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Résumés en français

Changement d'utilisation: espoir

Par Lucius Burckhardt
(voir page 968)

L'architecture académique ne connaît que deux manières de traiter les bâtiments: la démolition et la reconstruction d'édifices existants ou l'inscription à l'inventaire des monuments. Le patrimoine construit, élément capital, se divise donc en deux moitiés inégales: l'une est entretenue avec un maximum de technologie, mais restreinte dans son utilisation; l'autre n'est que tolérée pour le regard et usée. Cette usure n'est pas due aux années et à l'utilisation, mais – nous le verrons plus loin – aux questions institutionnelles, juridiques, organisationnelles et politiques: les clauses écrivées tout petit dans les baux, les usages des caisses hypothécaires, les prescriptions à la construction, fiscales, le Département des travaux publics et, last not least, la crainte des propriétaires devant la possibilité que leur immeuble soit classé monument historique.

Démolition et construction – expressions du pouvoir

L'actuelle architecture néo-académique se fonde sur la capacité de manipuler aisément le code architectural développé à l'époque de l'avant-garde. Les architectures de cette dernière avaient tenté de créer la rationalité par une «épuration» des styles architecturaux. Or nous savons aujourd'hui que cette «scientificité» relevait davantage de l'aspect extérieur. Toutefois la «modernité» d'alors communiquait au spectateur l'espoir d'un possible futur où l'homme régnerait en maître sur les choses. L'imitation de ce code, dans l'après-guerre qui a fini spirituellement en 1968 et matériellement en 1973, transmet le message inverse: la domination du pouvoir apparemment rationnel sur l'homme.

La foi dans les sciences repose sur l'idéologie de la satisfaction des besoins. Ainsi on croit par exemple qu'il est possible de déterminer de manière analytique le panier des biens de consommation indispensables et de les offrir sous forme de HLM. Cela faisant, on ignore la relativité historique et sociale du niveau de vie: chacun de ces niveaux offerts sous forme de paquet de bien-être favorise en fait ceux qui peuvent se l'offrir, discriminant ceux qui sont au bas de l'échelle sociale et qui doivent se hisser encore à ce niveau.

Enfin, la problématique du néo-académisme se dévoile sur son terrain propre, l'esthétique. L'avant-garde avait espéré être révolutionnaire du fait qu'elle détruisait l'architecture bourgeoise, le classicisme «de 1800». Entre-temps, le capitalisme monopoliste s'est chargé de cette démolition, et rien ne fortifie mieux ses structures établies que l'aide qu'il peut y céder.

L'architecture de l'avant-garde devait et voulait détruire des édifices, afin d'en bâtir de nouveaux. Mais cette destruction portait un autre message que la vague de démolitions des années 60. Le vide créé dans les constructions existantes et rempli par une nouvelle, dans les années 20, annonçait un espoir: que l'après-guerre vainquit la répression du féodalisme. Tout autre est la signification des démolitions effectuées à Francfort-Westend, à Zurich-Hegibach, à Schaffhouse-«Pantli»: manifestations de la répression, mises en garde adressées à une génération qui crut par moments pouvoir échapper aux contraintes, il s'agit d'explosions irrationnelles d'une oligarchie soi-disant rationnelle.

Qui détruit des immeubles?

Avec le mot «construction» nous ne désignons pas uniquement les entreprises de ce secteur, mais un tout comprenant le financement, le marché foncier, la

mise en valeur de la construction par la vente et la location, l'équipement, ainsi que la planification et la législation à la construction. Il s'agit de comprendre que ce tout – par nécessité inhérente – provoque non seulement la construction d'immeubles, mais principalement la démolition de bâtiments. Si aujourd'hui des immeubles sont démolis longtemps avant que ceux-ci soient vétustes, ou si ceux-ci deviennent vétustes par manque d'intérêt à leur utilisation et entretien adéquats, cela est dû aux interactions à l'intérieur de la «construction», telle que nous l'avons définie.

Qui entretient des immeubles?

Ce sont les habitants, les petits propriétaires, les bricoleurs, les squatters, l'occupation illégale et, dans une moindre mesure, la protection des sites, donc pas un groupe spécifique auquel la société pourrait s'accrocher tout particulièrement. Nous disions plus haut que la protection des monuments fait la distinction entre édifices classés et non classés. Même la fameuse protection des ensembles n'y change rien: ne peut être classé qu'un ensemble constitué de plusieurs unités. L'édifice non classé demeure donc déclassé. D'ailleurs, les méthodes de rénovation de la protection des sites sont extrêmement coûteuses.

