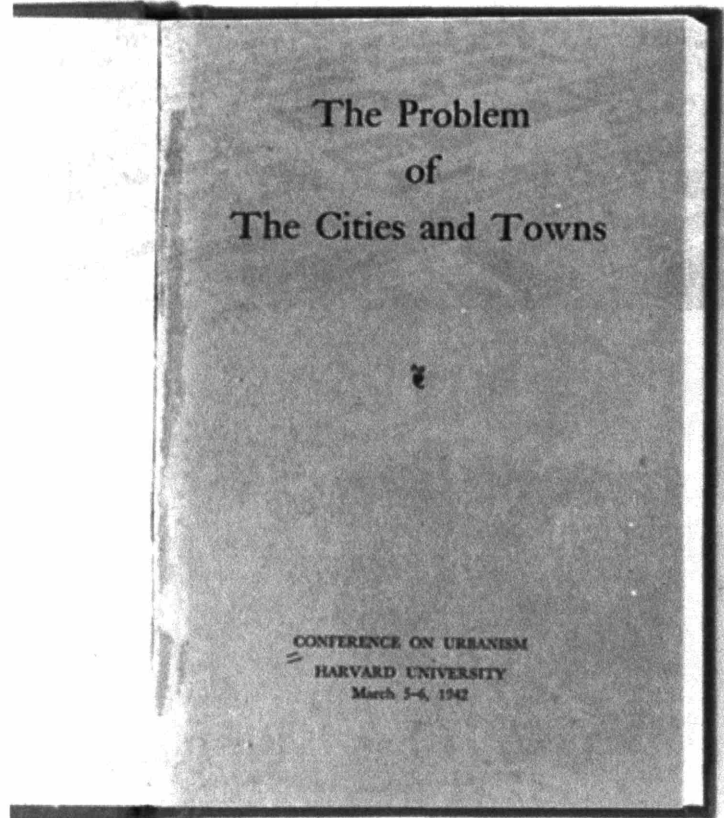


Fig. 3.2: South Side Planning Board Redevelopment Plan for the Near South Side.

From John McKinlay, Redevelopment Project No. 1: A Second Report, The New York Life Insurance Company Redevelopment Plan (1950): 8.

Fig. 3.3: The Problem of the Cities and Towns, report of the Conference on Urbanism, Harvard University, 1942: cover.



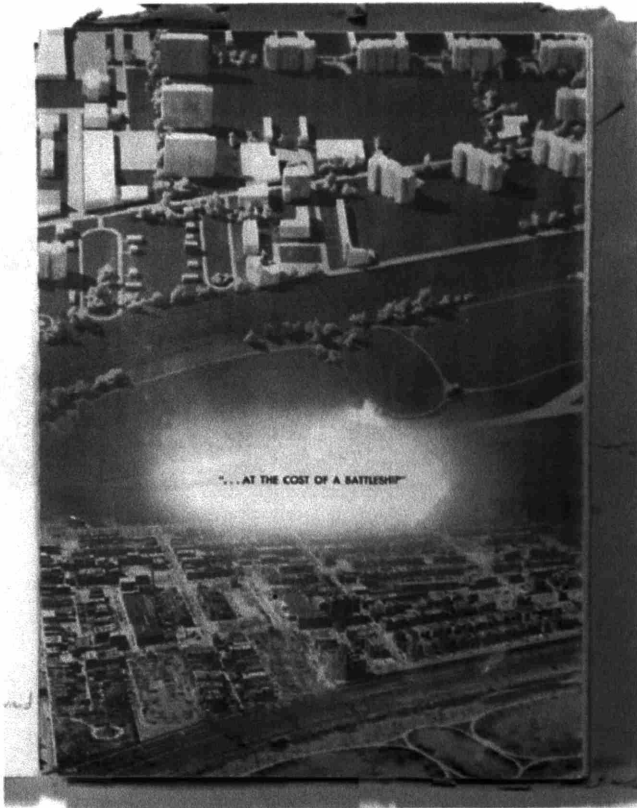


Fig. 3.4: "...At the Cost of a Battleship."

From *An Opportunity for Private and Public Investment in Rebuilding Chicago* (1947): 3.

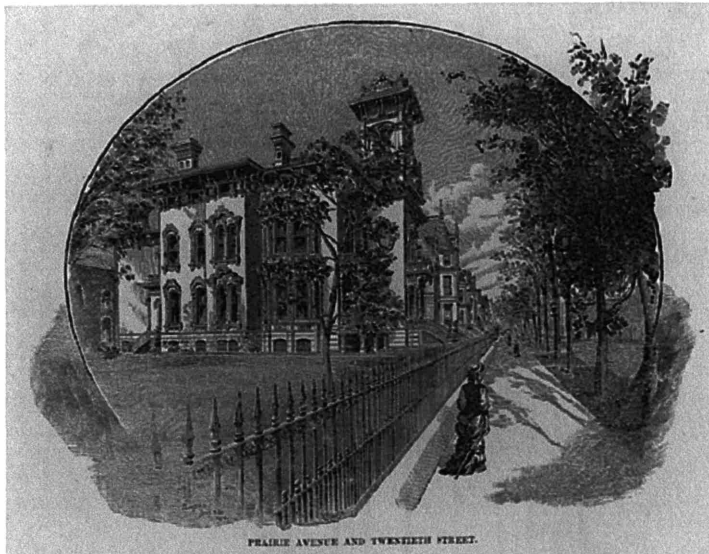


Fig. 3.5: "Prairie Avenue and 20th Street."

From *Half Century's Progress of the City of Chicago: The City's Leading Manufacturers and Merchants* (1887): 25.

Fig. 3.6: Existing density.

From Ada Louise Huxtable, *Two Cities: Planning in North and South America* (NY: MoMA, 1947): 14.

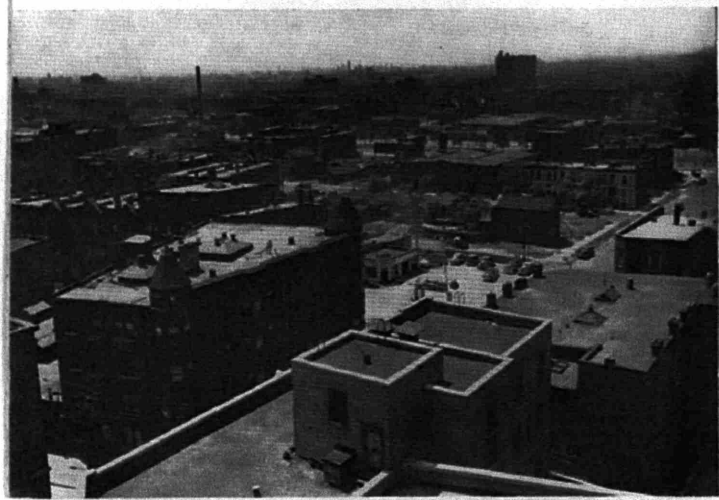


Fig. 3.7: "Some of their Offspring." A cartoon by Joseph Parrish.

