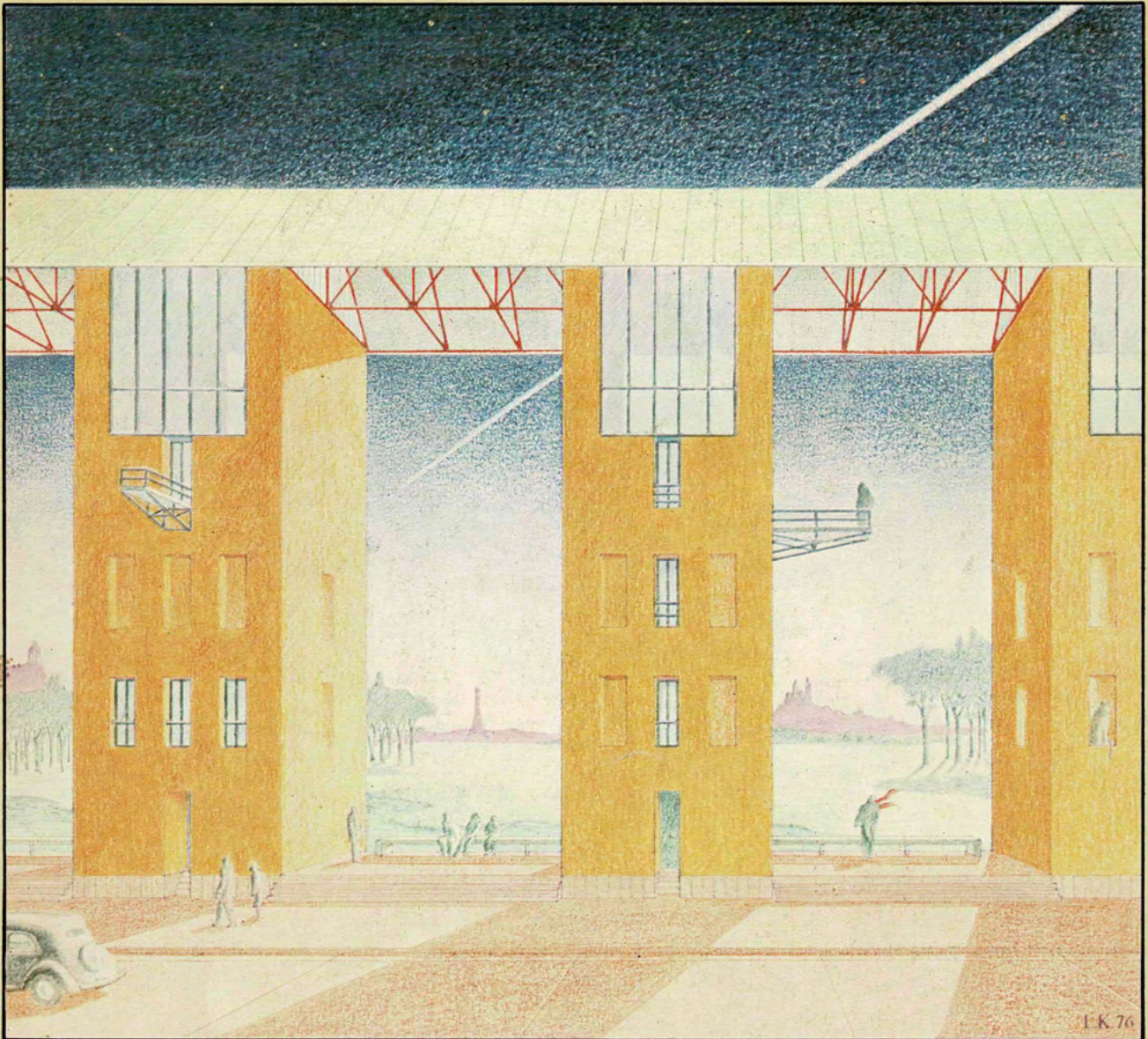


Architectural Design
Vol 47 No 3 1977 80p



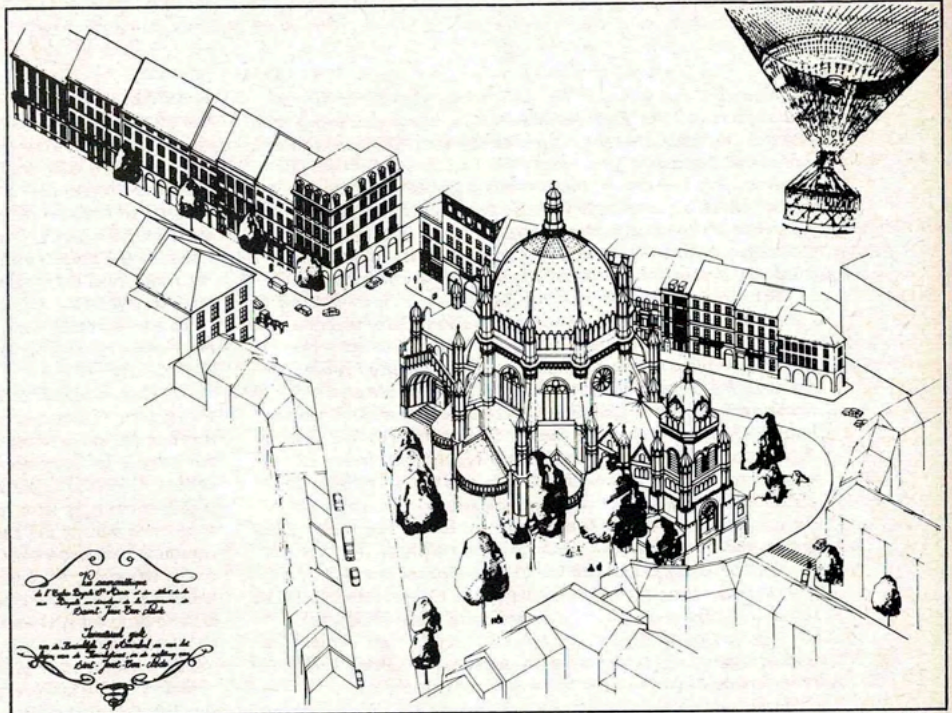
Tafari/Culot/Krier

The Pleasure of Architecture

Architecture Language & Process

The work of Maurice Culot and Leon Krier has been featured in this issue of *AD* because, when taken together, they exemplify two extremes of a European Marxist approach to the re-definition of architecture – one which encompasses the functional, social and ritual requirements of urban living during the next phase of western society. In his article ROBERT MAXWELL proposes a critique of these two architects to reveal significant differences and similarities. In the work of Leon Krier he notes that the architectural process and its use of language is a valve which is to be conserved and recuperated through the development of theory; while Maurice Culot, who treats architecture with equal sensibility, sees it as a resource to be expended in the practice of political struggle.

The debate on the present condition of architecture can be conducted on a number of levels, but in England it seems to centre anxiously on the single issue of public confidence. Until this is restored, architects are well advised to keep a low profile and apply the same to their buildings. Context is all. While the architectural philosophers canvass yet again for signs of a new sensitivity to the *genius loci*, individual firms, crying snap! claim to have already discovered it – a claim that seems to rest, for the most part, on a liberal use of such devices as pitched roofs, bay windows and indented facades. There is not only a lack of speculation about architectural possibilities, but a sort of horror of any gesture which is not purely empirical in its reference, anything savouring of an interest in ideal form, anything which might revive the image of the architect as a formalist ogre. It is almost as though an interest in form were seen as incompatible with a dedication to people. People, formerly omitted from photographs of new developments as obscuring the brilliance of the design, are now admitted in such numbers as to suggest that we are overpopulated on the scale of a developing country. The swing to an indiscriminating populism may be cynically seen as the ploy of a profession suddenly deprived of willing clients, and the hypocritical layers would no doubt be quickly steamed off by a return of investment. But some degree of cynicism towards at least the sentimental aspects of the populist revival seems entirely called for. It is a pleasure, then, to review the work of Maurice Culot and of Leon Krier, two innovators who between them define a region of theoretical practice dense with new possibilities. It is not the purpose of this essay to describe and evaluate either contribution in detail, but rather to attempt to show how, between them, they clarify the problems facing architecture, or at least facing the development of an architecture which could encompass the functional, social and ritual requirements of urban living during the next phase of western society.



This drawing of an area around the church of Ste Marie, including (top left) part of the rue Royale, was prepared as part of an ARAU campaign for its conservation after signs of dilapidation had appeared. This meticulous drawing by Daniel Lelube reveals the 'designed' quality of an existing environment. Nadar's balloon (Nadar was a 19th century balloonist) adds a further comment on the value of an object, once new and now out of context, to force a re-evaluation of the context in which it appears – compare with the antique aeroplanes in Leon Krier's drawings.

for power, and that architecture as a tradition which combines and has always combined a theory and a practice is in a position to contribute decisively. Both, I think, see architecture as not only a reflector of social and economic relations, but as a means of suggesting what those relations should be. By its very coherence and diversity architecture can enter into the social reality, helping to identify, actualise and confirm the conditions of life.

Both therefore treat architecture seriously, as a primary element of production and as a system of articulating the use of land. They also share a serious attention to history, without which no identification could be made, no reality could be constructed and no future could be assessed.

