

The Trinity -
Second lecture

A Lost World of Progress



I arrived into this city at night - always the best time to enter a modern place.

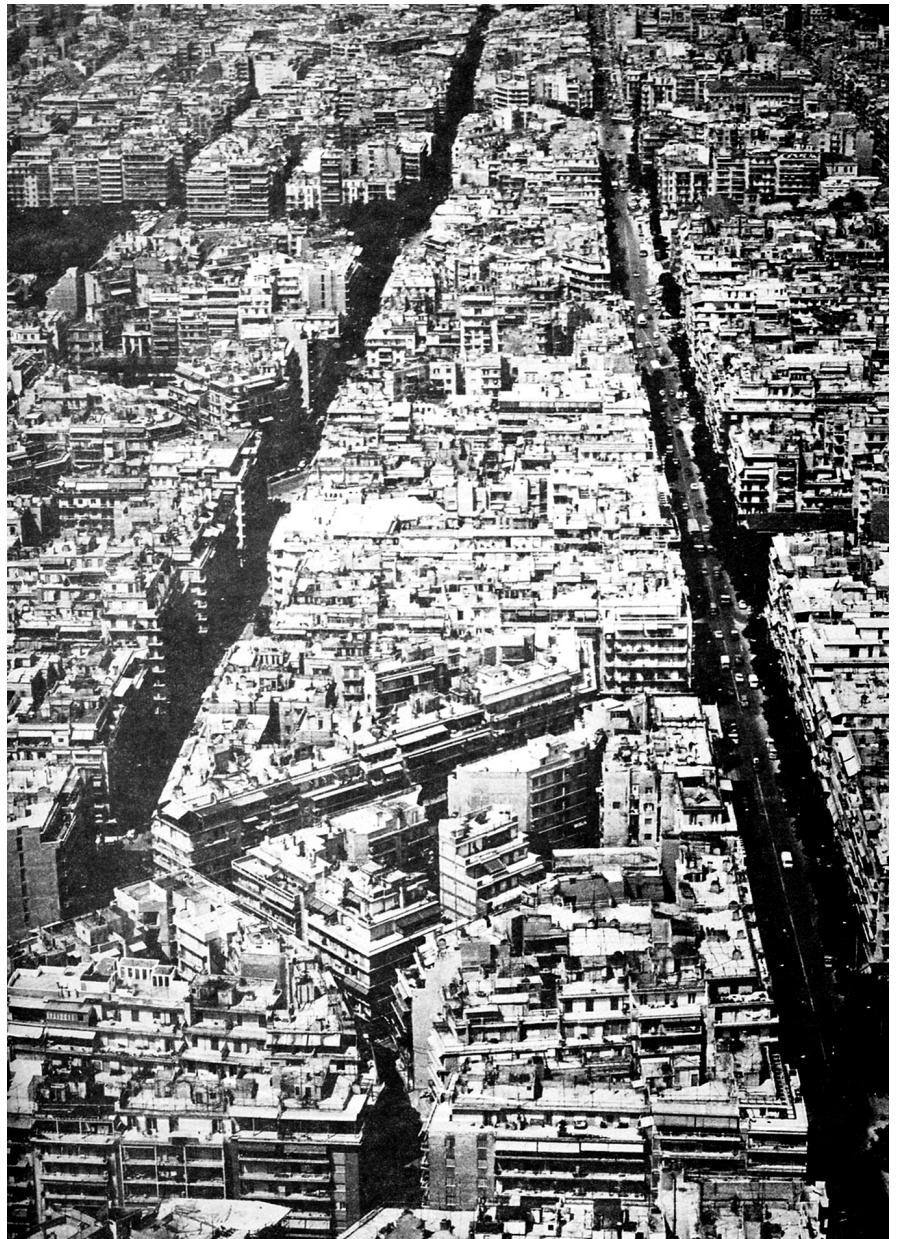
The lifespace trash is invisible.

After leaving and entering this city a few times, pursuing the reasons for our visit, I became aware that although it was mostly built in the last half of the 20C, it had a rigorously regular cornice-line at around nine storeys. This appealed to me. 100 ft, or 30 metres, was the old height limit that had helped to make my own city, London, the beautiful place it once was. Nothing is a surer sign of the urbanistic illiteracy, the rustic primitivism, of a city's fathers', than the weedy sprouting of skyscrapers.

One of our party reported, with displeasure, that she could find no supermarkets in this city. Then we found its central market. It was large, even vast, and very lively. This, I began to think, was a modern city like no other I knew. In my jaundiced eyes the impressive monument to the last 50 years was not something created, but, as with Britain's culture of conservation, something repressive and conservative. But what had this city 'conserved'. Its fabric was barely 100 years old? How had it resisted those monuments to Urbanistic subliteracy in the shape of 'tall buildings'. Every building was between the pre-1945 five storey limit and the post-1945 ten-storey limit. It was beautiful in a tragic sort of way. The abnegation was moving. The barbarians may be at the gate but they are not yet through it.

To stand on the rear balcony of a sixth floor apartment and look down into its back yard was an hallucinatory experience.

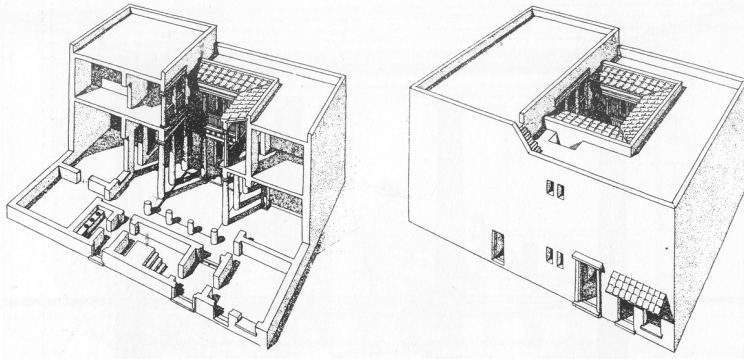
It was as if I looked down into an archaeological excavation which penetrated three millenia - or even more - perhaps all the way back to the beginning of the city in Catal Huyuk. Each floor of the apartment blocks which crowded in around the yard was like a layer of time. There, down at the very bottom, like the final frame of a telescopic proscenium, lay the aboriginal court of the courtyard-dwelling that was the cell out of which divided and cohered the living plasma of the city - wherever it first emerged, from Meso-America, from China or from Mesopotamia.



Most of the world's human beings live in dense cities of this sort. Many of them may dream of escaping to the suburban way of life of the USA. The effects on resource depletion and climate change, if this happens, would be catastrophic. But how can we humanise the 'urban' way of living? Global suburbanisation will undo all the progress of the 20C. Cities must become the places that human beings love to live in, more than anywhere else. This has been the over-arching purpose of all of my 'architectural' work.



The original 'urban plasma'. A wall painting that its discoverer Jimmy Mellart dates from 6,200 b.c. It describes the dwellings of a settlement. These were houses in a culture that had not invented hinge technology. Its doors were holes in the roof, from which the central room was entered by a ladder. He conjectures that the object in the rear was a volcano.



An ancient Mediterranean House, in this case from the Island of Delos. The generic urban dwelling is a city in miniature with its 'city-wall' and central plaza. The walls shut out all the noise, even of streets bustling with activity. The hole in the roof illuminates a closed world, separated from all others, into which the cosmos was inscribed by its symbols. The rays of the sun swept around them. It was a cosmic clock lit by diurnal time.

Yet the steel and concrete floor on which I stood was not yet a century old. This was the power of Architecture, uncongested by the micro-history and tales of yore that 'local history' uses to fig-leaf its hag-drivelling incapacity to announce an Urbanity.

It was at this point that I met the Urbanist Alexandra Gerolympos. Her study showed that the 'Centro Citta' that Italians, for example, believe to be the indispensable component of even the slightest town, had all caught fire in 1917 and burned, before a strong wind, for six days. The government of that time had not lovingly rebuilt all the crooked alleys and wonky wooden houses, so that, a century later, they could be thronged with tourists, sitting at student cafes, stuffing themselves with guide-book histories while all of the real economic and political institutions of the city ended in crinkly tin sheds next to autoroutes.

Gerolympos's Study showed that the Government of the new, 5 year-old State, had, instead, razed the 128-hectare site redrawn all the streets and plots from scratch, and obliged them to be rebuilt in as politically-cultured a manner as anyone could expect for that distant, but still 20C, time.

The decisions were taken within two weeks of the ending of the fire. The government decided that a competition was superfluous. They wanted to make haste. They wanted also, mainly a rational city, whose organisation would signify its political economy. Beauty could be added by beautiful buildings, if they could be afforded and if architects of talent could be found. A Genius as city-planner was less to the point than common sense, which the politicians of that remote time felt themselves capable of judging. After all, who does not live in a city? Who does not have an idea as to the defects and advantages of certain arrangements? One can not be a major politician in Continental Europe without admitting to some ideas on city-planning.

In Britain the reverse is the case. This registered in the plans prepared by the two city-planners who were involved. The French one placed a huge 'bazaar' in the dead centre of the town. The British one treated the town as a mainly ornamental street-pattern that one might drive around as a carriage traverses a verdant cemetery. The British planner had recently planned the capital of Australia on similar lines. The Briton soon departed. It was reported that he was unwell. While this may have been so it is surely clear that the Frenchman knew better the nature of the Mediterranean city.

For there was somewhat more to the French plan than the formal symmetries that are the main thing that English 'Beaux-Arts' planners, from Lutyens downwards, have understood about them. I could see that the French plan was not only a discourse on my arcane phenomenologies of temporarility but, even more incredibly (at least to an Englishman), a politico-economic constitution inscribed into the spaces and symbols of the human livespace, that is to say the body of the city itself. I could imagine nothing more antithetical to the English spirit. The British Constitution, as everyone knows, is unwritten. It is a cloud of customs and precedences which are, therefore, supported only by consensus. It is one of the reasons why violent revolutions are rare on the island. There is nothing very solid, clear and definite to defend, and conversely, nothing very clear, definite and solid to attack. Everything rests upon a principle, established when English capital ruled the world, that government (which meant mainly 'other' governments) was unnatural and unwelcome. It is on this basis that every public issue is kept in a state of permanent impermanence.

What could be more menacing to the free-wheeling ethic of laissez-faire than a state whose cities were not merely possessed of written, legally instituted constitutions (the province of lawyers), but of cities in which those constitutions were so clearly inscribed into their lifespaces that their citizens understood their terms by simply walking over their topography and living their day-to-day lives inside them? From this topological cognisance they would not merely understand their political and economic constitution through the employment of the abstracted mediation of ideas, but feed this knowledge upwards, almost literally, through the soles of their feet, the empathy of their limbs, and the sight of their eyes. Why! they would stand a very good chance of actually understanding the economic and political constitution of their own condition! They were in grave danger of becoming a real, living, universal, democracy! This notion, of which I had never read a single line in all of my education as an English architect and city-planner, astonished me! What was this but an 'ontic' Constitution?

What was wrong with it? Why had it formed absolutely no part of my course on city-planning, or any of the literature, in English, that I had read? I had to find this out!

The city in question was Thessaloniki. The date of the fire was 5th August 1917. The Head of government was Eleftherios Venizelos. The French City Planner was Ernest Hebrard and the English one Thomas Mawson. Many others were involved. But the plan can be understood by comparing the different political constitutions offered to this 'tabula-rasa site' by the French and English designs.

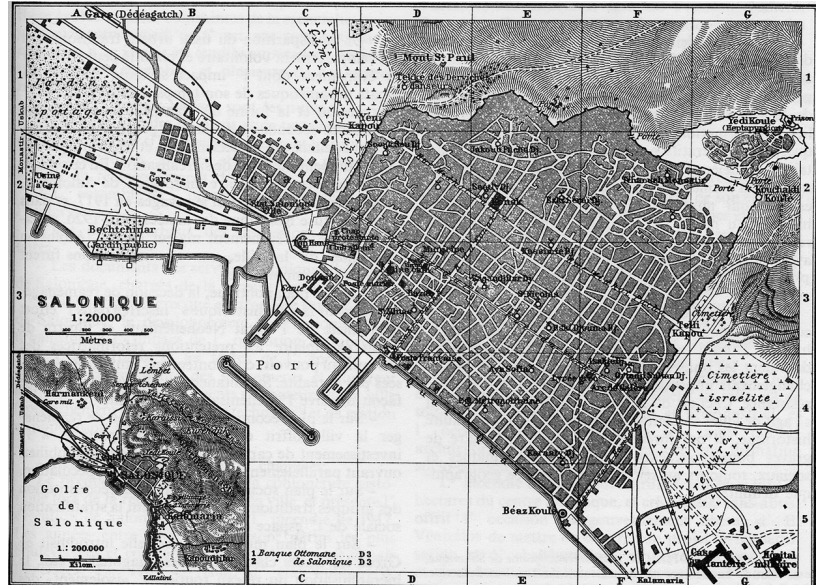
The place was the expanded territory of an European State. It lay on the Northeastern end of the Mediterranean, with a vast, underdeveloped, ex-Ottoman, Balkan hinterland. The state was that of modern Greece, properly termed Hellas.

The time was almost timeless. Hellas has by far the oldest high culture of the Continent. But it had only been reconstituted, as an independent unit, on March 25th 1832. Thessaloniki previously known as Salonika, had only been won by Hellas, five years before the fire, at the end of the second Balkan War. Prior to 1912, Thessaloniki had been, like Greece itself, part of the Ottoman Empire for four and a half centuries. The fall of Thessaloniki to the Turks was in 1430.