Originally published in The Chicago Tribune, 19 December, 1952. Reprinted as the frontispiece of Report to Chicagoans, 1947-1952 (Chicago Land Clearance Commission).



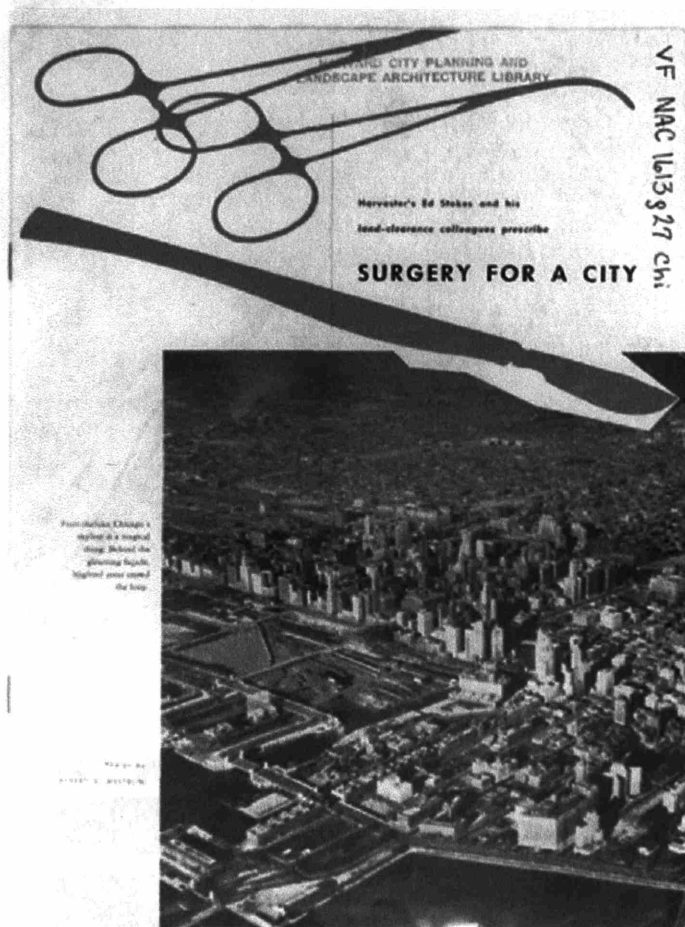


Fig. 3.8: "Surgery for a City." Offprint of *Harvesterworld*, distributed by the Chicago Land Clearance Commission in 1954.



Fig. 3.9: The Golden Flats, Near South Side, 1941. Andreas Feininger, photographer.

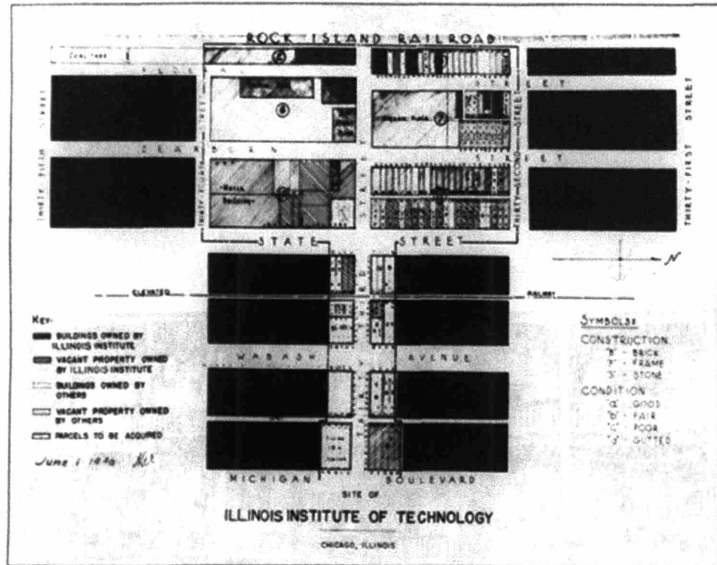
Fig. 3.10: Proposed quarter-square-mile redevelopment site.

From Redevelopment Proposal for the Central South Side (SSPB, 1951): 4



Fig. 3.11: IIT Land Holdings Plan, 1 June 1940.

From IIT Archives, 1999, 1.4.2.10.



TECHNOLOGY CENTER

LAND OWNED 65 ACRES . . . GOAL TO GO 35 ACRES . . . \$1,400,000

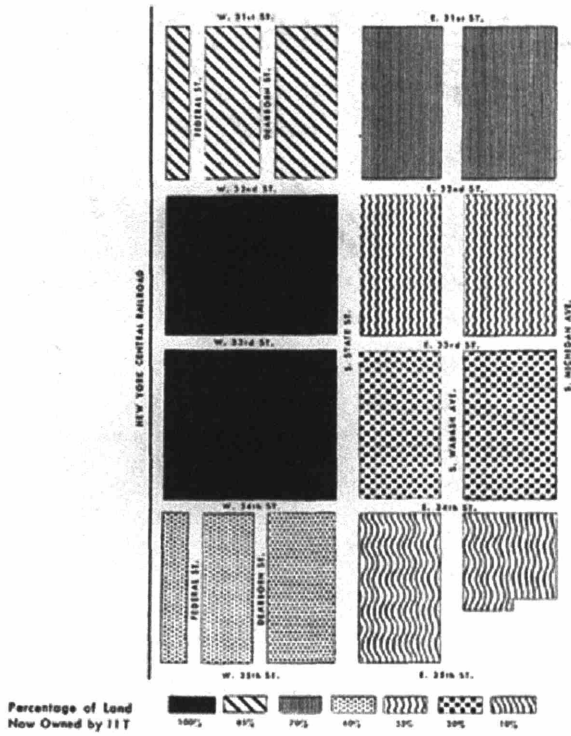


Fig. 3.12: "Percentage of Land Now Owned by IIT."

