RESISTANCE TO AN ENMITY: THE STREET AGAINST CIAM[*]

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While the turn of the century is just a step away, and the winds of the 'global' world are blowing stronger than ever, every possible niche that remained public's, is being privitized. Those concerned on the other hand, are trying to find out or bring into the agenda, the merits and benefits of having public spaces. The attack on public spaces is serious and it has precedents. An attempt to identify the precedents will inevitably take one back to the era of CIAM when public life was seen as the adverse of the public itself. One way of getting rid of the undesired public life was thought to be the disintegration of public spaces and this was hoped to be achieved *via* the segregation of a variety of functions which public spaces provided. Not only that, but parts of some of the public spaces were somewhat privatized as well. For instance, squares and streets were no longer the focus of public life but were constantly and continuously privatized by means of private transportation, or by means of apartment blocks which jut out in the middle of the so called public land, destroying or eliminating the indispensable intermediary zones, semi-public spaces, and futher encroaching into the public space. True, purporters of CIAM saw an evil in increasing private interests:

> The ruthless violence of private interests disastrously upsets the balance between the trust of economic forces on the one hand and the weakness of administrative control on the other (The Athens Charter, article 73, cited in Conrads, 1970, 138).

Their efforts to reconcile the opposing forces of urban dynamics by means of a new understanding of urban transformation nevertheless had similar consequences. One way or another, such efforts result in the expansion of the boundaries of private space.

1. For a large compendium of pedestrianization projects at the city center, see Brambilla and Longo (1977), and Gehl (1987, 1989); for the reconciliation of pedestrian and vehicular traffic in residential areas see Eubank-Ahrens (1987), Pressman (1987), and Royal Dutch Touring Club (1978).

2. A very useful source is the one edited by Anderson (1978). See also Appleyard (1981), and Barlas (1994).

Yet, many have come out with ideas to stand against this comprehensive assault as well. One major trend can be summarized as the revival of or the return to the street. Together with Jacobs who has written the well-known *The Death and Life of Great American Cities*, there are others who tried to attract attention to various aspects of publicness which the street offers (Rudofsky, 1969; Whyte, 1984, 1988). By the late seventies it became a common practice to conserve the public nature of the street by means of 'pedestrianization' or other measures (1). It seems that the critical standpoints were taking effect. There is, however, not much theorizing about the street, except a few attempts which have modest (albeit some may find them speculative) claims about the nature of the street with all its physical/spatial and social/psychological components (2). While the attacks on public life, and therefore the street, are continuing, it is imperative for us to understand more about the street. One basic contribution could be the investigation of the attack itself and the attackers. By doing so, one can hope to find the very attributes of the street, the amalgam of which depicts some sort of public life, that the attackers wanted to eliminate in order to get rid of the public space/life the city dwellers once enjoyed and were accustomed to. More importantly the attacks did not always prove successful altogether, for there are important attributes which help the street persist no matter what.

THE ASSAULT

The street, as the most important element of urbanism, has been the subject and focus of a number of studies and debates since the turn of the twentieth century. Three important international meetings, RIBA conference in 1910, and the CIAM Conferences of 1933 and 1951, provided some of the most influential theoretical proposals on the street, the tenets of which directed, oriented, and conceptually structured the practice of city planners and urban designers for the remainder of the century. The common notions behind these conferences can be summarized as the search for an idealistic urban order, both for society and architecture. Adherents of CIAM ideals were implicitly utopian in their quest for the integration of man and nature.

One important aspect related to the conferences was that the theory and practice of urban design were in constant revision during the period. The ideas about the street also changed from one conference to another. Whereas, for instance, in the RIBA Conference of 1910, the street was accepted as an integrated part of the urban fabric, in the 1933 CIAM Conference it was seen as an obstacle to man's progress. With the latter conference the street, theoretically, became lost in the vast open spaces of 'gardens' and skyscrapers, or even became a part of buildings (Figure 1). In 1951 CIAM Conference, however, some of the ideals of the 1910
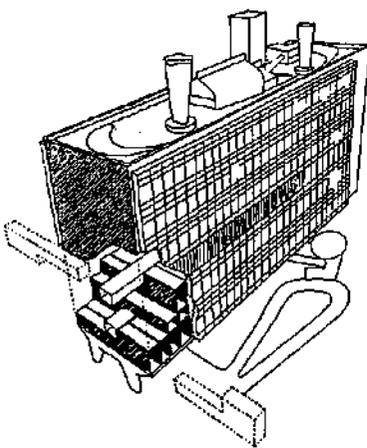

