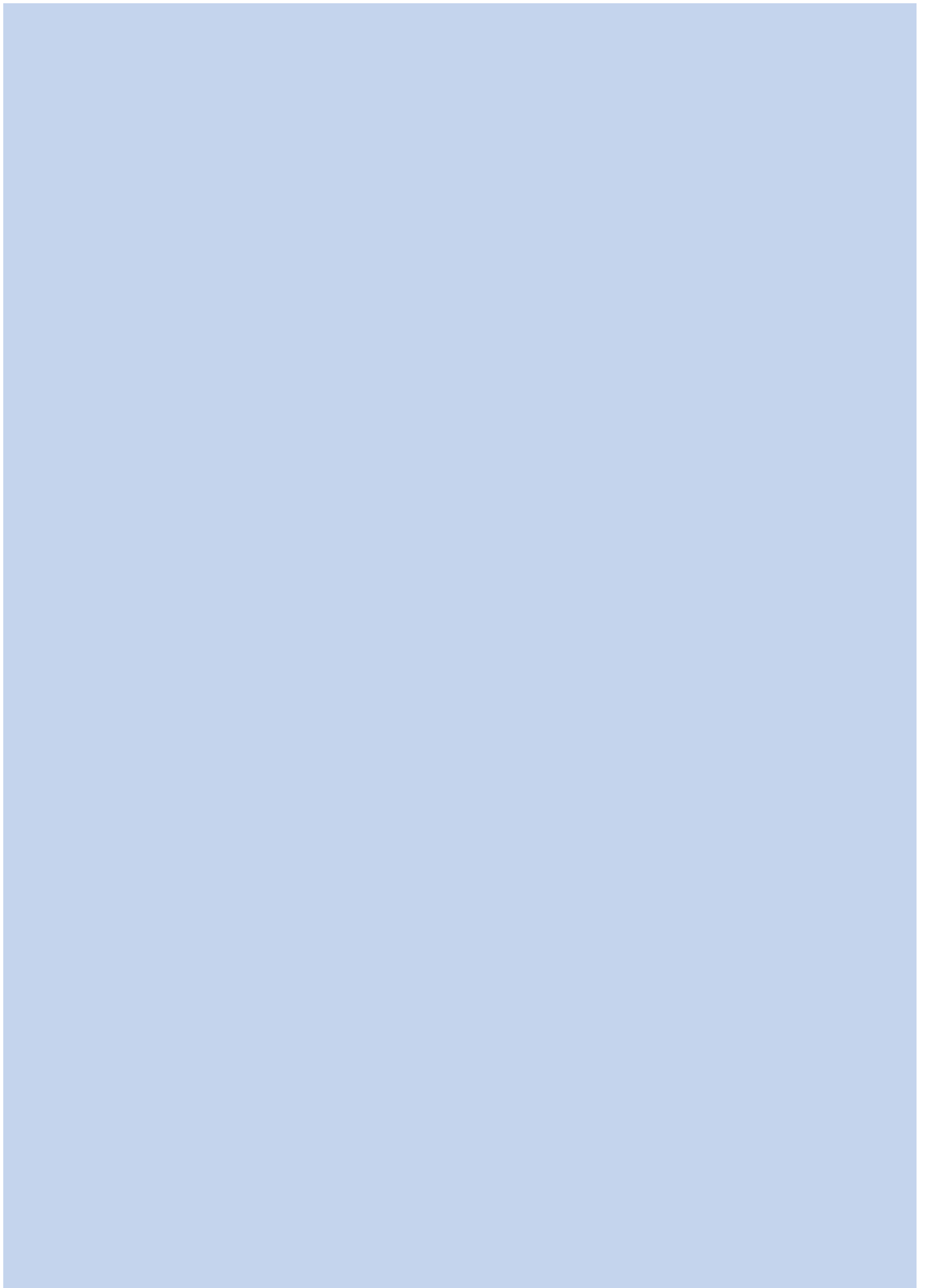# theTAlectures.

WINTER

JOA

JOA

**Volume One (WINTER)
of the Study Materials for
the Course of 44 Lectures offered
by John Outram's (virtual) Academy.
(JOA).
http://www.artsofpeace.com**

the 44 Lectures

Volume One: 1-14.

THE WINTER CAMPAIGN

scripted for

JOA

in three volumes by

John Outram

PREFACE TO THE 44 LECTURES.

Researches towards a General Architecture of Decoration, Building and Urbanity.

I do not call these 44 Lectures "written". Writing does not inscribe three to five illustrations per page, all with long captions. Writing Architectural theory in text alone is futile. This is why I call it "scripting" and name them "Lectures". I would have called them 'iconolects' if the word had existed. More on this in the Introduction to Volume 1.

Geoffrey Kipnis, in a Lecture to the RIBA, confirmed that no intellectually persuasive Theory of Architecture has ever existed. So when my own generation, which began their studies soon after WWII, decided to create an Ur-Architecture which would assimilate the 9,000 years of the phenomena of that name (including 20C Modernity), we knew that we would have to effectively 'theorise' this Medium.

Architects, when they 'theorise' tend to 'prove' their idea by building it. While this may 'prove' or 'disprove' a thesis to an Architect, it is insufficient for those, the vast majority, who have not received our peculiar training. Yet the convention has arisen that Practitioners do not write theory. Theory is written, in a curiously 'Scholastic' manner, by those who do not work at inventing Architecture. James Stirling, my second and third-year tutor from 1956-58, was generally admitted to be the best architect in the world when he unfortunately died in 1992. He advised "Never write about your work, John. It will only emasculate you". This peculiar state ensures that Practitioners no longer even read Theory. Theory is merely discussed by Theoreticians.

There is a simple reason for this. It is called the project for an *"Architecture Autre"*. This is an 'Architecture' (so called), which owes nothing to the 9000 years of Architecture's prior existence. These 9,000 years are now bundled as "Historic Architecture". What we build now is called "Modern Architecture". "History and Theory" as the academic category is termed, often bridges-over into the forbidden zone of the nine millenia. But Practice does not. So what is there for the Practitioner to read about?

It is argued by the devotees of *L'Architecture Autre* that this 'line in the sands of time' (usually placed at 1900), must be drawn for many reasons. One must "serve the masses" and so avoid elitism and the arcane. One must cope with all the machines, pipes and wires. One must advantage Building by using the new structures and materials. One must accept the sheer 'bigness' of contemporary projects. One must be 'Green'. One must reduce costs. One must be flexible. One must use mass-production and machine-production. One must invent a New Style for this New Era. One can go on almost indefinitely. All of these are argued to be reasons why the study of Architecture prior to 1900 can be of no use to the future of our own lifespace.

These 44 Lectures argue, one by one, that all of these so-called imperatives are advantages that can best be exploited by an understanding of Architecture based upon the study of ALL its examples - not merely those built over the past 100 years! The only people whom this 'line in the sand' advantages are the architectural ignoramuses and incompetents who pretend to 'educate' the young, and the no-longer-so-young architectural ignoramuses who throw-up the trash we must live-with today. *L'Architecture Autre* was a desperate move, based upon the collapse of the *Ancien Regime* after WWI. It had some 'truth' then. Today it is ignorance, charlatanry and fraud.

CONTENTS of VOLUME ONE:

LECTURES ONE TO FOURTEEN

INDEX TO ALL THREE VOLUMES

44 LECTURES ON THE 'WAR OF THE ARTS OF PEACE':

Introduction to 'THE WINTER CAMPAIGN'.

Whenever it rains on a wintry day, and the streets around Marble Arch become cold and grey and greasy, shining with wetness, my mind returns to the late 1940's when post-WWII Britain had won the war but was about to lose the peace. The Empire that Churchill had fought to save had been mortgaged and the reward of its 'subject peoples', who had joined and died to fight the Axis, were due for their ultimate reward: the ending of Imperial British rule. "Wars", as Canning remarked during the conflict with Napoleon, "are fought on credit". London's credit was always good. When we won we picked up the global possessions of France and Spain to add to our mercantile monopoly. This time the credit was spent and the rewards were losses. The emergent nations, once outside the Empire, chose their own trading partners. Our monopoly was broken.

Marble Arch is the part of London I have known since 1946, when I 'came home', at the age of twelve, from British India to a country that I had never known. I remember workmen digging-up the pitch-pine paving blocks on Oxford Street. They had been laid centuries back to muffle the sound of iron-bound carriage wheels and covered over with Trinidad Lake asphalt when that started to be imported around 1900. The 'WINTER' volume of these 44 Lectures is a 'landscape view' of the world that I found when I began my Architectural studies at the Central London (Regent Street) Polytechnic, two stops along the Central Metro Line down that same Oxford Street.

It always seemed to be raining. We never shed our boots and raincoats. Most 'gates' in this 'landscape' were chained and padlocked. We Neophytes were not allowed to plough the field marked 'Architecture'. Nor could we enter the woods called 'History'. In fact there was almost nowhere that we were allowed to go that was not mined and wired and marked "The Past", and "No Entry". As Professor John S. Walkden of the Central London Polytechnic advised us at our first and last meeting with him: "Architecture is no longer a literary subject". I understand now, a half-century later, that he was a disaffected Classicist who restricted his academic work to administration. Professor Walkden, if Pluto allows your bloodless shade to ghost this planet once more, visit The Live Oak groves of Main and Sunset, Houston, Texas, drink of the etiolated arterial fluid of the Architectural Professors of Rice University and visit Duncan Hall. You may feel in JOA's best building, finished in 1996, the faint stirrings of your long lost, and endlessly mourned, 'Classical' vitality.

The Polytechnic preferred literary virgins. It was unique in its avoidance of the customary 'booklist'. "We collected", as the late Peter Smithson famously observed, "Catalogues". The only gate that would open led to a field marked "the Market". With a bit of luck, and some curious husbandry, a crop emerged that harvested as 'High-Tech. *Architecture Autre* was born much earlier, in Paris after WWI. It was a sickly infant then. The 'Modern' was overshadowed by the 'Moderne'. But in 1950's Britain, after WWII, *Architecture Autre* (with the emphasis on the *Autre*), became an absolute Orthodoxy. No other crop could be grown.