From Technology Center Today and Tomorrow (IIT, 1947)

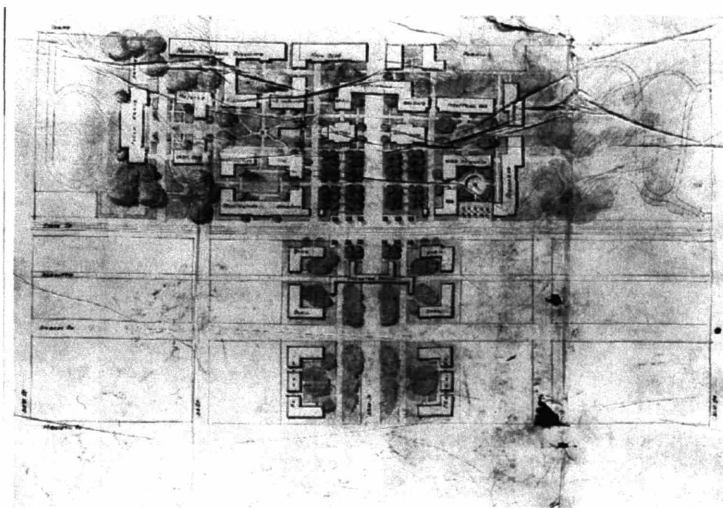
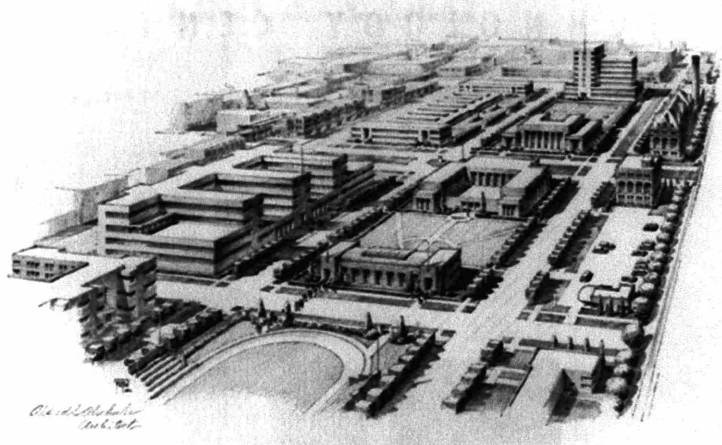


Fig. 3.13: AIT Campus Plan, 1937. Holabird and Root, architect. Graphite on tracing paper.

From Chicago Historical Society DF6778.

Fig. 3.14: IIT Aerial Perspective, 1939/40. Alfred Alschuler, architect. Frank O. Tupperwhite, draftsman.

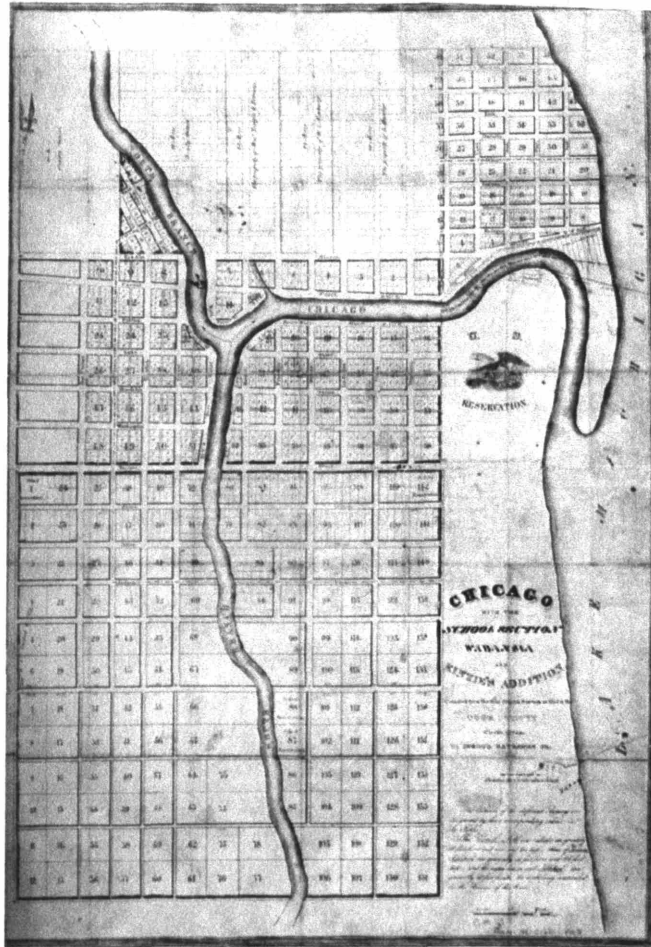
From IIT Archives 1999.1.4.21.



AN ARCHITECT'S CONCEPTION OF THE NEW CAMPUS

Fig. 3.15: Plan of Chicago, 1834. John Hathaway, Jr, draftsman.

From John Reps, The Making of Urban America (1965): 301.



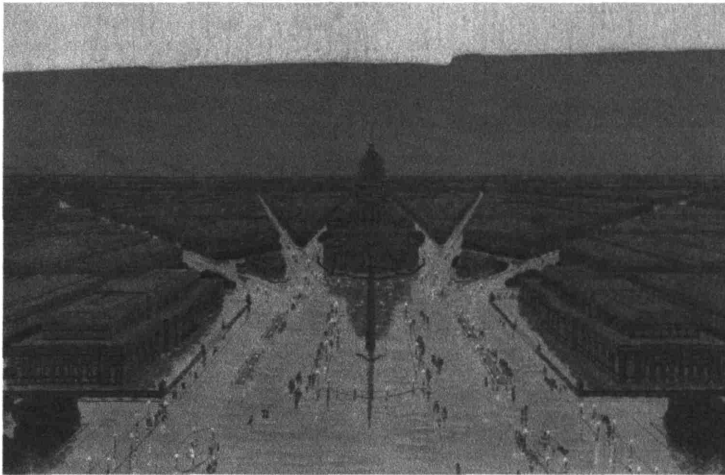


Fig. 3.16: Chicago Civic Center, 1909. Daniel Burnham, architect.

From Burnham and Bennett, Plan of Chicago, 1909 (NY: Princeton Architectural Press, 1993 rpt.): 112.

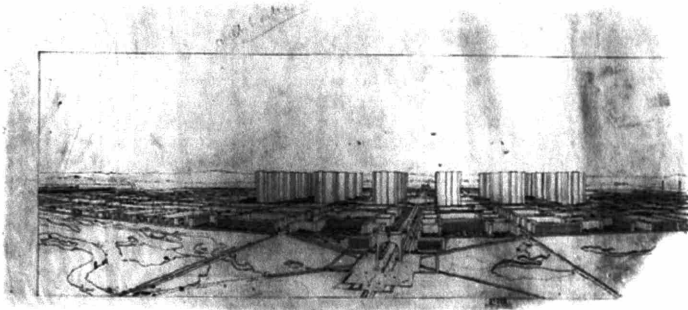


Fig. 3.17: Cité Contemporaine Pour 3 Millions d'Habitants, 1922. Le Corbusier, architect.