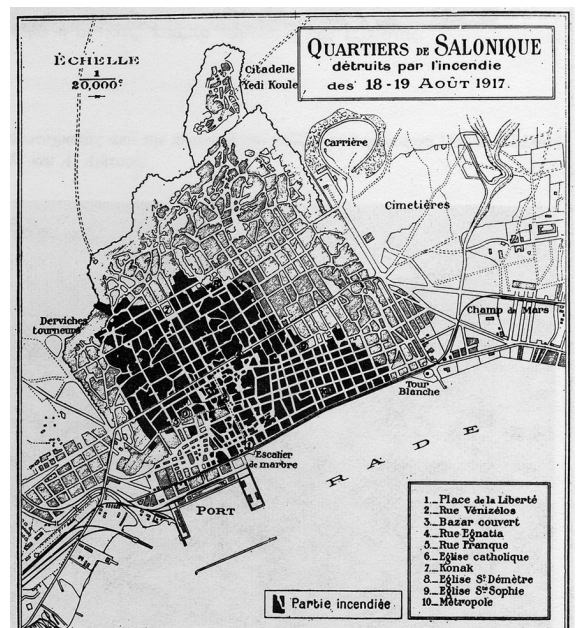
At that time, in Rome and Florence, Alberti was inventing theories of painting and architecture whose Hellenic roots (via Rome) were just being finally snuffed-out by the Turkic conquests. In Britain the court of Henry V had become the first to use English, rather than Latin or French for its court documents. 1430 is a long time ago. Yet for the Hellene it is as fresh as yesterday - a mere half millenium of the several millenia of the Mediterranean civilisation that had been conquered, plagiarised (Istanbul is merely 'eis tin Poleis!'), tortured, taxed into destitution and ultimately ruined, by the Central Asiatic horse-borne horde.

The political leader, in 1917, was Venizelos. His vision was not only that of a revived Hellas on the Peloponnese but of one that included Byzantium and the Ionian territories of Asia Minor. He had the imagination of a new Alexander, but lacked his military fortune. It is said by some that the Hellenes deliberately torched the city in 1917. It is doubtful if Venizelos would have destroyed the second city of Greece when Athens was still controlled, at the time of the fire, by the pro-German king Constantine. However the drastic re-planning can be understood to stem from the new nation's unwillingness to restore a city constructed under the reign of its hated Turkic conquerors. But then how many cities have been destroyed since 1917, or even made de-novo, and with far sorrier results?

He wished to reconstitute a modern Hellas. both Hebrard's and Mawson's plans used an Architecture of the Hellenic legacy - Pagan as well as Christian. There was no Neo-Gothic. Hellas, with her painful memory of the 13C looting and ruin of Byzantium by the treacherous, freebooting, 'Christian' Crusaders, was hardly likely to promote a French Gothic revival! Most people, except 'Modern' Architects, can distinguish between the meaning of a work and its formal qualities as 'ornamentum'. Venizelos, along with the new Hellenic state, was not going to miss an opportunity to erase the traces of the hated period of Turkish oppression while, at the same time, creating a city that embodied the ideals of his idealistic time - the beginning of the 20C. In short:



Improvements financed by Western capital and allowed by the on-off 'Tanzimat' Westernisation movement had begun to quadrate the Mediaeval shambles by 1900. But, even after 450 years of Ottoman imperial peace, Salonika, its second largest city, was still squeezed tight inside a city wall of no use at all against late 19C guns with a range of several miles.



The 128 hectares burnt in 1917. The mediaeval Ottoman streets were too narrow to prevent a blaze leaping across to ignite the wooden houses packed into the space within the city walls. Fire engines were still hand-pumped.

VENIZELOS HAD NO INTEREST IN RECONSTITUTING A PICTURESQUE 'CENTRO CITTA'.

The other accusation levelled against the early-20C re-planning of Thessaloniki is that it was **Anti-Semitic**. Salonika had become the home of many Jewish communities. The largest, the **Ladino-speaking Sephardic Jews**, dated from the time of the expulsion, from southern Spain, of anyone who refused to convert to Roman Catholicism after the decree of 1492. Thessaloniki had surrendered twice to the Turks. On the first time, the city had opened its gates without a fight. Its conqueror Murad II not wishing to destroy a going concern, allowed things to go on much as before. The second surrender was worse for its citizens. In 1402, the Ottomans were defeated by Tamerlane, an even more ruinous horse-borne warrior. A remnant of Byzantine power took the opportunity to take the city back from the disadvantaged Ottomans. Whereas, at the time of the first surrender, the citizens had admitted the Turks against the wishes of the Byzantine establishment, this time, Andronikos Palaiologos afterwards hired Venetian arms. Murad, in order to encourage the final assault after a long siege, had to promise his army the right to pillage the city and enslave its citizens. The city was ruined and many thousands of its Byzantine inhabitants marched off to be sold. Afterwards, Murad, wishing to kick-start such a valuable imperial asset, opened the city to anyone who wished to re-populate it. Salonika became a city which exemplified the amiable face of every great Empire, a polyglot society in which many religions co-existed under the imperial yoke. The Hellenes were so reduced that it took four centuries, until the mid 19C, to recover anything resembling their Byzantine preponderance.

This recovery occurred under Ottoman rule as the Turkish Empire decayed over the course of the eighteenth and especially the nineteenth centuries. The Hellenes rode back on the slow rise of the Western influences that came with Nineteenth century steam locomotion, first on water and then on rails. The Western nations were Christian. Russia, who slowly became the local superpower, especially after Catherine the Great, was Christian Orthodox. The whole globe was being conquered by the novel technology and commerce of the West. The rescue of the Hellenes from Ottoman rule became an icon of this process. It was an ambition shared by many of the Western powers.

The early 20C also pursued the project of 'authenticating' traditional cultures.

In Thessaloniki the huge gap between the Neo-Classical ideal of Greece entertained by the West, and the Post-Ottoman reality of the living Hellenes, imparted a unique quality to this, otherwise parochially ethnic, 'Hellenic Revival'. The image of the semi-naked athletic youth, became the universal, Western icon of Modernity that, whenever it needed to be 'historicised', was directly projected, both backwards as well as forwards, from a notion of 'Ancient Greece'. The living Hellenes, at the turn of the 19C into the 20C, found themselves having to live 'inside' this universal projection of a Mythical (and therefore timeless) Ancient Greece. Needless to say that the living were adversely compared to their mythic archetypes!



The relatively modern, 19C, quarter of Salonika, on quadrated streets, was as devastated as the older parts. The blocks, although built of brick and stone down by the commercially prosperous quayside, were burnt as badly as those made of wood and plastered mud brick which lay along her narrower, less accessible, alleys. The old photograph recalls a WWII city destroyed by aerial bombardment. Its nemesis, in 1917, was not even WWI. It was Ottoman-style fire-fighting and fire-proofing techniques!

The 20C fate of the Jewish citizens of Thessaloniki was, as in the anti-Islamic Catholicisation of Spain, once more caught up in a conflict in which they played no main role. There was nothing specifically either pro nor anti-Semitic in the conflicts between Nationalism and Imperialism, Greeks and Turks and Modernity and Tradition that fuelled the violence of the two early 20C Balkan wars, the 1914-18 Great War, and the Greco-Turkish war of 1921. Thessaloniki was prised from Ottoman rule in the second Balkan war of 1912. The city, including much of the large Jewish quarter, burnt down in 1917. The new state refused to allow any re-building on the old street-plan. Many in the Jewish community emigrated. But many remained to live in the new city. Their fates were overshadowed by the 1921 ethnic cleansing which afflicted the Hellenes of Asia Minor after their defeat by Kemal Ataturk. Thessaloniki was flooded by hundreds of thousands of Hellenic refugees from Asia Minor.



A breach in the ancient walls of the Turco-Byzantine citadel above the town reveals how the little alleys in which the fire started, were rebuilt



A view through the same old walls shows how the houses inherited from the Ottomans have been redeveloped, in the same streets and at much the same height, in the synthetic, pragmatic and aniconic livespace-engineering language of plastered concrete slabs typical of the last 50 years.

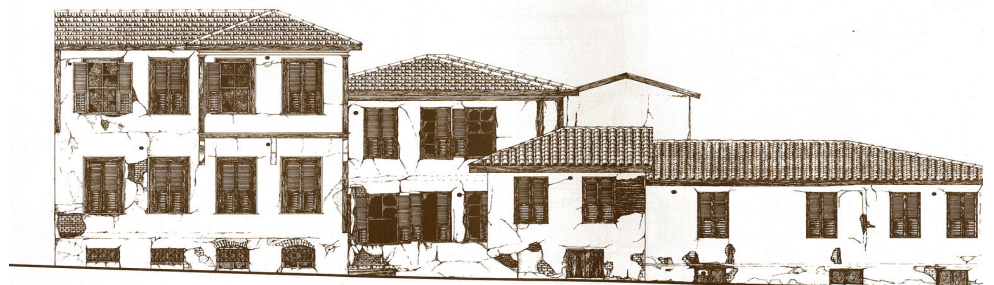
There was nothing either anti-or pro-Semitic in the character of the new city plan. Neither was there anything either **pro or anti-Turkish.** Indeed, **if properly understood,** there was **nothing pro-or anti-Greek,** if by that we mean what the **Greeks really were - in 1917.**

The plan sought to create no ghettos.

These plans descend directly from the Utopian, Modernising culture launched on its course by the French Revolution and navigated into reality in the 19C by influences stemming mainly from Paris.

The plan sought to inscribe a radically novel politics.

The fate of the Jews of Thessaloniki, as Jews, was never any ambition of the plans of the 1920's. They sought a political constitution for all citizens within a 'modern', secularising, state.



ΣΠΙΤΙΑ ΣΤΗΝ ΟΔΟ ΘΕΟΦΙΛΟΥ 20.22.24.
ΟΨΗ.
ΥΠΑΡΧΟΥΣΑ ΚΑΤΑΣΤΑΣΗ.

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High on the hill above the town, 20-21-22 Theophilou St. remained, neglected and falling down, through to the end of the 20C.. Surveys of them, and their steep streets, were made. Their construction was timber-framed, with many diagonals to both render them flexible as well as resistant to earthquakes. The frames were infilled with mud brick and then plastered over. Rain was shed clear of their fragile walls by wide overhangs and outjutting gutters.

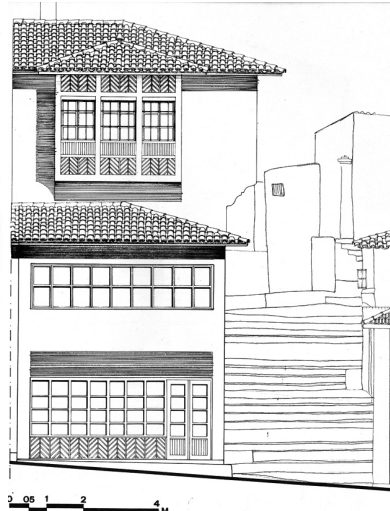


Rather than restoring these houses as they were found, the Municipal authorities proposed redeveloping them, more or less completely, but on the same labyrinthine alleys. The structure was of concrete, the walls of stuccoed cinder-block and the windows of stained woods. Everything valuable in the old houses, such as the proportions of the windows, was lost. Mark Mazower accuses Thessaloniki of having "lost its soul". This folksy fakery is not the way to 'find' it.



A view, from Acropolis St. of the side of 1-3 Sylla St. The survey shows the timber diagonals which prop the overall frame, along with the mud block infill.

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The proposed rebuilding has to be fitted with a garage complete with up-and-over door.

It was the Nazis who destroyed their rights as citizens, that had been given to all of Mankind by the French Revolution whose very ideas were those inscribed by the Hebrard plan.

The Nazis substituted the Tribal, Genealogical, Nordic-Eugenic category of 'blood' and 'race' - animal distinctions foreign to the Rights of Man, before administering their genocide. Almost the whole Jewish fraction

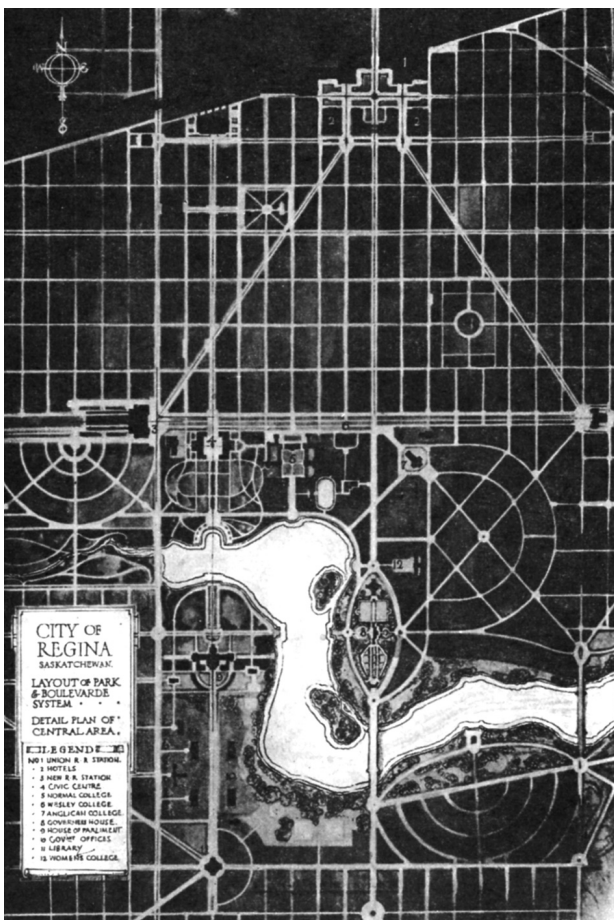
of Thessaloniki was evacuated within weeks to be burnt at Auschwitz. Their quarters were demolished, the cemeteries uprooted and their synagogues dynamited.

While it is true to say that all of the early 20C plans for Thessaloniki envisaged building on the cemeteries that lay outside her walls, this was no different to a hundred other walled towns facing the radical urbanisations of the late 19C. The crime was the manner in which the exhumations and expropriations was effected.

