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THE MOTHERSHIP HAS LANDED IN CUPERTINO.

Sabrina Puddu
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Institutions always pursue a pedagogical mission towards their members in the attempt to turn them into a community. A community – a homogeneous entity in terms of aims, beliefs, ideology and operative procedures – is not a given, is not a natural precondition. Rather, it is ‹informed› – that is, it acquires form and order – through the sharing of a space of action. The construction of community is thus also an architectural project which operates on the divide between social and spatial order. The latter – a tangible matter of fact – often tends to be predominant and to acquire independency from its original causes. Spatial order is thus elevated to the status of paradigm, of archetype.

place apart› segregated in the countryside. Besides the exemption from urbanity stands therefore another degree of exemption: the campus, as a knowledge-intensive spot and ordered space within the wilderness, superimposes order over the wilderness.
The campus has variously changed and adapted its form over time and space in correspondence to the changing pedagogical ideology and the different conditions over which it was inserted. The campus continuously gets in and out of the city, always keeping its status of exemption from urbanity and always in the attempt of shaping a community-oriented environment. It is a place of hyper-collectivisation whose architectural project is oriented towards

fig. 048

Rendering of the ‹Apple Campus 2›.
Cupertino USA, 2010.
© Foster + Partners.

It is under this light that we can understand the campus. A spatial paradigm conceived as complementary to an institutional reformatory act aimed at defining a new social order through the constitution of community. While the campus emerged as a place for education – the space of an institution, the University, whose pedagogical mission was targeted toward the formation of the ruling class – its pedagogical objective goes beyond its specific institutional statute. Indeed, the prototype of campus – the University of Virginia – participated in the broader project of dometication of a new nation. Americans had to learn how to be Americans: the campus was conceived as a privileged environment to favour such a process of ‹Americanisation›. The instrumentality of the campus was from the outset tied to an idea of spatial order meant to define a place of exemption.
The primary form of exemption of a campus is the urgency of anti-urbanity. In order to be moulded, an academic community requires an ‹other space›, ‹a

the maximisation of the possibilities of encounter and knowledge exchange among members of the community and therefore strongly relying on a vast array of communal spaces – internal streets, lounges, collective services, courtyards, cloisters, etc.
In this sense, the campus is an instance of hyper-designed environment, therefore a major example of an order-giving attitude. In general, design as a projective action cannot but operate through the definition of order. Rather than being some latent condition, one to be brought to the surface through design, the spatial order of a campus is always superimposed over a given situation. It thus conforms to a more general statement about order understood as practice (the provision of order): that campus design as a practice of order perturbs the given condition inevitably by suspending situational relations.

The boundary condition – a fence, a ring road, a vast green field – together with the ‹otherness› of its

internal morphology – the green ordered field of the prototypical campus superimposed over the messiness of the wilderness – define the campus as a project of order contrasting with its external condition. It is a place for a privileged community and therefore, a place of exemption from the everyday aspects of life outside its boundaries. It is a community of its own that demands the need of being together while at the same time requiring a certain degree of detachment from everyday life. It is a community of peers highly homogenous in its aims that is ruled by a process of continuous learning. The campus is a place where learning – both discipline-specific but also charged with a generic component for the education of the human being – happens everywhere at any time. Continuous learning and an enhanced promiscuity of talents are key aspects of the present post-Fordist condition. We can therefore understand the relentless interest in the campus as a spatial device beyond the peculiarities of the academic institution: a device which appeals also to those institutions – including business corporations and private companies – whose modus operandi is grounded on knowledge formation and exchange.

The campus is thus assumed as an architectural diagram of relevance for the fulfilment of the mission of a new industry which depends on the definition of its own working class as a specific community of talents that are continuously called to renovate their intellective capabilities inside the workplace. This reaffirms the campus's success as place for a pedagogical mission brought to its extreme within current understandings of life-long learning and collective learning. The operative procedures of the post-Fordist knowledge-and-innovation-based industry are indeed based on continuous processes of education.