From Fondation Le Corbusier, Paris.

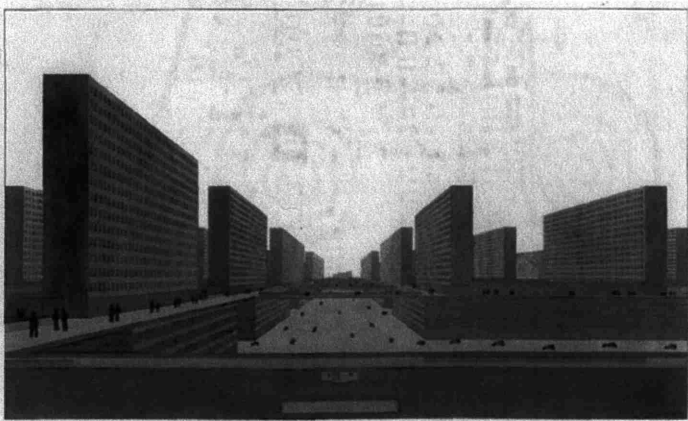


Fig. 3.18: High-Rise City, perspective of a north-south street, 1924. Ludwig Karl Hilberseimer, architect.

From Art Institute of Chicago.

Fig. 3.19: Aerial view of the IIT campus looking north. John T. Hill, photographer.

From John Zukowsky, ed., Mies Reconsidered (Chicago: AIC, 1986): 84.



Fig. 3.20: "Three-Square-Mile Development Area."

From An Opportunity for Private and Public Investment in Rebuilding Chicago (SSPB, 1947): 30.

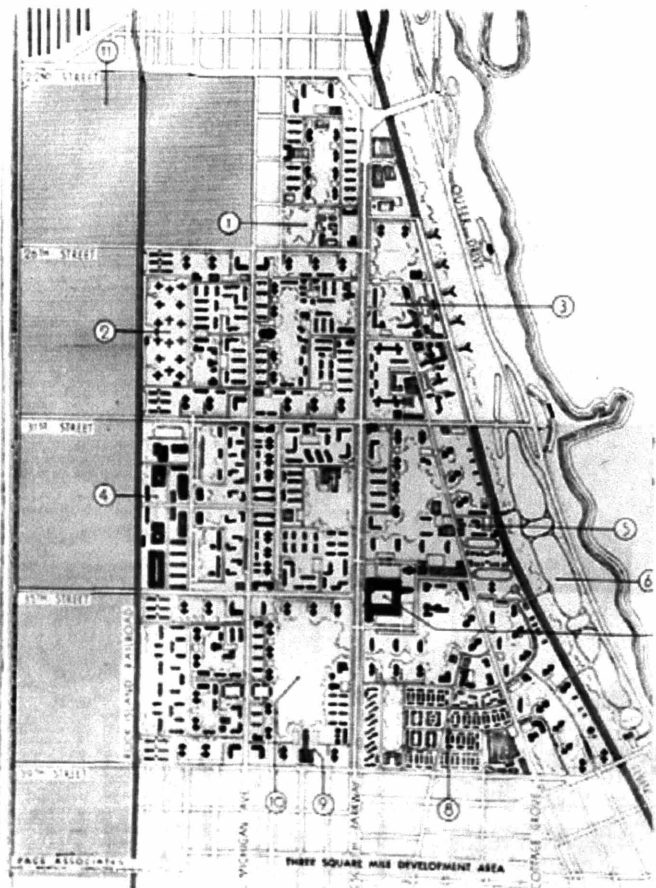


Fig. 3.21: Parthenon, Athens:
metope no. 32, north.

From Deutsches
Archäologisches Institut,
Athens.

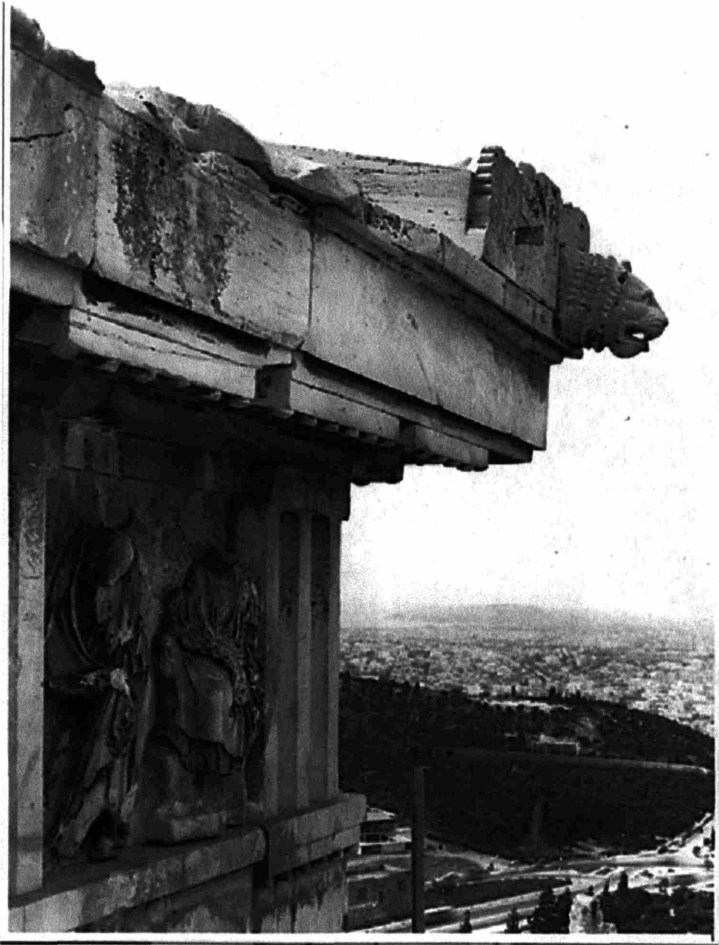


Fig. 3.22: Mies van der Rohe and Ludwig Hilberseimer with preliminary model for the IIT campus, 1940.

From Richard Pommer, ed.,
In the Shadow of Mies (Chicago: AIC, 1988): frontispiece.