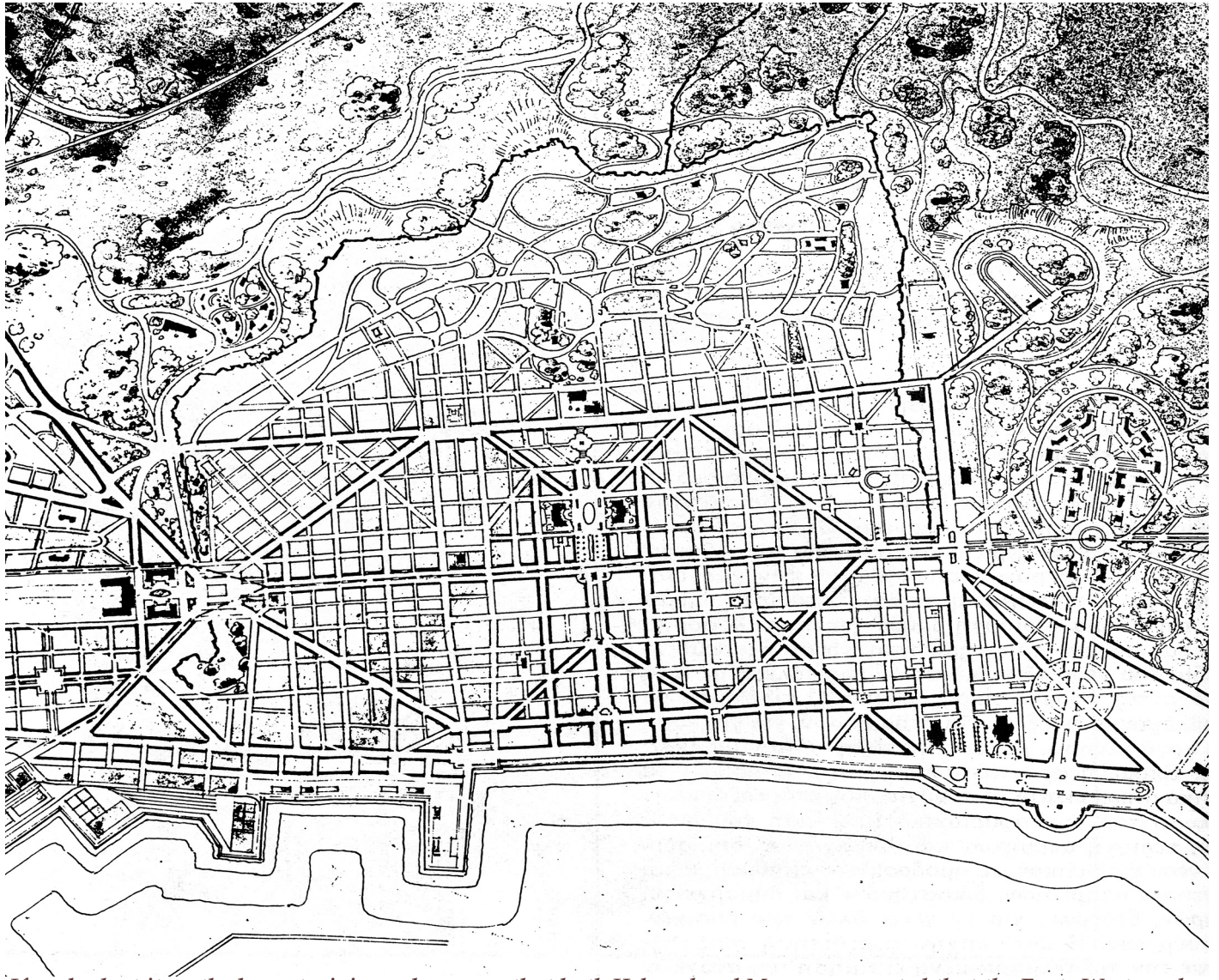
Paris, by 1917, had become the global model of a well-engineered and beautiful, city. It had been carried out by governments who needed recourse to neither genocides nor gulags, let alone the future public tortures, executions and humiliations of Mao. The fact is that 19C France had succeeded in both modernising as well as civilising herself, whereas lesser cultures, finding themselves incapable of the double effect, had to choose. Those who modernised became barbarians, and those who remained civil, sprouted mythic mediaevalisms.

Hellas, with her newly-conquered recovery of the second city of the Turkish Empire, was a country in a hurry to catch up with a Western culture to which she felt both superior, in that her ideas lay at its foundation, and inferior, in that she was, on the ground, a mediaeval, Ottoman, shambles, now cindered to ruin. Venizelos appealed for help to re-plan the city. He was presented with two alternatives, whose comparison is instructive. They were those of Mawson and of Hebrard.

Hebrard, along with some other planners, was in the French army, serving on the Balkan front. He had been excavating Diocletian's Palace at Spalato. Mawson had a family business, which included his two sons, as a Plantsman and Garden-Designer that morphed, as Jefferson might have predicted, into a colonial city-planner for the British Empire!



Thomas Mawson's 1912 plan for Regina, Saskatchewan, is so perverse as to cause one to suspect a total civic illiteracy. He reverses the Delta to face it away from the water. The 'West Front' portal which should give access to the theatre of the politically sacred opens onto the horizon of dissipation and death that is the 'sea'. The Delta, instead of contemplating 'Okeanos', faces a Jardin Anglais. A body of water shaped as inconsequentially as its location serves to focus streets that wander like errant planets through a 'garden of ballistics'. What can this be but a premonition of Suburbia - that gift of the Counting Houses of London to mankind.



If we look at it on the largest, civic, scale, we see that both Hebrard and Mawson accepted that the East - West road of the ancient Via Egnatia would form one vertebra of the new plan. It was a road that was still main and descended from the earliest foundation of the city, being the land route to Constantinople from, ultimately, Rome. Mawson breaks its ancient continuity by blocking its Western end, that faces Athens and the rest of Europe, with an enlarged railway station. The Eastern end that used to route to Constantinople, he drips off into one of his parkly arabesque romances. They recall the meandering boulevards that Mawson prescribed for other cities, like Regina and Canberra. More revealing still is the North-South axis, the Cardo of Roman Planning. Here the horticulturalist Mawson replicates the main Event-Horizons of the Fluvial Narrative. But he avoids obtaining any political or economic function for them. Mawson's mind is entirely pictureseque. His urban components are like shrivelled insects, affixed by a pin to a map. As for any English Nominalist, symbols are bloodless cyphers registering no ontic dimension. Not for him the modernist infusion of an ancient symbol with fresh blood. His Cardo lacks the politico-economic enfleshment that would incarnate it as living urban tissue. One can not be surprised that he came with his two sons. Post-Napoleonic England was a dynasty of traders. Why not a dynasty of city-planning landscape Garden-Centre provision stores? Nor can one be surprised that Mawson retired with ill health. The man was an urbanistic mortician purveying that Nordic policy of political obfuscation that turns city streets into picturesque carriage-drives along which the triumphant shopkeeper, purveyor to a cottage-bound consumerdom, may view the fractured ruins of what was once the conceptualised, constitutionalised, Poleis.

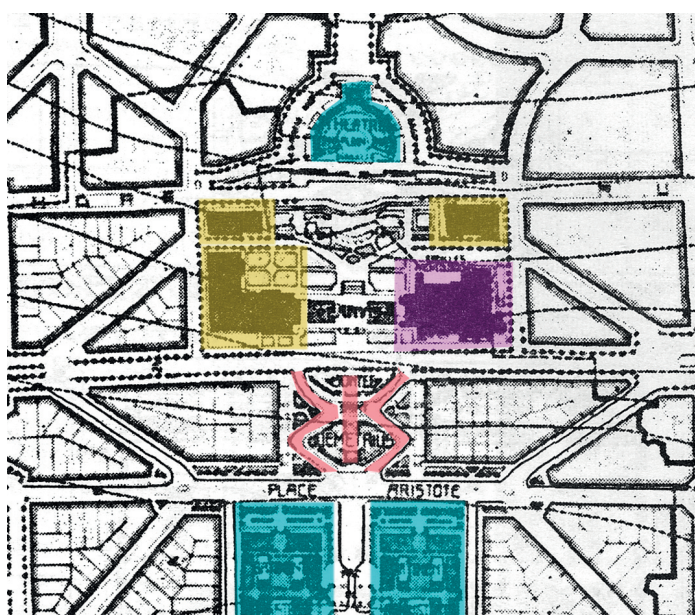
Both of the Empires, the French and the British, had provided them with employment designing colonial towns and cities. The difference between them comes to light in their treatment of the North-South axis between the old, Byzantine, acropolis-castle and the sea. This is the 'cardo' of Roman planning. It is, normally, the more vital of the two cardinal axes.

Both designers share the same civic narrative.

There is the church of St. Demetrios up in the North.

There is a 'civic plaza' and then, below that the 'crossing' with the Via Egnatia, the main East-West route from Rome to Constantinople.

Below that Mawson shows some large, unannounced city-blocks parted by an exiguous boulevard that terminates in a plaza on the sea so tiny as to look like a slip of his draughtsman's pen. Compared to what was built and planned by Hebrard, Mawson's plan is like a shrunken head, dessicated by a millenium of lack-lustre ignorance of life. It exhibits a curiously 'limp' grasp of what constitutes a real city. But then if one compares the work of Hebrard to that of Lutyens in New Delhi, one understands that the British colonial city was never designed to become the living space of a city, in the Western sense of a space in which the 'demos' would be able to practice its own government. The Planned English city of the early 20C was a theatre to display not the appearances of its citizens but the pomp and power of their colonial governors. It was in no way 'modern' in the sense understood by the liberal Western politics, descended from the France, which Venizelos supported.



The 'Plaza of the Source' begins in a (BLUE) building that is clearly a 'cave of origins'. Recognisable as an open-air theatre, its iconic function is to serve as the cult building of a yet-to-be-invented rite of civic 'issuing forth'. The church of St. Demetrius (TINTED PURPLE), patron of the Byzantine city, lies to its East. An as-yet-to-be-determined 'L'-shaped building (TINTED OCHRE) lies to the West. The whole composition, along with two smaller structures, serves to focus the spatial axis, the 'spine of the city' down onto the 'tumbling stream'. These are a pair of zig-zag stepped ramps (TINTED RED) which bracket a more central, honorific flight of stairs that decline Mt. Demetrius to pass through the arch between the buildings of the Regional and Civic Executive (TINTED BLUE AGAIN).

What is striking in the plan designed by Hebrard, Pleyer and the Hellenic Architects under cabinet minister Alexandros Papanastasiou, is its conjoining of the politico-economic fabric of the new Thessaloniki to the event-horizons of the 'Fluvial Narrative'. There can be only one explanation for this brilliant synthesis. It is the spark struck by the radically rationalised politics of France, nurtured into splendid effect during the 19C, from the newly-revived body of Hellenism. The artifices of the Beaux-Arts were finding, in the ruins of Thessaloniki, a fertile soil.

The narrative begins, on the foothills to the North, in the architecture of an open-air, 'antique', Hellenic theatre. Its curved amphitheatre encloses the well of space that sources the entire 'Cardo'. One may sit in it and view the complete narrative of Somatic time which was planned as the conceptual backbone for the new body of Thessaloniki, running all the way down to its dissipation in the dim horizon of the Sea.

Hebrard, by choosing an artificial source for the point of origin for his 'cardinal' (Cardo), axis enables it to be placed felicitously with respect to the 'given' archaeological monument of the church of St. Demetrius, the martyred Roman Governor who became the Christian patron to the Byzantine, pre-Ottoman, city. Much rebuilt over its long, and combustible, history, there still remain traces of the foundation of his church in 463 A.D. Demetrius personified, with his life, the junction between the culture of the Ancient Hellenes, the novelties introduced by Alexander, and the assimilation of Semitic Monotheism, that went to make up Byzantine Christianity. This elevated 'plaza of the sources' is completed by three more buildings, two small and one the size of the church.

They remained un-named, ready for a use appropriate to its critical position. But they are needed to focus the axial 'beam' of civic space out of its upwelling 'Nymphaeum' down the hill towards the sea.

Hebrard shows this decline as steep slope, which he titles Mount St. Demetrius. He plans a gentle traverse by using hairpin-bent stepped ramps that flank a central flight of steps. It has been made artificially steeper because the general slope of the hill will have been cut and filled to form a relatively level plateau for the formal five and seven-fold Beaux-Arts compositions both above and below it. But this steepness serves a symbolic function. For, like a white-water section of the river, as it tumbles down steep rocks, it breaks any easy link between the elevated heights of the mythopoetic and ineffable 'origins' of the city and the 'fallen' world of Man in which we now live.

By placing the steps on axis, and engaging in the 'superfluity' of axial symmetry, Hebrard makes sure that these otherwise unremarkable 'landscape' items are read as part of the extended 'fluvial narrative' by which he enflashes the constitution of Thessaloniki.

It is also notable that, in classic Beaux-Arts fashion, the axial spaces of Hebrard's narrative are never transport routes.