Their essential differences

Where they differ, in the first place, is in the action which they propose in order to demonstrate the importance of architecture as an activator of a socialist future. Whereas Krier sees architecture as an immediate source of ideological values by means of which the new conditions of life may be envisaged, Culot looks rather to its established ideological values as a source of political clarification and confrontation, and hence as the occasion for political action.

One sees architecture as a value to be conserved and recuperated; the other as a resource to be expended in the political struggle.

Architecture as a social object

Both of them start from a perception that architecture is a social object, acquiring its value from acceptance and use. Both enjoy architecture and appreciate the specific benefits which it can confer on social intercourse – not only as an enabling system, but also as a system of expression – a system which, in the past, has often been a means of confirming, both practically and symbolically, social cohesion and shared values. Both have been led into a radical appraisal of those divisions in society which now appear to block this ideal state of affairs.

These divisions stem from an ingrained assumption on the part of bourgeois society that competition is a law of nature and that society benefits in the long run from a firm opposition of capital and labour; an assumption which does not prevent the growth of bureaucratic rigidity, but which does invite and accentuate the class struggle, with an indefinite prolongation of divisions and waste within the social body. Perhaps only by this means can Capital dispel attention from its opportunistic nature and assure a dynamic disequilibrium within which its necessary 'opportunities' will continue to arise¹.

Intellectual Marxism

Awareness of these obstacles has apparently led them both into a position of intellectual Marxism, a position which accepts the reality of the class struggle and looks to some kind of social and political revolution as a prerequisite for a healthy society and a return of coherence to the public realm which architecture hopes to articulate. This position sharpens their arguments, but does not seem to conduct them into a dogmatic impasse, in which architecture is rendered silent and impotent during a long twilight, while the slate is wiped clean.

On the contrary, both convey a sense that the revolution is already happening, that the change is as much a revolution in consciousness as a struggle

Culot / ARAU / Little Manhattan

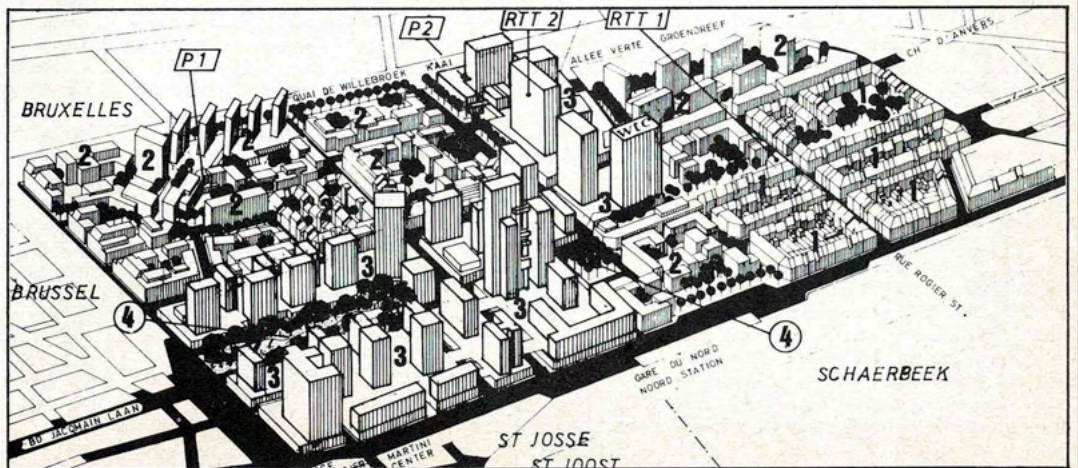
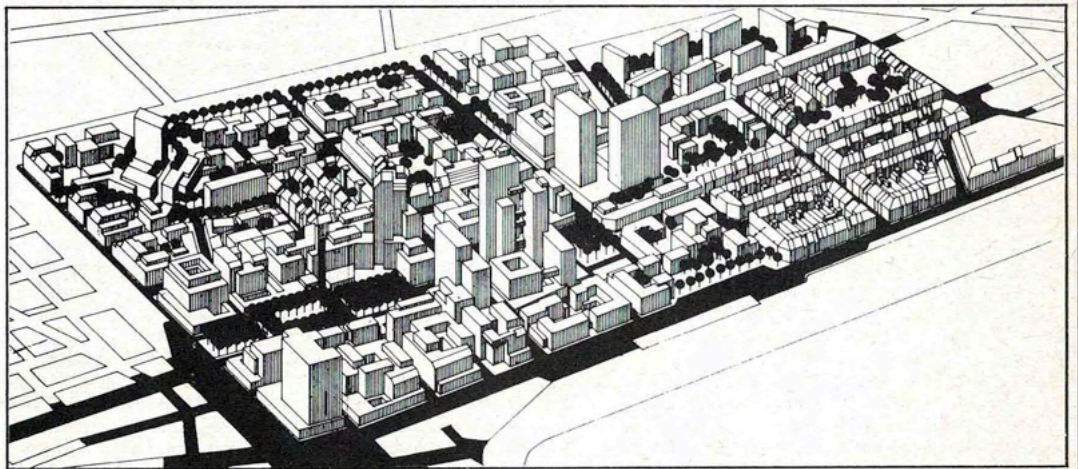
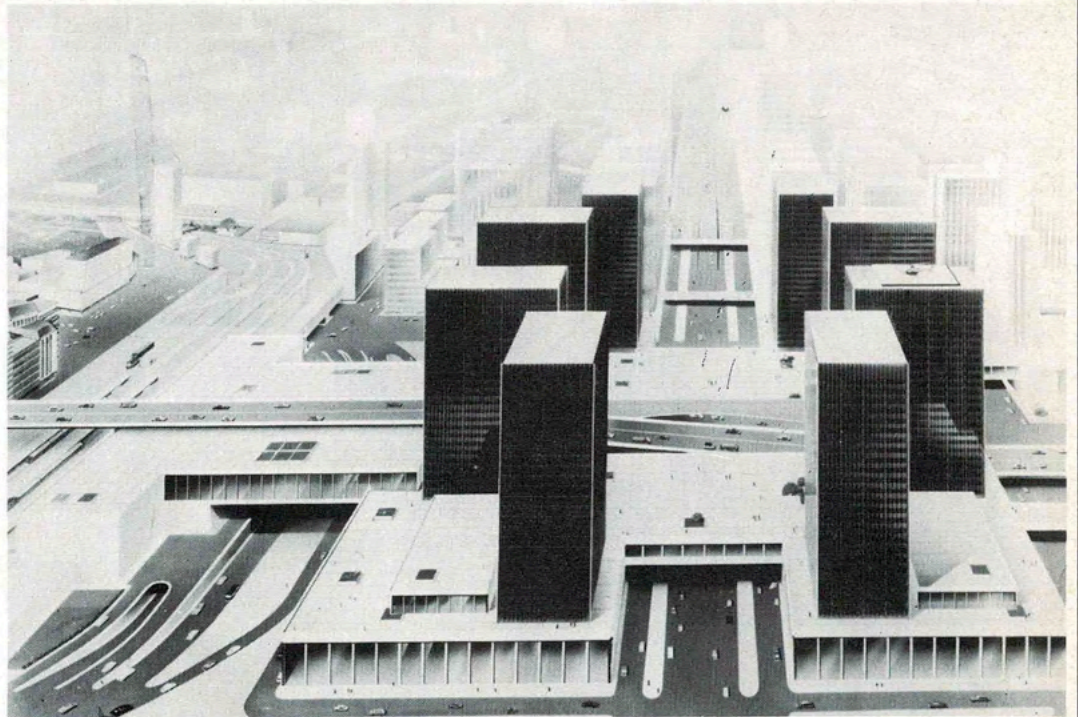
Maurice Culot writes of his involvement in ARAU:

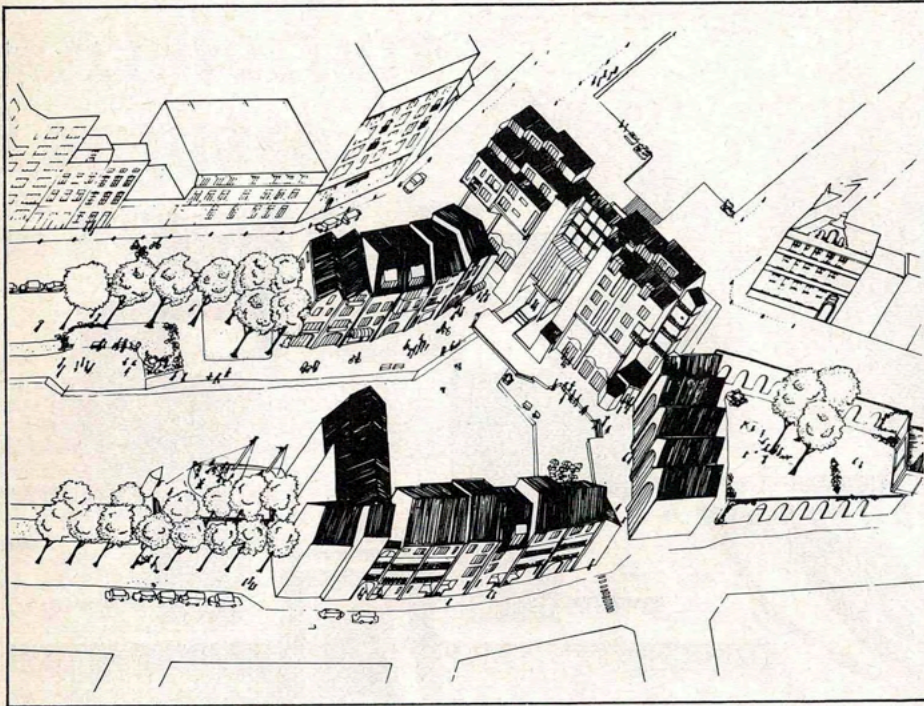
'I am a founding member of ARAU (Atelier de Recherche et d'Action) which was formed in 1968 to promote the democratisation of decision making in the field of city planning. Most of my work revolves around developing alternative planning schemes which are both part of a programme of action and also illustrate the group's philosophy. For ARAU members the city is a place where democracy could live – they reject any proposal that banishes inhabitants from the city. ARAU does not propose architectural images for the city's future – instead the future form of the city must be the product democratic decision making processes, in which democratic chaos is to be preferred to a city of order.'