Back in 1955-6 we spent nine months just learning how to draw with line and colour. We learned sciagraphy and how to construct card and wood models. We laboured to construct perspectives and to water-colour them - all by hand. This was before we knew anything about building construction or formal composition. Right at the end

we were asked to invent a garden kiosk. Architects cannot learn by building buildings. They are too big, too slow and too expensive. We imagine them with drawings. We communicate our imaginings with drawings. They may, today, be digitally recorded. One may attempt an immersive pseudo-experience. But no Architecture is real until it is built. Architecture that is not yet built can only exist in the imagination. We learn how to draw so that we can think Architecture fluently by drawing our thoughts. The Media of Representation come before anything else. If one cannot play the instrument all subsequent work is useless.

But we were brought to understand that this first year of drawing and painting was merely a means to the end of being able to 'present' a design so that it would seem both 'real' and 'attractive'. These same skills would then, after his five years of doing 'Practice-Designs', enable the young Architect to obtain his first employment making the exactly-detailed drawings on which all building contracts used to be signed. Unfortunately our Instructors were either too illiterate to know how essential this year of painting was to the culture of Architecture itself, or too persuaded, as was John Walkden, that, as he put it: "Architects lost their charisma (and their Authority), when they abandoned the 'Orders'." For the seemingly-unknown function of these 'Orders' was to 'frame' the picture planes' of ceilings, walls and even floors that had been 'envisioned' by the very graphical techniques we neophytes had just mastered!

Most of the best Architects of the Italian Renaissance, the high point in the Architectural history of Europe (in which I include the Ancient Hellenes), began their work as painters, if not also sculptors. Leon Battista Alberti judged Painting to be of greater critical importance than Architecture to the development of civil society. Alberti was a literary man. He wrote *De Re Aedificatoria* to make sure that Architects understood their part in the scheme of the Western Rational State that was emerging from the chaos of Feudalism. He advised them to "read no other book".

Mark **Jarzombek** has pointed-out Alberti's understanding that Architecture existed to situate (I would even say 'steady', as in home-stead), the iconography of the 'truths' which it was capable of 'scripting'. The Architectural device used for this 'steadying' were those 'Orders' (there were five of them according to the Orthodoxy), which John Walkden mourned. These 'truths' (Alberti called them *Philosophia*), were more easily, more cheaply and more sophisticatedly inscribed graphically - that is to say with drawings and paintings. This was not to say that Architecture, as 'building', should eschew whatever narrative 'scripts' that it could carry. It was merely to recall that Architecture's main syntactic and semantic ambition was to employ its intrinsic narratives to promote the extrinsic narrative structures of painting and sculpture.

This then, was the peculiar state of drawing and painting back in 1955. We all became expert in its capabilities, but for the cognitively trivial reason of being able to draw-up a contract to build some illiterate box. We had no idea that an iconically literate medium, such as it had been, more or less, until WWII, would require its inventors to be able to draw and colour its iconically literate DECOR - properly termed *DECORUM*.

Can it be surprising, then, that the advent of the computer, which enables anyone to make a drawing whether he has the skill in his hands or not, has led to the abandonment of drawing and painting, let alone model-building, from the primary education of the Architect? First, in the mid-20C, the Architect, for entirely ideological reasons, abandoned the use of an 'Order'. Then at the century's end, he abandoned the skill of depiction. Is it any wonder, now that *anyone can invent the contract drawings for*

a building that Architects expect the imminent demise of their Profession? But why should it not die when Architecture has? And who is to blame for that but practising Architects and their Savant-Philosophers and 'Historians'? None of them, even the most excellent ones, have been able to save the Medium from its present collapse.

But, apart from being in the 'wrong time' we, the London cohort of 1955, were also in the 'wrong place'. John Harris, Emeritus Keeper of the RIBA Drawings Collection, confirmed in his book 'The Palladians' that Britain's Clients and their Architects had never much understood the difference between the outside and the inside of the buildings whose Architecture they bought-in from Italy. They never much mastered the scripting of ideas via iconically-structured 'Decor'. William Kent, Lord Burlington's principal Architect for thirty years was described by Walpole to be, as a painter, "below mediocrity". That was 200 years ago. We were now in the 20C. But this island's Architectural Culture was just as ignorant and just as incompetent. We still looked out of the window instead of up at the ceilings of 'painted' interiors. The page 17 of Lecture 31: "A Flowering", treats this tendency by the 'Test of Gluteus Maximus'.

John Harris describes the original 18C garden layout for Kew Palace. Its centre was an island surounded by a modest lake. The island harboured a shepherd and shepherdess with sheep. This was the Island Albion. It was securely protected by water and was home to all that was pure, natural, modest and innocent. Around it looped a drive bounded by an enclosing shrubbery. Set into the obscuring greenery there were a sequence of timber-built and painted 'temples'. These recalled, in a cut-price and sketchy way, the monuments of the Asiatic cultures of Mohammed, Confucius and Imhotep, together with those of ancient Rome and Greece.

London was already the biggest city in Europe, perhaps the world, and Britain was well on the way to building her commercially-fuelled Empire by this time. Trade's attitude to materials in the raw was uncomplicated. But political entry had to be obtained to the human cultures that controlled the territories from which commercial products could be extracted. It is here that London, though by no means uniquely, developed that charlatanry which always accompanies selling. We sold blankets to the American Indians, cottons to the Asian Indians and ponchos to the natives of Argentina. We sold, even more famously, glass beads instead of genuine jewels whenever we could. Dealing with cultures of which we had little or no knowledge, we developed a certain talent for fakery, for detecting the parts of a material culture which we could imitate by mechanical reproduction back home with our industrialised means of production. An unfortunate effect of these substitutions (of which we remained mostly unaware), was the destructive effect of commercially undercutting the work of native craftsmen. For these were not merely purveyors of 'beauty' or 'fashion', but of the very culture itself, through the systems of signs and symbols inscribed into the artefacts they produced.

After lunch, one could venture forth from Kew Palace into its garden. One 'perambulated the globe', passing the evidences of the foreign artifice and artificiality which enabled Britain to sell our manufactured pseudo-culture in return for their raw materials. At its centre, secure and innocently simple, was Albion, the Child of Nature. Britons were secure. Nature could not be faked. It was the work of God not Man.

Why, one may ask, did these great Asiatic cultures let us Europeans in? Well, we had gold and we had ships that could make war. In the last resort we would bombard the port that refused us the right to install a 'godown'. In any case, our method was always to woo the ruler. Revolution was never part of our Imperial ambition: merely trade

and the offer of 'Protection'. Britain, after we had decapitated our Monarch, was as Pitt remarked; "..run on sound commercial lines". We were given its Capital by the Globe. London's job was to whistle-up a Dividend. The Navy ensured payment by 'due date'.

Cultures use Architecture to confirm and stabilise themselves. They use decoration and iconically narrated ideas to enrich and fill-out these structures with the ideas that founded, generated and motivated their culture. Imperial, trading, Britain like all cultures, pursued these policies. Our role was to de-stablise so as to restore balance with our own product-fetishes. Our 'Architecture' was one of movement, exchange and fashion. If we had a 'lifespace culture' it was never Urbane, never even Monarchical, and certainly never Republican. Lecture Eight: 'Deco Denied' discourses how the greatest urbanistic monument of the Empire on which the sun never set was designed by Britain's top Country House Architect as a suburbia of Bungalows, dedicated to a village politics of private consumption. Lecture Three: 'The End of Urbanity' confirms that Patrick Abercrombie, author of the famous 1944 'Plan for the County of London' was the President of the Council for the Preservation of Rural England. Lecture Thirty-Two: "A Lost world of Progress" informs that Thomas Mawson, the first President of the British Institute of Town Planning, was a Plantsman who wrote books on garden design.

The general trading-fabric may have needed longevity. One needed to pay-back the capital investment on the ports and railways. But this did not imply any stability to the culture itself. It could never be allowed to settle. Darwin, British himself, by travelling around the Empire as an entomologist, confirmed with his Origin of Species, in 1859, the 'Death of God the Designer'. The American Economic Crash of 1929 introduced the 'End of Progress'. The discovery of Belsen in April 1945 confirmed the end of the 'Perfectibility of Man'. The dropping of the Bomb in August 1945 ended any idea of war as an heroic activity. Science and Technology, the twin ideals that supported Architectural Modernism, appeared to be as capable of evil as of good. The 'white modernism' of the 'Heroic period' was no longer inherently benign. In 1955 the Old Ideals were dropping like leaves from the dead tree of Western Civilisation. What was left to look up to, to look forward to?

If this novel, fascinating, tragi-comic 'reality' of the human condition was to be revealed, and we were to achieve a certain nobility by revealing it in public, then our story must be told. Architecture used to be the medium through which such 'hidden realities' were revealed (and mainly to the 'interior'). In our innocence, I and some others of our post-WWII generation, aimed to invent an Architectural 'Universality' capable of entering the work of Corbusier, Mies, Wright, Aalto and even Buckminster Fuller into a generalised , even 'generic' medium. The effort required that one hunt down every and any attempt at an Architectural 'Modernity' and subject it to analysis. This is recorded throughout the 44 Lectures, but especially in Lecture 9: 'What Taboo?'

A semiological level of this universality, as is described in Lecture 3, 'The Great Escape', had been achieved by 1961. While never carried-through to a state which might please a professional linguist, it allowed me what I needed. This was an 'equalised' access to all Architectures, anywhere, and at any time. I needed this if I was to not only decrypt the Medium but re-build it into an effective contemporary tool: a tool that could satisfy the dictum of L. B. Alberti that "Architecture was the paradigmatic Medium of Civilisation".