Figure 1. Le Corbusier's Marseille Block 'Unité d'Habitation' (Moholy-Nagy, 1968, 275).
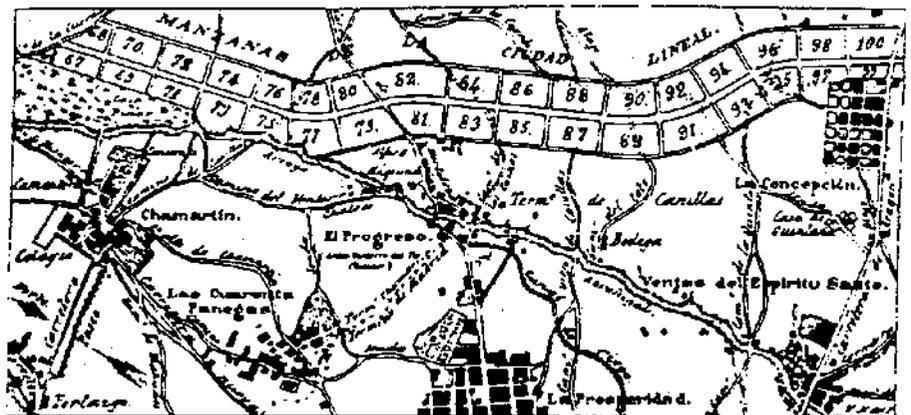
Figure 2. Soria Y Mata's Linear City 'Ciudad Lineal' of 1892 (Moholy-Nagy, 1968, 270).

RIBA Conference resurfaced. The historical city was no more seen as an obstacle but as an exemplar to future progress. Yet, the formal proposals for the street, which dominated the 1910 Conference, could not find a place in the agenda in 1951. It was rather the concepts of townscape and planning processes that became the inheritance of urban design after the Second World War (3).

Among the three, the 1933 CIAM Conference can be considered the most important, for the ideals presented there exerted a serious blow to the street and to what it represents. CIAM architects were devoted to the replacement of the *social environment supported by the street, with the help of urban elements which enhanced movement and seriality.* This, they hoped to achieve, by eliminating the linear and formal structure of the street which they tended to call the *rue corridor.* The basis of their rejection of the 'old fashioned' street emerges from their preoccupation and critique of its negative aspects: congestion, fumes, dust, lack of sunlight, dirt and most importantly the functional heterogeneity. However, by doing so, they overlooked its positive aspects. Once, the street was an urban element which propagated an ideal and harmonious relationship between man and environment (4). Problems which preoccupied the CIAM architects were basically related to these issues. They needed to formulate the role of the State and the place of the machine in the modern society. But the street with its negative aspects stood as an obstacle in front of such a task. Thus, they tried to eliminate it by breaking apart its constituents: the house, the foot-path and the vehicular strip.

The ideals presented in the Le Corbusier-inspired 1933 conference are not the product of a parthenogenesis. They should be seen as the summation and revision of a number of reformist ideals which were already in circulation. Both technological and social precedents must have inspired the CIAM architects.

The *arrangement of city services and paths in multi-level structures were already* present in the installation of underground infrastructure lines as well as passages, such as *Le métro de Paris,* the London Underground, or the Grand Central Railroad in New York. In addition to these technological precedents, the elimination of the street as a social environment had also been a long-standing and widespread reformist agenda which emerged as a reaction to the ill-effects of industrialization.

The spatially confined neighborhood street of the Victorian London with its defective sanitation, for instance, was seen by social reformists (as well as utopian socialists) as the propagator of poverty and social decline, and thus, was indicted. As early as 1838, the Select Committee considering plans for the improvement of such neighborhoods condemned those districts in London, through which no major thoroughfares passed (5). According to the report, such neighborhoods fostered disease and moral degradation. The Committee's recommendation supported the use of demolition in such districts not only to facilitate the circulation of air, but also to force traffic of higher social classes through the working class quarters. By doing so, it was thought, the much despised social habits of working-classes could be improved through exemplar and emulation.

In the *1890 British Housing Act of the Working Classes* all legislations and reports which had been prepared since 1838 were amalgamated. The role of the narrow, airless, or deteriorating streets as a major determinant of social and physical ills was reaffirmed (Garside, 1988). In America as well, the use of the street as a social space by urban working-classes faced a concerted attack by the so-called reformers who were infact business holders. There, *the social reformers saw the model tenements with their* enclosed courtyards as an alternative to the street. By building these tenements, it was thought, the 'street habit' which stood as an obstacle to the rehabilitation of the poor could be broken such as in New York in the early 1900s (Wright, 1981).