Changement d'utilisation

La longévité des constructions est fonction de la possibilité de modifier leur utilisation. Le mot d'ordre de l'association des architectes anglais, lancé en vue de la pénurie de matières premières commence par les mots: «Long Life Loose Fit». Les constructions ne permettant pas une autre utilisation deviennent inutiles. Naturellement l'architecture néo-académique se rebiffe devant l'idée d'un changement d'utilisation, ne serait-ce que par l'argument que la transformation coûte plus cher qu'une nouvelle construction. En effet, la transformation est plus onéreuse qu'une nouvelle construction lorsqu'elle est effectuée selon les méthodes de l'architecture néo-académique: si avec les méthodes de l'«instant planning» on remet un investissement complet dans la vieille construction. On persiste donc à considérer le changement d'utilisation

comme exceptionnel, comme événement d'une haute originalité. On cite quelques exemples isolés, tels cet atelier d'une usine devenue université aux USA, une école suédoise de conception analogue, la Poste de Hambourg devenue centre commercial.

Ces quelques exemples émergent d'un processus qui est au fond tout à fait banal, tellement banal qu'il échappe tant à la théorie architecturale qu'à l'optimisation économique. Point n'est besoin d'étudier comment on peut trouver une autre destination à une construction coûteuse, spécifique. L'ensemble des constructions du 19e siècle – une époque qui ne connaissait pas l'électricité ni l'automobile et tout juste les balbutiements du chauffage central et de la salle de bains – a réussi à franchir le seuil du 20e siècle et à s'adapter à notre niveau de confort supérieur lorsqu'il ne fut pas détruit pour les raisons précitées.

Mnemosyne

Le design moderne offre aujourd'hui une série d'éléments mobiles pour ceux qui désirent habiller leur futur immeuble trop conventionnel d'un mur-rideau qui semble être préfabriqué; ou encore pour ceux qui désirent masquer le fait qu'un immeuble consiste en éléments préfabriqués. Ce bouleversement total du langage architectural par rapport à la majorité de son public volontaire ou involontaire a provoqué une nostalgie de signes ne pouvant être fabriqués uniquement artificiellement, donc pas manipulables, une nostalgie de signes du temps. L'entretien conventionnel des monuments enlève du temps aux constructions, à l'instar du néo-académisme: alors que celui-ci construit pour 1975, la protection des sites restaure les constructions pour revenir à des origines conventionnelles, détruisant les traces d'époques intermédiaires.

Outre la prétention de domination exprimée dans le langage du néo-académisme, les traces du temps des constructions anciennes transmettent un message autre. Le besoin d'une telle information n'est pas de caractère nostalgique mais émancipatoire. Le spectateur peut suivre l'apprentissage et l'initiative des anciens utilisateurs, ce qui lui permet de rompre la prétention de domination de l'architecture «intemporelle», de sorte que, au lieu d'être manipulé par elle, il apprend à s'en rendre maître.

Summaries in English

Conversion as a way out

By Lucius Burckhardt
(See page 968)

Academic architecture still has only two ways of dealing with buildings: already existing buildings are either to be pulled down and replaced by new ones, or they are to be preserved as historic monuments. Thus our building substance, this most important element of our national heritage, is split up into two unequal parts. One part is maintained with all the technical resources at our command, but restricted in use, whereas the other part is tolerated only until further notice and is simply subjected to wear and tear. It is worn out, as we shall see, not only by the inexorable erosion of time and heavy use, but above all for institutional, legal, organizational and political reasons. The building substance is eroded by the fine print in the rental contracts, by the policies of the building and loan societies, by building codes, tax laws, by townplanning, and not least by the fear of owners that building might be classified as a historic monument.

Demolition and new construction are manifestations of power

Our present-day neo-academic architecture is bas-

ed on the power freely to manipulate the architectural code developed during the avant-garde period of modern architecture. The architects of the avant-garde attempted to «clean up» architectural styles and build rationally. We know today that this «scientific spirit» was, rather, a matter of external appearance. Nevertheless, the early modern style fills the beholder with confidence and the hope for a possible future in which man is the master of brute things. However, the imitation of this code in the post-war period, which was intellectually finished in 1968 and materially finished in 1973, conveys the opposite message: the rule of the seemingly rational establishment over the individual human being.