My role in the group is not that of 'the' architect. However, with the aid of collaborators at the Archives de l'Architecture Moderne and my students at La Cambre, architectural and urbanistic conceptions of the ARAU projects are being developed. My mission is not to create new forms but only to explain the options and programmes being debated by ARAU. We do not force our own architectural tastes on people, but follow the advice of the people involved.

We never accept an architectural commission for any of the projects developed by ARAU – this is essential if ARAU is to maintain its integrity.

*The area around the Gare du Nord has long been seen as a location for business redevelopment, culminating in 1967 with a plan for incorporating into the area a World Trade Centre consisting of eight tower blocks grouped around the motorway crossing. The story of how ARAU mobilised local opposition to the advance of the 'monsters' is a complicated saga which is told in considerable detail, along with many of the other activities of ARAU in the Dutch magazine *Wonen-TA/BK* which published a special English/French/Dutch language edition on ARAU (6/75). The situation is still unresolved and with few of the original residents left, but fortunately, the changing economic climate has taken the steam out of the developers' proposals. The rendered perspective prepared by the project developers avoids commenting on the relationship between the development and the inner city by concealing the latter in a mist. The two simple diagrams were used by ARAU for clarifying particular steps in the long argument. They show ARAU's flexible method in extended negotiations.*





Maurice Culot

Maurice Culot is Director of the Archives de l'Architecture Moderne in Brussels, an enterprise which he, with some others, founded in 1968. In only a few years it has already built up a valuable collection of books and original drawings. His work on Pompe, Bodson, Sauvage and others shows him to be a talented historian and critic, and his respect for architectural scholarship and his love of the early buildings of the modern movement are very evident to any who converse with him. Yet at the same time he was a founder member in 1970 of ARAU - Atelier de Recherche et de l'Action Urbaines - an agency dedicated to the task of intervening in city development on the side of the indigenous populations who are threatened with disruption or dispersal.

This formidable combination of scholarship and activism is rare, yet it follows logically from his Marxist beliefs and the idea that history has to be both understood and made. It is a position which sees theory and practice as together indispensable for material progress. The result of this approach is to clarify the extent to which the process of technocratic development and the process of maintaining historical continuity are in confrontation.

Brussels: bureaucracy versus local identity

It is a curiosity of the Brussels scene that the big developments of the last 15 years have almost invariably resulted in the insertion of isolated slab blocks into the city fabric. These buildings, some of which have been the product of English finance, are dotted insanely around, wherever sites could be found, but tend to cluster in the area of the Gare du Nord. Their architectural character is uniformly bureaucratic, mechanical and soulless. They introduce a measure-less scale which plainly disrupts the existing scale of three-, four- or five-storey houses, so that the displacement they effect in terms of loss of dwellings, shops, workshops and local ties of all kinds is accentuated by their

character. Small wonder, in a way, that Culot has been able to unite all shades of local opinion and sentiments to resist further incursions and to bring many of these more recent schemes to a full stop. His method is to demonstrate the true cost of these developments in human terms by putting forward alternative schemes. These counter-proposals make every possible use of architectural thought and ingenuity to make clear to ordinary people what they stand to lose and what they stand to gain.

ARAU alternatives

In preparing alternative schemes, Culot has employed subtle tactics: aware that the economics of the officially sponsored plans invariably involve a degree of grandiosity, of the bravura of indefinite growth, he has been able to demonstrate that lower, tighter and more traditional forms of development could be both more economical and more effective in contributing to the overall city plan. Without in any way conniving in an exploitation of real estate, he has been able to show convincingly that the alien proposals were not good value for any except their promoters, apart from their disruptive effects on their surroundings. By producing reasonable alternatives Culot has avoided being accused of being merely obstructive, of wanting to halt all progress. But he has shown how moderate development could be allowed while at the same time extending and consolidating the existing grain of the city. The way he has done this has brought into focus the possibilities inherent in architecture of staging quite self-consciously an art of city living. Camillo Sitte is being revived and given new tasks.

These alternative schemes are produced in great variety, by different individuals or through group efforts, and Culot has never been concerned to define a pure architectural material for his purposes, but is content for it to be hybrid, variable and opportunistic. Its general tendency is to reinforce and intensify the existing street network. Instead of high blocks and wide, windy spaces at the scale of the automobile, he has low

Reconstructed Quaysides: Various ideas have been put forward to restore some of the former waterways in Brussels. This scheme by fourth year students of Culot at the School of Architecture at La Cambre, combines shops, houses and workshops around a marine museum at the junction of two canal basins.

chains with space layered, filled and enclosed, at the scale of the pedestrian. Because he sees the existing city fabric as a territory over which the local residents have primary rights, he is able to present the advance of business architecture as a straightforward invasion and to expose in the clearest terms the conflict of interest between those who finance building and those who use the city.

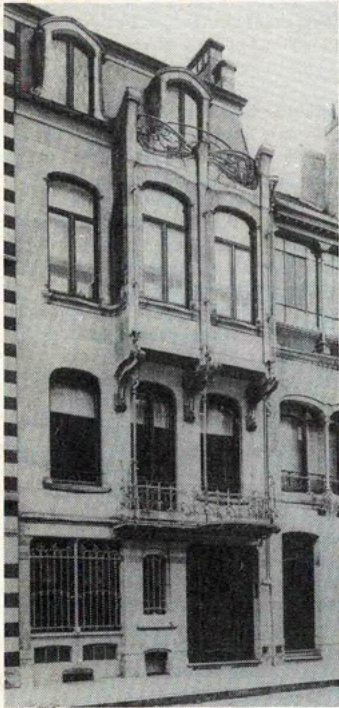
Two values become very obvious: the new blocks are wanted in the city mainly for reasons of prestige, to make a presence. This shows that the city is a place to fight for and therefore worth fighting for. Then, also, the alternative schemes are all directed towards showing the city as a responsive and joyous environment where life is not only possible but advantageous. City blight may take many forms, but an old and established community is generally full of life. In such areas blight, if it strikes, may well be the result of a deliberate wasting process whose purpose is to pave the way for cheap land acquisition and exploitation. It does not occur when the inhabitants have access to land and buildings and can identify with their quarters as home and workplace, even if they are not owners. Apart from exposing links between changes in ownership and exploitive intentions, Culot's researches are of special interest to architects in showing what aspects of city form are conducive to the formation of group identity and attachment to places.

ARAU's theatrics and facades

It is here that paradox enters in. It is easier to change the face of a quarter than to entirely restructure its patterns of ownership and use. The two may go together, or they may not. Many of ARAU's schemes have a certain improvised or theatrical quality. They can involve, for instance, masking views of an existing tower block by judicious infill around a little church², or lining a boring old building with new house fronts³. In the latter case the old pattern of individually distinct houses is imitated at a smaller scale. Effectively what is reproduced is a reflection of burgher row houses, with a happy blend of emulation and conformity as we find most completely in Amsterdam. As the object of the exercise is not stylistic in intent, but political, style becomes expendable, a means of interesting the consumers. Pastiche and kitsch are treated as weapons lying to hand.

Reproached with this, Culot is unrepentant. Capitalism, after all, has no scruples in using these same weapons. And it is true that in London we have already seen the return of the mansard as a way of pushing up the disposable floor area in conservation areas, or the simulation of old tourist alleys in order to increase the frontage for shops, as in the well-known group alongside Hampstead underground station. And perhaps most notable of all is that spurious imitation of an entire old town by Francois Spoerry at Port Grimaud, where a fictitious historicity is fabricated as a means of interesting the consumers. If these games can be used for frivolous commercial purpose, they can equally well be used for serious social purposes.

