

Résumés

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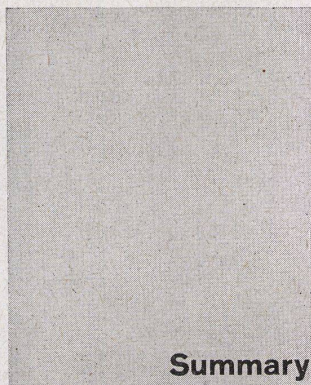
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de l'enseignement américain. Grâce à eux le métier d'architecte a retrouvé un certain prestige qu'il avait perdu en partie. Grâce à eux également, l'esprit du Bauhaus a continué de vivre. Arrivé à ce point de nos commentaires, nous allons devoir nous demander ce que les trois dernières décades nous apportèrent? La quatrième décade apporte un certain esprit d'adaptation, principalement en Angleterre. Pour les USA ce fut l'immigration intellectuelle la plus importante. Professeur Cook disait à cette époque: «Hitler secoue l'arbre, et moi, je ramasse les pommes!» Jusqu'en 1945 rien de particulier ne s'est produit. Les CIAM se rencontrent pour la première fois en 1947; le bilan des dernières années est maigre! L'on perçoit pour la première fois l'importance particulière des planifications à grande échelle, ainsi les centres d'habitation de la Finlande, ou St-Dié de Le Corbusier.

En citant rapidement l'époque de 1950—60, nous remarquerons qu'une nouvelle tradition est en train de naître, tradition qui n'existait pas au 19ème siècle: les planifications à grande échelle deviennent gigantesques: Chandigarh au Pandshab, Brasilia construite fanatiquement dans l'espace de trois années au milieu de la jungle; Gropius construit une université à Bagdad pour 12000 étudiants! Au même endroit l'on élève un centre communautaire pour les étudiants. Revenons une dernière fois sur l'activité du Bauhaus: Le Bauhaus a su, en dehors de ses buts purement pratiques, créer une atmosphère toute particulière, atmosphère qui permit à des personnalités comme Kandinsky ou Klee de trouver un refuge capable d'abriter leurs créations.



Summary

Rainer Senn

The spirit of poverty in church architecture (pages 150—151)

What is the meaning of poverty in church architecture? Without wishing to restrict ourselves solely to the problem of churches, we may note that poverty—in a very general sense of the word—has its definite advantages. In spite of its disadvantages which are sufficiently well known, poverty can become the fruitful soil in which the flower of liberty will one day flourish. Getting straight to the point, we can say that the lack of funds for church construction can have two causes, either a purely mundane one or a moral one, a kind of need for the spirit of parsimony and spiritual poverty. A building erected in this way nevertheless, need not necessarily be "poor" in its visual effect; on the contrary, it will radiate a spirit of liberty, a liberty that is detached from all material trammels.

Our financial means have always been restricted, really sufficient only to put up four walls and a roof. It will perhaps be asked whether this state of affairs hampers the architect in his free development. In fact, not at all: this poverty of means, on the contrary, obliges the architect to cultivate the spirit of the "essential." The architect will be obliged to make a serious study of all possibilities of effecting economies, i.e., it will be necessary for him to have a thorough familiarity with all human needs in order to isolate what is essential.

As each space, whether church or other premises, is truly simple, the maximum freedom is offered to the minds of those who frequent these places. A few well arranged benches, carefully studied lighting effects, etc. can suffice to make a perfect church of the most simple space.

J. H. van den Broek and J. B. Bakema
Church at Nagele (pages 152—157)

We have already dealt with the little village of Nagele in Holland (cf. Issue 10/1959). Several "unités d'habitation"

are grouped around a central area. All the public buildings are situated on this square. Thus we find the Protestant church here as well. In the same area, on the other side of the road, we have the Calvinist church and the Roman Catholic church.

The church of van den Broek and Bakema follows the principle of circular optics. The planning conception on which the entire village is based is, moreover, the same. Nowhere do we sense the idea of a principal elevation. The church is principal elevation from all sides, thus inviting worshippers to assemble from all sides at once. Worshippers enter the church via a deliberately conceived sequence of clearly defined spaces: slender tower, broad court, entry which is again narrow, nave which again is wide.

The construction of this church is extremely simple.

Johann Georg Gsteu and Friedrich Achleitner

Renovation of the Rosary Church in Vienna (pages 158—161)

This church dates from the year 1909 and was heavily bombed during the war. The architects have succeeded very well in adapting their renovation to the needs of the site. Here again extreme simplicity of means employed.