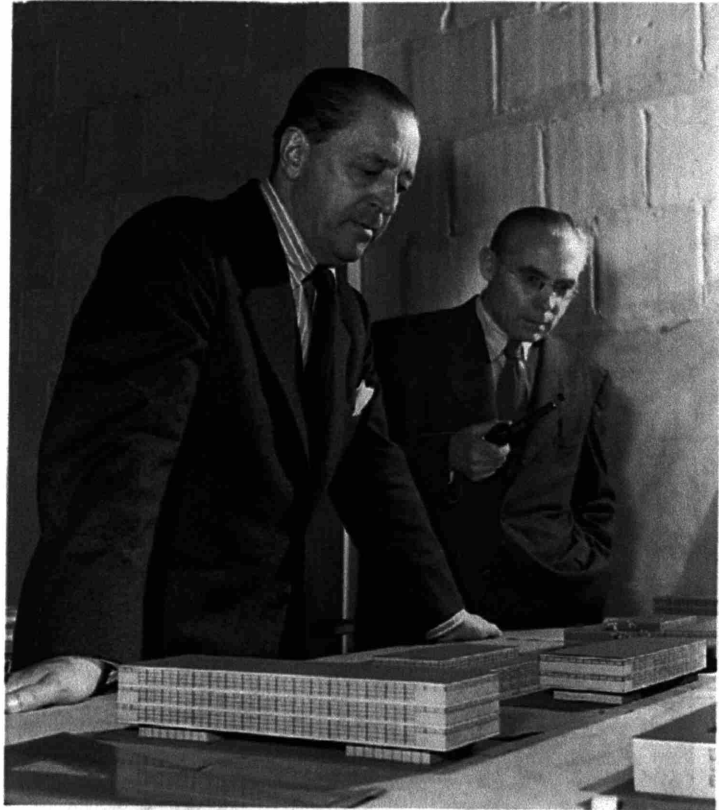
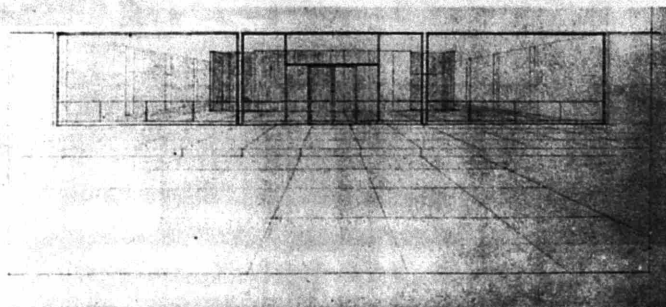


Fig. 3.23: IIT Metallurgy and Chemical Engineering Building, exterior perspective, 1939/45.

From MvdR Archive, MoMA,
45122.658.



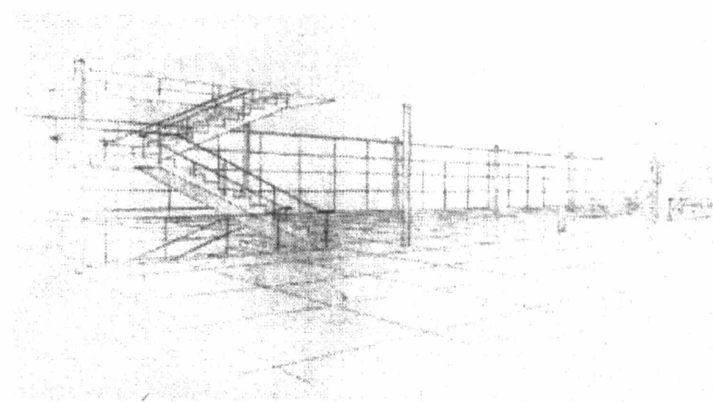


Fig. 3.24: IIT, interior perspective, 1939/45.

From MvdR Archive, MoMA, 4000.52.



Fig. 3.25: IIT Chemistry Building, 1965.

Werner Blaser, photographer

Fig. 3.26: AIT, preliminary campus project, aerial perspective.

From MvdR Archive, MoMA 4000.104.

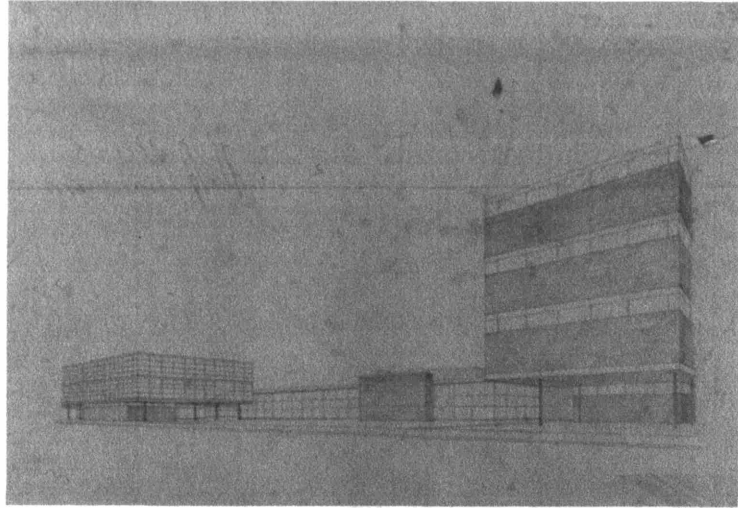


Fig. 3.27: AIT, perspective view looking west along State Street, 1939.

From MvdR Archive, MoMA, 4000.105.

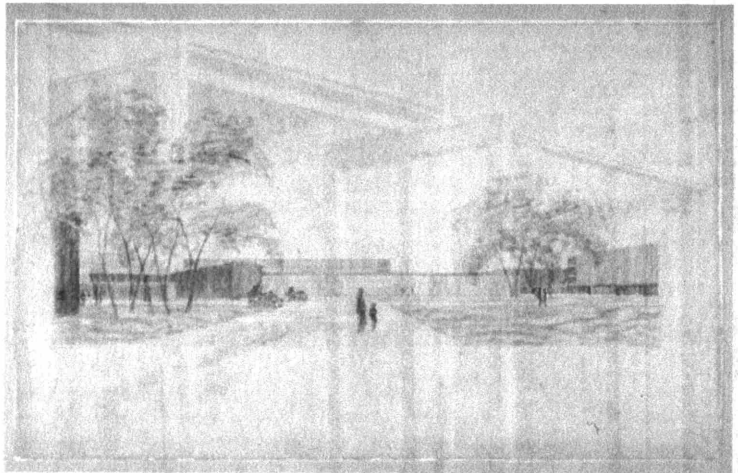
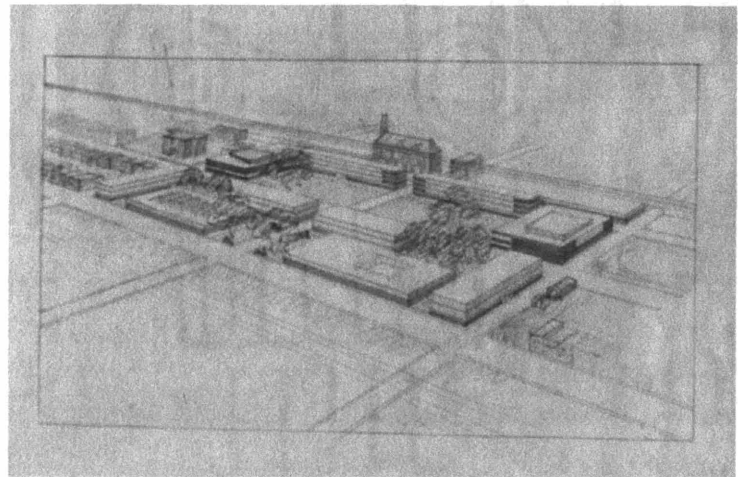