As Culot is engaged in an active process of political confrontation, it is not surprising that many of his schemes should have the quality of a



Baron Victor Horta, *House and Studio*, Brussels, 1898. Horta was a Belgian architect who studied in Paris between 1878-80 and then in Brussels under Balat. His work at the turn of the century contains examples of the best of Belgian Art Nouveau architecture – as shown here in his own house. Maurice Culot is concerned with the preservation and documentation of such works. Maurice Culot is a director of the Archives d'Architecture Moderne. As such he is responsible for preparing approximately 10 exhibitions a year and up to 5 book length catalogues. (The exhibitions on Godin, Sauvage, Van de Velde and Brussels 1900 have won world acclaim.) The Archives deals mainly with the 19th and early 20th centuries and is in the process of creating an architectural museum for which it is assembling drawings, models and photos. It is a non-profit organisation with about six people working for it full time – often without pay. This group also came second in an ideas competition in France for making an architectural inventory. The first phase of this project is now complete with a three volume (1 000 page) documentation of the architecture of Lyons. The Archives also publishes a monthly magazine 'Bulletin' (available from the Archives at 4, rue Paul Spaak, 1 050 Brussels) which deals with historical material and is highly polemical.



provocation, since the invasion of a living quarter by a horde of tower blocks may also be seen as a provocation. This ironical, sometimes satirical and occasionally ribald vein of comment shows up more plainly in the work of students associated with ARAU. But this does not mean that we should dismiss these results as a mere counter-exploitative rhetoric. It has always seemed to me that Spoerry's success at Port Grimaud is a standing reproach to our municipal housing and its un-faillingly antiseptic approach. A touch of consumer hedonism and the risk of spreading the bacteria of personalisation might make the task of providing homes easier than building houses. At any rate, Culot's alternatives are useful in suggesting what contributions architecture can make towards making a city quarter more liveable and more lovable.

If this seems to lead back to a facsimile of bourgeois consumption, and hence merely tends towards a further disintegration of bourgeois society through proliferation, it is hardly reasonable to reproach Culot with this result, which must after all be considered perfectly consonant with the ends of a Marxist activist. The question is posed rather for those of us (if any exist) who still feel that liberal bourgeois society is capable of correcting social injustice and of evolving new mechanisms for control of production and investment which would limit managerial privilege and put a stop to exploitation.

The uses of History

In purely expressive terms this quandary seems to be a simple issue, but of course it is not. It is unlikely that a complete socialist revolution could accommodate a petit-bourgeois heaven and a legitimisation of a moderate scale of private consumption. It is difficult to judge the real terms and conditions of life in a country such as Cuba or China, but insofar as their art gives an indication it shows the rhetoric of consumption replaced by the rhetoric of production. The pressure goes into reverse, but the human tendency underneath does not seem to vary so much. The general militancy of communist government, especially in China, is not to be explained solely by the negative pull of market forces at world scale (the forces which at present curb public expenditure in England): the dialectic of cultural revolution and bureaucratic retrenchment wears a more fundamental aspect, the result of an endemic conflict between individual and group so clearly described by Durkheim, with all the attendant problems of controlling society while animating it. These problems are in my view not solvable by ideology alone, but involve a history and science of human affairs as well as a philosophy of knowledge.

The image of a lived-in architecture, with its aura of bourgeois consumption, which we receive from Maurice Culot's projects must be seen as a purely heuristic device for carrying out a political practice in architecture within the framework of bourgeois society.

To see it only in these terms, however, would be to do him an injustice. There is a genuine curiosity in his programme and a willingness to experiment with a variety of forms, which indicate a level of cultural interest going beyond the adventurous. In some of the proposals⁴ we see a search for an architecture which is not purely one of consumption, but which proposes a fresh blend of present interest and historical antecedent, and this return of architecture to its historical base seems now the only sane way to advance it and to make progress. As Culot has said: 'The Culture-machine

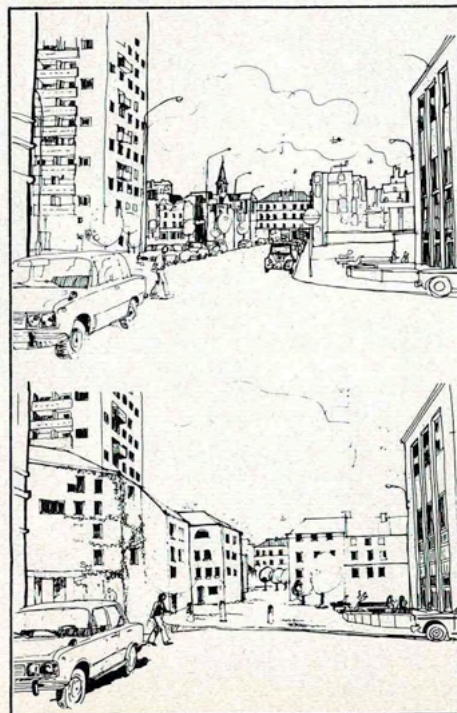
doesn't ever turn uselessly when it mixes history into the present'⁵.

Leon Krier

Mixing history into the present and making a new synthesis is precisely what Leon Krier appears to set out to do. He is not involved in political action, other than by making drawings of a possible architecture. These drawings must speak for him, and if they influence only other architects, they may still have an ineluctable effect on the future of architectural practice. The drawings represent a labour of creative thought and discovery which could be justifiably described as intellectual production. Krier's wish is to establish this activity as legitimate and potent. Instead of aiming to clarify the conditions of consumption, he tries to clarify the relationship between intellectual and material production, again on the premise, on which Marxists rightly insist, that there is no practice without a theory and no theory without a practice.

If Culot's talent is directed towards social relations and the heroics of confrontation, Krier's lies undoubtedly in a mastery of draughtsmanship and the dedicated stoicism of solitary work. Mere drawing would be nothing, though, without the passion which animates it. The drawing can be pitched at different levels of reality: the epigraphs, for example, are both witticisms and mirages, situated in an imaginary realm but immediate in their effect, while the elaborated perspectives, such as that of the High School at Echternach (1970), are all-embracing in their actuality, with old and new reconstituted together in the same painstaking

Reorganisation of the Porte de Hal area: These before and after sketches show the way in which empty sites and parking streets are brought to life with rows of new buildings imitating the existing vernacular and masking the tower blocks. This scheme is by a group of third year students. The method recalls Camillo Sitte in suggesting an Art of City Building.



delineation. But the new proposals are characterised by an ideal configuration, skilfully adapted to local irregularity but making no secret of their normal intent.

Defining a possible architecture

In these more realistic drawings the architecture is not to be seen as totally introspective and empty of social purpose, and this is true in spite of an element of surrealism which is often present. On the contrary, the aim of the drawing is to define a possible architecture — one which could answer the variety of functions, both practical and poetic, which we recognise readily enough when we encounter them in thriving old cities. The aim is to establish in visual terms the form of a matrix for fresh city life. For the body of his city, Krier would have ordinary city blocks defined by ordinary city streets, the correct dimensioning of these units being itself a key to the opening up of the territory and the regulation of the sizes of building sites and hence of building operations. Mixed uses, working and living, recreation and social ritual would all be acknowledged as a set of patterns of human behaviour, not as abstracted and physically isolated activities.

Krier's approach constitutes a polemic against the over-specialisation and functional determinism of modern 'urbanism', particularly as defined in the era of CIAM. In that dogma the universal application of rigid zones, together with an obsessive treatment of buildings as uniquely generated from internal functional pressures regardless of their relations to their surroundings, has been responsible for a total disintegration of city form. A neutral zone of undifferentiated space separates everything and murders both place and occasion.

This philosophy has been taken even further in post-war planning for indeterminacy and indefinite expansion⁶. These tendencies, developed in the modern movement as part of an excitement about function and control, have now lost their curative aspect and have delivered over the city to the operation as much of bureaucratic regimentation as of business exploitation. From rather different points of view, Culot and Krier join in their defence of the 'quartier', the close-knit locus of community life and loyalties.