Universality came easily to me. My father had been born in Cawnpore, India, and my Mother in Rosario, Argentina. I was born in Malaysia. We registered the extreme limits of the tsunami of London's capital that had swept Britons, our language and

our culture, all over the globe. The Architecture of Mogul India was, if anything, more familiar to me than that of England, or France, or Finland. They were all both equally promising or equally useless to my needs. One of the key components of my architectural decryption of Hellenism is a Vedic cosmogony received from J.C.Kuiper, a Dutch ethnographer working in Indonesia. And why not? Mesopotamia was their mutual origin. My access to these Architectures was through travel. But I came to know them mainly through my slow purchase of over two thousand, largely 'old', books.

The 44 Lectures appear set out as an Academic Year - with Winter, Spring and Summer Terms. This 'Academicism' is a disguise. I have lectured only very occasionally. These 44 Lectures are not primarily verbal, or even visual. They are the invention of a Practitioner, not a Professor. I call them "the Practitioner's Revolt".

I am interested in the How, What and Why of inventing Architecture in the barren desert of the *Architecture Autre* 20C. Talking about Architecture is a largely useless activity, as any Architectural Academy will prove and any Practising Architect (what the Savants call a 'Practitioner'), will confirm. The Architectural Academies have filled-up with clever Musicologists, Physicists, Psychologists, Pugilists and other experts in everything except Architecture - a medium in which they have neither training not practice. They have neither skill in the Medium nor, one must observe, much interest.

The Savants see themselves as assisting, in the Marxist manner of the Intellectual Midwife, in what has become the main project of 'Modern' Architecture. This is to birth *'L'Architecture Autre'*. I use the French term because to do so is to assist the idea of an Architecture that is 'strange', 'other' and *unheimlich*. What is desired is an Architecture that is NOT - that is to say *NOT ARCHITECTURE* as it has been known, more or less, for the last nine millenia. One may observe the utility of a body of knowledge, like Anthropology, which excludes any direct cognisance of Architecture as such. It begins with the promise of an Otherness which is generic. These are the Savants and these are the Academies which currently train the 'Architects of the Future'. Mies van der Rohe advised: "Never talk to your Client about Architecture". The contemporary Professor is strict in this discipline. From 'Baukunst' to Koolhaas' "Age of Trash" is a straight line.

These Lectures are, speaking bibliologically, some 500 'double-page spreads'. They have to be 'scanned'. One should begin by allowing the eyes to wander over their profusion. It is why I say that these Lectures have been 'scripted' rather than 'written'. It would be natural to observe, first of all, the profuse (some 3,000) illustrations. Architecture is closer to Graphics than to Text. Architects conceive graphically and communicate their instructions graphically. This too has gone out of fashion with the Architectural Academies and their many Professors who can neither draw nor build - only talk and compute. One might then read one of the long captions to some Graphic. These are all printed in a Burnt Umber Palatino Italic Bold in ten point. They are uniform - as opposed to the Main Text, which is as animated as the page of a Tabloid.

The Graphics are extensively textualised, which may offend those who believe, as Le Corbusier suggested, that Graphics should be 'pure' - that is to say 'meaningless'. The text, in exchange, is graphically agitated by changing point size and type face and even colour - from paragraph and sentence and even word to word. Nor are these adjustments entirely 'logical' in their detail. But these 'pollutions' are not without purpose. Whereas I suggested that talking about Architecture was often fruitless I do also believe that 'theory' entails the 'understanding' of one Medium by conceiving of its 'ideas' in another. The act of translation illuminates an idea like no other.

Buildings and words being so far apart, as Media, I bring to my aid, in these Lectures, a third Medium, which I call 'iconocryptic'. These are neither buildings nor their merely graphical models. An Iconocrypt might be called, in Vedic metaphysics, Architecture's 'subtle body'. They are images (which proximates them to Buildings), but they are images which have been generated verbally (which proximates them to Text). This is why I prefer to use the word 'iconocrypt' to denote them.

I describe the invention of this process in Lecture Six: 'Tricorso'. It was provoked by the need to 'publish' the ideas in JOA's first two large projects. The ideas were 'hidden' in the buildings. I knew that only 'iconocrypts' could reveal them. But how to invent them? Miscegnation and pollution (of the hemispheres), is the norm, integration the ambition and an Iconically Engineered Lifespace the Project.

The creative imagination works best in darkness because it has to. What else can one do when it is dark except go to sleep and dream? It is why I associate this WINTRY first Volume with *VENUSTAS*, customarily the last of the Vitruvian trilogy. *VENUSTAS* is uninterestingly translated as 'BEAUTY'. My key to unlock this Latin riddle is the expression *"Pulchritudo splendor veritatis est"*. Keats said "Truth is beauty, Beauty Truth". Being English, and unused not to bright sun but to the inky shadows real brightness throws, he omitted the word *'splendor'*. Splendor means 'shining'. "Beauty is the 'shining' of Truth". Picasso understood this when he said "Art is the Lie that shows us the Truth". Kant would have agreed. We cannot aspire to apprehend 'the truth' that is to say 'what is'. This is the 'meaning' of SHADOW. Reality is beyond being visible. We can, however, somehow apprehend it through the illusion, the bright imagistic solarity of Art, or whatever Medium it is that 'shines' for us.

This was the epistemological error of *L'Architecure Autre* as it 'Turned towards Engineering'. Appearances can never be 'real'. It shows a strange ignorance of Science that 'the turn' occured at the very moment physicality vanished from Physics. It was Goethe's quarrel with Newton's theory of colour that Newton downgraded 'appearance' to be a 'secondary reality'. Appearances, especially if 'artificial' and even more artificially 'coloured', correspond not to Things, as the Haptics of High Tech fancy, but to Ideas. "Appearances", when taken to the level of symbols, "lead" as Ricour proposes, to "thought". "Thinking is", however 'subconscious' "always of "something". These "somethings" can be most efficiently evidenced by words. 'Appearances' are, therefore, not so much 'technical' as 'textual'.

This is the function of *DECORUM*:- it inscribes the 'shining' of that *splendor* implied in the Vitruvian *'VENUSTAS'*. I place it in Volume One because its technique must be the first thing an Architect masters. It was the first of the techniques we used to learn. One will never emerge from the darkness of ignorance and incompetence without it. Depiction is a component of the three masteries which enable the practice of the 'Tricorso'. The others are Building and Writing. It is the technique published in AA Files No. 2 (wholly ignored at the time), and used in JOA to generate the iconology of our own Iconic Engineering, or Decorative Surface-Scriptings. Its Emblem, an Eye inside a Mouth upon a Hand, all cut in stone, is on the back cover of this Volume One.

VENUSTAS offers the student the greatest difficulty. He must begin with it because it will take him the longest to master. '*Splendor*' is coloured Black, the symbol of darkness, ignorance and the infinitude of the Imagination.

'*VENUSTAS*' is a fitting subject for the WINTER CAMPAIGN.

the First Lecture

Breaking the Taboos

AFTERWORD for the FIRST LECTURE: 'BREAKING THE TABOOS'.

When Bob Maxwell, my sixth-year Tutor, now Dean Emeritus of Princeton Architectural Faculty, wrote, in 1995: "Outram has broken the Taboos of Modernity" I could not imagine why he used this hyperbolic expression. Bob authored a biography of James Stirling - another, less amiable, Tutor from my second and third years. Bob was of an older generation than I. But, more importantly, by making his main career in Education and Criticism he knew better than I the cycles of fashion that rotate who, and what, is 'in' and 'out'. So it was only gradually, as JOA's projects became larger, and built for more prominent Clients, that I became persuaded of the truth of Maxwell's judgment.

Yet it was neither JOA's Clients, nor the Public, that confirmed Bob's amiable revelation. Maxwell himself pronounced no anathema upon my hubris. He seemed, rather, to commiserate with an enterprise which he titled "an impossible dream" which was destined, by implication, to failure. But why should he have thought so when everything already stood in Cambridge? Perhaps it was because the only class of persons who agreed with him were the Professors of Architecture who pretended to train the Practitioners of the Future.

JOA's principal crime, it gradually became clear, was a transgression so grave that, like any truly appalling wickedness, it lay well below the conscious apprehension. We had resurrected, like some ghastly Frankenstein, the whole apparatus of an 'Architecture' which, after WWII, had been pronounced safely dead, buried and consigned to 'History'.

Yet I believed us to be innocent. Had not I, back in the late 1950's and early 1960's, been guided by Saussure and Chomsky, not to mention Levi-Strauss and the Architectural genius of Louis Kahn? Where was the raging iconoclast in an Architect who always built pitched roofs and walls, like Kahn, mainly of tile and brick? No, JOA's crime, as put by Michael Graves, in Texas, was "to go too far". JOA had not played with merely 'referencing' an Architectural Order as the two Venturis had. We had, instead, re-animated an entirely novel 'Trabeated Order' with MACHINERY - the intravenous elixir of the 20C!

From this consistently-followed action had sprung a revitalised 'Entablature' carrying an entity that 'made sense of the pyra-pediment'. I had renovated the Classical figure of the Hypostyle showing the dependence, literally, of Mies van der Rohe upon its 'buried meanings'. Finally, JOA had used this Frankensteinian Apparition to power into existence a renovated decoration of huge scale and iconic power that I had the temerity to title 'iconic engineering'. Moreover these graphical arrays flouted Clement Geenberg's commandment to eschew any 'meaning'. They were, instead, prolix with diverse iconic narratives.

The 'taboos were broken'. 'Quid Tum' - What then?

the Second Lecture

A Sixth Order.

AFTERWORD to the SECOND LECTURE: 'A SIXTH ORDER'.