Fig. 3.28: AIT, perspective view looking south, 1939.

MvdR Archive, MoMA 720.63.



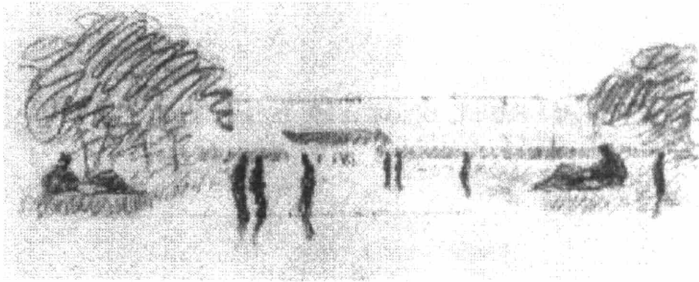


Fig. 3.29: IIT, aerial perspective with existing buildings, 1941.

MvdR Archive, MoMA 4000.3.

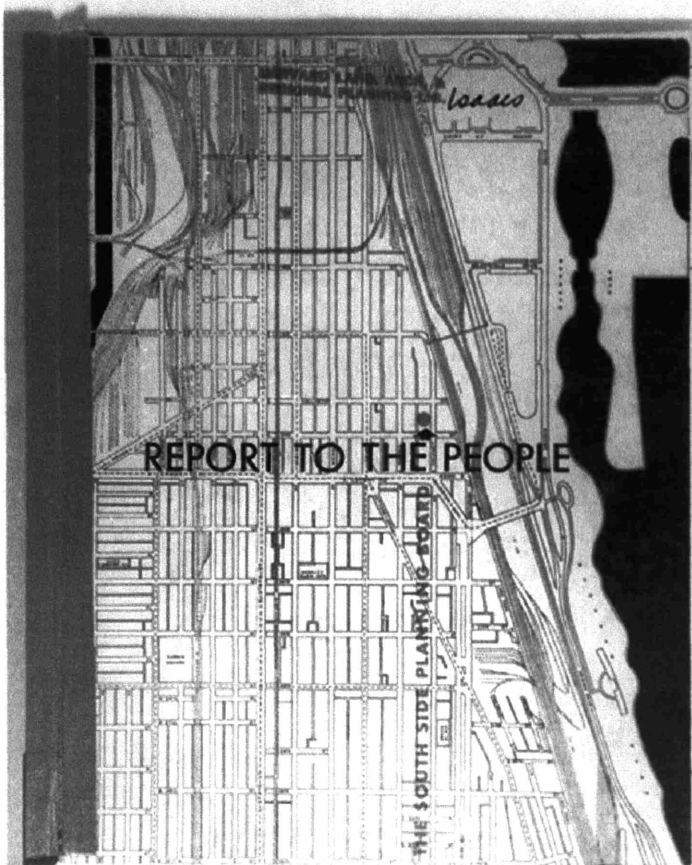


Fig. 3.30: Report to the People (SSPB, 1949): cover.

Fig. 3.31: "Future Development of Michael Reese Hospital Campus Plan."

From Walter Blucher, "A Hospital Plans," Town Planning Review (January, 1951): 318.

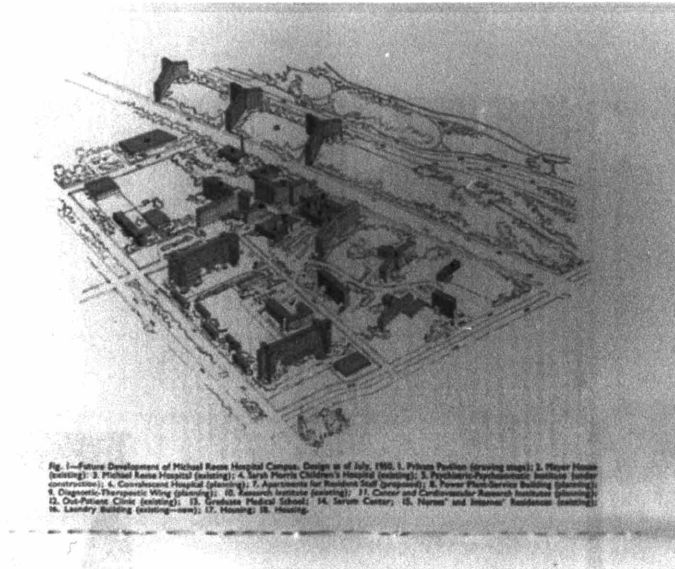
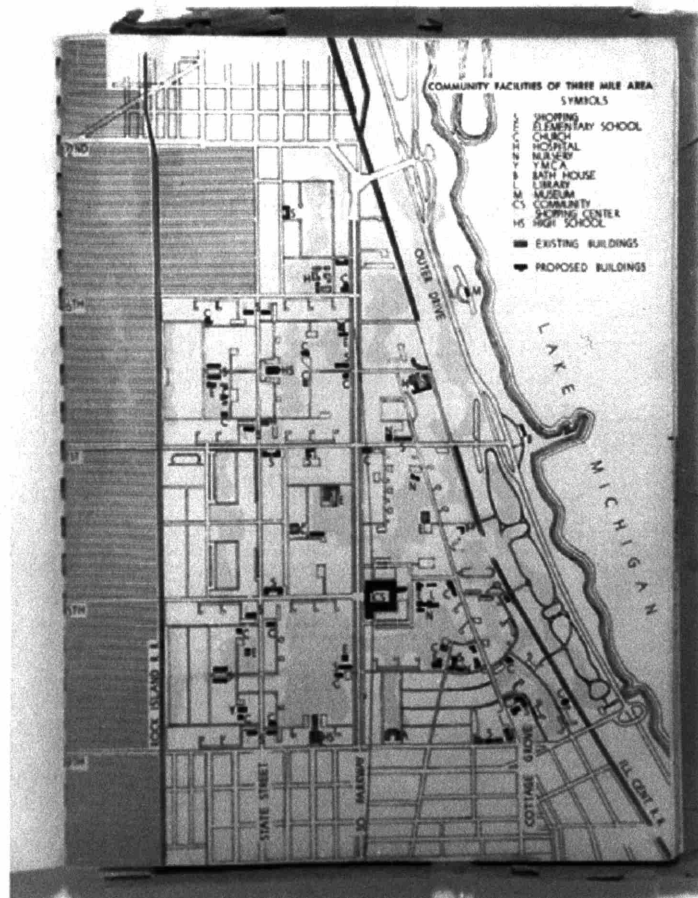


Fig. 3.32: Green carpet. "Community Facilities of Three Mile Area."