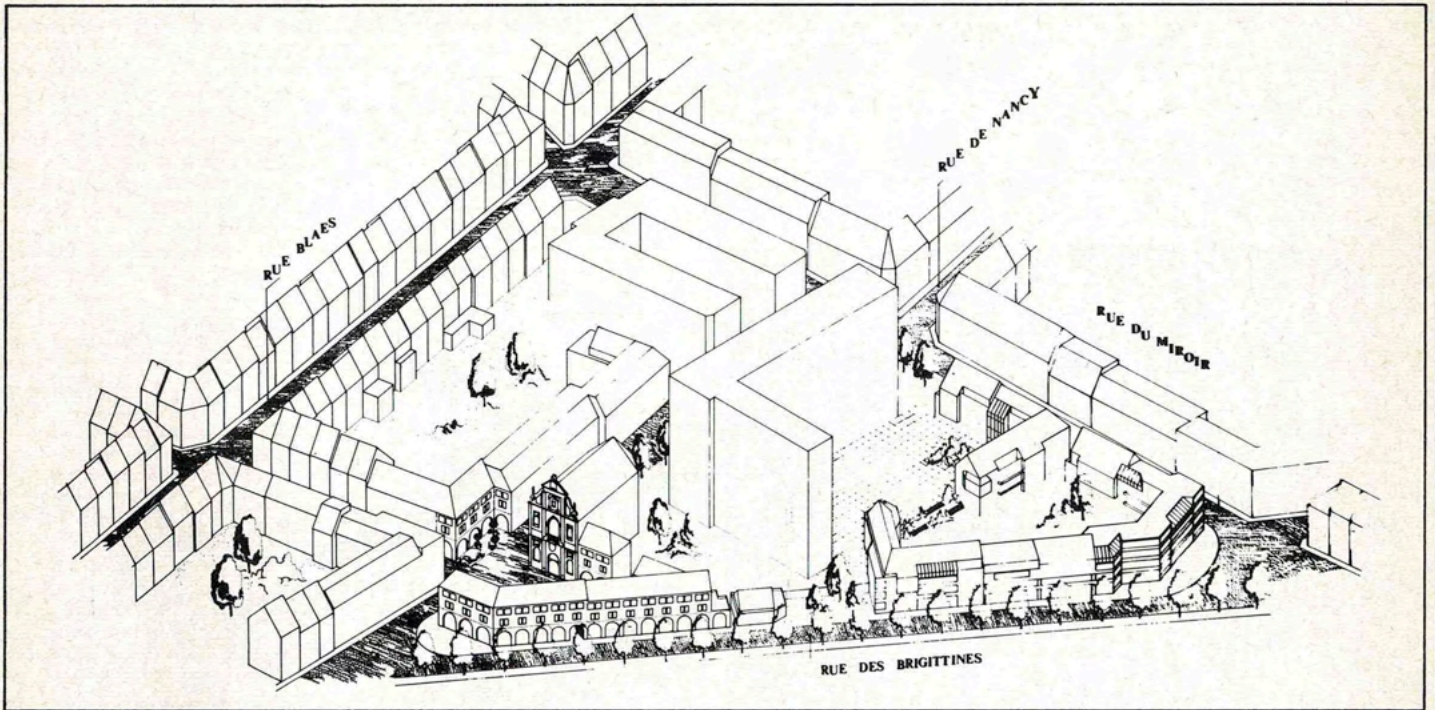
La Villette competition entry

With Krier, these intentions can be most readily appreciated in his entry for the competition for La Villette. He has gridded the entire area with a hierarchy of streets based on a small block, which could itself be sub-divided as required into smaller building plots. Although certain functions are localised — as for example the concentration of industry along the margin of the motorway ring — the important thing is the non-specific mix over the majority of the area.

It is against this matrix that we read the differentiated elements, which consist not only of individual buildings, but also of spaces, Mairie, school, hotel and so on but also (from Krier's own list) piazza, colonnade, arcade, passage, mews, court. Simultaneously, he shapes space as well as building mass, and this combination is particularly stressed in the case of the two spatial elements by which the individual quarters are aggregated into a segment of Paris — the grand boulevard and the park.

I have deliberately come to these elements last because they are the most striking, indeed audacious, from a formal point of view, and tend to monopolise the attention. What we see in this

Culot/La Cambre School/Brigittines

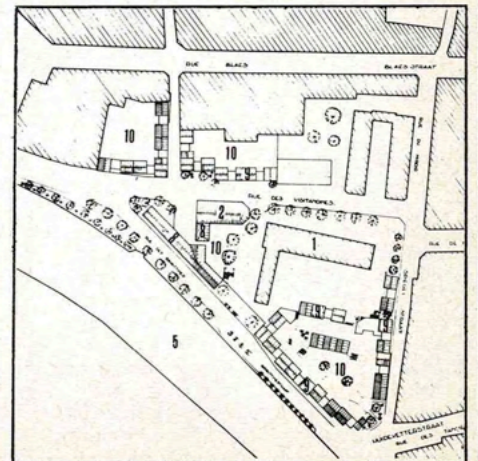
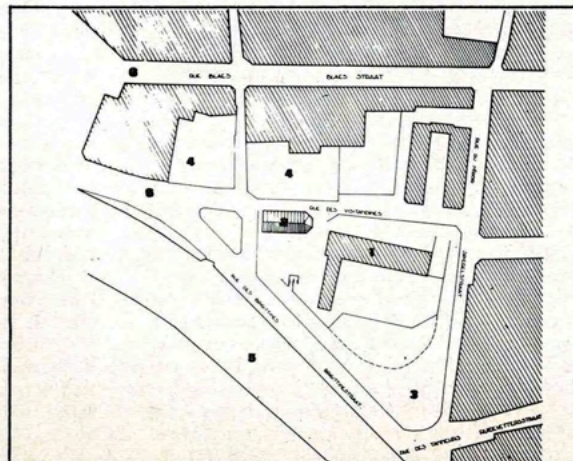
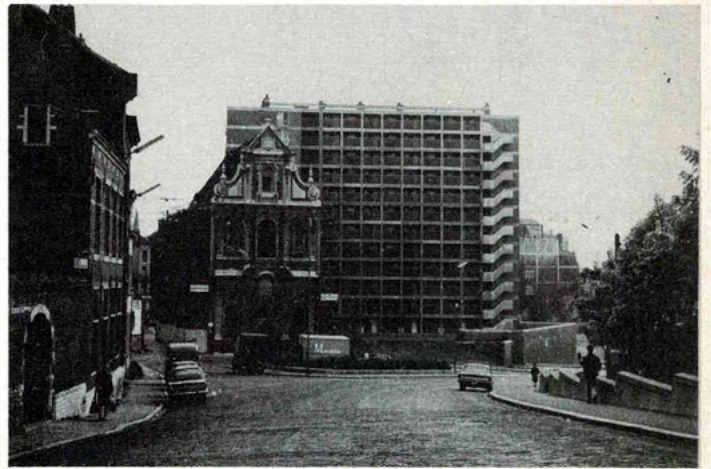


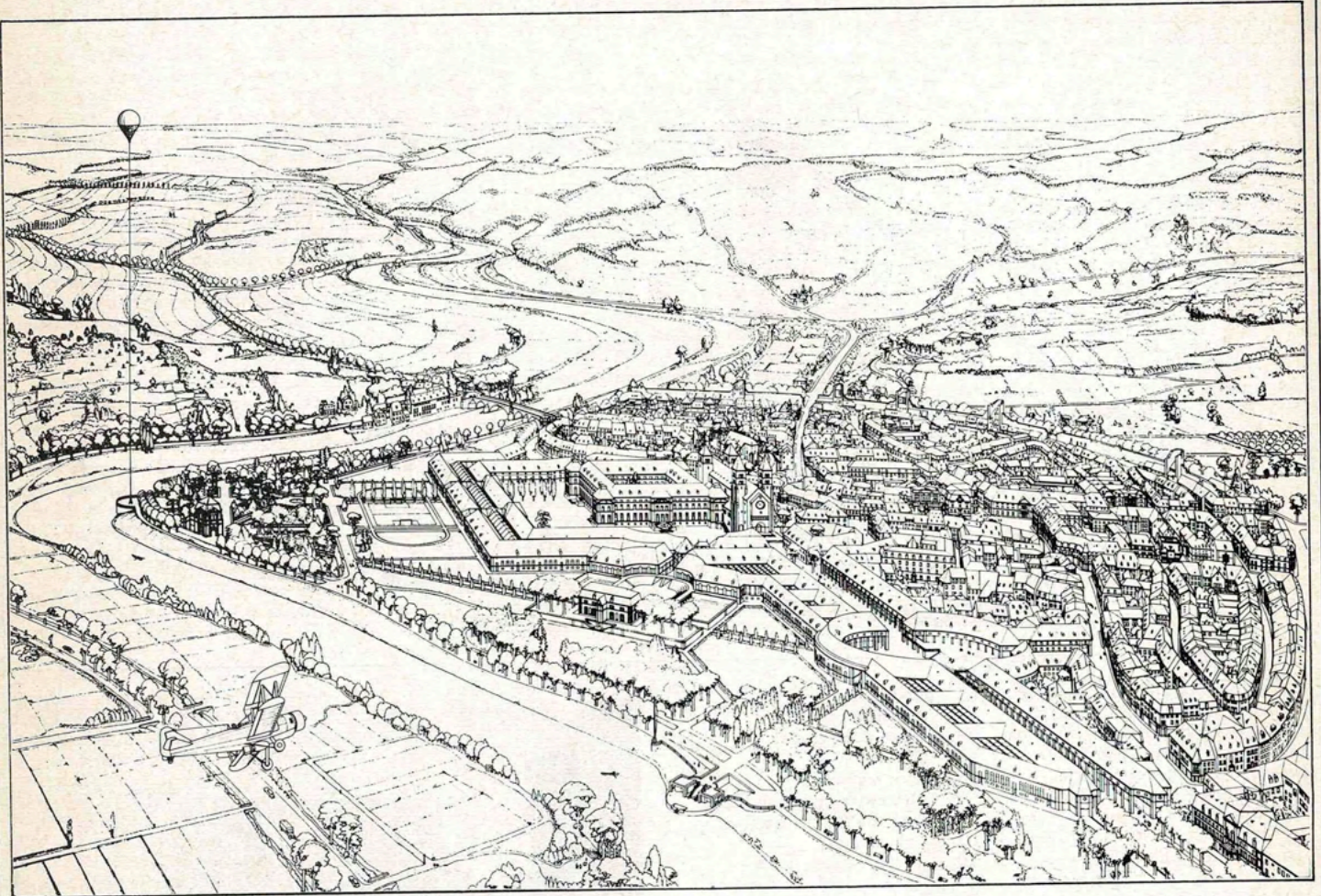
A first year project at the La Cambre School of Architecture involved a shallow 6m deep strip land which was created when a bowling-alley was built in 1958 to a proposed road-widening line – now abandoned. The students have not hesitated to reproduce the scale and effect of the individual burgher houses further up to the street in their proposal for an infill on this left-over piece of land.