Figure 3. Eugene Hénard's plan and section for a Parisian Street (RIBA, 1911).
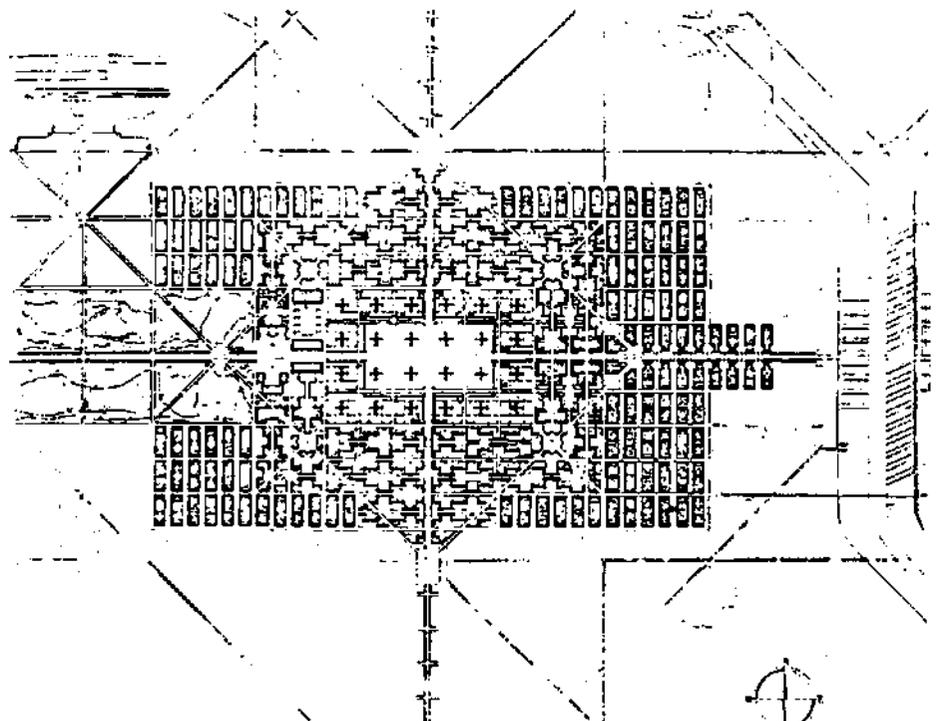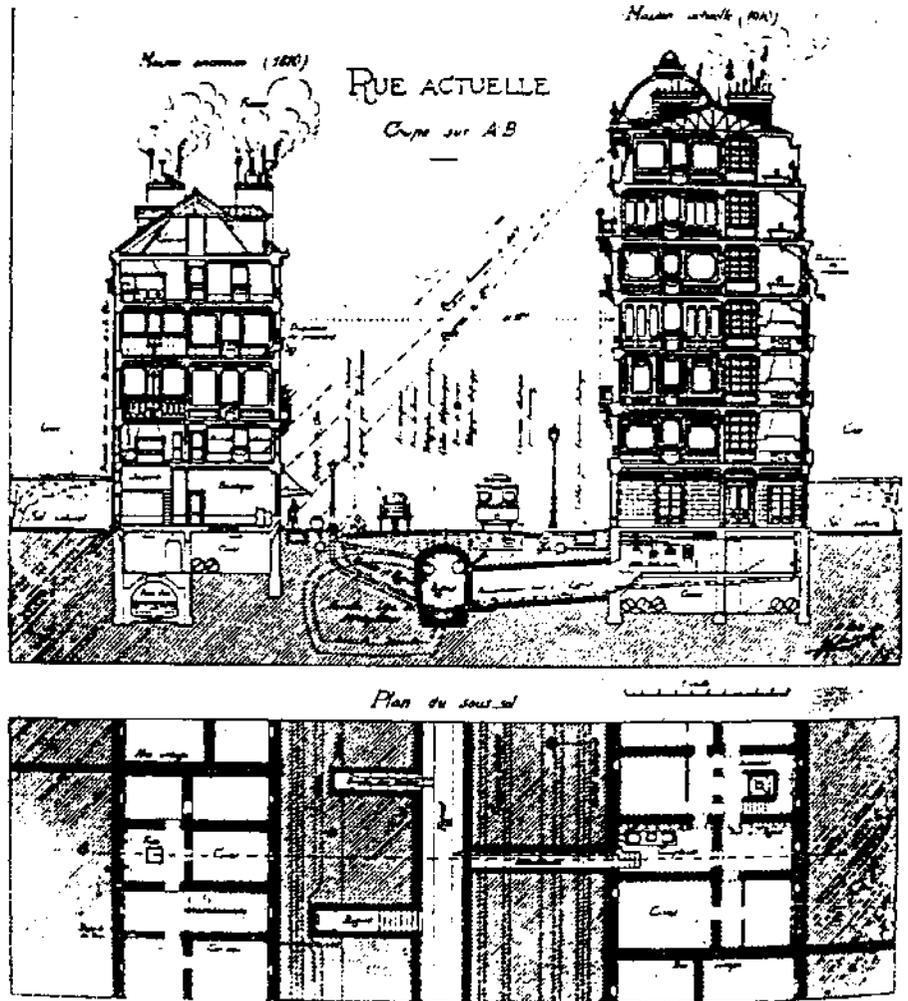
Figure 4. Le Corbusier's Contemporary City for three Million People (Moholy-Nagy, 1968, 269).

