

## THE OLD FALLS DOWN, TIMES CHANGE, AND NEW LIFE BLOSSOMS OUT OF RUINS

Johann Wolfgang von Goethe

1. Current design and planning methodologies produce alloplastic environments, artifacts that by definition depend on man's consideration and Values. Modern architecture is the legitimate child of abstract-calculatory thinking which owes so much to bourgeois society: it is rigid, authoritarian, and oppressive; a deserter putting itself outside the all-encompassing whole of nature and potential. While we are unlearning and work to structure a framework outlining the architecture to come, we witness a glittering spectrum of backlashes ranging from the ludicrous to the more dangerous onslaught of 'expert professionals' and bureaucracies. Yet, the discussions on user participation, do-it-yourself and adaptive architecture, advocacy planning, energy-conscious building and the socio-political context not only persist but gain intensities. This is encouraging indeed; without doubt the new awareness will conquer its positions, but can hardly be as panacean as claimed by some of its proponents; its manifestations will still be alloferential to man only instead of to the whole of nature. Necessitated by limitations which are rooted in our very structures, an architecture in our traditional image is limited to provide symptomatic relief only, thus justifying the status quo of the 'monoculture of man'.

2. There is no design in biological evolution. Its order is the interaction of chance and necessity. Its dynamics are autoplasic processes working as open systems and being regulated by laws of nature only. To the contrary, sociocultural evolution is instructional in character although there is no doubt that it is part of the biology of man and other animals.

3. We investigate an architecture which will be exploratory, self-organizing, and emergent. As a true ecosystematic and evolutionary process, it will be an open autoplasic system, creating, changing, and terminating, in an indeterministic manner, diversity and contexture. To a minor extent, this architecture will contain characteristics of Lamarckian evolution; and it will be normative to the extent only that its parameters are clearly defined to support and to further life. When we, as parts and makers of history, can shift our collective consciousness, vacate our exploitative positions in nature, and can intercalate both modes of evolution, the prerequisites for a new kind of evolution embracing both the organic and the environment will be fulfilled.

This view expresses the urge to eliminate or to reconcile disparities, inconsistencies, dualisms; and to establish frameworks which bring about, stimulate, and support ever higher orders of organization within the context of unfulfilled entelechy. The transition from necessity to freedom can only occur when enough unfinished process-material exists (Ernst Bloch).

Architecture, then, seen as material in transition (mater, lat.=mother), having increasingly properties of living systems and being an integral part of life itself, will be an experiment that can never be completed. It incessantly will explain and form the world out of its very self anew and thus, at any given time, will be the best possible of all architectures (worlds).

Wolf Hilbertz  
252 Kenrick St.  
Newton, MA 02158  
(617) 964-3367