From An Opportunity for Private and Public Investment in Rebuilding Chicago (SSPB, 1947): 45.



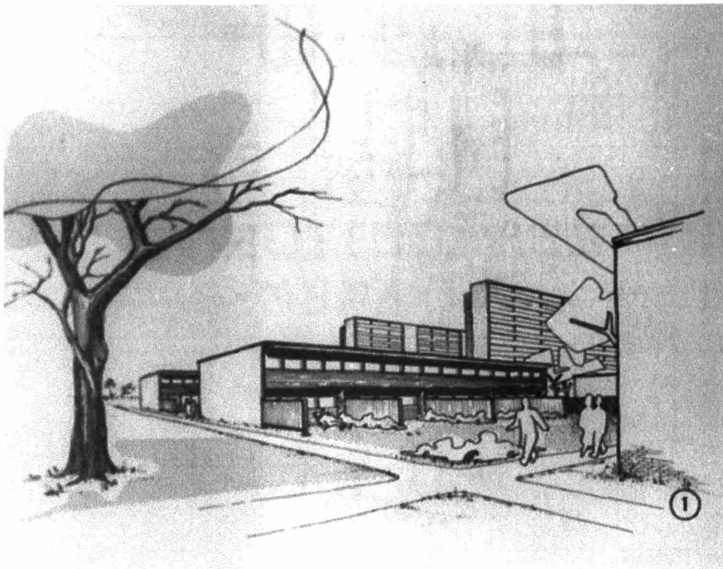


Fig. 3.33: Green carpet. Perspective.

From An Opportunity for Private and Public Investment in Rebuilding Chicago (SSPB, 1947): 61.

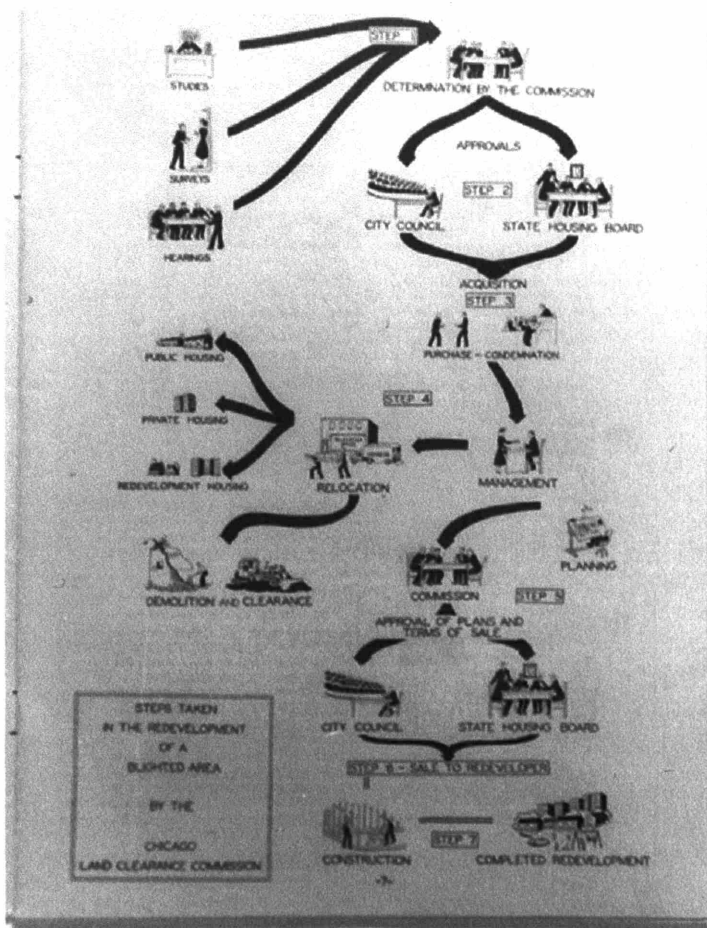


Fig. 3.34: "Steps Taken in the Redevelopment of a Blighted Area by the Chicago Land Clearance Commission."

From John McKinlay, Redevelopment Project Number 1: A Report to the Mayor and the City Council of the City of Chicago and to the Illinois State Housing Board (March, 1949): 7.

Fig. 3.35: "Suggested Land Use Plan."

From Report to the People (SSPB, 1949): 38.