Furthermore, in most of these legislations as well as in those proposals for alternative urban forms, such as Garnier's *Industrial City* (1904) or Soria Y Mata's *Linear City* (1880) (**Figure 2**), functional segregation was one of the most important issues. Nevertheless, the street was not conceptually abandoned. In fact, RIBA in 1910, and partly the Berlin Conferences in 1930 (CIAM 2), the street gained increasing importance among the theoreticians. The theoreticians' attempt was to reconcile the street form with changing requirements of the new age. This is particularly manifest in the proposals of Hénard, the town planner of Paris who elaborated on the mechanization of the street section (**Figure 3**).

It was in 1922, that a major conceptual onslaught took place at the street. Le Corbusier's *Contemporary City for Three Million People* (**Figure 4**) was a radical opposition to what the street represented. The various functions which were once mediated around the street's axis were dispersed into separate enclosures or zones. The city center was dense. It was occupied by new machines which overcame the friction of time and space. This allowed for efficient administration from offices located in skyscrapers. Small networks of covered passageways (or arcades) provided the link between commerce and business. Elevated streets ('streets in the air') were included in the widely spaced *Redent* housing blocks which were at the periphery. An uninterrupted park-land allowed for the horizontal segregation of transport routes and city functions. The new promenades of Paris could be found in the 'street buildings' placed in the park-land. These three-storey terraced buildings contained *boutiques* and *cafés* (**6**). In this sense, the street was no longer the mediator between man and environment.

6. See, Shane (1979, 109).

Le Corbusier's attacks on the street did not end with this proposal. For him the street was no more than a trench, a deep and narrow cleft which oppressed its inhabitants. He saw it as a dangerous place, for the increasing number of rapidly moving vehicles posed a great threat to those who lived in it (Le Corbusier, 1964). To eliminate the threat and the ills thus described, he continuously proposed for the elimination of the street. Instead of the street, there would be fast motor tracks to relieve the vehicular traffic and provide it with the space where it could move rapidly. This would require the complete segregation of vehicular and pedestrian traffic (which incidentally is an older concept that can be traced back to the works of Raymond Unwin, Clarence Stein, and Henry Wright). For Le Corbusier the city could function successfully only when it was built for speed (Le Corbusier, 1987). Note that Le Corbusier was not advocating for the decongestion of the *rue corridor* by means of introducing traffic lanes built for (and sometimes elevated) rapid traffic. His vision was that of a streetless urban pattern.

Similarly, in his own work, Gropius isolated buildings in large open spaces and away from the surface of the street. At around the time of Stuttgart housing exhibition (the *Weissenhof Siedlung* in 1927), where similar themes were exhibited, Gropius developed alternative housing schemes (Gropius, 1965, 104). Gropius' theoretical studies showed that apartment blocks of eight to twelve storeys were preferable because they allowed for the largest amount of usable area of open space at the ground level. This, in turn, comprised the origin of what has been called the 'open block'. This was an arrangement of apartment buildings standing alone in their own open sites, rather than aligned along existing streets and roads. Such a spatial configuration enabled the buildings to be arranged in any kind of spatial combination that the planner chose. Later, in 1928, Gropius won the competition for the Dammerstock district of Karlsruhe (**Figure 5**).

Figure 5. Gropius' Dammerstock Housing Project in Karlsruhe of 1928 (adapted from Benevolo, 1987, 518).