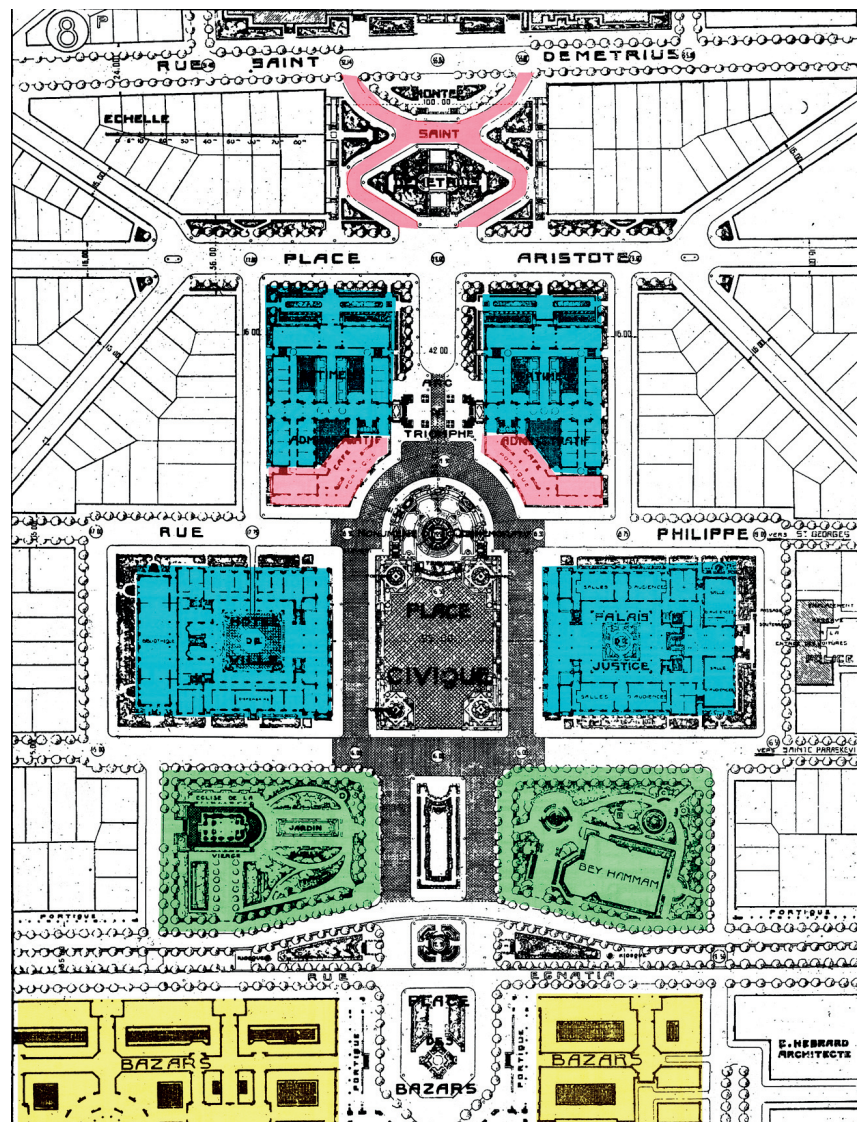
This is a route of 'understanding' that must be walked by the erect body. Our whole being must be able to focus on the meaning of what we are doing. One can not, during such a promenade, be chased around by the unruly children of Mr. Ford.

The 'freshly fallen' space now debouches through what Hebrard designs as a triumphal arch. Within the iconography of the Fluvial Narrative this becomes an example of that Triple Arched Door under a Balcony of Appearances that signs a boundary between the sacred, inner, space above and the secular, outer, space below. What does this doorway mediate but the relation between the elevated (inner) Place of Origins and the lower (outer) place of the Government of the City?

Hebrard here, in what he titles a 'Place Civique', but what I prefer to call a 'Place des Pouvoirs', or, in English, a Place of the Powers, enflashes the classical Western constitutionality of the 'separation of powers'. He centralises the Palace of the Executive. To one side of this he places the Palace of the Law-Makers and to the other the Palace of the Law-Judgers. In the case of the second city, or a provincial capital of a rational state, these might be occupied by a directly elected regional president, a directly-elected regional parliament and a directly-elected regional Judiciary. If this sounded too much like a state within a state, then these would be partly downgraded to appointees from the national centre. This would make the Constitution more of a democratic fiction - as many are in the real world.

Hebrard proposes what is most rational and ideal. What is the point of going to war to propagate democracy, as the West did during the 20C, and continues to protest that it does in the 21C, if the Western public in general, in being mainly ignorant of its fundamental geometries, neither knows or cares what Democracy is?

What better way could there be to manifest these long thought-out and hard-fought political ideals than to build their respective homes around a space which makes the ideas physically real-becoming an 'Ontic Constition'?



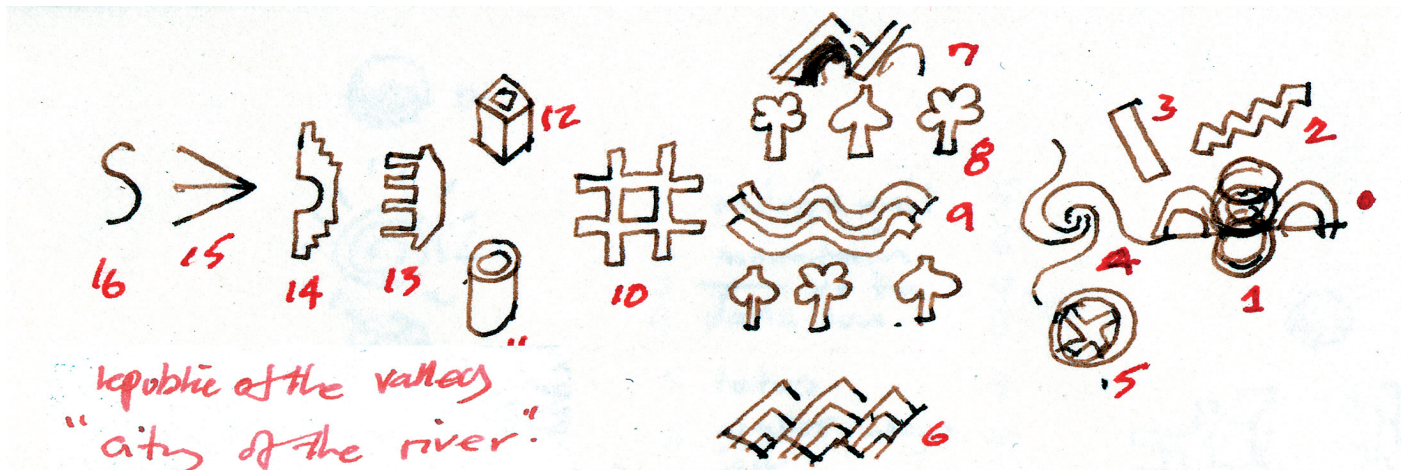
The hairpin turns of the 'tumbling stream' (in PINK) can be seen at the top of the page. The fluvial narrative then passes under a triumphal arch which splits the palace of the Executive (in BLUE) into two symmetrical halves. A hemicyclical arcade (in PINK), containing cafés housing "the mind of the plaza" faces onto the 'Place of the Powers'. This hemicycle is focussed by a monumental column sited in a basin of water. The axially of this column is reinforced by being 'crossed', laterally, by the space of a street. To the West (in BLUE, to the left) is the Palace of the Representatives, or Legislature. To the East (in BLUE, to the right) is the Palace of Justice, or the Law Courts. These four elements, all in scale to a modest city, represent the four powers which rule the rational state of Western Politics: the Executive, or government, the Elected Representatives, who fashion the laws employed by the Executive and the Courts of Law in which the legality of these processes can be tested, and the 'mind of the plaza', or Public Opinion. The buildings in blue both enable as well as symbolise the function of government. To build in this way is to manifest a desire for government to occur and to be seen to occur. It manifests an understanding of the ambitions of government. When such ambitions are lacking, as they are today, and any power outside that of the individual, personal, will is seen as a constraint, if not positively evil, such compositions become not merely superfluous, but offensive.

How different is this ethos to the 'picturesque' pseudo-Mediaevalism that camouflaged the socio-plastic geometry of political disenfranchisement in the 1947 'Redevelopment of Central Areas'.

Hebrard places the access to the mytho-poetic and religious 'place of the Origins' under the control of the Executive. It is the Palace of the Executive that flanks the tripartite archway which gives access to the upper place. No Western European state, since the advent of Christianity, has ever allowed either its secular ruler to become a deity, or allowed the priestly class to escape the rule of the secular power. We have seen examples, even including our own works, when HRH the Queen opened the Judge Business School, of how the Head of a State, or even any 'state within a state' will prefer to stand directly above the 'front door', the main gateway. This is always so as to take possession of access to the necessarily interiorised (and therefore hidden), powers of the institution.

Nevertheless, when viewed as set within the whole sequence of the fluvial narrative, a curious fact emerges. There is no obvious correlation, within the hidden structure of the 'Architectural' iconography of the paintings of Claude Lorraine, that have been one of the keys to my decipherments, of this 'Place des Pouvoirs'. Does it exist, then, in any form within the magical rusticities of the Claudian reverie?

I BELIEVE THAT WE CAN ARGUE THAT IT DOES. ALLOW ME TO RECALL A VISUALLY PROMINENT PART OF THIS REVERIE THAT HAS OBTAINED NO 'PART' IN THE 'HIDDEN' HISTORY THAT I HAVE DECIPHERED FROM THE PAINTINGS OF GELEÉ. I REFER TO THE 'RUINS'.



Lecture Twenty-Seven pages 16-17 show a variety of arrangements of the icons describing the Event-Horizons of the 'Republic of the Valley'. Event Five, derived from the Classicised Ruins distributed around Claude's paintings were interpreted as follows: 5. "the Displaced Crossing where the abandoned shell of the monument to the 'old gods' is enflashed by the 'tholos', or doorless tomb, which is now open only to the heavens/sky and the underworld/earth.



I have named these places the 'Confluence' within the fluvial iconics I derive from Claude. It is the place in which the small figures of his exiguous 'actors' can be found. They add virtually nothing to the bewitching 'power' of Claude's landscape vision. It is their frequent Architectural accompaniment of closed, axially-vertical, cylinders that engenders the decipherment of a 'Crossing'.



I employed the architectural iconics of the Cathedral to name these doorless 'ruins' the 'Occluded (or hidden and shadowed) Crossing'. The 'Confluence' can 'read' as the 'Crossing' under the 'Natural Heavens' of the sky. At this point, far 'up' the River of Somatic Time, 'youth' could sport its naked innocence amongst the Ruins of Civility.

Viewed historically, I have understood the bleached Classicism of the Renaissance to represent the desire of the nascent Italian City-States to find an alternative, 'native' auctoritas with which to combat and escape from the twin oppressions of Franco-Germanic Nordic Feudalism and the Hellenic-Judaic Christian Religion.

Yet these ruins seldom play any integral part in the Biblical or even the 'Hellenic-Antique' histories painted by Claude. Their dumb monumentality has, however a powerful effect. For it is their very 'unhistoricity' which casts part of the magical spell so many have felt before his canvases. We are in the landscape of a mighty culture that once lived high up in these places, far from the sordid reality of contemporary life down 'on the plains'.

The simple rustics, nymphs and satyrs and mythological protagonists have no need of these ruins. It is of no consequence to them that the Architectural power of the 'tholoi' and tombs entertain a patent iconic ambition (for those who can 'read' it!) to connect the upper and lower inhumanities!

How would these amiable illiterates understand their original purpose?

But to those who come afterwards, who HAD divined it -what then?

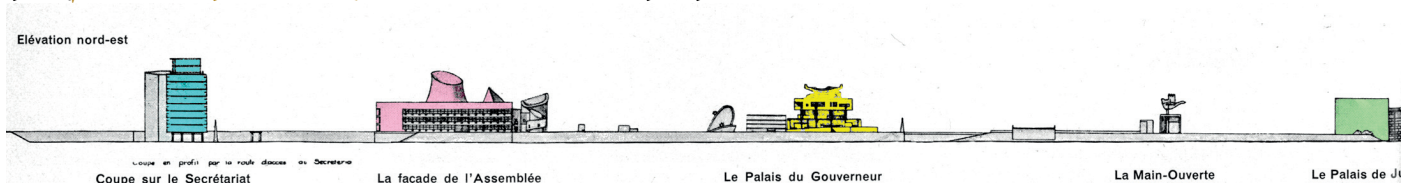
The Greek City-State was not a City, like a fortified Mediaeval Castle, that ruled over a conquered, alien, hinterland. The whole valley from mountains to the sea, was the 'state'. Thus, when this scale of 'citizenship' finally emerged, but on the scale of a 'nation', in Europe, especially after 1789, there was the intention that all would be city-zens whether they lived in a city or not. Looking at Claude's paintings with historical hindsight I see the rustics rising and assaulting the 'blind cylinders' of his 'ruins'. I see them breaking that overpowering spell of magical antique authority. I see them opening them, much in the way the Columna Lucis opens the Heap of History to the Light of Reason. Then I see their Architectural power, now modernised and given a genuinely Hellenic, polychromatic, vitality put to work to create the instruments of the modern State of Reason.



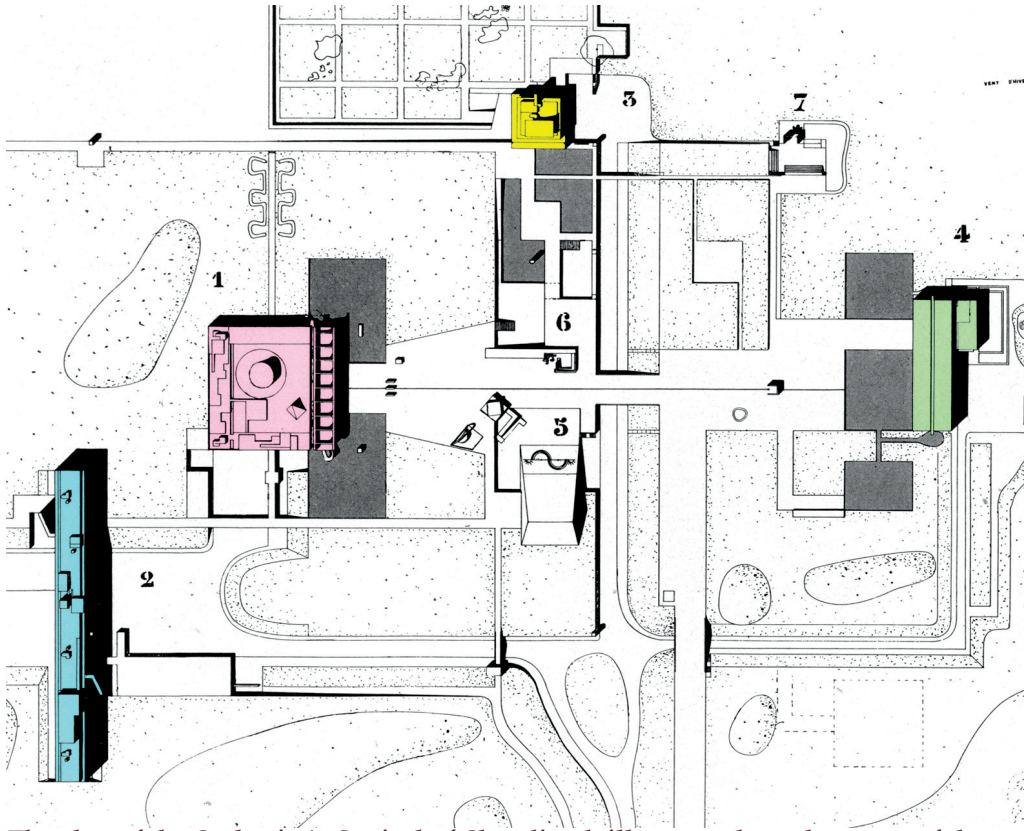
The arrest of the Marquis de Launay, unfortunate commander of the Bastille who surrendered it to the Mob and was knifed for his pains after the 'storming' of that largely undefended fortress on 14 July 1789. The doorless, round and battlemented tower, constructed for its tubular strength has become an icon of dominance and repulsion. In this it 'chimes', but for different reasons, with Claude.