The fact was, as the Practitioners discovered, that the Sixth Order worked as well as most of the design-methods on offer in the second half of the 20C. In the Autumn of 1974, I had placed electrical and telecom cables, springs and pulleys into a made-up off-the-peg wooden architrave-and-dado 'Architectural Ducting' system. From then, until July 1997, when JOA finally signed-off Duncan Hall at Rice University, in Houston, I seldom, if it was in JOA's power, built a 'Architectural Column' that was not also a services-duct, becoming both bigger, and more 'authentic' in the process.

It had taken me fourteen years, since graduating, to hang out my shingle. This was not the career of a 'breaker of taboos' - eager to escape from his Profession's culture. It was, rather, the history of an Architect who was more than happy to work in a large organisation, providing it built 'Architecture'. It was only despair at working for Architects, both Public as well as Private, who failed this simple test, that pushed me into 'opening an office' of my own.

I was surprised at how easy it turned out to be, now that I was my own master, to make rapid progress towards what I thought the obvious goal of a Twentieth Century Architecture. I can summarise this by saying that my ambition was for the Shade of one of the better Architects of the past, were he, or she, to come back to us, to feel envy. I wanted for the Shade to admit "I wish that I lived in the 20C". We were richer. Our technology was superior. Our historical and archaeological knowledge was more scientific. Only one ambition conflicted. It was that idea, held most enthusiastically by the most eminent in the Profession, that a line (around 1900) had to be drawn across history after which nothing of 'the Past' could be allowed authenticity. The task of the Profession was to invent an 'Other' Architecture (une Architecture Autre), - one that owed nothing to this 9,000-year 'History'. I thought the real iconoclasms were not the small adjustments which I had invented, but this ideological trashing of the entire medium, in the hope of this 'Other' as my colleagues called the 'New'.

The (very), 'best' schools teach Architecture in this spirit - that of the chimpanzee army tapping-out Shakespeare on a thousand typewriters. Design is taught as Serendipity. It is the search for the haystacked needle or the recognition of an evolutionary 'sport' in the Datafields of Contingency. A foreign student asked me after a criticism I gave at my alma mater, the Architectural Association: "Mr. Outram, what do you think of the education which I am receiving?". The tuition fees alone, over six years, would be some £120,000. I replied: "It will fit you for a practice in which there are no canonic models and no theory. There will be nothing to rely on except luck and, I added, your own genius". Down in the Basement, the 'Triangle Bookshop', once the best Architectural Bookshop in London, has only one short shelf, in 2010, for books on buildings built before the 20C. Why this is, how we got here, and what we can do about it are the subjects of my Forty Four Lectures.

the Third Lecture

The End of Urbanity

JOA

AFTERWORD for the THIRD LECTURE: 'THE END OF URBANITY'.

The 1945 Labour Administration was voted-in by a nation that had been promised Reform in return for the destruction and cruelties of WWII. The mood of the electorate, the blitzed cities and the fractured economy offered the chance for some radical thinking.

This was provided by a slim book, now lost to the memory of all Architects, dated, poetically, "The Summer of 1947". It fixed the pattern of the rebuilding of Britain. So 'radical' was it that it dismissed the whole of 9,000 years of Architectural and Urbanistic precedent. The planning of London, the capital of the bankrupt Empire on which 'the sun never set', was prescribed, in detail, by Patrick Abercrombie, the Chairman of the Council for the Preservation of Rural England. Britain suffered a wartime 'Arts Establishment' who advised, like the philosophers of Brobdignag, that when one 'died for one's country' it meant the literal, sodden, climax-vegetation of the Island. From this stemmed the 'London of Villages' and the 'architecture' of boxy hut-sheds, of all sizes and shapes, from the Festival Hall to the Pelli Tower at Canary Wharf, that has always constituted the 'official version' of the second half of the 20C. What was absolutely tabooed, within this villegiate squalor, was 'Architecture'.
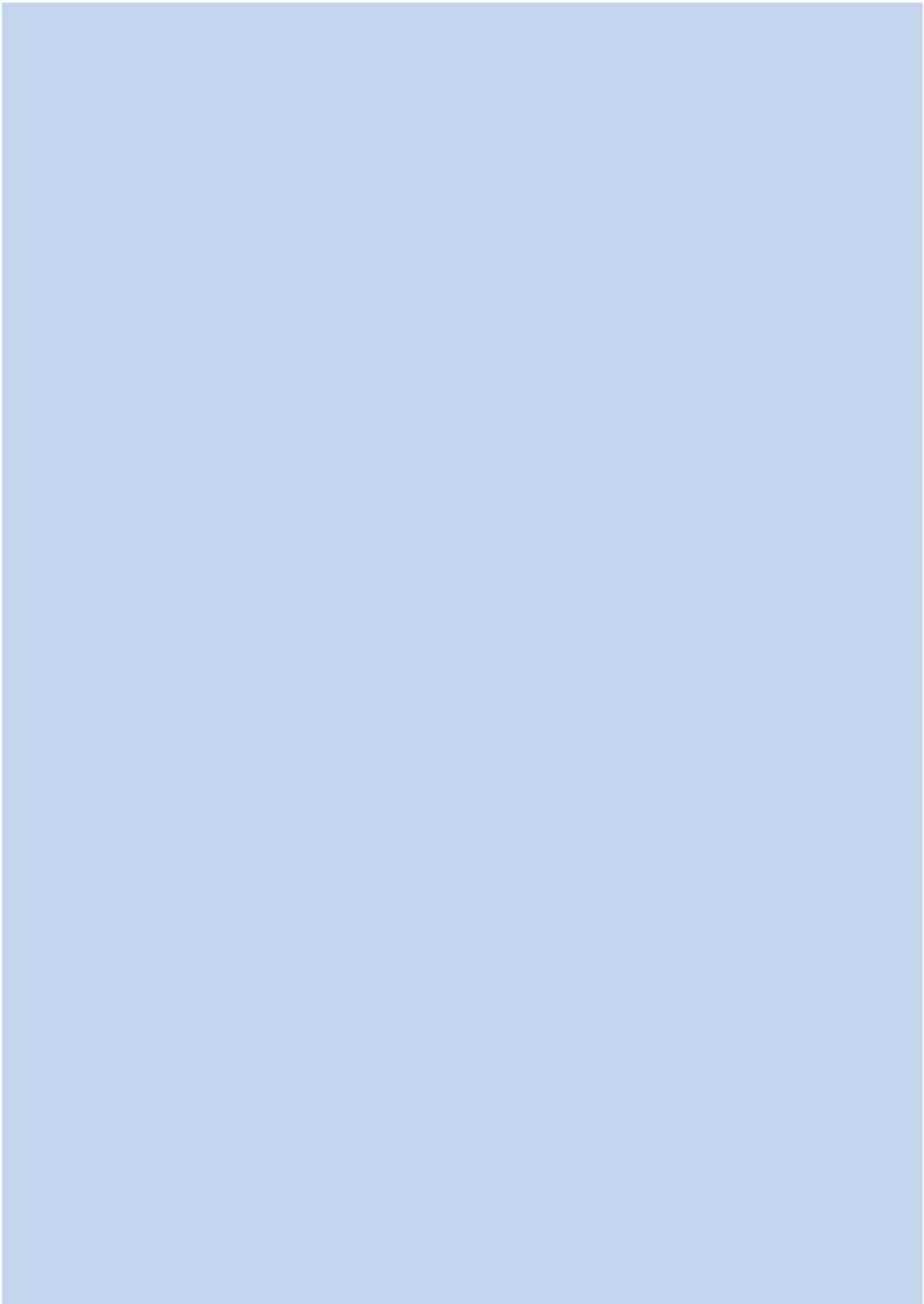
Everything that had supported the industrial economy of Britain and the Empire was systematically destroyed by a 'consensus politics' whose agreement remained uncannily total on the destruction of Urbanity, whether Domestic, Industrial, Public or Private. Nothing was to be left of the great 19C cities except their 'Centres'. The reality of life, that is to say industry and domesticity, instead of being made the foundation for a unitary City of Citizens, was fractured into the 'planned' pseudo-villages of British sub-urbanity. Excised, fortified and bounded by a new 'ring-road', the shrivelled rumps of the great cities that Britain's violent, 200-year, industrialisation had created were to be reduced to 'administrative and shopping complexes'. Fortified by multi-storey car parks, they received the diddy little autos manufactured by the futureless English motor-car industry. With these the 'rusticated' subjects could carry their flimsy shop-trash back to reify the project of a universal Countryside Consumerdom to which the post-'45 'consensus-politics' had condemned them. Finally the 'Administration' went into digital cyberspace and 'Shopping', even, left the 19C city-ruins for 'out of town' Centres. The Banishment to Rusticity became total. Britain became, in the 21C, a Car Park of Shopbound Saxon Serfs.

The Country-House-Socialist Architects and Town-Planners of this pusillanimous post-WWII urban ruination remain only partly known. Whoever they were, they, and their illiterate lifespace-design-culture, deserve the utter infamy into which some industrious historian, if Britain can afford such luxuries in the future, should cast them. Heads should roll.

The Fourth League.

The Great Escape.

JOA

AFTERWORD for the FOURTH LECTURE: 'THE GREAT ESCAPE'.

This Fourth Lecture describes how the Architectural novices of the mid-1950s (denied ethical access to any aspect of their medium's culture, such as it had been in pre-WWII England - so far from its originating centres in Italy, or further, such as Egypt, India, Meso-America and China), turned to the 'toys-for-boys' of engineering and technology that had been given the Modernist Seal of Approval by the publications, if not the buildings, of Corbusier.

The 1958 lectures of Peter Smithson proved that there was a hard-edged, mechanistic, abstract German and U.S. Modernism which had been overlaid by the softer 'rational-village' style of Walter Gropius and the Swedish Moderns favoured by the Festival of Britain Architects. Smithson's aim was to discredit the Modernist credentials of Britain's post-1945 Architectural Establishment. The 'escapist' cult of 'Machine Age Mobility' was taken further by Buckminster Fuller, a 1940's naval aeronautics engineer turned prefabricated housing manufacturer, whose designs never sold one unit. Archigram promoted, during the 1960's, the designs of 'walking cities' in a similar mode, and with a similar ineffectiveness. Smithson, appalled by the eruptions of High-Tech, Vitalism and Pop-Archigram, said he regretted giving his momentous lectures. But he was never going to 'win' with his village-wonky gutters and half-timbered facades.