Paul Hofler

Baranzate (pages 162—164)

Reflections on the church of Mangiarotti and Morassutti.

Most of our churches are a kind of closed boxes designed to house worshippers. What does the church actually require? On the one hand, it requires that the architect provide the congregation with premises and a roof over their heads. In addition, the congregation should be able to concentrate on a specific focal point: the centre where the sermon is preached or the mass celebrated. Finally, the church building itself ought to be centered in its neighbourhood, thus representing and symbolizing the communal idea binding together the congregation.

However, what happens inside the church? The auditorium alone, to be sure, cannot determine the total architecture of the church. The church does not become a church until certain events housed by it actually take place within it: sermon, mass, etc. And these ceremonies alone ought to dictate the architecture of the church. The church is a sort of receptacle housing ceremonies, parishioners and thoughts. Any specific place covered with a roof will suffice. Massive walls, concealed spaces, etc. are in fact foreign to the spirit of the church.

For those who are familiar with the church of Baranzate on the road leading to Varese all the problems of modern church construction are patently revealed: Priests and worshippers enter via the basement level (chapel, sacristy, etc.) on to an upper floor, the church proper, entirely glazed (double glazing with intermediate plastic foil). Consequently, the church is nothing but a kind of skeleton. All surfaces are transparent, the general expression is clear and convincing. We are confronted—not by an experiment—but by an eloquent end product pure and simple.

Osmo Sipari

Cemetery Chapel at Kemi

(pages 165—167)
The cemetery was already in existence before the chapel in question was built, which is why the architect was obliged to adapt the location of the chapel to the general lay-out of the cemetery, in which he has been most successful. The logically conceived and obvious "mortuary route," chapel proper, passage beneath the belfry, etc. is absolutely impressive without, however, becoming theatrical.

Once again the modesty and the strength of conviction of Finnish architecture call forth our admiration.

Alf Engström, Gunnar Landberg, Bengt Larsson and Alvar Törneman

Crematorium at Gävle (pages 168—171)

This crematorium is located in a new cemetery. A large parking area adjoins. The architectural design is very well adapted to the needs of the place, the materials employed are sober, the passageways are clearly conceived. Vestibule, waiting-room and chapel constitute a harmonious unity with the surrounding landscape.

Emil Steffann and Nikolaus Rosiny

Parish Centre in Düsseldorf-Wersten (pages 172—173)

This complex is located in a suburb to the south-east of Düsseldorf. Here too we find extreme simplicity in the means employed. There should be cited at this juncture a letter from Steffann to the Dominican Father Régamey: Poverty and simplicity are the fundamental principles of my projects and studies. Poverty is not simply something to be avoided, it is in some measure a duty. Poverty can aid us to reconstruct the world.

Kaija and Heikki Siren

Parish Centre at Espoo (by the same) (page 176—177)

Parish centre with arena between an old cemetery and the river. These buildings constitute the continuation of an old 16th century church.

Otto Glaus

Parish Church at Schellenberg (Liechtenstein) (page 178)

This is a highly interesting experiment: Glaus has sought to concentrate in one place the most various functions: chapel, belfry, etc. Glaus too achieves an astonishing simplicity of expression; the means employed are extremely modest.

Kaija and Heikki Siren

Church at Orivesi (page 179)

This small church is situated near a 200-year-old belfry in the Finnish lake region. The old belfry is what remains of a church that was burned down. Simplicity, clarity, modesty and poverty are again the salient features of this building.

Fritz Metzger

Central Catholic Church (page 180)

Metzger is one of the rare architects who have made a profound study of the problem of the church with a central plan. This church—very well situated on the available terrain—is most impressive and clearly conceived.

Gaston Leclaire

Reorganization Plan for a Sector of Paris (pages 184—188)

The sole aim of this study is to suggest how an actual sector of the city could be reorganized. An exact study of the Paris area (canals, traffic routes, green zones, access roads, zoning, density, reorganization projects, administrative centres, cultural and sports centres, parks and housing) forms the basis of Leclaire's studies. Only all these multiple aspects taken together can make up a real planning program.

Siegfried Giedion

"Bauhaus" in its Period (pages 181—183)

The studies of function carried out in the 1920's were particularly fruitful in Germany. A little group of artists raised their voices in a society in which politics—especially liberal politics—had become dangerous. It can be maintained without any exaggeration that the "Deutscher Werkbund" became at that time the spokesman for artistic and intellectual activity of the highest importance. During that period the Deutscher Werkbund played the indispensable role of patron: it had the daring which was to permit Mies van der Rohe and Walter Gropius to come out with their creations.