This project is important because it shows how Gropius used the opportunity to implement his theory into practice. The plan for the project was simple. The building blocks were oriented in the direction of north and south. This allowed
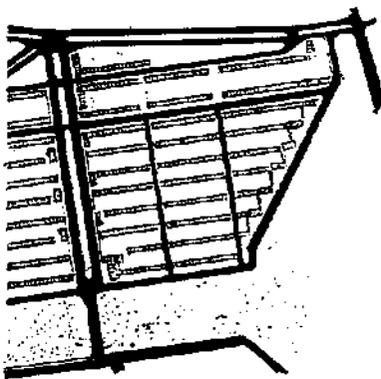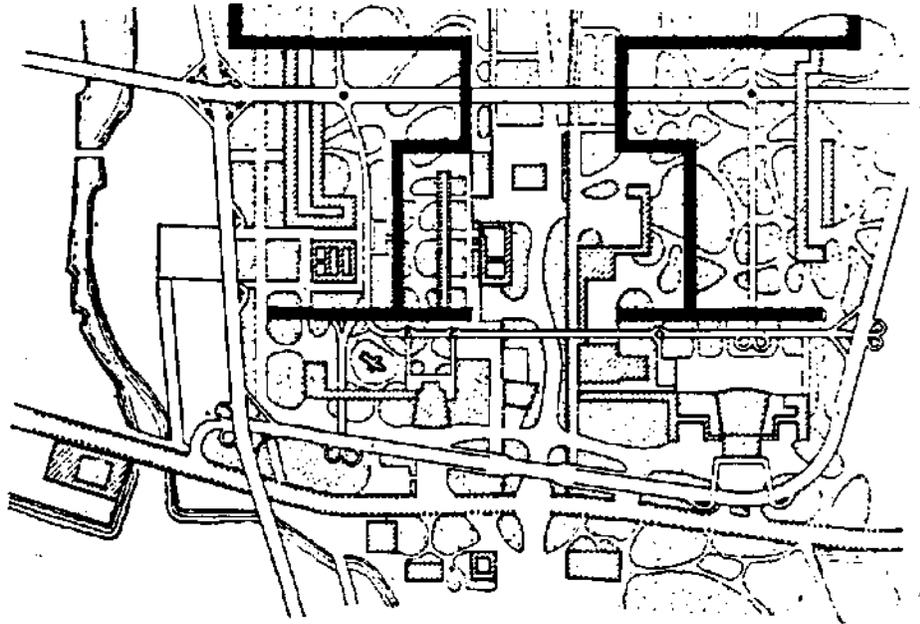
7. See, Benevolo (1987, 514-518), for his detailed account on Gropius' conception of 'open block', as well as the Dammerstock project.

8. For example, Hilbersheimer's study for Berlin in 1930, Klein's studies for the Reichsforschungsgesellschaft in 1928, Luckhardt brothers' district with tower-houses in 1927.

9. However, given the fact that Le Corbusier modified his schemes in the housing blocks (redents) of his Ville Radieuse (**Figure 6**) so as to provide them with intermediary spaces which linked private and public realms, Gropius seems to be the more important figure in the development of the CIAM model of urban pattern (Rykwert, 1982, 104).

for maximum exposition to sunlight on each façade. The buildings were served by pedestrian paths which passed through rows of buildings in the open spaces. The paths, in turn, connected each 'open block' which were separated by roads (7). One can increase the number of similar schemes and proposals prepared by others (8). But, it is Gropius and Le Corbusier who should be credited for the then emerging streetless urban form (9).

These precedents take one to the 1933 Conference, to a time when the attack on the street reached its peak and more or less became an international movement. The Charter of Athens incorporated the ideas about abandoning the street despite the reservations of those who insisted that the historical core of the cities would have to be conserved. It is the 16th article of the Charter which best summarizes the position of CIAM on the street:

> Structures built along transportation routes and around their inter-sections are detrimental to habitation because of noise, dust, and noxious gases. Once we are willing to take this factor into considera-tion we will assign habitation and traffic to independent zones. From then on, the house will never be fused to the street by a sidewalk. It will rise in its own surroundings, in which it will enjoy sunshine, clear air, and silence. Traffic will be separated by means of a network of foot-paths for the slow-moving pedestrian and a network of fast roads for automobiles. Together these networks will fulfill their function, coming close to housing only as occasion demands. (The Athens Charter 1973, 57)

Yet, it is not only the 16th article from which one can follow the enmity of the CIAM architects towards the street. Articles 51 through 64 condemn the existent street networks for their inadequacy, inefficiency and inflexibility in meeting the requirements of the increasing volumes of mechanized traffic.

The overall organization of the entire document itself, four major sections in which the so-called four basic functions of the city are discussed, formulated and reformulated, shows the CIAM architects' commitment to eliminate the multi-functional street. Several articles, particularly 77th and 78th articles, attest to this theoretical standpoint. The city, it was declared, should be divided into zones of particular functions, namely habitation, work, leisure and circulation (89th

and 90th articles). Segregation of functions constitutes the fundamental attack on the street, for the existence of the street and the social life it generates depend very much on the amalgamation of various functions. Not only that, but if the 62nd article is followed, one also finds out that pedestrian traffic is also segregated from that of vehicles. In fact, when the schematic proposals of Le Corbusier are recalled, it can be seen that pedestrian paths are isolated in the midst of open verdant zones, just like the traffic channels for vehicles (27th and 64th articles). The pedestrian would be forced to follow the paths allocated for him, away from the buildings. This point is logical in itself, for the CIAM architects reject the alignment of dwellings along transportation routes. The buildings for habitation would be set back from such routes readily forcing the inhabitants to live away from the street, and, naturally, curtailing the use of the street surface for the purpose of walking (article 27).