The scientific creed rests on the ideology of consumption, i.e., the satisfaction of needs. It is believed, for example, that we can ascertain analytically the right size for the package of indispensable equipment for living and offer it as the welfare housing unit. However, in doing so, we overlook the historical and social relativity of the standard of living. Every standard of living offered as such a package of amenities favours those who can afford it and discriminates against those who first have to work in order to reach this level.

Finally, we are experiencing the problematical cha-

racter of neoacademicism in architecture in its original and proper sphere, namely, the sphere of aesthetics. The avant-garde hoped that they could be revolutionary by destroying the traditional classicist architectural style of the 19th century. In the meantime, however, big business itself has taken over the job of destruction, and nothing consolidates its established structures more than the act of cooperating with it.

The architects of the avant-garde too had to and wanted to demolish buildings in order to erect new constructions. Nevertheless, this destruction had a different meaning from the demolition wave of the sixties. The gaps created in existing building in the twenties and the new constructions that filled these gaps signified new hope, the hope that the first post-war period was overcoming the repressive old order. How different in character, though, are the gaps knocked into the Westend of Frankfurt, in Zurich-Hegibach, in the «Pantli» in Schaffhausen: they are manifestations of repression itself, warnings from those in power to a generation that for a time thought that it could escape from their clutches; they are irrational outbreaks of an oligarchy that considers itself rational.

Who destroys buildings?

The word «architecture» designates not only the building trades but also an entire complex comprising building finance, the real estate market, the selling and letting of buildings, the furnishings business as well as state planning and building regulations. It is important to see that this complex, out of inner necessity, generates not only the erection of buildings but also their destruction. Nowadays whenever buildings are pulled down long before they are dilapidated, or when buildings become prematurely dilapidated because no one has any interest in their proper use and maintenance, these are consequences of interactions within the above-described complex.

Who maintains buildings?

Buildings are maintained by their residents, by small owners, by amateur constructors, by squatters, by illegal occupants and, to some extent, by being made historic monuments. None of the groups represented here has an influential position in our society. We have already mentioned that there are two kinds of historic monuments, classified and non-classified. The picture is not changed by creating historic neighbourhoods, about which we are hearing so much: in this case, a classified object is simply a group of buildings. The non-classified building continues to be – declassified. Besides, the methods of renovation employed in protecting historic monuments are extremely costly.

Conversion

The longevity of buildings is closely bound up with the possibility of converting them. The British Architects' Association, in connection with the energy crisis, issued the slogan «Long Life, Loose Fit». Buildings that cannot be converted become obsolete.

To be sure, neoacademic architecture bristles at the thought of conversion, asserting that renovation is more costly than new construction. As a matter of fact, renovation is more costly than new construction whenever it is carried out by the methods of neoacademic architecture, i.e., when «instant planning» involves totally new investment in the old buildings. Therefore conversion continues to be an exception, regarded as an event of the utmost originality. Individual examples are pointed out, a factory used as a university in America, a similarly designed school in Sweden, the post office in Hamburg that was converted into a shopping center.

These are all outstanding examples of something that is going on all the time; it is such a matter of routine that it escapes both architectural and economic analysis. We need not study how, by means of high in-

vestments, a structure erected for a specific purpose can be used for a different purpose. The building substance of the 19th century, a period without electricity or oil or cars and only the crude beginnings of central heating and bathrooms, wherever it was not destroyed for the above-mentioned reasons, managed to be saved for our times and adapted to our standards of comfort.

Mnemosyne

Modern Design now consists of set pieces, available to everybody, e.g., a seemingly prefabricated curtain-wall in front of a conventional building or a façade that masks the prefabrication of another building. This complete shattering of the architectural idiom in relation to most of its voluntary and involuntary public has led to a yearning for those signs which alone cannot be fabricated and therefore cannot be manipulated: the signs of time. Conventional historic monument preservation takes time away from buildings just as neoacademicism does. While the latter builds for 1975, the monument preservers pedantically restore a building to its time of origin and annihilate all traces of the intervening centuries.