It should be added that the period of essential formulation of our century covers the first three decades. It was the first decade that was to play the decisive role after the 19th century, which was so replete with activities, but unfortunately isolated in its effects. What is more:

At the beginning and at the end of every artistic period which can be grasped in visual terms it will be found—whether this is sought or not—that there is a clearly defined conception of space. In principle we find throughout human history three strikingly different conceptions: The first conception of space is solely oriented toward the volume in space. This period extends up to the time of ancient Greece. The second period—that of the conception of closed spaces—comes down to our own times. For this conception the disposition of interior spaces—in architecture, for example—is essential. The third conception which has just emerged is that of volumes in their relationships to space. Plainly, this means that this concept embraces something of the previous conceptions: the volume of the first period, the interior dispositions of the second. The third conception is new—as

we have just suggested—in the sense that it represents a co-penetration of internal and external space.

After 1900 Paris becomes the pole of attraction of nearly all important artists: from Spain, Picasso; from Rumania, Brancusi; from Russia, Chagall; from Ireland, James Joyce; from Switzerland, Le Corbusier. The Parisian atmosphere is particularly favourable to the aspirations of young artists.

The crucial year is 1910. The cubism expressing the new conception of space represents the transparency, the simultaneity and abstraction of the subject all at the same time. At about the same time Kandinsky discloses the cosmic aspect of space.

The second decade is the great period of formulation in painting. This is the epoch which saw birth of the principal "isms." Much has often been said on this score of a flagrant lack of unity. In reality something quite other was involved: The "isms" represent the different facets of our tumultuous age, and all of them contain and express the third conception of space, thus constituting an inseparable unity.

The third decade is that of architecture. The new idiom permits the expression of two principal themes: the dwelling and the housing project. The ideas of minimum living space and community building are very much in the foreground of our thinking.

We shall have to locate "Bauhaus" in this third decade. The period in itself was both favourable and unfavourable at the same time. In favour of progress were all the dynamic movements accompanying it, unfavourable were the political conditions constituting its framework. Gropius has given a perfect definition of the "Bauhaus" movement: institution without a program, in one word an "idea." In detail, Gropius defines this idea as follows: "A unity: art and technics." "Bauhaus" was painting, sculpture, theatre, the dance, photography, designing of furniture, of the coffee-cup and of the entire urban complex, all at once. "Bauhaus" was an idea and its greatest strength, we believe, lay precisely in the fact that it was an idea. A movement on this scale cannot be created either by an organization or by mere publicity. Only the "idea" possesses this unique generative force.

We should like to refer to the conference organized at Weimar in 1922 by Theo van Doesburg, publisher of the journal "De Stijl," put out since 1917. Many personalities took part in this conference: van Eesteren, future town-planner of Amsterdam, Hans Arp and others.

The activities of "Bauhaus" tended in two directions: the creation of new types and the creation of a new pedagogy. Generally, teaching seeks to impart knowledge of the past. Here, on the contrary, the creation of new types was sought after. Moreover, "Bauhaus" sought to throw a bridge between "artistic" activity in the narrow sense of the word and "industrial" activity, this being a principle of prime importance.

During this period certain shops, seemingly of slight importance, began to mass-produce new articles: such as, for example, the tubular furniture of Marcel Breuer in 1925. Another example: the 8 to 12-storey point block is planned for the first time. We know to what an extent this type of dwelling was criticized up to its first realization in Rotterdam in 1934!

As regards the pedagogic methods of "Bauhaus," it could be said without exaggeration that this movement was absolutely international in scope. The method of the "Vorkurs," in America "Basic Design Course," was successfully applied throughout the world. It consists in restoring to students full freedom to manipulate material as they see fit. Many were the artists who criticized the aspirations and pedagogic activities of "Bauhaus." "Art cannot be taught." And yet we believe that it is precisely the instructional methods of Bauhaus that have made the name of this movement and given it its durable effectiveness. Painters, sculptors and, above all, architects throughout the world have profited by this uniquely dynamic movement.

We could mention with regard to architecture the first cycle of conferences on "modern" architecture of Prof. Glaser, Director of the School of Arts and Crafts of Berlin, under the auspices of Bauhaus.

One of the last events staged by Bauhaus which enjoyed an international resonance was the architecture exhibition organized by Gropius in Paris in 1930. The theme taken up here—which has always been close to the heart of Walter Gropius—was