Yet for all this, the fact is that Hebrard does not place his 'Place des Pouvoirs' down in the city, by the port and the commerce, but keeps it high up just 'downstream' from the horizon of the 'ineffable origins'. But is it correct to situate the Place of Politics so far away from the worlds of the city, manufacturing and trade?

What are we to conclude then, to find that, after turning the clock forwards to the 20C city founded and designed a half-century after Thessaloniki, we find the same topology? Le Corbusier places the 'Place des Pouvoirs' of Chandigarh in the same position. The tripartite 'Division of the Powers' is also the same. The Exexecutive lies between the Legislature, to the left and the Judiciary, to the Right. Corbusier, however, extracts the 'palaces' of the Democratic process out of the City entirely. He focusses them around a space too vast to cross on foot and too unsheltered to occupy (under Monsoon or Tropic sun) except on some balmy starlit night when all the Palaces would be dark, inert and still - like the ruins of some dead culture.



A cross-section drawn, from East to West across the so-called 'Capitol' of Chandigarh, the New Capital of the Punjab, the old one, Lahore having been removed from the New India into the New state of Pakistan by the line drawn by the Radcliffe Commission. Only four buildings occupy this gigantic site - the Palais du Gouverneur (Yellow) - so vast it was never built, the Assembly of Lawmakers (Pink), the Courts of Justice (Green) and the Secretariat (Blue). The space in between was to be filled, like an open-air sculpture-park, with huge steel and concrete representations of Corbusier's ideas as to the diurnal rhythm of life, the 'open hand', and so on.



The plan of the Corbusier's Capital of Chandigarh illustrates how the centre of the vast empty plain was to be a sculpture park (perhaps inspired by the cosmometrical stone engines' of Shah Jahan in Delhi), devoted to representing the ideas behind Corbusier's urbanism and his key invention of the Unite d'Habitation. The plan is pure Beaux-Arts 'division of powers' except that by reducing the 'Executive' to a single (heroic like Corbu) figure, the 'Governor', his 'Palace' (Yellow) never got built. This miscalculation rendered the Capitol topologically 'headless'. The 'Executive' became confused between the Assembly (Pink), with its political wheeler-dealing, and the obstructive bureaucracy of the Secretariat (Blue). This led to the only major increase in building - for lawyers chambers behind the Court (Green). The Google Maps below shows the failure of Corbusier's ideas. The huge 'plaza' is a desert, intentionally voided of any array of cafes and arcades which would allow the 'Eminenti' to gauge Public Opinion via the Mind of the Plaza". Of Corbu's 'sculptures', there are none!

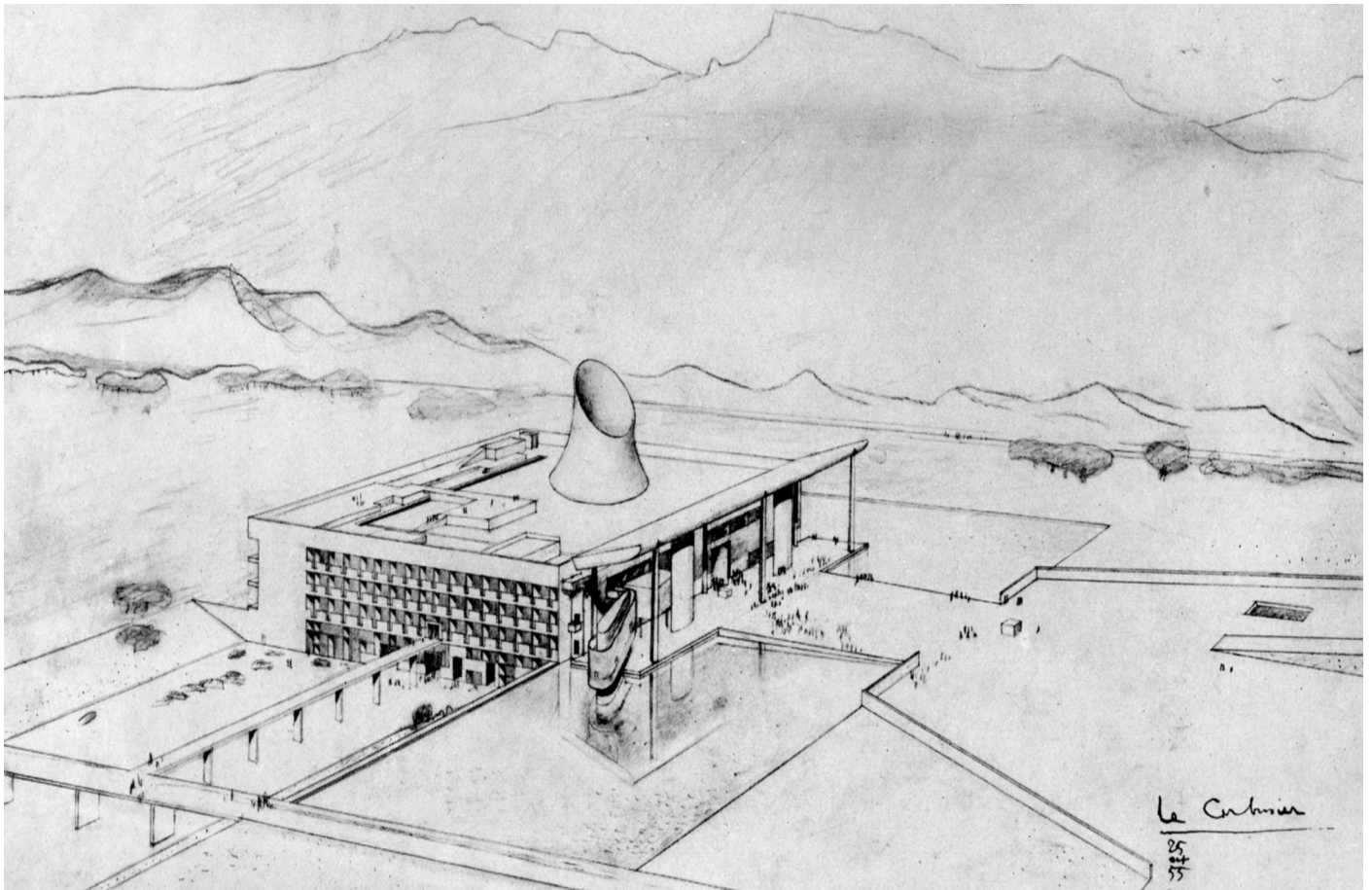


IN CORBUSIER'S POST-WWII CITY, THE IDEAS OF OUR MEDIUM ARE PRESENT BUT USED IN SUCH A WAY (CORBUSIER'S) THAT THEY ARE REFUSED ANY URBANISTIC EMPLOYMENT.

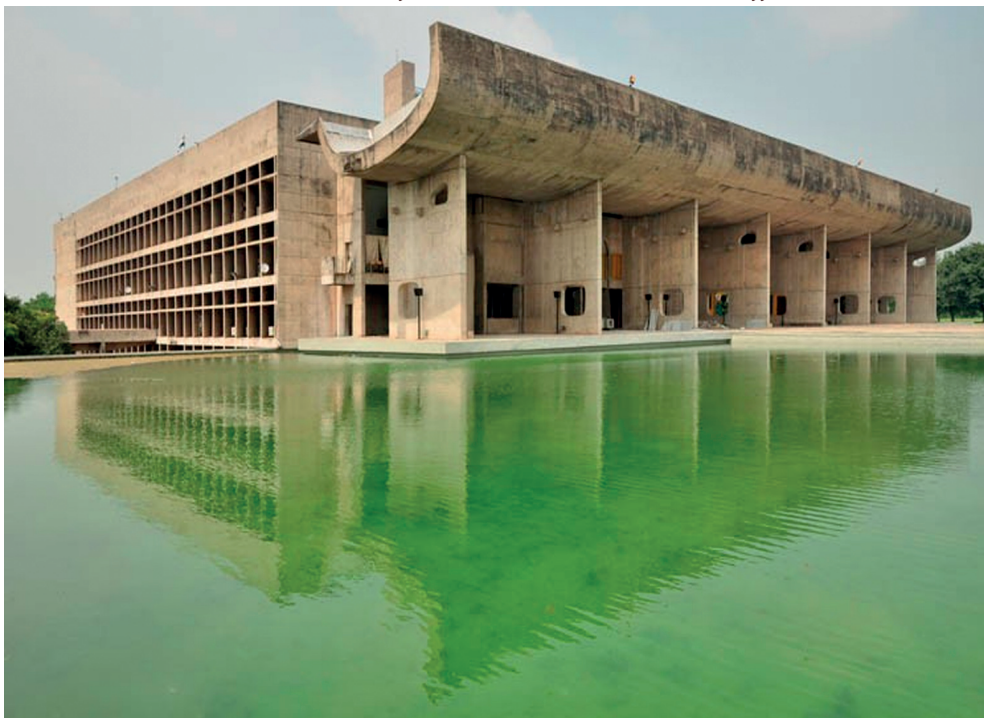
Corbusier's Architecture, as I argued in Lectures Eight: "Denial of Deco", and Twenty-Six, 'Back to the Beginning' were motivated by the self-hatred of his failure to be the successful interior decorator that was his employment until his mid-thirties..

Corbusier's hatred of the Architecture of the Parisian Beaux-Arts was revealed, as I showed in Lecture Two, '6th Order', derived from its ability to deploy the decorative powers of "The Rome of Horrors". Yet it is precisely these powers, whatever the levels of taste and puerility of narrative, that enabled the Post-Renaissance Western city to attract the permanent residence of its citizens, as the French still put it: "au centre".

What more evidence than Chandigarh is required to prove that it is precisely the failure of 20C Architecture, led by geniuses of the order of Corbusier, to reform and revive the iconic surfaces of Architecture that has led to the entire collapse of the urban lifespaces, the medium of Architecture, and the media of 'Art'. Can one even avoid the conclusion that it has been the selfish refusal of Architects to allow painters and sculptors to overshadow the Architects merely haptically mechanical labours of spatial subdivision that has ruined the human lifespaces?



The top temperatures are never less than 30 °C during the July and August Monsoon rains. June can exceed 40 °C. Corbusier was a 'great "form-giver"', but his urbanistic talent was non-existent. The huge empty spaces have become unkempt and sprout inconsequential trees. Much of it is now hot asphalt car parking. There is no shelter from crime, sandstorms, sun or rain. Even his famous raw concrete is now afflicted with masses of ugly black mouldy algae.



The Buildings of the Capitol are entirely separated from the body of the city itself. Corbusier placed his Capitol far enough away to ensure that, like the anti-populist post-WWII, re-developers of Los Angeles, only the 'wheeled' citizen would have access. Corbusier's huge plazas exhibit almost no human occupants. Those who do venture out on their unkempt cement surfaces find no shelter from the sandstorms, rain, baking sun and unpredictable gusts of wind - let alone cafes for the inner man or toilets likewise. There are none of Jane Jacob's "eyes on the street". The result is that these 'plazas of the people' are fenced in chain-link and patrolled by armed guards.

The Portico of the Palace of the Lawmakers proffers no goddesses in gilded chitons. More's the pity as they abound in India and might be found, with some educated invention, a role somewhat less patronising than Corbusier's (begging-bowl) Open Hand. Corbusier's pediment rests, like a beached hull, far above the algae-green Ocean. It appears magnificently pregnant. But with what Cargo? The columns of his Portico are equally nauticalised fins, but mysteriously holed. None of the iconic culture of Architecture is actually renewed. Nor is any contact made with India.

BUT THAT IS ONLY THEIR SUPERFICIAL INHUMANITY.



Corbusier often used vehicular icons for his powerful semantic referents. We can legitimately 'read' his portico as the hull of a ship. Is this not, then, a modernisation of the 'flying', pedimental, Aetos? In frontal perspective it also carries a 'Pyra' that sheds light into one of the two assembly-chambers. Is this not a transposition of a coffer with its gilded rosette of cargo-ed 'illumination'? The cooling tower is the skylight to the larger chamber. It even sports machines that track the sun and moon. Of all the major 20C Architects, Corbusier was by far the most able to reconceive and translate the iconic capabilities of Architecture. Of the columns supporting the Portico we must not expect too much, the column is still taboo! But placed-off-centre we see some colour. This is the main door. Its character is the key to unlock the secret of Corbusier's ultimate failure to re-animate the capabilities of Architecture. Corbusier's main doors, uniquely, are huge pieces of wall that swing open. We have already discussed in Lecture Five: 'Babuino' how an iconically-engineered surface and even an iconically-engineered city, can 'dissolve' solid walls and overbuilt cities. So why 'dissolve' a piece of wall (a door) through which one can, in any case, walk and make disappear? As so often, Corbusier intuitively, yet fails use, the critical Architectural devices.