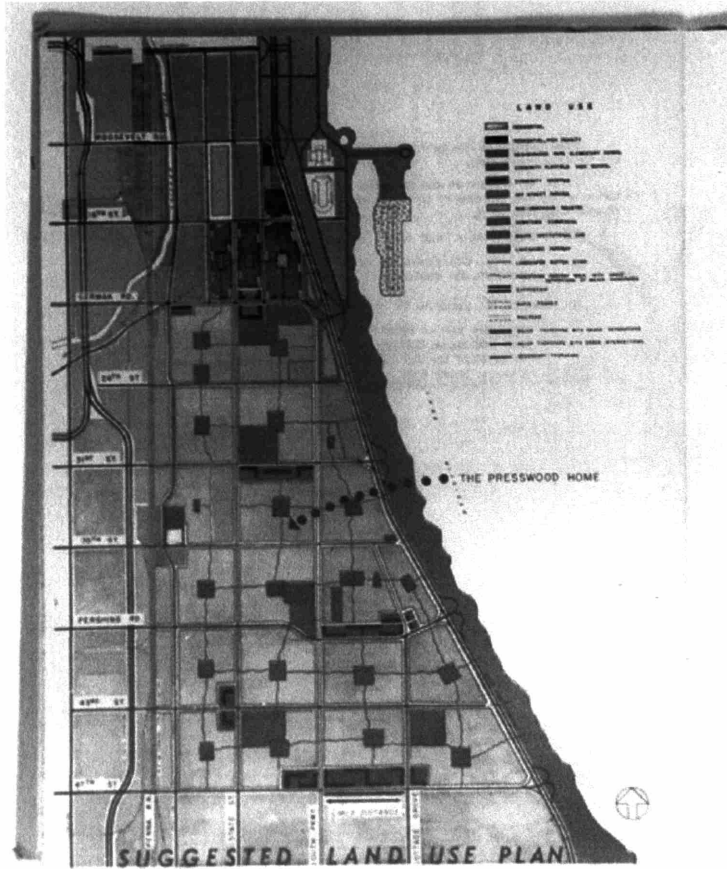
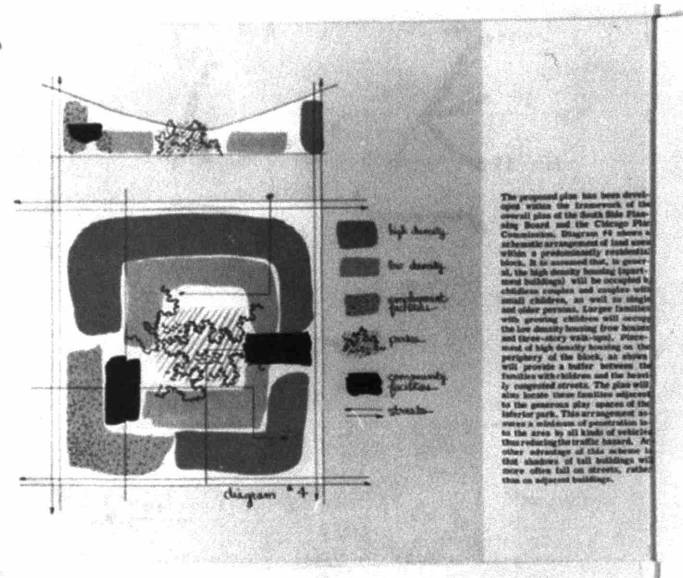


Fig. 3.36: Superblock diagram.

From Redevelopment Proposal for the Central South Side (SSPB, 1950): 8.



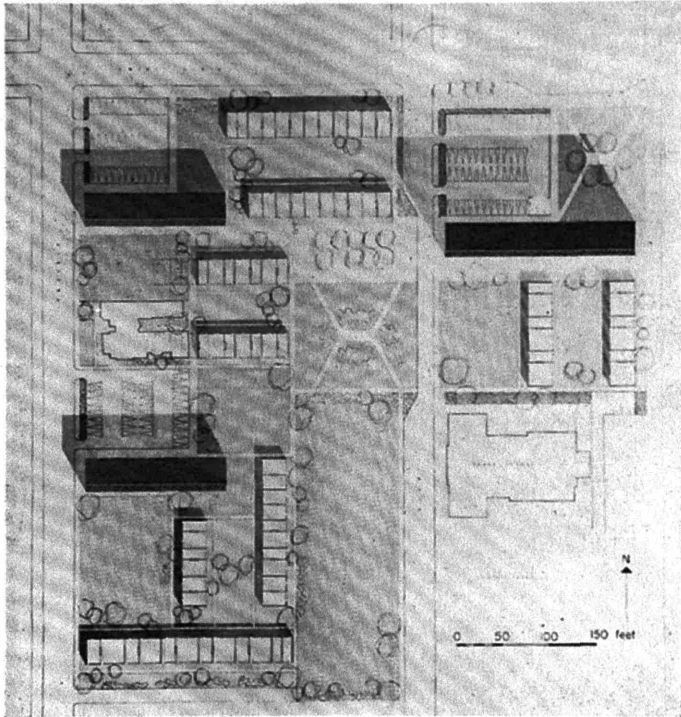


Fig. 3.37: Roof plan, Prairie Courts, 1951-56. George Frederick Keck and William Keck, architects.

From *The Architectural Forum* (January, 1952): 106.



Fig. 3.38: Aerial photomontage, Lake Meadows, Chicago, 1950-60. Skidmore, Owings and Merrill, architects.

From rental brochure, Lake Meadows, New York Life Insurance Co.

Fig. 3.39: Urban neighborhood before and after plans, 1943, Chicago Plan Commission.

From New Pencil Points (March, 1943): 51.

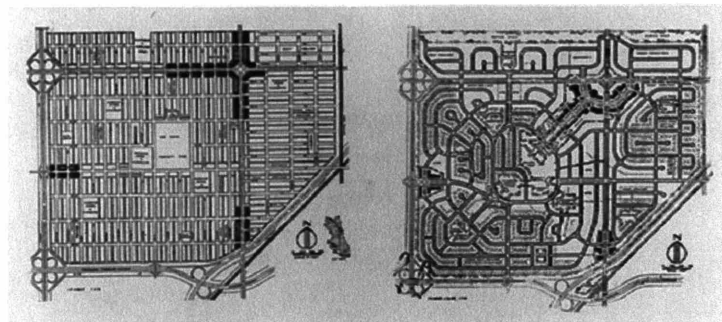


Fig. 3.40: "Central South Side Redevelopment Projects."

From A Redevelopment Proposal Adjacent to Michael Reese Hospital, submitted to the CLCC 16 April, 1952: iii.

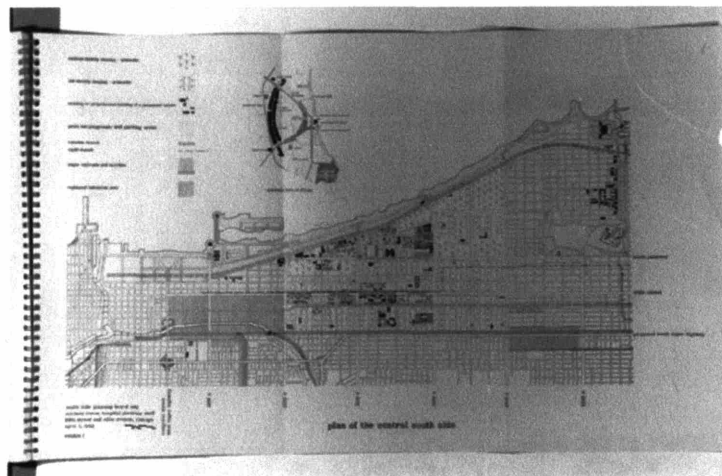


Fig. 3.41: "It's Your Billion" (1951) and "Chicago's Face Lifting Program" (1950). CLCC exhibition and information brochures.





Fig. 3.42: Stateway Gardens, 1985.

Clarence Hines, photographer, Chicago Historical Society.