While the idiom of neoacademic architecture manifests its will to mastery, the traces of time on older buildings speak an entirely different language. This is not a matter of sentimental nostalgia; these signs can emancipate us. The beholder can repeat the learning processes and the ingenuity of former users and converters. This helps him to break through the claim to mastery made by «timeless» architecture, so that it no longer manipulates him but he can manipulate it.

Old buildings and present functions: the «reanimation» approach

Six theses by André Corboz
(See page 992)

1. «Recycling» is all the rage. Fans of preindustrial society and champions of soft technology willingly believe that it would be enough to refurbish and systematically equip our stock of existing housing to accommodate an expanding population. Our architectural heritage would then stop undergoing renovation operations and would be subject only to acts of rehabilitation or reanimation.

From this standpoint, «recycling» is any intervention that rules out prior demolition.

Restoration covers all the technical and scientific interventions based on a method and having as an aim the maintenance of the material continuity of a building through time. This definition has nothing to do with function; thus understood, restoration deals solely with content. Reanimation aims to adapt a building to present-day requirements. The definition does not, in the first instance, concern structure and architectural idiom; reanimation bears on content.

2. It is clear that restoration and reanimation are not independent, especially as they generally proceed abreast of each other. Restoration and reanimation are incorporated in two different architects, rendered even more different by their training and their interests.

Regardless of the school he belongs to, the restorer on many occasions makes choices that lack all theoretical relevance. In the absence of a functional plan, the restorer will follow his taste and his inhibitions, because the element of decision is located outside his system. The same thing holds for the re animator: if he does not wish to compromise the building in which he is displaying his programme, he will select systematically the discreet solution and will abandon any idea of working on surfaces.

To be sure, one of the major faults of the diverse theories and schools of monument preservation since the 19th century was to have enormously overemphasized the formal aspects of buildings and to have all

the more neglected their functional values, this is to say, their social values. Inherited from the Ecole des Beaux-Arts, this narrow conception has scarcely been subjected to the influence of modern ideas. When the question of the survival of old building complexes comes up, it is necessary to state that restoration and reanimation do not come from two distinct spheres, but constitute complementary processes of one single action.

3. The application of the preceding principle, nevertheless, calls for certain other clarifications. When confronted with the Parthenon or Chartres, we will all agree that content is the preeminent factor.

The reanimation of buildings and building groups that are not historic in character brings us up against a defect in our culture; we know what to do with Pommersfelden and Chambord, but a row of houses in Boston, such and such a farm in the Bernese Oberland, a village in Haute-Provence do not dictate per se what we ought to or can do with them. In a culturally eclectic period like ours, we no longer have any standard by which to measure the respective values of the preservable and the modifiable.

4. If everything that is old is historic, does that presuppose a general embargo on what is old? Absurd. Ought everything historic be approached with the same respect? Or, rather, are certain structures amenable to more expeditious handling? If you prefer, in the event of a conflict between restorer and re animator, must we maintain, cost what it will, the given historic state or install the function of the building in accordance with its own logic?

We can distinguish straight off two great classes of buildings. Works without character or striking position, but still solid and usable, can be treated as «frames» in which new functions will be easily installed without altering the original structure. These buildings fall mainly within the competence of the re animator. The restorer alone has to do with constructions to be preserved as they are, and if need be left empty, because reanimation would destroy their very nature.

However, and this should be insisted on, the great majority of cases fall between these extremes and possess no distinct character calling for either treatment. Is it not preferable then to recognize the insufficiency of the theory, at least provisionally and to draw the consequences in the shape of a dual principle? a) Principle of minimum intervention, which institutionalizes the discretionary clause. b) Principle of reversibility of interventions, which more carefully defines their meaning. We no longer recognize our right to impose an indelible mark on structures delivered into our hands by history completely at random.

The ideal would be not to put in a building anything but light-weight, movable equipment, whose attachments are independent of the structure of the building, not to pierce walls to install mechanical systems judged to be indispensable but to expose mains and lines. The contrast between the intervention that is immediately legible and the given building, far from being camouflaged, ought, on the contrary, to become the point of departure for all the interior fittings; the result will be ambiguous, like the operation itself, and therefore interesting. This implies that the status of the work has changed: instead of being regarded as complete, finished, monosemic, here it is understood as an open-ended problem, capable of being actualized and admitting of more than one solution, thus having multiple meanings.