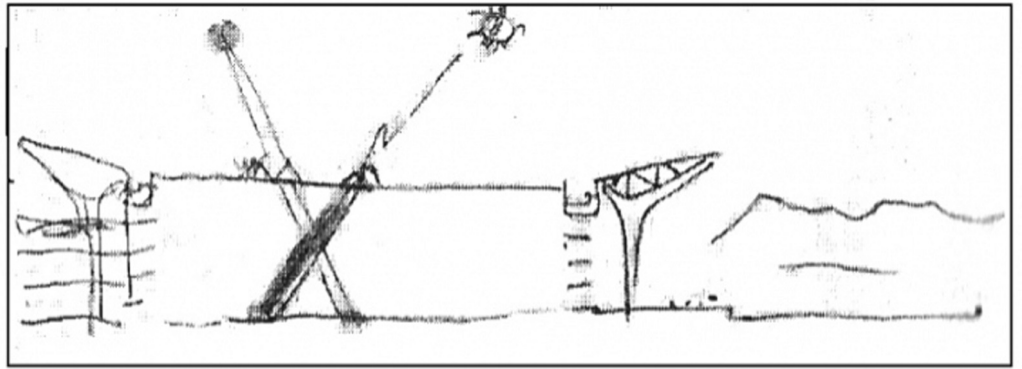


Corbusier began by writing intelligently. Then he studied advertising. He found more effect could be obtained by proposing a Radical Positivism. Here he becomes the prisoner of his propaganda. Are these positivist machines or conceptually-liberating symbols?

The really anthropophobic aspect of these buildings – common to all of Corbusier's work, is the way that he achieves a profound understanding of Architecture, while, at the same time, ensuring that it cannot fulfil its intellectual purpose. This was to cargo ideas into the quotidian livespace so that they could be epiphanically reified so as to render it fit for occupation by the talking, thinking animal.

For what do we see, above, emerging from the 'hull' of his voyaging portico, if it is not a 'Pyra'! Is this the Cone of Hestia containing the Light of a New Foundation? For what is it also, in practical terms, but a rooflight to one of the Parliamentary Assemblies!

And what is the roof-scape upon the truncated cone to its right (again seen above). He has designed them as engines admitting the lights of the Sun and Moon. Do they actually track the position of the celestial bodies? Are their rites enacted in some place that employ these machines? Have they been built (for like everything in Chandigarh the level of finish is 'rough'), with sufficient celestial accuracy?



Dans le Palais de l'Assemblée: possibilité de fêtes cosmiques, la lune, le soleil

These are the irrelevant questions that come to mind.

I say 'irrelevant' because Corbusier's interest in these objects was not 'mechanical'. It was symbolic and semantic - a fact revealed by his generative esquisse above. He hopes that the penetration of the light from these celestial bodies would accompany 'fetes cosmiques'.

The sketch shows that Corbusier's huge portico like the equally 'aerofoil' roof at Ronchamps, addresses no throng of Citizens (unless they can 'walk on water'). The 'audience' of the Portico (always, traditionally the locus of interface between Ruler (of even the elected) and the Ruled) are, here, the Podular Hills, The 'pediment' of this early sketch is clearly an 'Aetos', that is to say a 'wing' - here updated to an aerofoil section (albeit reversed). Corbusier understands the 'cultural load' that Banham despises (did Banham even know where to locate it?). But how is 'the load' to be understood? How is it to be explicated and translated into thought? Corbusier's 'Festivals' are devoid of human celebrants, especially outside. How are they performed on the inside of his magnificent buildings? Corbusier, with the literalism typical of the Positivist 20C must accompany an Idea with an Action. But why? Is thought not the quintessential human 'act'?

As Ricoeur says: "The symbol gives rise to thought?" Is that not enough?

There are two answers. The first is that Corbusier could never bring himself to accept that the medium of 'decoration', which he had failed to even master at the level of the inter-war Moderne, could be the secret of an intellectually reinvigorated Architecture. Indeed, as reported in Lecture Eight: "Deco Denied", Corbusier said that the graphical marvels of Cubism were admirable "because they meant nothing". The second was that he had become world-famous by inventing a New Architecture whose symbolic power was intuited by everyone even though its 'sense' was never coherently explicated - either by himself or the Literati. Why should he then turn back, as he might see it, to the 'proscenium frame' (of an 'Order'), needed to reify ideas through a 'perspectivisation' - even though this could now be effected by the new multi-point geometry of Cubism.

Ironically, for the 20C's most famous Architect, Corbusier's symbols lacked the 'Architecture' needed to conjure their epiphanic reification. His recourse to nailing them onto his giant centre-hinged doors tells us all we need to know about his own lack of confidence in his iconoplastic engineering. Why use these powerful, thought-provoking icons on a piece of wall that 'vanishes' anyway by the mere push of a sad little finger? This is hardly going to evoke 'Shock and Awe' in the shades of Architects past.



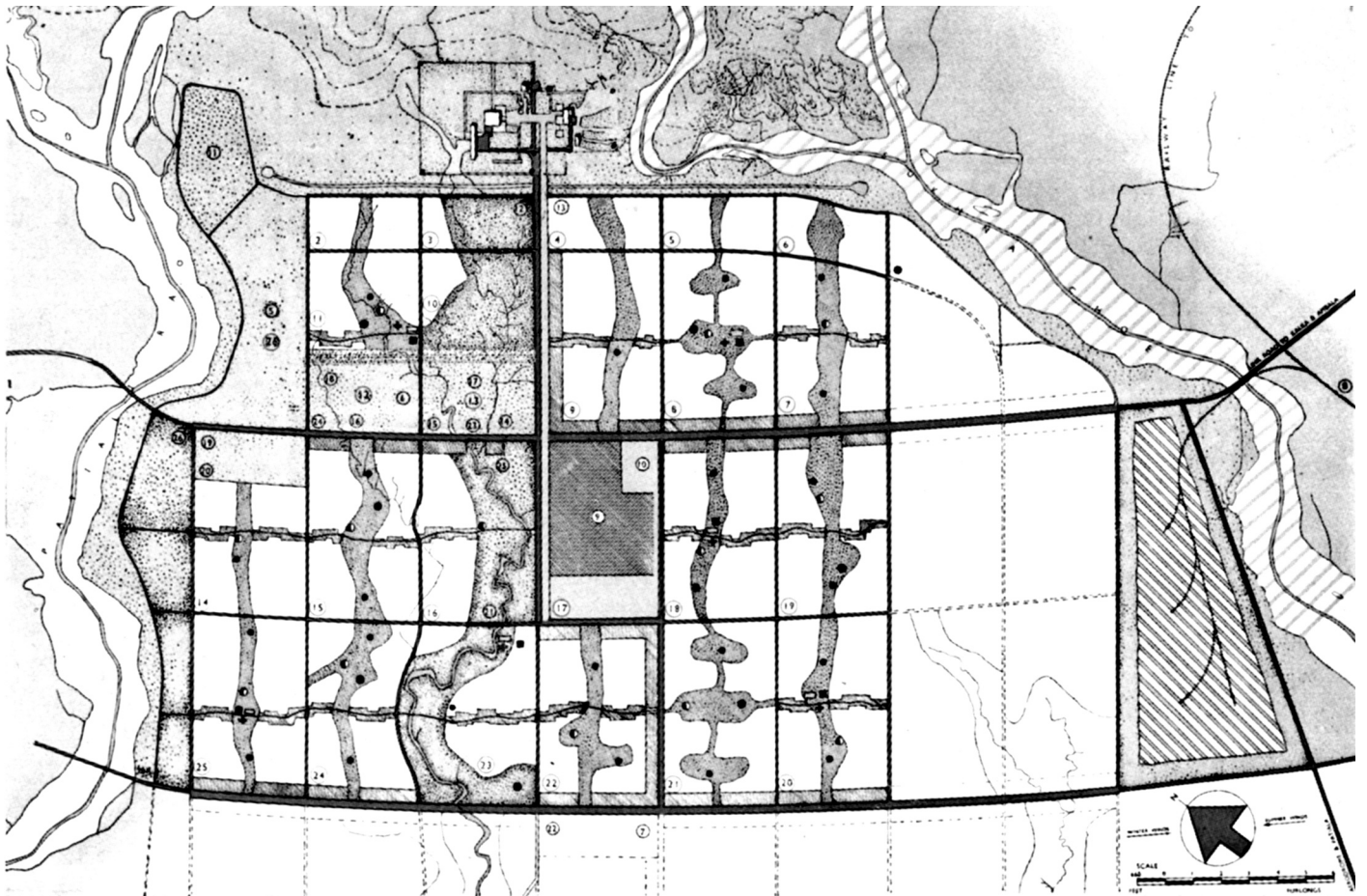
This pulped vomit was Corbusier's gift to the superb building craftsmen of India. These wonderful artisans, under the inspired leadership of Mitchell Krites, A Sanskrit Scholar from Chicago, rose magnificently to the challenge of carving and inlaying, fifty years after Chandigarh, the inlaid marble decorations and stone ornaments of the huge Mosques of the Muslim Oil States. Nobody except bloody-minded Existentialists, cindered by WWII, needed this purging of the trash that was Fin-de-Siecle European Decorative Art. The newly-independent India never needed this 'politique du pire' of Western iconic dross. Can one wonder that ageing Indians look back with regret to the sterile iconics of Lutyens? Surely this will teach Indians to stand on their own feet, resting upon the lively fertility of their own iconic culture.



Nor are the syntactic inventions of this graphic particularly compelling. Corbusier himself has done much better things. The annual trajectories of the sun are drawn above a marine band. They occupy the upper half and are hardly a major semantic illumination for the Hindu mind. The 'submarine' lower half is more intriguing. It is centred on a 'tree' with tridentine branches on which settle white doves. The syntax is more that of Matisse than Picasso, which makes the colours of the enamelled steel panels tend to the 'beau' rather than the 'jolie laide'. To the far left of the tree is a vulture, known locally as a 'kite'. These interminably circle the plains of India. It flies over a desert on which stands a Red Man without the upraised arm of his 'Modulor' brother. A river flows over a turtle and a snake, passing by a 'Brahmin Bull'. To the tree's right a monsoon cloud drops rain that make three torrents, rather than the five of the Pun(panch=5)jab. A milkmaid (perhaps one of Krishna's 'gopis') attends to a large animal like an outsize goat. It's an iconic travelogue - not a work of Art. The syntax is analytic-taxonomic rather synthetic-dramatic. If it is intended to prepare the cognisance of the visitor for the interior than a critical figure is lacking- that of the magnificent hypostylar 'forest' of (mushroom-head) columns - sign of Infinitude.

Yet Corbusier spent the best hours of every day (the earliest) either painting on his own or collaborating with the sculptor Savina. He called this activity "research". It was intended to inspire his Architecture, as well as, if one may dare use the word, its decoration. This 'research' created graphics and sculptures that, while not up to the best of the 20C's fine artists, were better than those of any other mid-20C Architect.

Corbusier's Architecture was founded on the premise that "decoration was superfluous to a meaningless medium". Yet he was obliged to spend his freshest energies playing with the most powerful symbols that he knew, and in a mainly graphical, 'decorative' medium, so as to transpose their iconic felicities to the gross forms of his buildings. Only in this way could he ensure that they would continue to project the iconic force that made them so attractive!

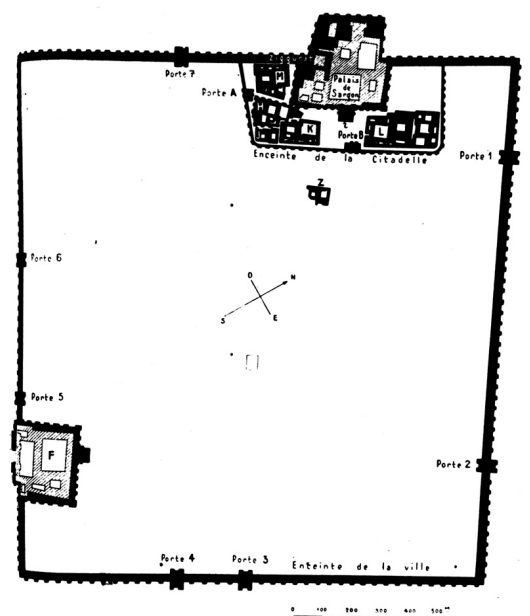


The purpose of a City's Monuments, as we suggested on page one of Lecture One, is to cast an Architectural lustre over her lesser buildings. This is best done if they form an integral part of the City. Corbusier's Capitol is removed from the body of Chandigarh's grid of building-plots. He spurns their embrace. It took a Swiss Visionary to reduce the political payoff of the French Revolution's Beaux Arts city-planning to this dull Realtor's 'Subdivision Sell-Off'.

Corbusier saw his life, as did the critics, as an heroic struggle against 'Academic' ignorance. With the hindsight of half a century the tragic 'heroism' may also be awarded to the decades of uninventiveness that the world had to suffer in the face of his ultimately sterile genius. For it is surely apparent now that the progression from his work to that of Gehry is direct. Gehry celebrates the 'dumbness' but without the 'tragic' sense of an Architect who knew what Architecture was, but could not render it effective. With Gehry there is no 'tragedy' - only, as we examined in Lecture 24: 'Demolition Derby', a limp, self-inflicted, all-American suicide.

Bereft of the Executive component of its 'Place des Pouvoirs' and also of its Nymphaeum/Source 'topos-of-the-Spirit', which Hebrard inscribed for Thessaloniki, Corbusier, by detaching his Capitol rendered this City merely a headless 'body of physical commerce'.

The City Plan shows how the Capitol is to the City of Chandigarh as any ancient fortification or palace has been, from time immemorial, to the City that it overawes and subjugates. Apart from this retrograde topology the City-Design is a mere camp. It is designed, as was Radburn and the British New Towns, to substitute bicycle parkways and high-speed roads for urban streets. Its CBD is a slab of real-estate at its centre. 'Hand-working' is displaced to the Eastern boundary so as to avoid its smelly breezes. Nothing in this plan speaks of either a burgeoning democratic citizenship or a future that is more than the bungalow Anglo suburbanism confirmed in India by the Raj. Corbusier was repelled by the latter. But what could he do to combat it except run away into his deliberately distanced, country-house, 'capitol'?