Neal Ascherson essayed, in the Observer, that when he was up at Cambridge, in the 1950s, the idea was that if calm and reason reigned (colour grey), wars and famines could be planned-out of History. Then, at the end of his essay he wrote: "when I came down from Cambridge I felt the presence of something out of sight, over my shoulder, which later turned out to be Pop". The Sixties, ten years on, through Architects like Piers Gough, reified what can be described as a 'Pop Architecture'. Leslie Martin, a generous, cultured and amiable man, had been high in the LCC and the Festival of Britain. He retired to a water-mill in Cambridge, whence he acted as a vital conduit for State Patronage. Martin persuaded the University Senate that Architecture could be placed, through the employment of advanced Mathematics, upon a "sound theoretical footing". What actually happened was that everything novel and vital was born 'ex utero' - outside the traditional high culture of Architecture, Literature, Music, Painting and so on. It was a sad performance by the Cultural Establishment which left them cowering in the shadow of the (fully chromatic) Pop that they had failed to forsee, shape and 'put to work' (in the sense used by Heidegger).

Later, seeing the 'Palladian' parti of the Pompidou, some of the disenfranchised Humanists, Classicists and Latinists turned to High-Tech as a way back for them into a 'popular' Architectural culture. It was, after all, an Historian (albeit with a stainless-steel prosthetic arm), who commissioned (the all-greyed-out, steel-and-concrete) Lloyds of London.

the Fifth Lecture.

Happy in Limbo

AFTERWORD for the FIFTH LECTURE: 'HAPPY IN LIMBO'.

The only prize worth winning, for a young Architect in the 1970s, was the Financial Times Industrial Architecture Award. The Industrial Areas created by the pusillanimous Welfare Planners lay, as I described in my Fourth Lecture "The Great Escape", entirely outside the imagination of that consensus-politics (Sunset of Empire), bureaucracy that was soon to be routed and dismembered by the 1979 Thatcher Administration. The High-Tech Four of Foster, Grimshaw, Hopkins and Rogers, who shared the Venice Biennale of 1992, with Stirling and myself, all found their feet in these armpits of the Welfare State.

There was no need to 'keep-in-keeping' with that fatal brew of meaningless abstraction for Public Space and Rustic Isolation for the cult of consumerised privacy that continued to exclude all Urbanity from the 'housing' banished from the city by "the Summer of 1947". So it was that I was able to reify something (even set under the flightpaths of the fat-bellied 747s), of the Horrea that a sailor might find, coming up the Tiber from Ostia. Here was the cultural depth, a perspective in Time, that could raise an educated man's spirits in spite of the indignities imposed by the culturally pusillanimous Attlee Administration upon what was once the greatest power on the globe.

McKay Securities, the quoted Developers who had commissioned Poyle, were gaining in confidence. They were invited to a power-breakfast by Michael Heseltine, the 1979 Thatcher Administration's Minister for the Environment. But they refused. They feared that their Insurance Company Funders might believe that, being already accused of 'softness' because of the Roman Architectural echoes ringing rather faintly around Poyle, breakfasting with Cabinet Ministers was going to lead them to waste their hard-working debt in gratifying the fickle appetites of Politicians eager for popular approval.

Even so, McKay ventured out of their normal habitat inside the Garden of Ballistics (as I called, back in 1954, the motorised suburbia imported from the victorious USA). They commissioned the same sort of Warehouse-Workshops in Northern Kensington, a few streets beyond the Notting Hill that would later become so very fashionable. Kensal Road folded many iconographies into itself. There were the split pediments of 'semi-dee' by-pass Tudorbethan, here cleaned-up by De-Sijl detailing. Best of all was the monostyle Order with cantilever pediment. Better still, it faced away from the obvious 20C prospect, the still waters of the Grand Union Canal, to create Britain's first post-WWII 'Industrial Boulevard'.

Here was proof that it was not the motor vehicle that 'ruined' Urbanity, but the deliberate Urbanistic illiteracy promoted to forward the 'Architecture Autre' ambitions of the 20C.

the Sixth Lecture.

'Tricorso'.

AFTERWORD for the SIXTH LECTURE: 'TRICORSO'.

After being an Architect for over twenty years, Poyle and Kensal Road were the first two buildings that I personally built. In large firms one remains in a 'team' and 'in charge' of nothing. But I saw that the Editors of the Architectural Review (and I saw three of these rapidly-changing dynasties), could not 'see' in my sheds what I knew was 'there'.

Being 'published' is the usual way that the young Architect comes to the notice of his peer-group and, through their approval, to Clients who care about 'Architecture'. My problem was wanting, as Madonna sings, 'something more' than the routine of pictures and descriptions that accompanied 'Publication'. I wanted texts that were more interesting than the usual Modernist platitudes. Even more than this did I want 'pictures' that were more than mere photographs, however big and glossy. But the Editors were, in their theoretical mode, essentially 'functionalists'. Like most Architects, they had little other way of classifying buildings than Realtors who knew them by what uses they could be rented - factories, warehouses, retail, housing and so on. I had to accept, after two years of 'waiting', that I had to do this 'explaining' job as well (If one wants something done properly etc, etc.). And so I embarked upon the peculiar conceptual voyage, rotating through three media, that I have described.
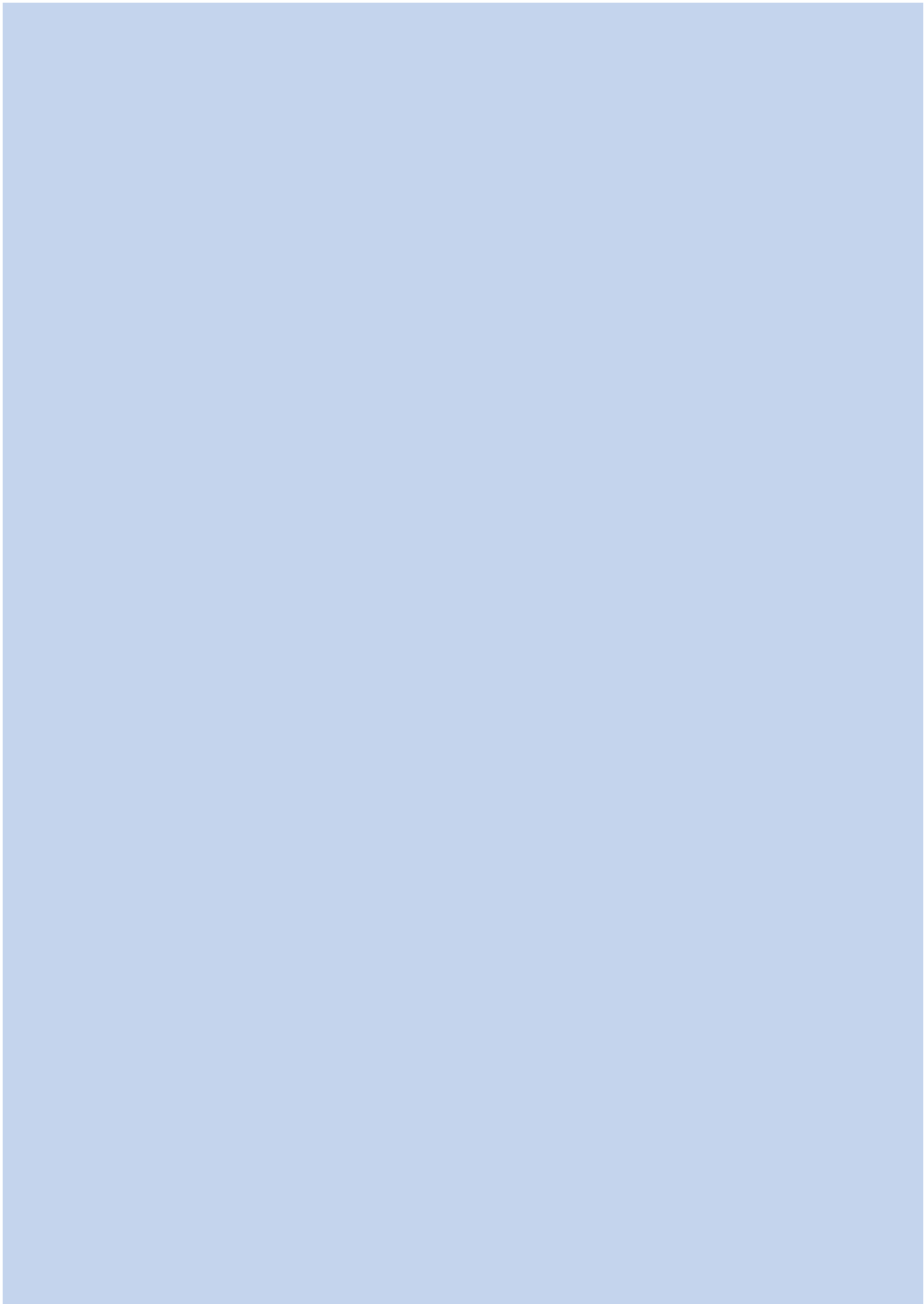
I shared the 'Four figures' with Semper, Corbusier and perhaps with others. They are obvious enough. But they do not 'say' enough. I needed to know and to 'establish', what 'Architecture' was - as such. That was something that needed doing in the 1950s, after the 'End of Urbanity' (Lecture One). But I needed to go further than a mere phenomenology of the 'having been built'. Buildings were prisons. Why else make them of glass? I needed to discover how to use this oppressive quality, this 'darkness', this self-imposed 'blindness', to help me 'see further'. I needed that technique, essential to 'Urbanity', and known to the Architects of the 'past', who could use the darkness of an 'Interior' to see what was not visible to the naked eye or the photographic film. I needed to overcome the admission of Peter Smithson, my 5th-Year Tutor, when he said, in 1959, "John, Modernism is incapable of the Great Interior".