Culot notes that the La Cambre School, which was founded by Henry van de Velde in 1927 on the lines of the Bauhaus, is now ideologically split into two parts. The objective of the Leftist teachers is to encourage students to assume political responsibility through their actions as architects. As well as being taught a traditional concern for the technicalities of building, students are also given projects which are alternatives to commercial developments. The students are required to present this work in a manner which will be understood by non-professionals. Students are free to choose their own tutors and organise themselves in groups which are not restricted to students of only a single year of the course. This has given the students a sense of coherency in both their studies and in their community action work – and the developing militancy of the students has caused considerable consternation within the conservative element of the school's staff.

- 1: public housing
- 2: Brigittines church
- 3: proposed car tunnel
- 4: vacant sites
- 5: major railway
- 8: houses with shops and trades-people on the ground-floor
- 9: public housing
- 10: landscaped open space

Note to legend: 1 to 5, existing;
8 to 10, ARAU proposal.





Leon Krier, project for a High School at Echternach, 1970.

studied formality is a refusal of those strictly functional typologies generally adopted today (as, for example, in Mathias Ungers' gridded systems) and the embracing of a deliberate rhetoric of public events. Along this boulevard both the Mairie and the Square des Congrès are nodes which combine building and public space into a single entity, while the Place Centrale, at the intersection of park and boulevard, is an event simultaneously at the scale of the locality and of Paris as a whole.

The plan, then, is about the definition of place and of identity within the matrix of a city. It is against this central purpose that we must read the significance of individual episodes like the Glacis de l'Industrie, the Colline des Vents, the Grand Hotel et de Babylone, and other singularities.

Syntax and language

By an opposition between episode and background, figures and fields, Krier is creating a systematic web of *relations*, a syntax of the city, freezing the process of pragmatic development in order to neutralise the diachronic movement and distributing values according to a strict subdivision of the whole in order to display synchronic relations. These relations are not those of an emptied formality, but are dependent on an attribution of social functions, like the 'meanings' of the dictionary. By joining together elements which activate simultaneously syntactic and semantic links, he is, effectively, creating a language.

Much nonsense has been talked in recent years about a 'language of architecture', for the most part nullified by the failure to understand that the process of signification involves a simultaneous segmenting of the fields of thought and of expression. Instead there is an obsessive insistence that meaning is aggregated from fixed units which are independently accessible to every individual. Krier's synoptic view of a total field and its subdivisions avoids this solipsism.

To project this totality, Krier has had to undertake quite arbitrary steps in both the diachronic and synchronic dimensions. Paradoxically, in order to give depth and character to his statements and avoid constructing a mere architectural Esperanto, he has had to tie them back to the language of architecture *as it is*, with all its contingent poignancy and confusion. Normally, architect and planner alike face this problem by ignoring it. The planner deals in statistical abstraction which necessarily disembodies the material and destroys all meaningful relations except those established, in abstraction, by the original model. The architect takes the general persistence of the 'language' for granted, going through it to the particular contents he wishes to define or to modify. Such an injection of isolated content, like the coining of new words or the projection of a personal style, can change the general form of the language only by slight

degrees, if at all.

Mistaking the model for the reality

To recognise the vast scope of Krier's intention and ambition is to put the idiosyncrasy of his more singular episodes into a necessary perspective. We should not suppose that if he were to undertake an individual building commission he would take the opportunity to build any one of these episodes out of its strict context⁷. We should not take any of the proposals too literally, while recognising that they are about the world of real possibilities, and not a completely fictitious realm.

In relation to his project for housing at the Royal Mint site, he pointed out that the somewhat grandiloquent colonnaded frontages were thought of as expressing a range of diverse functions, rather than the overspecialised brief for housing alone. What we are meant to see is the potential for generalised public meaning, and to condemn any particular element as an unsatisfactory model for immediate imitation is once again to mistake the trees for the wood.

However, what is especially enjoyable about Krier's world is precisely the extent to which it, after all, escapes from a purely axiomatic and abstract approach, and sets up resonances at many levels, precisely because it recognises the impossibility of creating meanings outside of our established cultural tradition and its rather agonised history. There are frequent references to previous episodes in the history of architecture, particu-

Culot / ARAU / Crossroads of Europe

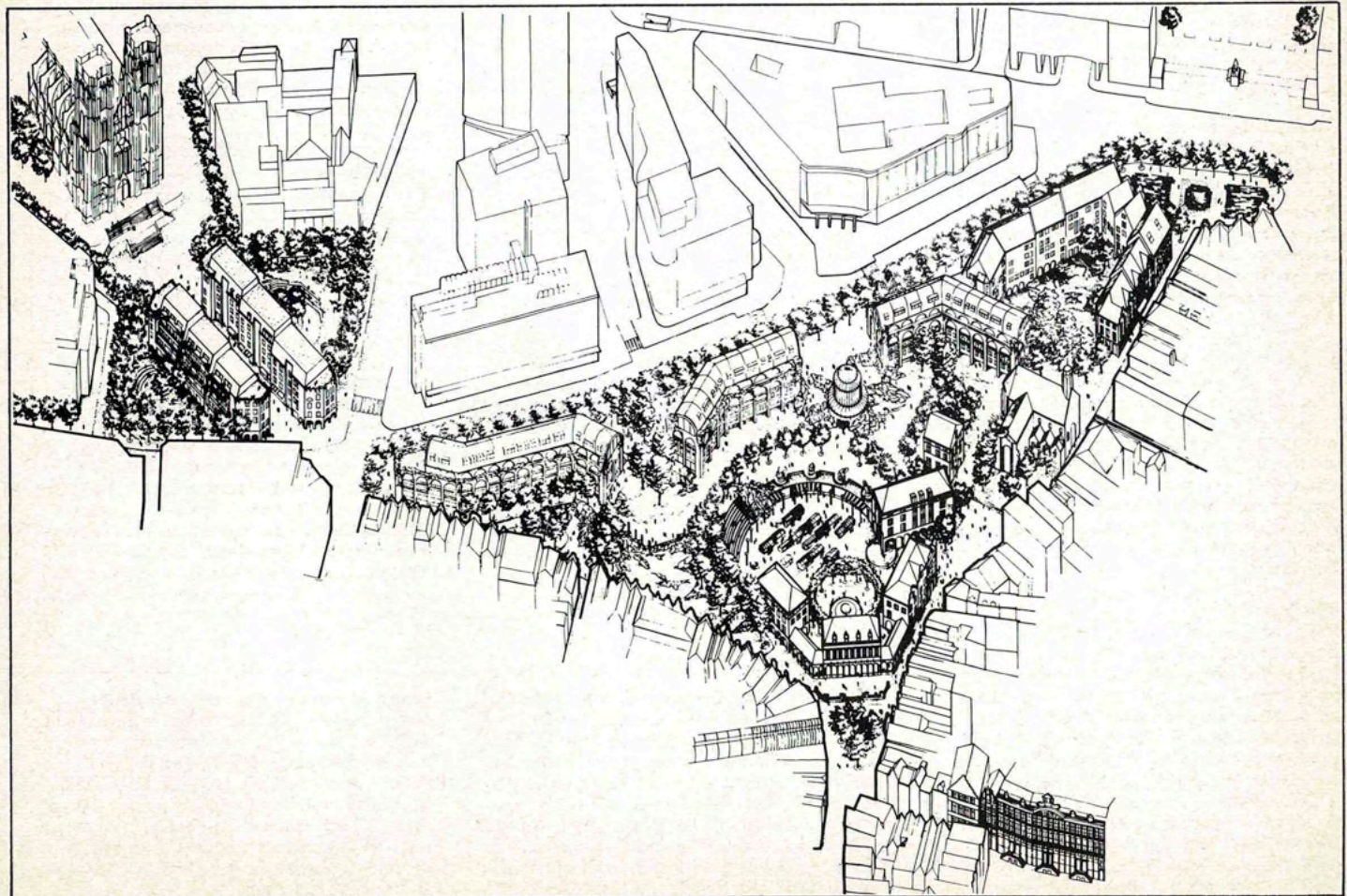
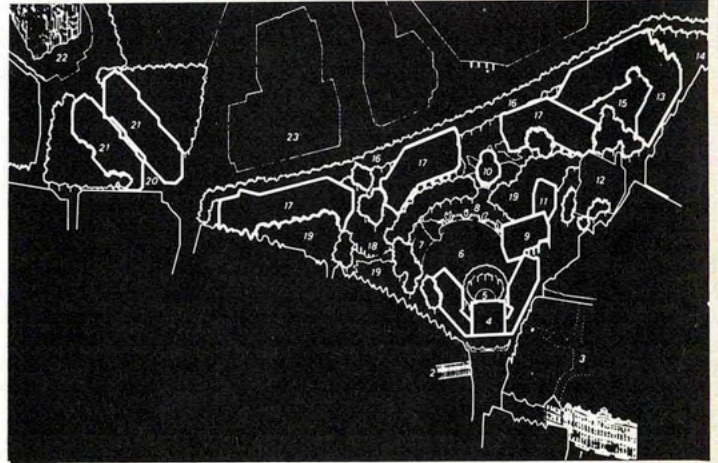
The centre of Brussels is at present virtually a vast parking lot: the official project for this area envisaged a large subterranean carpark covered with gardens. However, this plan was abandoned after ARAU roused public opinion against it because of the way in which it wasted valuable space and turned the very centre of the city into an (albeit green) desert. A competition was held in which several entries adopted suggestions made by ARAU in this alternative scheme shown here (and also featured on the back cover of AD). Worthy of note is the reconstruction at the bottom apex of the site of the Les Arbaletriers as a formal centre piece for the city, and the terrace of houses along the top edge of the site which are reminiscent of Bofill's scheme for les Halles in Paris.