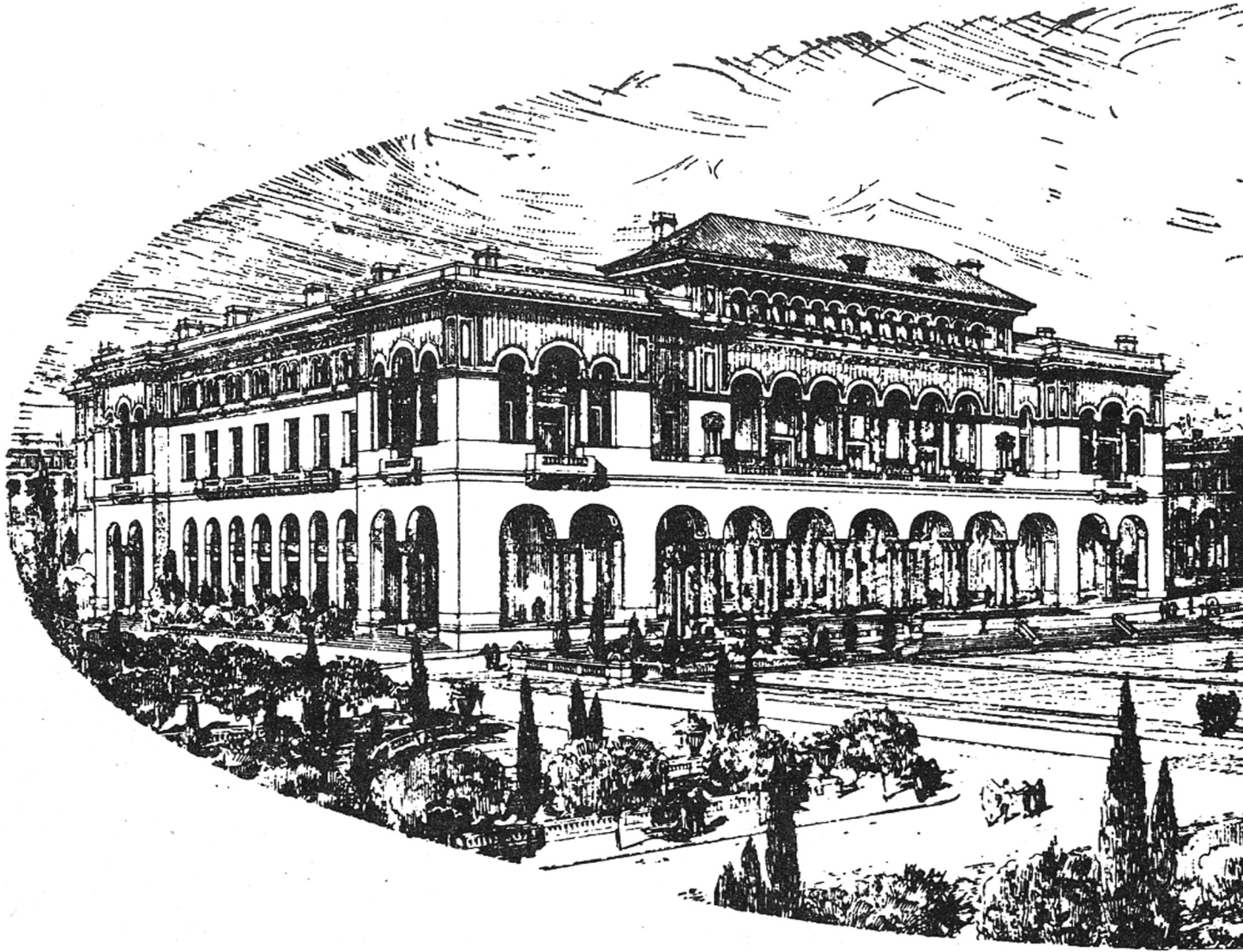
Plan of the walls of the ancient city of Sargon. Dar-Scharrukin, now Khorsabad shows the Palace half in and half out of the city walls. This position, which is that of Corbusier's Capitol, allowed the 'power' of the City to both enter it and to exit it without the hindrance of its Citizens. It is the geography of a tyrant whose power does not arise from the consent of the Citizen.

The best one can say, for Corbusier, is that the Chandigarh City Plan was not his. Lutyens made a plan for Delhi that failed the 'democratic test'. But one may expect that of Anglo culture. Corbusier's failure is sadder, because one expected more from his Beaux-Arts cultural tradition. But did anyone from that stable, like Lucio Costa, educated in France, do any better in Brasilia? Corbusier's genius, and the urbanistic sterility of 'L'Architecture Autre', betrayed them all by promising them a renewal from the corpse of History instead of its 'generative genes'.

We can return, then, to Thessaloniki, to focus, as we have already remarked, on the preceding page 32-11, that the Plaza of the Powers cannot be readily 'deciphered' within the otherwise revealing iconographies of Claude Lorraine's 'secretly Architectural' landscapes. So we proposed that, after the storming of the Bastille, the ruined, displaced and locked-up 'Displaced Crossing' was restored from its rustic exile to rehearse, via its vertical axuality, a congress between the 'Above' and the 'Below', upon the 'stage' of the Urbane Landscape to support the political project of Democracy. The Claudian river-valley becomes the Republic of the Valley and recalls the Hellenic 'poleis', its socio-plastic precursor. Claude himself can supply an image of a 'Place des Pouvoirs' that is not a 'ruin'. It is his 'Temple of Apollo at Delphi'. There are some low-key Rustics and a Bridge. But the real focus is an enormous, vastly-populated white Temple whose single door into a huge dome qualify it for the Architectural role of a vertically-oriented machine that is no longer a ruin but a fully active entity.



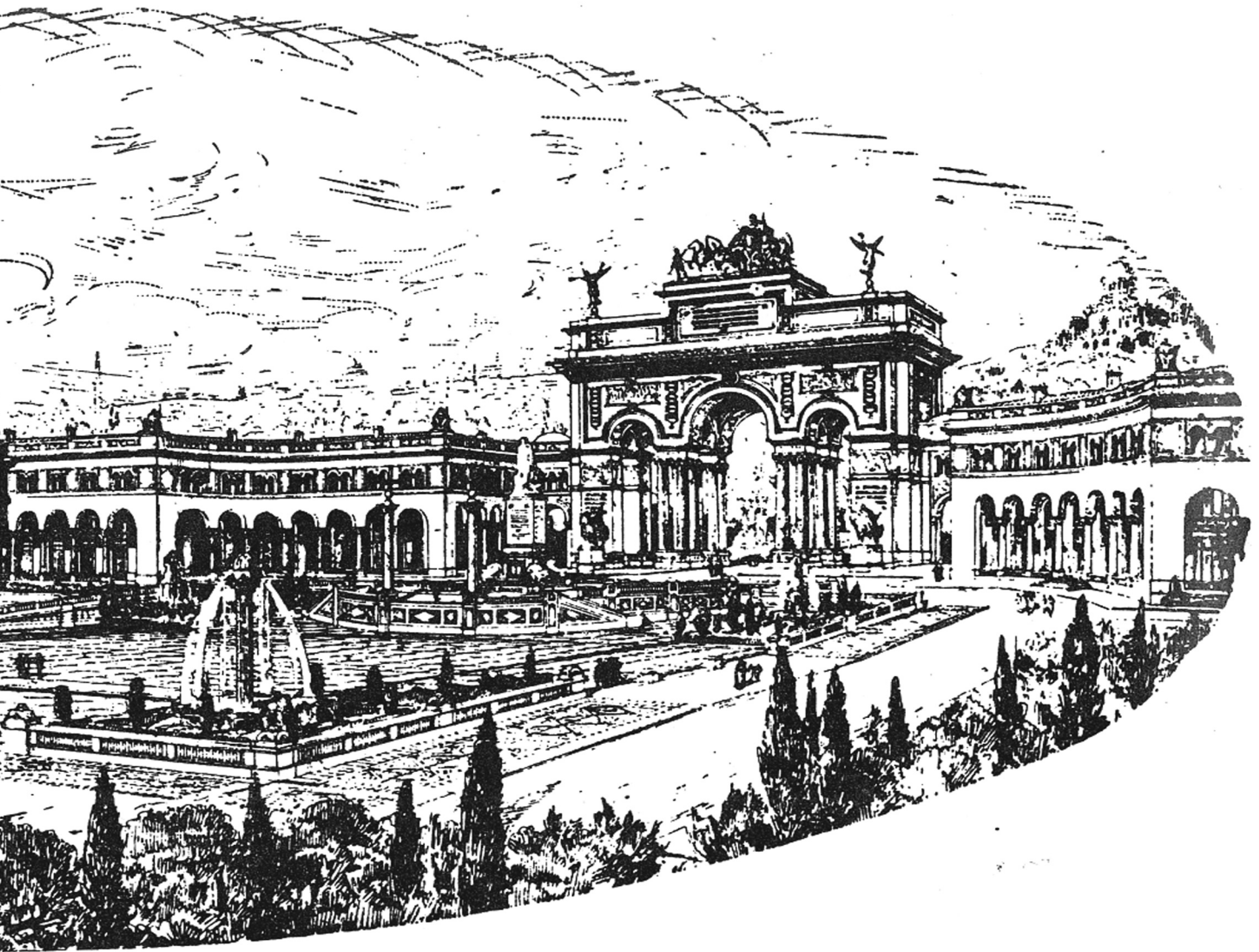
The 'Temple of Apollo at Delphi' is unusual within the canon of Lorraine's landscapes because buildings in this position, far up the 'Valley', tend to be ruins. The Temple of Apollo is attended by a huge crowd. It is even more 'in use' than the monuments in his seaport canvases. It is for this reason that I adopt it as both a 'Confluence', and a 'Displaced Crossing' which, by being no longer displaced into the death of ruination, have become a 'Place des Pouvoirs'.



One always hesitates to illustrate. Architects are, today, illiterate in iconography. Yet, being designers, they judge everything iconically. This unhappy combination produces a regime of judgment which is an enslavement to fashion that sports its chains of ignorance as its badge of authenticity. Such sharp eyes will dismiss this drawing. Yet its iconic analysis reveals much. How can one explain its peculiar scheme of planting except as a premonition of that ruin of public space which marked the 20C? What are these but sprigs pushing up, everywhere, through the untrodden stone flags of a social space for which the new century would soon fear to find any use at all? What are these ragged weeds but the first sproutings of the giant forest trees that Corbusier would prescribe for the ruins of the Beaux Arts planning of the 19C? Yet the Architecture has uncommon merit. It is cultivated. It works a sophistication now lost to the notice of the 21C designer. The Palace of the Executive is centralised on a giant triumphal arch topped by a Nike, or statue of victory, driving a quadriga, or war-chariot. One should not dismiss this idea too easily. The only Western nation that managed a comprehensive rebuilding of its capital city without needing any gulags or genocides was post-revolutionary, France. Hitler smashed everything within sight and failed. London did not even attempt it.

Nike was a Titan who went over to the Olympians. She personified the victory of the 'cooked' values of Olympus over the 'raw' forces of Nature. Although associated with victory in war, she narrates the myth of Athena, also a goddess of war.

To a Modernist, whether Architect or Not, Hebrard's perspective view of his Place des Pouvoirs, above, will seem quaint, if not actually repulsive. At least Corbusier, whatever his failings, was 'of Modernity'. But my argument is neither for Hebrard's, nor Corbusier's Architecture. I leave that to my blinkered profession. Urbanity is more important than both. If neither Architectures facilitate it then both are useless. I see it as merely a fact that Hebrard's was of more service, in its time, to Urbanity. Nor may it appear that this design is a proper child of the 'Opening of the Bastille' as I characterise my post-revolutionary transformation of Claude's ruins of Antique greatness. History shows that Revolutions do not burn for ever. The city burns and the city is re-built. If it is civilised the reconstruction will include, within its synthesis, (if that is ever achieved) the culture which the Revolution destroyed (the 'Old') along with that which it invented (the New).



Athena was born, adult, from the head of Zeus to become the patroness of the arts of peace. Nike manifests an Executive which is not embodied in the person of a single ruler but in a system of articulated powers which, nevertheless, exercises, in the public arena, the forces of the state to achieve victory over chaos, unreason and disorder. Nike driving a war-chariot is iconically congruent with Father Christmas driving a sledge full of presents! Both are the type of the adventitious being born by a vehicle. What more explicit narration of the phenomenology of Kuiper could there be than a golden figure 'flying' her craft straight for the columna lucis in its Okeanos.

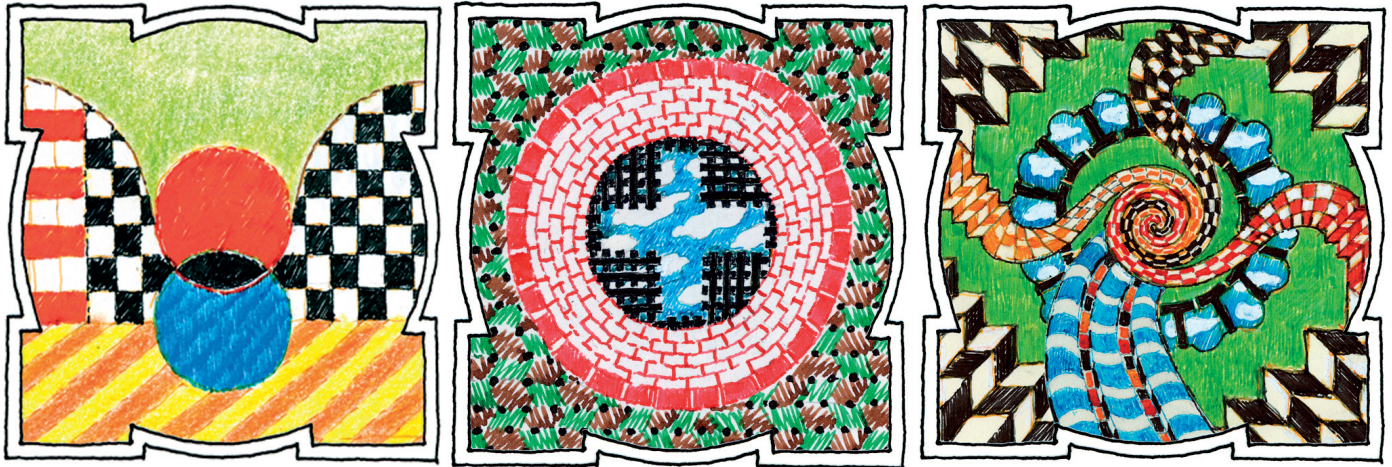
The Palace of the Legislature, to the left, has more presence than the hemicycles of the Executive. Its double-volume arcadings are topped by an attic floor. On the Eastern face, towards the Plaza of the Powers, the upper floors are combined into a singular 'Balcony of Appearances' that also carries a prominent 'Cone of Ashes' roof that denotes its uppermost, 'Attica', floor as a distinct 'Ark'. The displacement, by the quadriga, of a balcony for the agent of the Executive, such as a Mayor, on which to stage his or her appearances, and the fact of a balcony to the Legislature leads one to conjecture that Venizelos had a more parliamentary constitution in mind for Thessaloniki. A whole 'cabinet' could appear, upon their election, and other public occasions, under the arches of its long balcony. The very least that one can say of this architecture is that it allows room for a political interpretation more sophisticated than the late 20C reliance on glass walls to provide administrative 'transparency'!