Yet, in fairness to the authors of the Charter, one has to remember the 63rd article which allows (!) for the mingling of pedestrian and vehicular traffic. Only, in this case, the requirement was such that, an integration should have to be done in special paths: promenades. This seems to be an apologetical article at the first glance. However, if one recalls the meaning of the term promenade, it appears that the intention in this article was to create passageways of leisurely 'strolling' [sic] for vehicles (!) as well as pedestrians. Thus, the inclusion of such an article does not constitute an antithesis to the position of the authors of the Charter. On the contrary, it expands the invasion of mechanized transportation through the city, and thereby conforms with the CIAM architects' antagonism toward the street.

Three postulates form the basis of the Athens Charter and the urban form envisaged in it: sunlight, vegetation, and open space. These three also give the Charter and the visions of the CIAM architects their environmentally deterministic character. True, industrialization had unprecedented impacts on social life. But, it was not the urban form which generated poverty, misery and social decline. It only contributed to the so-called ills of industrialization. Thus, the alternative urban model proposed by the CIAM architects, the abandonment of the street which was hoped to reverse the social trends could not have been valid solutions, for they were based on a simple 'stimulus-response' model of man-environment relations. Setting back the dwellings away from the surface of the street surely allowed the penetration of more sunlight (a principle which incidentally required more open space), but this point only had to do with some of the sanitary conditions. The social and psychological well-being of the inhabitants of the city is a more complex issue which, when it becomes a problem, cannot be solved by resorting to deterministic approaches (10).

10. Oscar Newman's conclusions regarding the 'modernist' housing schemes is a prime example of such a point of view. He found a relationship between the form of the urban layout (and building types) and urban violence, vandalism and so forth; but he nevertheless added that the origins of the problem lied to a great extent in economic factors (Newman, 1972).

All of the above do not mean that the CIAM architects did not think about the various factors which affect the social-psychological well-being of the city dwellers. Take, for instance, articles 83 through 86 of the Athens Charter. These articles state that the implementation of the city as a 'functional unit' would be possible via a 'program' which is based on:

> rigorous analysis carried out by specialists. It (i.e. the program) must provide for its stages in time and in space. It must bring together in fruitful harmony the natural resources of the site, the overall topography, the economic facts, the sociological demands, and the spiritual values. (The Athens Charter 1973, 100; article 86; italics added)

Evidently, the authors of the Charter must have thought that the results and findings of such analyses would conform with and support their theses, otherwise they would not have adhered to such simplistic models and schemes regarding urban form and social life (and for that matter, the street). On the other hand, it is also a fact that

11. Except perhaps, some serious interventions such as the 17th arrondisement in Paris or the renewal program in New York.

analyses were made and are still being made. The findings however, do not support the ideals of the CIAM architects. Thus, as early as 1951, in Hoddesdon conference, the CIAM approach was challenged by younger members (Shane, 1983, 36-41). They found the 'Athenian' categories 'diagrammatic' (Banham, 1966). Still, the 'historical center', the 'core' was only acknowledged as new functional categories. Not much was said about the street, but it was at last acknowledged that the historical past of the city set an exemplar rather than an obstacle to future development. The task of re-emphasizing the importance of the street was left to Team 10.

THE DEFENSE

The street has resisted this attack and it did so amidst events where operations for renewal were of necessity, and during a period when the CIAM vision was most likely to be accepted. However, even the European cities which were extensively destroyed during the air-raids in the Second World War did not end with the CIAM model (11). Previous building and street lines became the framework for reconstruction. It is a fact that street-use has radically changed since the turn of the century. The automobile and other mechanized kinds of transportation have affected the street use greatly. The increasing demands for new technologies of communication and facilities of sanitation have also impinged on the street use. The need for rebuilding so as to replace the deteriorated building stock, put much pressure on the use as well as the form of the street. *But, by and large the CIAM model could not expand in scales which its promoters* would have liked it to expand. Because, the street was able to absorb all these transformations, and was itself also transformed through them. Above all, the form of the street has not radically changed so as to alienate its users.