Not that I complain. For it was this routine of translating a building into a text and then its visual metaphors into pictures and then those back into 'mythoi' and those into 'surface-scriptings, that I have named a 'Tricorso', which finally (over the next thirty years) gave me ways of rendering any human lifespace, at any scale, even up to that of a city, of any size, cognisable via meanings, icons and narratives which opened them to the 'understanding' of non-professionals. Twisting the body of a building to 'express its poetic' is as foolish as 'striking a permanent pose'. It begins to look like a malformation, a crippling. The right way to achieve wit is to speak it. This is the job of the textualised decoration which is 'Surface scripting', or 'Iconic engineering'.

The Seventh Lecture.

Babuino

AFTERWORD for the SEVENTH LECTURE: 'BABUINO'.

Falling for the City of Rome can be dangerous. It wrecked the perfect talent of Giorgio de Chirico, an early 20C painter of 'Classical' ideas. His inspirations from his birth in Thessaloniki never failed him until when, as he reported, he "came to Rome and heard (in his imagination) the sound of trumpets and clash of swords". After that his work bcame infantile, worse even than off-peak Salvador Dali. It was a sad loss to early 20C iconic culture.

Camillo Sitte was a big enough character to admit that he had failed, after a lifetime of on-the-spot research to decrypt the mysterious picturesqueness of the Mediaevo-Humanist city. In this he differed from the American Deconstructivists who, led by Peter Eisenmann, invented elaborate ways of fracturing and 'distressing' the sheet-rock sheds prescribed by the 20C. Geoffrey Kipnis, a Physicist and Musicologist by training, used to work in Eisenmann's office. He came, during the 1990s, to 'teach' city-planning at my alma mater, the Architectural Association School. While there, he gave a revealing lecture at the Royal Institute of British Architects. He informed us that he "had read all that there was to read of Architectural Theory and found it unimpressive". His conclusion was that "Architecture is the chrome fender on an automobile". His meaning was that it was merely a piece of "optional trim". Architecture could be disregarded at the scale of city-planning. In passing, during these revelations, he told us that it was Eisnmann's ambition to replicate the (picturesque) quality of Italian Hill Towns. Italy was where such as these American Savants would retire during the long summer vac. They were no better than the furniture makers who fired lead shot into chair legs to simulate worm-holes. They betrayed the promise of the USA so cataclysmically inscribed by Jefferson.

No-one should be in any doubt of the sophistication of the thinking behind so-called 'Classicism'. It is light years beyond the brutally illiterate dis-Urbanisation of the Redevelopment of Central Areas that has made Britain, and all those who followed her example, the suburban shambles they are today. JOA were able to use 'Alberti's Methods', in the form of an 'occluded temple' in many of our individual works, as well as unbuilt designs. Others of his strategies, such as 'each floor being grounded on Okeanos', or of the 'Roof-garden as the original, ante-diluvian habitat, Arcadia, or of the street as the scaly black Ourobouros, serpentine river-network of Infinitude', or of the coffered ceiling as a view upwards, into the golden fire-flower that advertises the Adventitous Cargo and so on and so forth, to name but five of the many.

What was the origin of the frigid taboo the post-WWII Intellectual Establishment laid upon the inventive study of the bases of our so-called 'high culture'? It is time this 'postwar history' was closely examined and revealed, along with its authors,

the Eighth Lecture.

The Denial of Deco.

AFTERWORD for the EIGHTH LECTURE: 'THE DENIAL OF DECO'.

New Delhi remains the largest, fully-built, city-planning project in the entire history of British Architecture. It was a Garden City of Roman bungalows, one of whom, in Akbar Road, was my boyhood home for a time. They were set in a hierarchichy of constellations around that of the Imperial Agent. Lutyens deliberately distanced his Architectural genealogy from its sub-Continental context. In this he reversed the promising progress made over the previous centuries when the Raj created Indo-Saracenic hybrids. When the imperial funcions of New Delhi ceased it proved impossible to use Lutyens' princely planetarium as the basis of a city of 'normal' or even 'ideal' type. It suffers the ususal futile conflicts, therefore, between being useful and being 'Art'.

Lutyens, situated firmly within English 'Country-House' culture, ignored the rise of the Moderne, across the Channel in Paris, in New York and not to mention everywhere else from A for Argentina to Z for New Zealand. As a result, both he and his Clients entirely failed to invent a decorative vocabulary for the interiors of his great creation, a fact made glaringly obvious upon the numerous dull grey cement saucer-domes inside the Viceragal palace.

Not that he, Britain's greatest Architect of the early 20C, was alone in these omissions. Le Corbusier, also, although trained as an interior decorator for his first thirty years, and taught how to paint 'Purisme' by the Engineer Ozenfant, also ignored the fertile decorative essays of the Moderne. Corbusier, instead, proclaiming the beauty of Cubism to be its meaninglessness, converted its compositional felicities to the planforms of houses and rooftop playgrounds. Bathrooms, especially, proved a fertile medium for the deployment of the de-semanticised 'Purist' syntax.

Both of these Architects, amongst the greatest of the first half of the 20C, ignored the revolutionary formal power of the Moderne to inform the banal necessities of 'building' with a conceptually-structured surface. Corbusier, especially, proclaimed the new "whitewashed" vacuity as "revolutionary" and, as had Loos before him, a mark of 'Modernity'. Seen 100 years later, after the semi-decorative delinquescences of Decon, the 'whitewash' looks more like what it actually was - a total inability to invent a modern, or even Moderne, iconology, and behind even that, as we have discovered, the refusal to employ an 'Order'.- as had done every other Architecture for nine millenia.

Not that this failure was unique. There was an attempt, in the mid-20C to assimilate 'Deco' to Modernity. But it failed. The failure, as usual, was intellectual. No persuasive iconography was invented. Then again, in the early 21C, the great V&A 'ART DECO' Exhibition again failed to make any sense of its subject. It travelled the world with its best 'shot' - that Deco was "good fun"! Is this subject impossible or are the Savants just incapable?

the Ninth Lecture.

What Taboo?

AFTERWORD for the NINTH LECTURE: " WHAT TABOO?"

When Bob Maxwell, Dean Emeritus of Cornell and biographer of James Stirling, wrote, of JOA's first big building, that it had both "broken the taboos of Modernism", performed an "act of architectural terrorism", and entertained "an impossible dream" one was obliged to reflect upon such august opinions. This was especially so as Maxwell is my old Tutor and the man who ultimately persuaded the External Examiners to accept (at the third attempt), my final 'Design Thesis'. Then when JOA had finally built, in Houston, Texas, our 40-year-old ambition to realise this so-called "terroristic impossibility", the Dean of the Rice's Faculty of Architecture placed JOA's invention "out of bounds" to his tender Architectural Innocents.

I was always surprised by these violent responses. My own ambitions were merely to have the shades of the Architects of old, should they return, feel envy that they did not live today, with all of our advantages of scholarship, capital and technology. Yet when I looked around, I could not help reflecting upon the opinion of Rem Koolhaas, that our present time was the "Age of Trash".

So what was this 'taboo'? Maxwell's focus had been on the "Invention of a Sixth Order". Yet JOA had never entertained such an hubristic ambition. Our tactic had merely been to extend the idea of Lous Kahn's 'Servant Spaces'. Kahn's gesture was to 'architecturally recognise' the machinery that even the 19C had commonplaced. Our new move was to upgrade this 'recognition' to the status of 'Architectural' columns and beams. It was not until my visit to Rome, along with the Cambridge Students led by Dalibor Vesely, that I obtained an insight into the workings of George Hersey's 'corpo trasparente', and through that of the peculiar landscape described by Christian Elling and, finally, of the extraordinary urbanistic technique, hinted at by Mark Jarzombek, which had been employed by L.B.Alberti and his quattrocento compatriots. When I 'reversed' these 'insights' it seemed to me that, lacking the preconditions of a Mediaeval city-scape (!), a Modern urbanity required the use of 'scripted surface', or what I called 'iconic engineering'. This required the use of an Architectural Order so as to 'steady its graphics' in quotidian, everyday, space. Both of these needed to be validated by being 'narrated', or as Ricoeur would say 'emplotted'.

Lecture Nine was my search amongst certain Architects of note to discover whether any these 'imperatives' could be detected within their works. I was sad that its 32 pages registered a negative. But the fault is easy to diagnose. It is that they all subscribed to the 20C ambition to invent an 'Architecture Autre' which no longer used, as all Architectures have done, a narrative structure mediated by an 'Order' and reified by a Scripted Surface, or Decoration.

It is ARCHITECTURE itself which was placed under a 'taboo'.

the tenth Lecture.

"Return of the Symptom"

AFTERWORD for the TENTH LECTURE:
"RETURN OF THE THE SYMPTOM AS THE CURE".

Harp, of JOA's early projects, may strike the viewer as the most 'extreme'. Why quite so many columns, and with flaming leaves for capitals? Why the curious 'flying roofs'? Why the peculiar jumpy rhythms of the inter-columniations? Poyle took some time to design. Warehouses were new to me, as was, after eleven years in big bureaus, building anything at all, especially down to £110/sq.M. The Warehouse/Workshops at Kensal Road took six weeks from commission to the receipt of planning permission. By then I knew how to play this game. By 1981 I had begun to tutor in Cambridge University's Faculty of Architecture. I gave my first 'lecture'. The images were shown on my two huge 4.5x4.5 cm sq. glass slide projectors. I motored them up from London, arrived late, just before the audience began to leave, rambled-on for three hours and found three sleepy stalwarts when the lights finally went up. But I was beginning to put images to words, an effort that would become formalised in the mid-1980's as the Tricorso.