5. The evaluation of the building to be reanimated necessarily entails a semantic analysis, in which the idea of function continues to serve as a point of reference. The older a building is, the more probable it is that its original function has disappeared in favour of diffe-

rent successive functions. This original function, moreover, is probably divided up into one or more primary functions and various secondary functions; the primary function denotes the specific activity, the secondary function can connote important values, symbolic in character, without any necessary relation to the other function.

The loss of function does not automatically entail any semantic impoverishment of the architecture. To reject reanimation as a kind of treason, above all if a change in use is involved, is to ignore the fact that there is an oscillation through the ages between architecture and history, between a building and the events

that fill it. Architecture, even that which at first sight seems most rigid, possesses a transfunctional nature.

6. Is it necessary at this juncture to point out that any building whatever, nevertheless, cannot admit any function whatever? This is where the concept of compatibility comes in. Compatibility is a qualitative notion and cannot be derived from the utility volume of a building or the amount of income it produces.

Let us observe that the procedure of reanimation overturns one of the cardinal axioms of modern architecture: the container comes before contents function follows «form». The compatibility of a building thus

presupposes prior research into an adequate need for the building; the problem is to find a hand to fit the glove. The ideal solution presupposes planning, which alone is capable of enumerating the installations and the services which a street, a neighbourhood, a zone, a city need. Once this survey is made, the notion of compatibility permits comparison of the needs for the available building. This confrontation ought to engender, by way of a kind of dialogue, the programme of reanimation in the proper sense of the word. ■

Ausstellungskalender

Schweiz

Aarau	Kunsthaus	Die Sammlungen. Tägl. 10–12, 14–17 Uhr, Do 12–14 und 20–22 Uhr. Mo geschl.
Basel	Kunstmuseum	Die Sammlungen. Mo geschl. Di–So 10–12, 14–17 Uhr
Bern	Kunstmuseum	Museumssammlung, Klee-Stiftung, Ruf-Stiftung. Tägl. 10–12, 14–17 Uhr, Di bis 22 Uhr. Mo vorm. geschl. Berner Kunstaustellung II
	Kunsthalle	bis 14.12. 31.10.–23.11.
Chur	Kunsthaus	Die Sammlungen. Mo geschl. Di–So 10–12, 14–17 Uhr Jeden 1. und 3. Freitag des Monats 19.30–22 Uhr
Frauenfeld	Kunstsammlung	Thurgauer Malerei, Sa–So 14–17 Uhr
Fribourg	Musée d'Art et d'Histoire	Les Collections. Mo vorm. geschl. Tägl. 10–12, 14–18 Uhr
Genève	Musée d'Art et d'Histoire	Les Collections. Mo vorm. geschl. Tägl. 10–12, 14–18 Uhr Art antique – Collections privées de Suisse romande. Tägl. 10–12, 14–18 Uhr, Do 20–22 Uhr. Mo vorm. geschl.
Glarus	Kunsthaus	Die Sammlungen. So 10–12, 14–17 Uhr
Lausanne	Musée Cantonal des Beaux-Arts	Die Sammlung. Tägl. 10–12, 14–18 Uhr. Mo vorm. geschl. Charles Gleyre
	Musée des Arts Décoratifs	L'art populaire d'Alsace 23.10.–30.11. 1.12.–31. 1.
Luzern	Kunstmuseum	Die Sammlungen. Tägl. 10–12, 14–17 Uhr. Mi 19.30–21.30 Uhr. Mo geschl. Weihnachtsausstellung der Innerschweizer Künstler
		30.11.– 4. 1.
Olten	Kunstmuseum	Roulet, Werke 1945–1975 bis 23.11.
Schaffhausen	Museum zu Allerheiligen	Die Sammlungen. Mo geschl. Tägl. 9–12, 13.30–17 Uhr Rolf Forster
		26.10.–23.11.
Solothurn	Museum	Die Sammlungen. Mo geschl. Tägl. 10–12, 14–17 Uhr
St. Gallen	Kunstmuseum	«Der Mensch auf seiner Erde»; Flugbilder von Georg Gerster
		2.11.–18. 1.
Winterthur	Kunstmuseum Am Römerholz Stiftung Oscar Reinhart Kunsthalle im Waaghaus	Die Sammlung. Mo geschl. Tägl. 10–16 Uhr. Mo geschl. Tägl. 10–12, 14–17 Uhr C. Liner
		24.10.–29.11.
Zürich	Kunsthaus	Die Sammlungen. Mo vorm. geschl. Mo 14–17 Uhr, Di–So 10–17, Di und Fr 20–22 Uhr Zürcher Künstler
	Museum Bellerive	29.11. bis Anfang Jan. Sammlung des Kunstgewerbemuseums. Mo geschl. Tägl. 10–12, 14–17 Uhr, Do bis 21 Uhr