Hebrard's design was forty years before Corbusier's. Corbusier's was Fifty-five years prior to the time I write this. Both are now 'History'. The Revolution that birthed Beaux-Arts city-design is two hundred years old. But what else is there to study of the medium of 'Urbanity' when today, even in the 21C, the world lives more and more in the mortgaged-to-death, Garden of Ballistics, bungalow-suburbs of Anglopia?

Hebrard's design was a promising beginning for the Place des Pouvoirs of a re-planned town, especially if all the vegetation were deleted and replaced by a few forest trees. Then, for a proper Urbanity, the buildings should be at least doubled in height for a 'place' of this width. But such details are unfruitful. The 21C needs an infinitely more powerful urbanistic technique. Nevertheless; looking at Hebrard's Thessaloniki one may conclude that it was not an entirely bad beginning for the 20C - the Century that lost the idea of Progress - along with Urbanity itself!

There is **one agreement**, nevertheless, between **Corbusier** and **Hebrard** -and even with **Claude Lorraine**. They all of show the place of laws, judgments and executive action to be well **'upstream'** of the **'central business district'** if that is the place of financial calculation, trade and even manufacture. We may also observe that it is, in the contemporary, as built, **Thessaloniki**, well **upstream** of our post-consumerist cult of **'serious shopping'**.

When mapped-onto the **narratology** of the **Christian cathedral**, the **seeming model** of **Claude's fluvial event-horizons**, the **Place of Power** becomes **congruent** with the **dome of the crossing**. In **Claude Lorraine** this is the **dome of the natural sky**. But this is the very **focus** of his paintings. It is the **stage** on which he narrates the action of his **mythic protagonists** - both **Biblical** and **Hellenic**. It is also the **stage** of the **mute, closed and ruined 'Displaced Crossing'** that I have **now hypothesised** as **opened**, **two centuries after Claude**, by the **burning of the Bastille**.



The icon of the **'Displaced Crossing'** lies between that of the **'Source'**, to its left, and the **'Confluence'**, to its right. It describes looking up to the sky, from a deep well, through a cindered trabuca whose centre is opened as a **'crossing'**. This was the icon that was developed from its identity within **Claude's iconography**. To suit its new **'post-revolutionary'** meaning, established after the analysis of **Thessaloniki**, it was required to be **'opened'**.

Both the **open** and the **closed 'Claudian crossings'** are depicted, along with their actors, as **remote from 'civilisation'**. **Claude** paints the **human figures** as both **etiolated** and **diminished in scale**. They are seen against the vast, inhuman, scale of a **Nature** that **Claude** paints, far **'upstream'**, as **untamed, savage** and **'sublime'**. This **'crossing-place'** is far removed from both the wide river in its lazy course between lush fields, or the emblems of the city with its bridge over the arched door guarded by two towers, and the portus-delta beyond. **Hebrard** as well as **Corbusier**, place their **'Capitols'** on a stage that narrates politics as a drama whose context and model are not those of the treasury, the harbour, and the fortifications needed to promote them.

NONE OF THE EVENT HORIZONS IS AS IMBUED WITH MORE VERTICALITY THAN (THE DOME OF) THE CROSSING. IT IS THE THEATRE OF THE VERTICAL AXIS ALONG WHICH THE IMMANENT DISCOURSES WITH THE TRANSCENDENT, THE HUMAN WITH THE INEFFABLE SUBLIME.

Politics, for **Hebrard**, as for **Corbusier**, and as it has always been until the 20C made it a game too lethal to be played by **Warriors**, was concerned with questions that the market-place, alone, could not govern. This is a **politics under the aegis of Dionysos** rather than **Apollo** and of **Apollo** rather than **Hermes**. It is a **politics of the Human against the inhumanity of Nature and the Kosmos**.

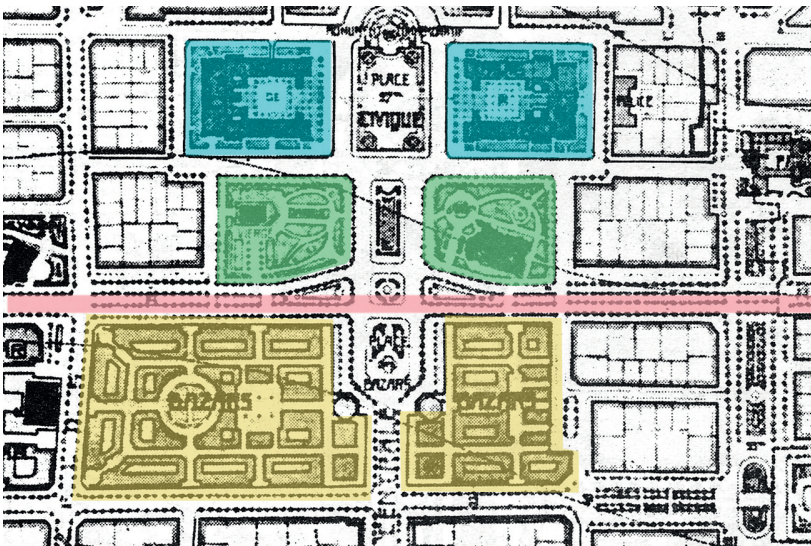
Examining the detail of **Hebrard's** plan of this **'place of the political'** shows that he **locates cafés** under the **semi-circular arcade** that fronts the **Palace of the Executive**. In a way that is actually too small to be entirely effective, this nevertheless **represents the fourth 'power' in politics**. **J.B. Alberti** called this the **'mind of the plaza'**. We call it today, on a **infinitely larger scale: 'public opinion'**. In the small, personal, face-to-face world of **Hebrard's** rational city, the elected and appointed powers could go down into the plaza itself and debate, in that **marvellously theatrical artificiality of the Hellenic coffee house**, where **personality is sacrificed on the altar of discourse**, what the conversationalists of the city made of things in general. It reveals the **operational inadequacy of Corbusier's political fantasies** for **Chandigarh** that his substitute for this theatre of free conversation is a **sculpture-park of his icons**, images better redirected to the **roof and walls** of his **buildings - including the Cafés**.

Not that the **centre of Hebrard's** place of politics has no sculptural **'object of interest'**. His view shows it focussed upon a **'commemorative' column** that **emerges, or plunges, into water**.

The **congruence** with the **'columna lucis's'** shaft of **'energy'** plunging into the Ocean to **initiate the Phenomenology of the Time of Inception**, is very exact.

The PLAZA of the Powers (in blue) was focussed upon the only manifest vertical axis in Hebrard's perspectives - a column founded in water that is the icon of the discourse between the primordial embodiment and the mind, or to put it practically, the body that was always there, or rather here, in Thessaloniki, and the adventitious theories which every citizen learns. By placing a tripartite composition around this central axis Hebrard makes of this 'cosmic' phenomenology of Inception the fire of a hearth presided over by the Governor around which is assembled his 'court'. This composition uses the archaic figure of a 'gathering' round the sacred hearth to en flesh the idea of a society gathered together for the rites of decision-making. It has an iconic clarity which invests the mundane with a noble splendour which is not so much 'out of date' as merely out of mind to an iconically illiterate culture.

Hebrard's Capitol for Thessaloniki speaks of a time when Europe still entertained, even after WWI, the idea that it was possible to govern coherently. Hebrard inherited a century of a French lead in the arts of peace.



The Palaces of the Legislature and the Judiciary (both in BLUE) bracket the Plaza of the Powers. Below this focus the Fluvial Narrative takes an iconic holiday in a 'museum' passage. The narrative slips between two relics of the past (both in GREEN). To the East is a Byzantine church and to the west an Ottoman 'hamam'. Both are set into a landscape of funerary herbage so explicit of the failure of iconic invention that ended Europe's cultural progress. Nor do they manage to create a significant spatial event between them. This is because neither they alone, nor in their conjunction, mean anything to Hebrard's canonic 'istoria' of the fluvial narrative. Finally, below the 'decumanus of the Via Egnatia (in PINK), we come to the giant Bazaar (in YELLOW) that performs so well, even a century after its construction, that supermarkets can hardly be found anywhere in Thessaloniki. What more proof is needed than this that the project to destroy the city and suburbanise the human lifespace lies not in 'functionality' but in the failures of Western politics?

The Urbanistic role of these markets was reinforced by the Revolution, the Napoleonic administrations and the Second Empire with its constitutional variations through to WWI. The Beaux-Arts city-design always predicated huge, and various markets as the places where makers and users met face-to face. The Revolution imposed social inclusivity upon the aristocratic caste. Napoleon showed the military power that flowed from the mobilisation of an entire society in the throes of a proto-industrial urbanisation. Metternich, and his 19C political heirs, seized with the political fear of these events, thrust the West back into a charade of pseudo-Feudal Monarchy which cloaked the industrialising urbanisation of Europe. The militaristic basis of the Feudal cultural model ensured that, instead of following France towards a democratic reification of the original Renaissance project for the Rational State, the Feudal fictions of the 19C bled each other to death in the Twentieth.

The massacres suffered by the industrialised class emboldened them to claim a part in politics that Metternich's constitutions could not provide. It led to the catastrophically violent demise of the last vestiges of the Ancien Regime and a 20C century of terror and destruction that, even today, has failed to invent anything approaching the urbanity of the Nineteenth Century's civil culture.

The next block downstream (in green) plays no part in the fluvial employment. It is an interlude with an antiquarian rationale that Hebrard might have been able, with more time, to weave into the grand design. He appropriates the 'opposed' loci of the church of Sophia and, on the Western side of the main fluvial flow, the Ottoman Turkish Bath called the 'Bey Hammam', Hebrard set both of these monuments within a shambles of a garden-design of the type criticised, and mercifully abolished, by his contemporary Gertrude Jekyll. Hebrard's mistake was to 'respond' to the topology of these remains. The correct strategy would have been to inscribe their ground-plane as an extended discourse upon his generic script. This would make clear that what remained from the past were 'museum-pieces' - fragments from a Byzantine-Ottoman istoria that was never coherent or intended to be so. The best that can be expected of such things is that they afford a pause, a contrast and a relief while Hebrard's narratives draw breath.

Downstream of these two is the 'decumanus'- the street of the old main through-route (in pink). The Via Egnatia cuts East-West across the descending event-horizons of the River of Somatic Time. Its southern boundary fronts the Grand Bazaar (in yellow) - the type of the huge central market that distinguishes a French city from its British equivalent.

**AFTERWORD for the THIRTY-SECOND LECTURE:
'A LOST WORLD OF PROGRESS'.**

Thessaloniki was the first European city to be totally replanned, and rebuilt, in the 20C. Yet it appears in none of the British literature on city planning from Lewis Mumford onwards. Mark Mazower wrote the authoritative history of the large Jewish community that accumulated in Thessaloniki between being ejected from the Catholic conquest of Spain and destroyed by the Nazi Holocaust. Yet even he can decipher no rewarding interpretation of Hebrard's extraordinarily comprehensive replanning and rebuilding. My most informative guide has been the published study by the Urbanist Alexandra Gerolympos who was kind enough to meet me and without whose work it would have been impossible for me to illustrate my 'understanding' of her own city.

For me, newly informed by my work in Texas, Thessaloniki was a revelation.

I found that I was able to provide the Hebrard Plan with an iconography that suggested a deeper culture to his forms than the drily positivist formulae of 'light angles' and 'density' used, since WWII, to disguise the suburbanising ambitions of Anglo Town Planning. I could not judge (though I might suspect) that Hebrard would be cleverer as well as being more cultivatedly Urbane than either Lewis Keeble or 'The Redevelopment of Central Areas'. What was more astonishing to a Modernist trained after WWII was to be able to confirm that Beaux Arts Planning was a distinct improvement on the literal-minded ideas of Hilberseimer, Gropius, Ernst May, Mies van der Rohe, Frank Lloyd Wright, Mumford and ultimately, the great urbanist of the 20C - Le Corbusier. None of the ideas of these savants and practitioners - all required reading as exemplary for mid-20C students - was an improvement on the seemingly simple, yet deeply-symbolic, felicities of Hebrard's Beaux-Arts technique.

I also found it more than curious that almost every aspect of city planning had become, after WWII, more dysfunctional than before!

Moreover, I began to entertain the suspicion that this regression was more than a little due to the failure of precisely the Savants, the Writers and the Theorists of Architecture, to deliver the modernised (and I use this word deliberately) iconics, in the sense of the syntax and the lexicon that the Architecture that the early-20C Beaux Arts needed for it to succeed. It seemed possible that the principal defect lay in the scriptological field. How ridiculous this must be if it were true that the critical failing was at the level of imagination and literacy - that is at the level of Architectural Theory, rather than that of the City-Planning Theory, and the City-Building Practice, which Architecture reifies!

Such, then, were the effects of the failure to 'modernise' Architecture herself..!