This 'working-through' the media of image, word and building also resulted in my fictional exercise of 'Optogarble' (described in Lecture Seven: 'Babuino'), written during the summer of 1984 during the building of Harp. 'Optogarble' helped raise the courage needed for the 'outrageousness' of swallowing the whole of Post-WWII 'Rationalism' into the body of a polychromatic 'Classicising' that was, if anything, even more offensive to the chaste sensibilities of the Neo-Neo-Classicist orthodoxies (c.f. J.Harris), that would become the Heritage Movement.

Yet of all the first four projects, Harp most clearly mapped the future of JOA's tactics. For, as foreshadowed in my iconic narrative of the history of the disappearing 'Ordine', presented on page seven of the Lecture 1: 'Breaking Taboos', there was nowhere to go for the column after its 'liquidation' by the 'pouf' of the 20C's 'stylicidal' fury. Nowhere, that is, except a position in which instead of accepting its steady decline into a mere anti-gravitational 'prop', it rebounded as Bob Matthew's "terroristic" 'Sixth Order' or what is described as "the return of the symptom as the cure", and devoured everything in sight.

Harp not only published this 'return of the symptom' in the form of an inflammably exfoliating column but carried this epiphanic resurrection of the forbidden Ordine even further. Swanley demonstrated, for the first time in JOA's work, the Pediment as the 'cargo of ideas'. Harp was a large step, albeit wobbly and gauche, towards our invention of the fully-developed Sixth Order. Our Eminent Critic rejected Swanley as any sort of 'generic solution'. JOA evoked the same reaction, but even more violently, from the Savants of our Profession, when 10 years later, and in Texas, the Sixth Order was built in its perfected form.
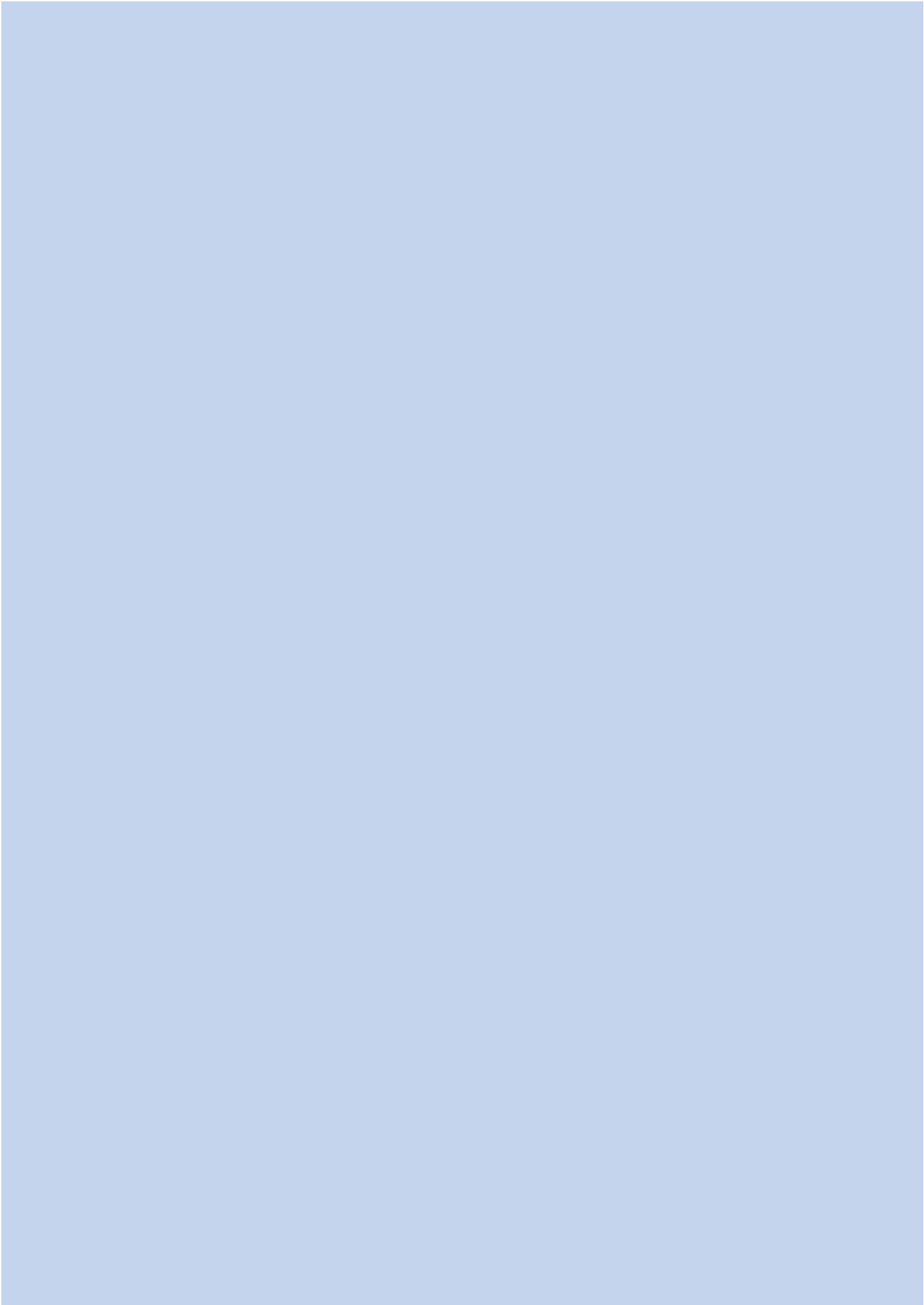
The Public "waved and cheered". My Profession preferred to die, sinking into Deconstruction, rather than the 'Lacanian cure' of a 'Modernised Architecture'.

theEleventh Lecture.

Which Cargo?

AFTERWORD for the ELEVENTH LECTURE: 'WHICH CARGO?"

We post-WWII Architects were trained as honest haptics brought into the Professional World to serve the supposedly sub-literate masses of the Welfare State. When we discovered, with Neal Acherson, that no such class of cretinised vegetables really existed, we Post-War Architects invented 'Pop' characters of our own. To these we served a menu of 'genres' or, if one wishes, 'styles' - High-Tech, Brutalist, Vitalist, Organic, 'Pop', Expressionist and so on. It was for this reason that JOA professed surprise that we, a firm noted for its unusual recourse to colour and ornament, let alone an excess of flame-headed columns, should be chosen to build a laboratory for testing 'white goods'. Apart from the Rausing House at Wadhurst, Which? was the first project upon which JOA discoursed with a Client Body (of the hydra-headed sort) who were clearly not satisfied with what they saw as the 'received' or normative Architectural service. I suppose one might have expected this from an organisation dedicated to apply fierce criticism to almost everything else! But the whole enterprise of 20C, 'Architecture Autre', Modernism had, by the 1980's, become so conscious of its ethical fragility that it was already retreating behind the barrier of unreason that would become, in the 1990's, the Art pour l'Art of 'Deconstruction'. JOA were eccentric, here, also in that we still clung to the Universal Architecture project to which we had all subscribed back in the 1950's.

Thus it was that JOA sailed quietly along with the physical body of Which to set-up a situation that most other Architect of the late 1980' would have been careful to avoid: A huge internal rooom of axial symmetry, ringed with giant columns ending in a theatrical, Busby-Berkeley, stair complete with 'torcheres'. For JOA, of course, no such paranoias threatened. For us, this interior, the logical outcome of every physical and social imperative sanctioned by our Client Body, held the promise of a long-sought benison. Here, at last, was a great public interior to disprove the suicidal premonitions of my old Tutor - Peter Smithson.