At a council meeting in the city of Cupertino in July 2011 Steve Jobs unveiled the project for the new Apple campus - named ‹Apple Campus 2›, designed by Foster and Partners as an addition to Infinite Loop, the company's current headquarters. The construction of the new headquarters, referred to by Jobs as ‹campus›, was justified on the basis of the company's shortage of space as opposed to a sharp growth in workforce. Yet, it is patent how the choice to build a brand new campus is related to a broader corporate goal and vision, that is, the will to frame ‹Apple's place apart› through the definition of a campus condition. This is essential for strengthening a technological community and it is pursued by means of a stunning piece of architecture. Thus, the ‹Apple›'s answer to ‹what campus?› is an instance of total order. ‹Apple Campus 2› defines a double campus condition, thus two degrees of order. The ‹first degree campus› is obtained through the demarcation of a clearly defined piece of land. By acquiring adjacent plots ‹Apple› becomes owner of a 71-hectare superblock within the suburban condition of Cupertino. A continuous fence surrounds the superblock to be interrupted at a discrete number of controlled accesses. The park-wood which covers the block's surface is marked by pedestrian paths while on its edge some building pavilions – a multi-storey parking structure, a central plant, a corporate fitness centre, a corporate auditorium, and three R&D buildings – are located which are minor complements to the main circular building.

Such a first degree defines a campus condition in relation to the surrounding condition of single-family detached houses in the garden and single-company buildings in the parking lot – the community of Silicon Valley. ‹Apple Campus 2› thus superimposes a different spatial order on top of the suburban city but also in relation to the existing corporate estates. Indeed, it proposes a spatial arrangement markedly different from that of the buildings owned by ‹Hewlett-Packard› that previously occupied part of the superblock and also from that of ‹Infinite Loop›, ‹Apple›'s current headquarter located a few blocks away. The latter is a unitary structure built by linked parts that encloses an interior green space – the inclusive garden for the privileged community of workers – and engages with the city in a shopping mall cliché, completely surrounded by parking lots. ‹Apple Campus 2› detaches completely the main building from the street – hence from the city – and hides it behind the thickness of a forest inaccessible by the public.

The ‹second degree campus› is the main building, the superimposition of a further degree of exemption in relation to the superblock itself. It is here, in the formal severity of the single-building campus as opposed to a campus by scattered parts, that the project declares its ‹Rappel a l'ordre›. This second degree of order, different from ‹Infinite Loop›, manifests a new corporate mission for ‹Apple›: that of the colossal and self-sufficient company that needs to incubate its inclusive community. It is one single building in the perfect shape of a circle: «13,000 emplo-

yees under one roof» in Jobs' words. The sheer size of the building suspends those possible spatial devices which have historically been deployed to achieve introverted and inclusive places, such as the courtyard and the cloister – the raison d'être of colleges and monasteries – or the village by parts – the academic villages as defined by Jefferson and that, following a two-hundred-year manipulation and atomization, result in the by now standard campus layout of autarchic buildings scattered on a green field. Apple-Foster's colossal ring – «the mothership has landed in Cupertino» in the city mayor's words – defines an interior space which, with a 350-meter diameter, does not comply with the notion of a courtyard, that is, a space of confrontation between facing facades. Rather, it encapsulates a fragment of a wider forest and, by doing so, it marks the transition from an outlying campus condition – the external forest – to a second, higher-degree of introversion. Despite the compactness of the campus – one single building – the curvilinear layout of the plan does not allow to grasp it in one single glance. This is a generic space – a plan libre spatially marked by pillars of regular span – that however does not allow for a total panoptic control and that engages in a continuous relation with the outlying pastoral landscape. Reiterating, the latter is a project of order and exemption in relation to the surrounding suburban landscape, in which a second project of order is inserted – the ring-building.

In conclusion, ‹Apple›'s new campus thus confirms the hypothesis that order, as a relational quality explicated through design, defines states of exemption. The new campus is a state of exemption from the outlying urban condition but also from the former surrounding spatial layout of corporate environments. By means of defining a new spatial order, ‹Apple› expresses the will to codify and implement an ‹Apple order›, a quasi-monastic conception of order that aims at clarifying its specificity within the wider technological community of Silicon Valley.

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