- 1: The Grand Place.
- 2: 'Galeries' Saint-Hubert.
- 3: 'Galeries' Agora.
- 4: Les Arbaletriers. Taken down stone by stone a few years ago, the Maison des Arbaletriers is rebuilt.
- 5: Fontaine Agenouilles. Behind the Maison des Arbaletriers, in the middle of a trapezoidal piazza is a recon-

- struction of the Agenouilles fountain by George Minne.
- 6: Circular piazza.
- 7: Steps.
- 8: Sculpture garden.
- 9: Diagonally-placed building. Placed diagonally with respect to the line of the rue de la Madeleine, this building draws attention to the pedestrian ways leading to the circular piazza. A covered arcade leads to the central station.
- 10: The great greenhouse shelters a winter garden and gives access to the station and to the existing great underground hall.
- 11: Maison de la Madeleine.
- 12: La Madeleine church. Leaving the Grand' Place one sees its facade in the axis of the rue de la Madeleine.
- 13: Rue de la Madeleine terminated at the further end by a row of buildings whose architecture harmonises with that of the previously-existing houses.
- 14: The hemicycle. This unfinished architectural composition is completed by gable-ended houses.
- 15: Internal park reserved for residents.
- 16: The Promenade de l'Empereur.
- 17: Dwelling houses.

- 18: Terrace, where one has a view of the row of ancient house front on the rue de la Montagne.
- 19: Parks and public gardens.
- 20: Rue Sainte-Gudule. A street is recreated on the axis of the collegiate church.
- 20: Rue Sainte-Gudule. A street is recreated on the axis of the collegiate church.

- 21: Church Square housing constructed taking into account the technical constraints deriving from the presence of the north/south railway junction. Two wooded areas are created on either side of the dwelling houses.
- 22: The collegiate church of Sainte-Gudule.
- 23: R.T.T. Building.



larly from Le Corbusier, Boullée and Ledoux. He is aware of the history of projecting whole cities as visual models, of the efforts of Sitte, Garnier and Le Corbusier.

It is the combination of rationalism and historicism which gives his world authority and independence as a statement in *that* sequence. It does not amount to a mere didactic exercise (though that is what it is) but has a life of its own within the language of our times. He has commented on the form he gives to the Mairie in the scheme for La Villette that it is a 'reflection' on a plan of Ledoux. He thus gives us an indication of how the individual architect, by selecting his own models and working upon them, may secrete new characters from the insertion of past into present. But this process is work, the product of mental effort, and is not to be confused with the superficial slapping on of 'vernacular' emblems so widespread today.

Moreover, in doing this work, he insists on the autonomy of architecture, endlessly in need of renewal as it may be, but not to be deprived of its own essential contents, nor under any absolute compulsion to borrow contents from other disciplines. This means that the fundamental acts of defining space by means of walls, columns, roofs, suddenly take on new life. Familiar elements they may be, but suddenly capable of new juxtapositions and fresh meanings. By this faith in the autonomy of architecture, Krier effectively devalues the whole gamut of purely analogical form generators, from organicist eccentricity through to machine aesthetics and the obsession with the aleatory states of mechanical systems. He opens instead the search for archetypal roots *within* architecture. A celebration of the art and wit of architecture.

The wit of architecture

And further on this line we have to accept his frequent use of irony and wit, at least as a defence against the boredom of undertaking a daring yet laborious task. The shadows of De Chirico's arcades and of Böcklin's cypress trees fall frequently across the images, charging them sometimes with an apocalyptic intensity — a comment on the insanity of the technological rat-race — or with a whimsical disclaimer, as in the deliberate confusion of the outlines of statues, lay-figures, people in various period silhouettes and, quite often, an aghast Jim Stirling in woolly pullover. If we wonder why the animation in the perspectives is provided by cars, aeroplanes and figures taken mostly from Corb's twenties drawings, we should ask ourselves how he could do otherwise than distance us from these evocations. To have put in the animation in contemporary fashion (as in a Peter Sainsbury or Helmut Jacoby rendering) would be to risk being taken for a mere letraset technician.

Conclusion

Krier and Culot thus come to architecture from almost opposite entrances, but they join within it. For both of them it constitutes a range of social objects and a territory which by its organisation reflects the reality of the social order and so creates and confirms meanings. Both see these meanings as inseparable from tradition and history, because both language and the social reality are in a continuity of evolution through time. The terms by which this process could be understood and even managed have still to be discovered. It is a task of enormous complexity, but one which we at least know cannot be expected to be simple. The

dangers of delivering the task of directing our future to any group of managers or rulers is too evident to need pointing out. But at least we are now aware of the false promises of objectivity by which the modern movement was originally dazzled, while noting that the more axiomatic any system is, the more it is open to the methods of operational research. Current difficulties of explaining and correcting our economic situation may be taken as hopeful signs that every part of our culture shares in the complexity and autonomy of language. The hope of to some extent managing our future, in the sense of avoiding the worst disasters, does not mean that we are capable of disregarding the historical process or of putting ourselves 'outside' it.

Whether or not we share the (to me, touching) belief that a substitution of a marxist for a bourgeois ideology would instantly transform the social realm and suffuse it with clear meanings, we must be grateful for work which makes such a positive contribution towards clarifying what architecture is and can yet be, and what actions could lead to the unfolding of its potential. The dialectical process of history is unstoppable, but its direction and momentum can only be measured against synthetic statements proposing ideal conditions. The understanding of the nature of the dialectical process is an essential step in the rectifying of some mistakes.

And to recognise the city as a theatre of action and of reflection provides the only framework for the uncovering of a practical future for architecture.

Notes

1. As, for example, in the current tendency of multinational corporations to invest in agricultural land. See Richard Norton-Taylor: 'Why Britain's farmers need a new Domesday Book', *The Guardian* 5/2/77.
2. Aménagement du quartier des Brigittines.
3. Rehabilitation of the rue de Rollebeck.
4. Such as the 5th year ENSAAV studies of the area of Porte-Louise, Bas de Ville and of the extension of the telephone exchange.
5. Speaking of the Krier/Scolari maquette at the New York Institute of Architecture and Urban Design 1976.
6. As in Milt Webber's 'The urban place and the non-place realm' in Webber et al: *Explorations into urban structure*. Philadelphia, 1964.
7. What he would do in such a case may be partly surmised from his collaboration with James Stirling on the Derby Civic Centre.

ARCHITEKTUR, SPRACHE UND PROZESSE

In dieser Ausgabe von *AD* werden die Werke von Maurice Culot und Leon Krier beschrieben, denn sie veranschaulichen gemeinsam zwei Extreme einer europäisch-marxistischen Redefinition der Architektur, die die funktionellen, sozialen und rituellen Erfordernisse des städtischen Lebensstils während der nächsten Entwicklungsphasen der westlichen Gesellschaft erfasst. In seinem Artikel fällt ROBERT MAXWELL ein Urteil über diese

建築 言語 及び 過程

モリス・キュロット, リオン・クリヤーの作品と共に AD 今月号に特集される事になった。なせならば 共に語られる時 彼等の建築再規定 (西洋社会の来たるべき段階に於ける都市生活の機能的, 社会的慣例的必要条件を包含する) の方法がヨーロッパ・マルキスト的 最も先鋭的 二例証をなすからである。

ロバート・マックスウェル は彼の論文の中で 彼等二人建築家の 顕著な相異と類似について述べている。'リオン・クリヤーの作品は 建築過程と言語の操作は 理論展開の過程で 保存され 生命を与えられるべき 一種の価値である' とし, 一方 建築を 同じ感性でとらえている モリス・キュロットは '建築を 政治闘争運動の中に 置やすべき 手段と見ている' と 彼は指摘している。