Yet it was not yet to be. The surface-scripting techniques available to the Interior Decorator are a cornucopia compared to the few, and miserably crude, abilities to colour and script allowed to the Architect, banished as he normally is, to the outer pales of the lifespace. Yet this profuse bounty proved to be all but beyond our reach. The scale of a 'public' architectural graphics is too large to bear the cost, once all those square metres are multiplied-up, of even the meanest of stencillings and stampings if these are to be applied 'BY HAND'.
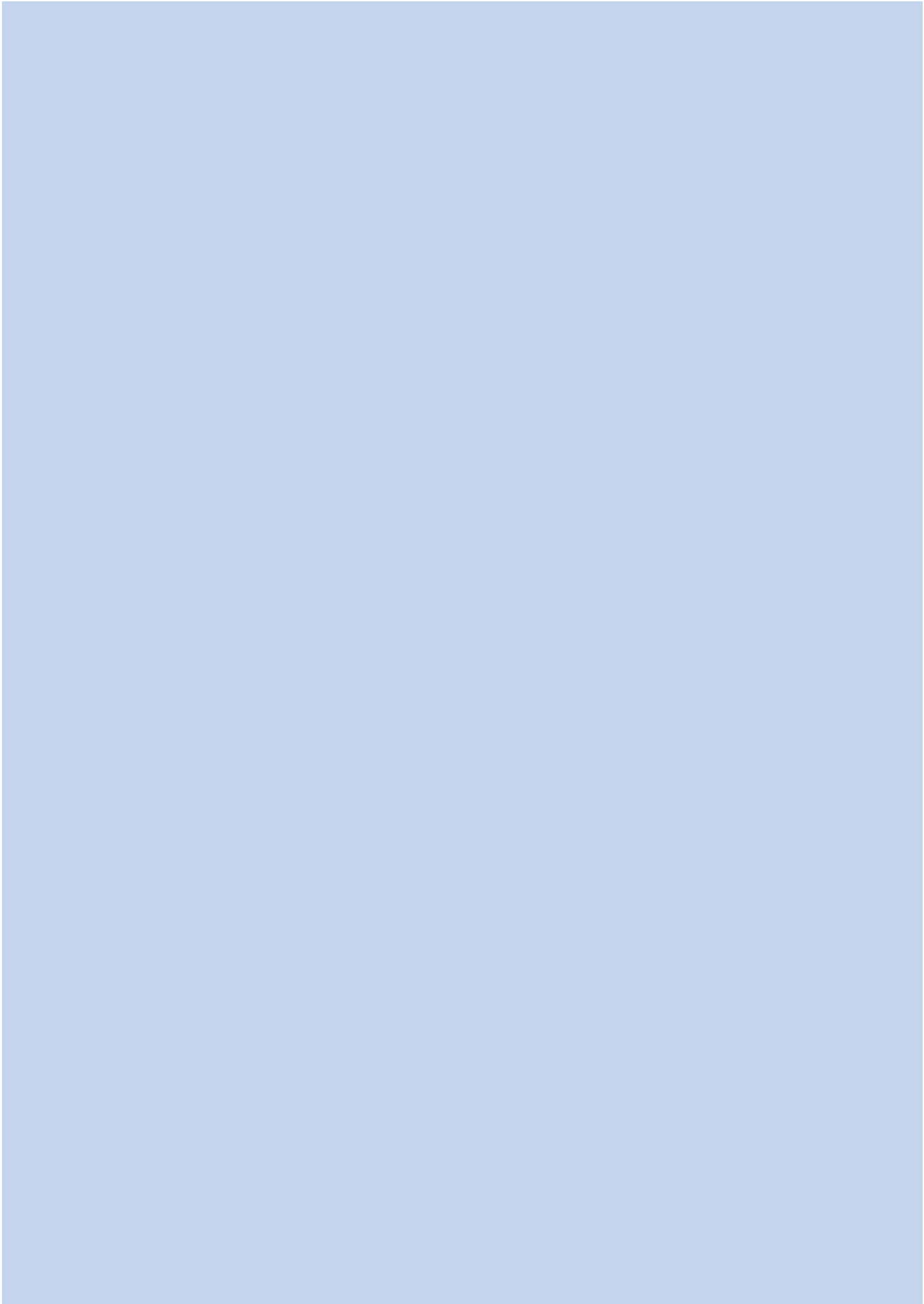
JOA had to spend, over the years of our endavours to this end, some £100,000 of our hard-earned fees before we had successfully explored what the lifespace-design industry had to offer to our project for an Urbane Interior. But, before we had reached this happy end, the Which project fell foul of the 1990's property-value crash and was cancelled one week before going to Tender.

The Twelfth Lecture.

"Something in The City"

AFTERWORD for the TWELFTH LECTURE: 'SOMETHING IN THE CITY".

JOA had , by 1986, come to the general notice. We had built the Rausing House, Harp Heating and the Isle of Dogs Pumping Station. We had achieved the publication of many competitions and other unbuilt projects and been interviewed, at least, for the Sainsbury Wing Extension. So Stuart Lipton, the most prominent Developer of the day, asked JOA to work on the second of his huge City of London projects. While, even in the City, a small speculative office building was of less real status than many of our previous projects, being 'chosen' by Stuart gave a young Architectural firm the Seal of Approval that one was now part of the New Thatcherite Order.

Not that we knew what this really meant!

Then, in the middle of this, We were given a budget of £10,000 and asked to join Stirling, Foster, Rogers, Grimshaw and Hopkins in the British Pavilion of the Venice Biennale. It seemed a lot of money to be just 'given' when one was always battling to be paid fees. But the opportunity to 'compete', at this level, and in Italy, every red-blooded Architects passion, and in Venice, where Rima and I had been married! It was all too seductive! No expense could be spared on a passion of such dimensions! In fact it was all, as we discovered when we participated in its rituals, for the greater glory of Italia, who turned-out to be the miserable bunch of scribblers who promoted the haptic Aldo Rossi while secretly ridiculing his 'innocence'. But then, which is one of the consolations of culture, the products can be enjoyed without meeting its authors. Passions, when transformed into media, have no more need for their human inventors.

The office moved, bought a complicated phone system, more Apple computers, a huge Canon printer-copier and in three years grew to over 20 qualified Architects. We took on a secretary and had to let her go when she arbitrarily increased her salary and wanted a bigger desk than an Architect's drawing-station. A question of pencil-envy. One of the reasons we bought computers back in 1981 was that I could not see the point of waiting over a week for a typed letter, as I used to in Louis de Soissons, back in the 1960's. Anyone literate can do a letter on a computer. So, in the whole history of my firm, we never had a typist, a telephonist or, indeed, except for this one, a secretary of any sort.

I prescribed the filing system (the Swedish CiSfb), and designed the peculiar 'hanging-fruit' system of library storage boxes. One knew when papers had to be 'retired' because material fatigue caused the cardboard library box to fall off the wall. It was better than the more commonplace 'geological' filing, in whch the older papers are to be found in the lower strata.

The Thirteenth Lecture

A Politics of Prefabrication

JOA

AFTERWORD for the THIRTEENTH LECTURE: 'THE POLITICS OF PREFAB".

If the 'Redeveloment of Central Areas', published by HMSO in 1947, during the Attlee Administration, can be described the 'End of Urbanity' in city-planning. The use of ultra-lightweight, globally-sourced, pre-fabricated building construction, by Rosehaugh-Stanhope, can be argued to mark the moment, in Britain at least, when Urbanity was no longer rendered possible even at the level of individual Buildings. This was the End of Urbane Architecture.

Urbanity is not only streets and buildings. These are a sine qua non, as the literal-minded Hilbeseimer and Gropius proved with their microclimatically illiterate slab blocks. Urbanity is the lifespace for intelligent, if not intellectual, talking animals. Surface-inscription exists for the human mind - not the human hand, foot or buttocks. Rosehaugh-Stanhope, with their ingeniously-crafted method of union-breaking, drove building construction towrds an ultra-lightweight, globally-sourced, prefabrication. Not that many Architects trained since WWII knew how to 'decorate' successfully. But the Profession had begun to experiment with it in the 1960's and was, by the 1980's, getting somewhat better - if still deficient in its textual support - otherwise called 'Theory'.

Sourcing a facade in Minnesota, so as to open competitive bidding to a global market, well outside the ability of any British Union to master, and ridding the building site of all building operatives except crane crews, defeated the habit of the British building unions to stop work on a prominent City of London site while negotiating the next year's wage rates. It was unsurprising that Margaret Thatcher opened one of her successful re-election campaigns in Broadgate.

Try as they might the Architects appointed by Rosehaugh-Stanhope found themselves driven towrds the lightweight, hung-from-above curtain wall, whose ultimate form was a sheet of glass. JOA did develop a polychrome, prefabricated panel facade for them. But Stanhope objected to the number of different 'trades' and processes it combined. There was no technical drawback to this, at all. We had proved them ALL on our previous buildings. All were 'industry-standard' building techniques. Stanhope's objections were that if there were so many technologies on the one prefabricated panel then it made it too complicated for them to sue a Contractor for defective work. It was useless for us to argue that JOA's projects had never, in 15 years, been sued for anything.

Stanhope suspected that their whole strategy was technically 'problematic'. They 'prided' themselves on re-writing the entire building contract every year. Then they loaded their Consultants and Contractors with novel 'liabilities' for which we had to obtain new levels of insurance. It was destructive on more fronts than one. JOA refused to play. If Lipton would not be part of my project, I would not be part of his. I told him clearly why in 1988, in writing. We parted, to go our own ways as 'good friends', as the years have shown.
.

the Fourteenth Lecture.

Zomby Army

AFTERWORD for the FOURTEENTH LECTURE: 'ZOMBY ARMY".

Thatcher's destruction of the consensus that ruled post-WWII welfare-state politics allowed millionaires to appear legitimate. Following from that, acts of public patronage could become the work of private families and individuals. This abandonment of the post-1945 Soft Marxism revealed unresolved differences within Public Architecture, allowing it to schism, first into Traditonals versus Moderns, and finally, later, into the reduction of Architecture Matrix (Mother) of the Arts of Peace, into a mere 'Fine Art'.

One of its first evidences was the extension to the National Gallery in Trafalgar Square. Here the Venturis attempted to satisfy the Traditionalists by using 'Greek' Wilkinson's cut stone details, while pacifying the Moderns by employing the vernacular plan of a humble, and crooked, London terrace, house. They then razored the result into a syntactic and semantic shambles. The Venturis hoped, by offering their Architeture as a bleeding martyr to Mass Culture, to disguise the 'elite' state of wondrous Literacy enjoyed by themselves, their Clients and the Art they adored. Here the Venturis were frustrated by the native English predilections for 'good', solid (raw) materials. Sadly for Robert and Denise their Polychrome Pop Interiors foundered in a sea of high-quality (Portuguese) grey limestone.

A similar syntax of picturesque fracture was used by Richard Rogers on the rebuilding of Lloyds of London. Rogers used the machine-age semantic native to the English revolt against Welfare Boxy. But the result was rendered 'safely' into an urbanistic zero by the combination of the syntactic infantilism of its 'rounded and shiny' parts and the semantic boredom of toilet-pods and lift-machinery. When its huge cost is factored-in, Lloyds was never going to rescue Urbanity.

The iconic analysis of the more recent 'Brown's Building' showed how the prevailing semantic poverty of Architectural Theory reduced the amiably urbane syntax of Post-Modern Classicism to a suffocating dullness. Many other examples exist of the semantic emasculation of Po-Mo. Who can one blame but the 20C theorists, the Architectural Savants who failed to crack the semantic code of Western (their own), Architecture - at any level?

None of these could champion the Army of Urbanity and lead it to victory against the forces of Capital when they were used to deny the natural human desire to raise. and inscribe, our own lifespace. Yet there, in the midst of the City, in Leadenhall market, a sophisticated example of Urbanity already existed - both at the levels of City-Design, Architecture, and Ornament. It remained only to prove that Architecture could be rescued from its 'Walking Dead' isolation as 'Fine Art' and be just "put to work".