Ausland

Deutschland

Baden-Baden	Kunsthalle	Ernst Schneider, Icke Winzer, Paul Uwe Dreyer	14.11.–28.12.
Berlin	Bauhaus-Archiv	Das Bauhaus, Bestände des Museums	bis 25.1.
Bielefeld	Kunsthalle	Max Beckmann: Gemälde	2.11.–14.12.
Bochum	Museum	Kennen Sie Bochum?	25.10.–30.11.
Bonn	Rheinisches Landesmuseum Städtisches Kunstmuseum	Hilla und Bernd Becher: Retrospektive Alt-Bonn und die Landschaft am Rhein, malerische Ansichten vom 16. bis 19. Jahrhundert	7.11.– 7.12.
Dortmund	Museum am Ostwall	J. Groth	bis 30.11.
Düsseldorf	Kunstmuseum Kunsthalle	G. Uecker, Zeichnungen G. Uecker, Bühnenbilder Wolfgang Knoebel und Jonas Hafner	9.10.–27.11. 22.10.–27.11. 31.10.–30.11.
Frankfurt	Städelsches Kunstinstitut	Charles Meryon: Paris um 1860 Reiffenstein, Mylius: Ansichten von Frankfurt*	22.10.– 4.1.
Hagen	Osthaus-Museum	Rohlf, Böckstiegel, Morgner	10.10.– 9.11.
Hamburg	Altonaer Museum Kunstverein Kunsthalle	Friedrich Karl Gotsch, Graphik George Grosz, Gemälde, Zeichnungen, Graphiken Scharff-Preisträger 1974: Almut Heise, Karin Witte, Eylert Spars, Maria Pirwitz	26.11.–11. 1. 4.10.–23.11. 17.10.–23.11.
Hannover	Kestner-Gesellschaft	Nikolaz Lang	24.10.–30.11.
Köln	Wallraf-Richartz-Museum Kunsthalle Kunstgewerbemuseum Stadtmuseum	Ernst Wilhelm Nay, Das druckgraphische Werk Sho, japanische Pinselschrift Textile Objekte Von der Faser zum Stoff	18.11.– 4. 1. 25.10.– 7.12. 6.11.–Januar 15.10. bis 31.3.1976
Krefeld	Kaiser-Wilhelm-Museum Museum Haus Lange	Richard Hamilton Claes Oldenburg, Zeichnungen, Skizzen	26.10.– 7.12. 16.11.– 4.1.
München	Haus der Kunst Graphische Sammlungen	Toskanische Impressionen Die Berge; Zeichnungen und Aquarelle seit 1800	17.10.– 4. 1. 21.11.–11. 1.
Nürnberg	Kunsthalle	Elementarform zeitgenössischer Kunst	24.10.–30.11.
Frankreich			
Paris	Musée du Louvre Grand Palais Musée d'art moderne	Voyageurs au 16e siècle Trésors des Musées soviétiques Jacques Villon Jean-François Millet Bazaine, tapisseries	30.10.–19. 1. 8.10.–21.12. 11.10.–15.12. 18.10.– 5.1. 22.10.–30.11.
Holland			
Amsterdam	Stedelyk-Museum	Bernhard Luginbühl	4.10.–23.11.
Rotterdam	Boymans-van Beuningen	Monumenten van Nederland	bis 30.11.
Österreich			
Wien	Graphische Sammlung Albertina	Italienische Zeichnungen der Renaissance	17.10.–21.12.
USA			
New York	Guggenheim Museum Modern Art Museum	F. Kupka The Architecture of the école des beaux-arts	10.10.– 7.12. 29.10.– 7.12.
Angaben ohne Gewähr – Änderungen vorbehalten			