There are several reasons for the resistance of the street against CIAM's attacks. One of them is fairly obvious. The large-scale renewals in the manner Le Corbusier proposed are difficult, if not impossible, to handle (unless perhaps there is a major disaster). They pose social, economic and above all, organizational problems. The replacement of families, the possible intermingling of social classes, the subsidization of the project, the ideological differences between central and local governments, make such projects politically problematic and therefore, not appealing.

Other reasons should be traced in the street itself, in its reason of existence. This is a very complicated topic, the detailed discussion of which would extend the scope of this essay. Briefly put however, several aspects can be underlined. First, we need the street as it is, with its surface delimited by buildings and which takes us from one point to another, both in time and space. Such an overall form is neither haphazard nor only mechanically functional. It has psychological connotations which tells us about the meaning of life although we may not be aware of it. Second, the street provides us with the *milieu* for social intercourse without which we cannot individually exist (in psychological terms). Third, the street is 'purposively' made to ensure individual and collective existence. It enables this through its various physical/spatial elements. It sufficiently brings together and separates people by means of its public and private realms, the link of which is sustained primarily by its surface and its intermediary spaces (and also by the infrastructure which can be found both above and below its surface).

As such the street is deeply embedded in human experience. It provides a *milieu* for communication which, in turn, is the essence of humanity without which we will not be able to survive neither as individuals nor as communities. True, the

12. Naturally, the infrastructure which is located both below and above the surface covered some aspects of communication, but face to face interactions which are essential for human existence were virtually eliminated from the street's surface (Czarnowski, 1978).

physical attributes of the street have historically varied. But, transformations of its physical properties or of its use were never radical so as to eliminate communication. *On the contrary, the variations in the physical properties always* point to man's effort to sustain communication. The CIAM model therefore, constituted a major attack on this aspect of the street. It subordinated all functions of the street to that of transportation, which is only one of the many aspects of communication (12).

Not very long after the 1933 and 1951 Conferences, the CIAM Congress of 1953 at Aix-en Provence became the stage where first reactions to the Movement surfaced. A group of young persons, who were to be called TEAM 10 thereafter, found the Charter useless, and started to construe a new approach to urban and architectural problems by exchanging information. They were also asked to prepare the programme for the tenth meeting of CIAM to be held at Dubrovnik in 1956. Before Dubrovnik however, they met at Doom and came out with the Doom Manifesto which urged for particularism, instead of internationalism (Günay, 1988). Human association and identity, rather than pure functional organization were keys for their approach. The city was seen not as a set of disintegrated functional units but as a closely linked pattern of associations which manifest themselves in similarly nested urban elements, namely the house, the street, and the district:

> In a tight knit society inhabiting a tight knit development such as the Byelaw Streets there is an inherent feeling of safety and social bond which has much to do with the obviousness and simple order of the form of the street: about 40 houses facing a common open space. The street is not only a means of access but also an arena for social expression. In these 'slum' streets is found a simple relationship between the house and street (Smithson and Smithson, 1967, 15).

13. The most celebrated ones are those of Jacobs (1961) and Sennett (1961; 1974). Note that Jacobs wrote her book about a *decade before the Pruitt-Igoe was* demolished.

14. Housing developments transformed into ghettos such as Pruitt-Igoe (**Figure 7**) and Van Dyke are prime examples of this failure.

15. There are more than the physical/spatial constituents (attributes) of the street. Physical and spatial constituents take their shape only because there is a triggering attribute behind them. I prefer to call this kind of an attribute a 'notional attribute'. Rykwert (1982) has explicitly wrote about two of such attributes and implied a third one. The first two can be given as the beginning and the end of the street and the third is the mediation between private and public realms. Barlas (1994) has added two more to these three, and elaborated on the third one. Those two notional attributes he has added are 'linearity' and 'nodality'. *Understanding such notional attributes and* even adding to the list will be of utmost help in enhancing the explanatory capacity of the theory of public spaces.

Starting with TEAM 10, reactions continued with other objections from different fields of interest (13). This was followed by the apparent failure of the CIAM-inspired small scale projects (14). The CIAM model was condemned for it represented an attack aiming at the heart of human existence. It is these reactions which *strengthen the resistance of the street against the attacks it faced.* The street and its constituents were found to be important contributors to the social and psychological well-being of people. But as to its whys and hows, there are more that need to be theorized about (15). Otherwise it would be sufficient to accept merely the following, and then assume that the rest is smooth sailing:

> If, in the biography of the modern street, the Twenties and Thirties are the decades that condemned it to death, the Sixties and Seventies will be remembered as the decades of its attempted resurrection... The solution? *(for resurrection)* Create areas within towns and cities where considerations of the pedestrian environment took precedence over the movement and parking of the automobiles (Kostof, 1992, 242; italics are author's).