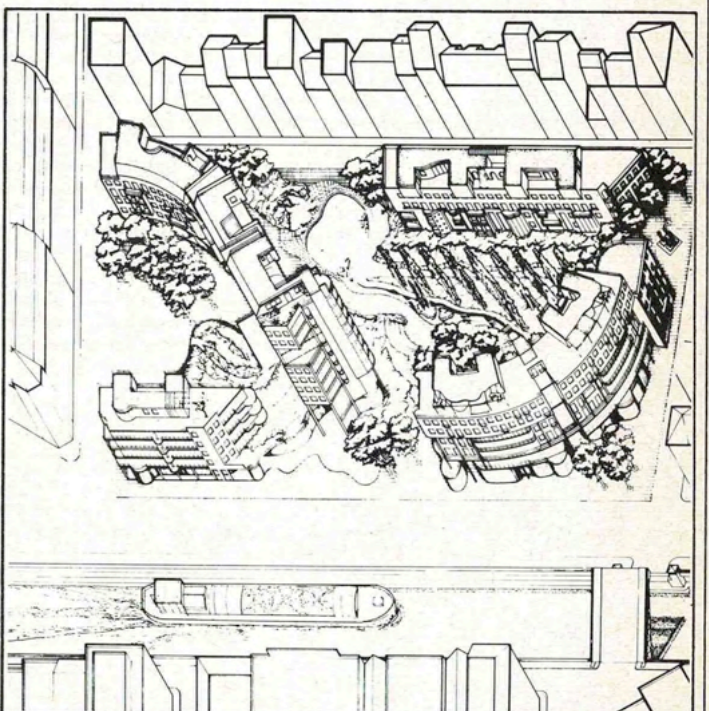
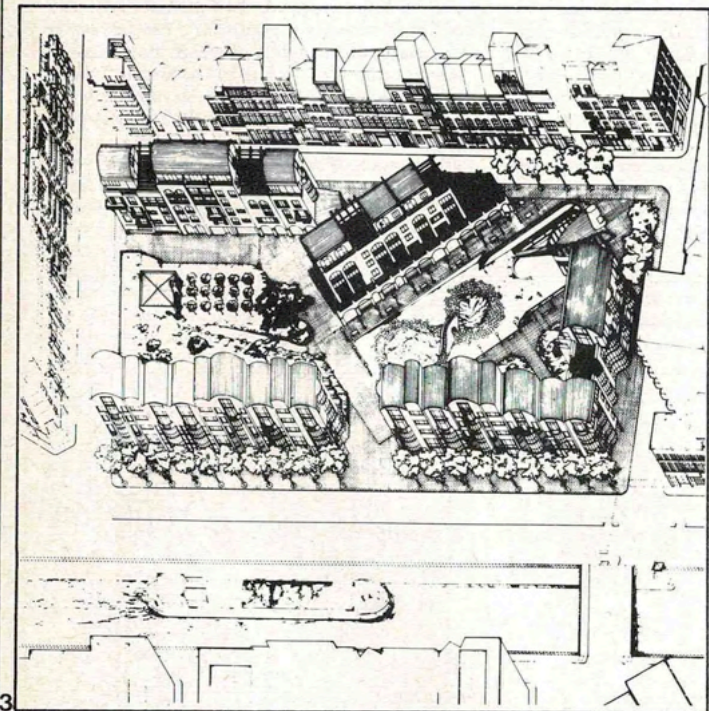
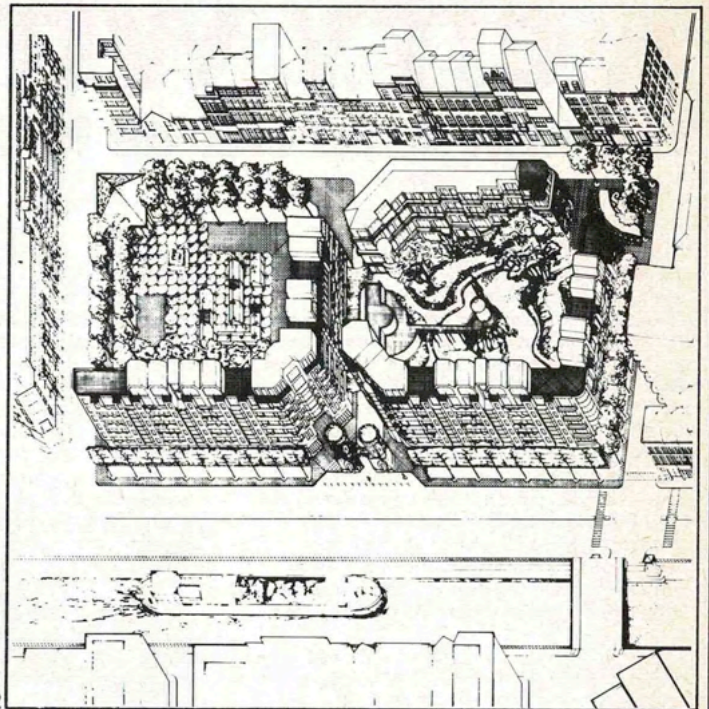
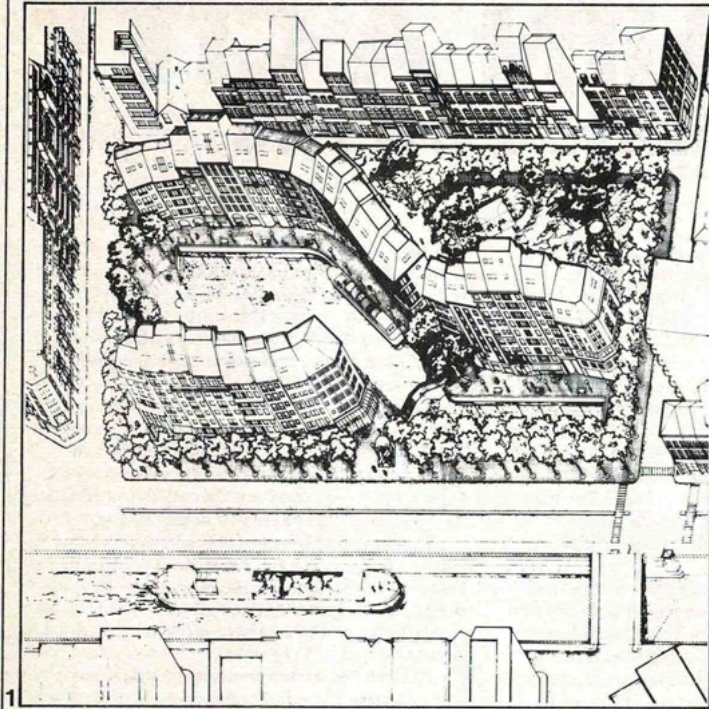
ARCHITECTURE, EVOLUTION ET LANGAGE

Les travaux de Maurice Culot et de Leon Krier figurent l'un et l'autre dans ce numéro de *AD* car, ensemble ils représentent les deux extrêmes d'une attitude marxiste européenne vis-à-vis de la nouvelle définition d'une architecture qui tient compte du fonctionnel, du social et du traditionnel nécessaire à l'habitat urbain des prochaines phases de la société occidentale. La critique que présente ROBERT MAXWELL dans son article, révèle des différences et des similarités importantes entre ces deux architectes. Pour Leon Krier, il note que l'évolution architecturale, avec son langage, représente une valeur à conserver et à regagner tout au cours du développement de la théorie; tandis que Maurice Culot, qui traite l'architecture avec autant de sensibilité, la voit plutôt comme une ressource à consacrer à la lutte politique.

ARCHITETTURA, LINGUAGGIO E PROCEDIMENTO

Si è voluto dare rilievo, in questo numero di *AD*, al lavoro di Maurice Culot e di Leon Krier in quanto, considerati insieme, essi esemplificano due estremi di un atteggiamento marxista europeo verso la ridefinizione dell'architettura - una nuova visione che racchiude le esigenze funzionali, sociali e rituali della vita urbana nel corso delle prossime fasi evolutive della società occidentale. In quest'articolo ROBERT MAXWELL propone un saggio critico su questi due architetti, tendente a rivelare differenze e similarità significative. Dal lavoro di Leon Krier, l'autore desume che il procedimento architettonico ed il linguaggio che esso impiega, costituiscono un valore che è necessario custodire e recuperare attraverso lo sviluppo delle formulazioni teoriche; laddove Maurice Culot, il cui concetto dell'architettura rivela una sensibilità di pari valore, vede il procedimento architettonico come risorsa da impiegare nel sostenimento della lotta politica.

beiden Architekten und zeigt bedeutende Unterschiede und Ähnlichkeiten in ihrem Denken auf. Was Leon Kriers Werk angeht, bemerkt er, dass der architektonische Prozess und seine Sprache Werte sind, die durch die Entwicklung von Theorien gewahrt und erneuert werden sollten. Maurice Culot, andererseits, der die Architektur mit ebenso grossem Feingefühl behandelt, sieht in ihr eine im Geschehen des politischen Kampfes zu verwertende Hilfsquelle.



This official study of a site released by the demolition of an old barracks, was commissioned by the Secretary of State for Housing, and entrusted to the Archives de l'Architecture Moderne. The aim was to develop new forms of public housing.

1 A touch of Honfleur in Brussels: This scheme is a quay-side set-piece (the water is only 1m deep and covers

a two-level basement carpark). The example of Honfleur suggests high densities (one unit has 11 floors). Note the garden terrace in the form of a barge and the reconstructed fragment of the barracks gateway.
2 Streets and squares: The sources of this alternative are Chris Alexander's repair of the city and Leon Krier's creation of a public domain.

Again the old barracks gateway has been reconstructed as one of the points of entry.

3 Van Eyck in Amsterdam: In this scheme a building form borrowed from Aldo Van Eyck's Jordaans proposal is used. Instead of vernacular pastiche, an equivalent form is sought with structural vaults taking the place of Dutch gables.

4 International style: This proposal uses a more normative functional idiom, but still looks for variety with set-backs in the facade. The use of this style – as a style amongst others – shows that the options have been extended and all styles are considered equally available.