True, pedestrianization projects of various kinds, like *woonerf* (in Dutch), *wohnbereich* (in German) or *rue residentielle* (in French) seem to do the job. They reconcile pedestrian and vehicular traffic. Or entire pedestrianization of shopping districts are also helpful. To say the least, they are acknowledged and accepted by everybody who are concerned. But the theory still lacks the necessary explanations as to why these attempts were really successful. Only intuitively some would be able to defend the merits of such ingenious design wonders. However, we need more if other designers are going to be educated and if they are expected to perform well.

Therefore, one final note: It seems very hard to accept that we are now on the safe side. CIAM is long gone, but its influence can be felt everywhere and especially in urbanizing countries. This is particularly so in the field of city planning. Functional segregation, streetless urban environments continue to direct the urban development schemes. We need to overcome this trend, and this seems possible only through further reformulation of theory and practice of the street.

BİR DÜŞMANLIĞA KARŞI KOYUŞ: SOKAK CIAM'A KARŞI

ÖZET

Kentsel mekanın oluşumunda rol alan tasarımcıların tasarımlarına yön veren nedir? İçten gelen bazı his veya heyecanlar mı, yoksa o veya bu kuramsal çerçeve mi, yoksa her ikisi mi, ya da hiçbiri mi? Kent tarihi veya kentsel tasarım literatürünü incelediğimizde çok farklı yaklaşımların tarih boyunca farklı bağlamlarda farklı biçimlerde egemen olduğu ve kentsel mekanın gözlenen biçimi ile oluştuğu anlaşılır. Ne var ki, günümüz kentsel tasarım kuram ve kılgısının neye dayandırılması gerektiği, eskiden olduğundan daha anlaşılmaz bir durumdadır ve her kafadan bir ses çıkmaktadır. Günümüzün ekonomik ve siyasi gündemi ile çağımızın buna pek uyumlu felsefeleri (!) de yanyana geldiğinde, ortaya çıkan tasarımların veya kentsel mekanın ne olduğunu anlatan kuramların içi boş birer kap olmaktan da öteye gitmediği, kentsel mekanın asıl kullanıcılarının feryatları ve veryansınlarına çok az kulak kabartıldığı izlenmektedir.

Öte yandan, toplumların genelde kapıldıkları düşünülen yeni ideolojik eğilimlere karşın, uygulamada bütünüyle farklı şeyler de yaşanılabilmektedir. Örneğin, bir yandan kentsel kamusal mekan üzerinde özelin yoğun ve ardı arkası kesilmeyen saldırıları sürerken, öte yandan daha fazla kamusal mekan elde edilebilmesinin yolları araştırılmakta ve uygulamaya konulmaktadır. Önemli örneklerin birçoğunu, yine önemli bir kentsel kamusal mekan olarak gördüğümüz sokaklarda izlemekteyiz.

Modern Akım'ın önde gelenlerinin kuram ve kılgıdaki saldırılarının odağı olan sokak, Modern Akım'ın sözde bitiminden sonra bile hala saldırı altındadır. Ancak bu saldırının şiddeti şimdi çok daha fazladır; kapsamı da daha büyüktür. İşte kentsel kamusal mekanın, bu yeni saldırı silsilesine karşı durabilmesini sağlayabilmek için geçmişe dönüp bundan önceki saldırılara nasıl karşı durulabildiğini anlamak gerekecektir. Saldırının asıl hedefinin ne olduğunu anlamak ise savunmanın nasıl yapıldığı konusunda bir fikir sahibi olunmasını sağlayacaktır. Bu amaçla ele alınmış olmakla birlikte bu yazı, çok daha geniş bir çalışmanın gerekliliğini ortaya koymaya çalışmaktadır. Yalnız sokaklarla ilgili olarak değil, kentin diğer iki elemanı olarak ileri sürebileceğimiz meydanlar ve evler (yapılar) için de benzer çalışmalar yapılmalıdır. Yakın dönemde yapılan, sokağın ne olduğu ve ne anlama geldiği konusunda düşünce geliştiren fazla sayıda çalışma üretilememiştir. Üretilenlerin birkaçı spekülatif olarak değerlendirilse bile, bu konuda yine de önemli veriler sağlamaktadır (Barlas, 1994; Vernez-Moudon, 1987). Bunlar ve benzeri çalışmaların katkısı, tasarımcı olarak üzerinde kalem oynamakta bir sakınca görmediğimiz kentsel (ya da başka tür) mekanların ne olduğunu anlamamızdır. Kentsel mekanların ne olduğunu ve ne işe yaradığını açıklayan bir kuram geliştirmeden, ne yapılsa boş olacaktır. Bu yazı, bu konuda bir başlangıç olmak üzere ele alınmıştır.

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