the Thirty-fourth lecture

The 'Handy-Square'.

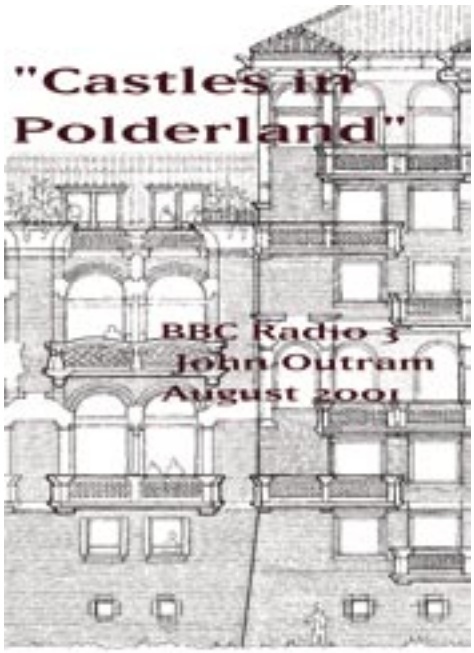
JOA

In considering how to widen the scope of this project: for a true representation of the relation between 'work' and 'culture', my mind turned to a huge project, for over 1000 houses, for which JOA had been asked by Sjoerd Soeters, its master-planner and inventor, to design a single block of 100 units. JOA's site was the one on the far left.

Half of the plan of Haverleij, by the River Maas (or Meuse). Van Beek's landscape-design fractures Baroque order into a pack-ice that freezes allees of trees and flowered parterres into a pangea-illogic 'heave'. The ruins sprout a luxuriantly picturesque vegetation. The yellow cubes were anciently-quadrated city-blocks now dispersed according to an equally neo-prehistoric inconsequentiality. They become walled residential compounds fortified against the irruption of an anarchic Nordic subconscious over which they hope to gaze with a salutary sense of release from all those tensions brought-on by civilisation. JOA's 'Castle' called Oeverhuizen, is to the far left, by the river. I showed a 'tridentine delta' to the landward. Happily, this merely added to the sublime taboo on any joined-up thinking. The actual result, though not yet grown, bears out the original intent. Not only is the 'setting' for the buildings inconsequential, but it has rendered the 'castles', massive though they seem on plan,

I first saw the site, on a misty winter morning, while standing on a dyke along the River Maas. The first three construction sites loomed, like oil-rigs, out of the closely-ruled brown furrows of the Polders. It resembled a socially radical vision of 20C Modernism in which the quadrations of the city reached out into the equally regular landscape of Holland's agriculture. It became a specially Dutch vision when I considered that these furrows, as level as water itself, were all submarine.

Today, as the young trees barely reach five metres, the 'towering' castles, each by an internationally-known Architect, have disappeared behind their infant foliage. The Castles are now as invisible as their 'setting' is indecipherable. Haverleij's 'poetic' has lost one half of its 'discourse'. All is relentlessly 'green'. The day has been saved, however, by the half of the site, to the right, that is not shown on the plan above. It has opened as an equally 'savage' terrain. But its anti-urban narrative is provided by being an 18-hole golf course (in which further 'castles' are embedded). In the twinkling of an eye, or should one say the sinking of a putt, the whole 4,000-person 'community' has found its social centre and Ritual Ground. The fractured geography of the Course is explained to the twistings and turnings of its native (golfing) infantry as they slog-on over the artifcially elevated terrains heaped upon the billiard-table of Polderland. The golfer must place his artillery to advantage in order to bombard the inoffensive turf of the green. Firing his little white seed, as in other masculine rites (craps, roulette) derived from an arable origin, he must, in golf, even sink it into a little black hole. Van Beek's recherche 'landscapings', are relieved of the hermeneutic burden of interpretation. A golf-course has its dully Newtonian 'history' of ballistic trajectories through a landscape as pock-marked with bunker-pits and water-holes as the Artillery-ranges which birthed its military mathematics. But what are we to think of the rest? Haverleij's 'alles' and parterres, charmed by their miraculously submarine birth, have become mysterious to a point of absolute silliness.



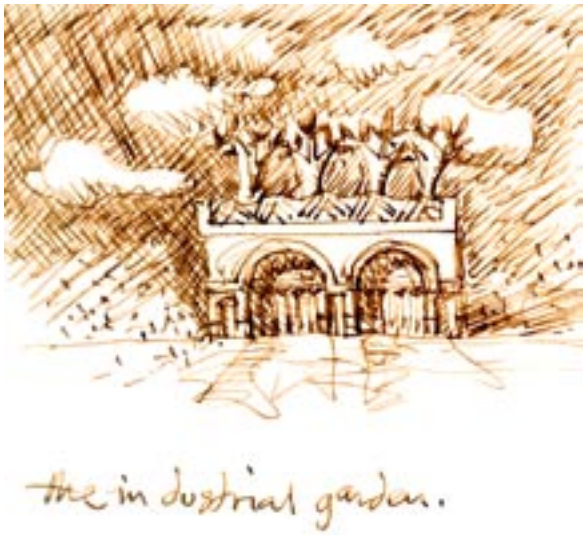
In an interview to the BBC Radio I described Haverleij as 'Castles in Polderland'. If only they had remained so - as I first saw them.

It was hard for me to see Holland, the point of origin of so much that is serious about London's Britain - navigation, trade, colonisation and banking, being paid back with Scots Golf - and all the green-welly suburbanism that goes with it. But it was good to see the Dutch fail their Anglophiliac ambitions with such conceptual heroism. Where in cosy little Britain can one find giant city-blocks, bristling with a lost urbanity, designed by international-name Architects, marooned in a landscape of golfed-out Baroque deconstruction?

C'est magnifique, mais ce n'est pas l'urbanite.

So I thought to myself (for I really liked the 'castle' that JOA had invented - after a gestation of only three days -so ready was it to be born!), "why not revert this to the city-block it obviously was and place it on a support, not of the dissimulative, suburban, Vitalist, Neo-Feudal, myth of Nature, but of the New Truth of 'robotised', but incontrovertibly human, work'? Why not support the rents and mortgages of urbane dwelling on a foundation of commercial rents? Or, vice-versa, and perhaps even more to the point, subsidise, so valuable is residential capital, workspaces that are, once again, inside the 'city'? Would not this idea, if it could be made to work, abolish, at one stroke, the very foundations of the wretched rigmarole into which early 21C life has sunk, with its ridiculous commutings and its overpoweringly excessive transportings around a public lifespace reduced to the asphalt tracts of car-parking?

But how could such an idea be 'made to work'?



My first imagining of this 'garden in a tray' partook of three 'walk-in' columns of my 6th Order. I used an arched entrance to the 'work-places' because the idea of an earthed roof with trees, in the form of a Garden of Eden, was going to be no lightweight 'green' skim of Alpine moss.

Seen 'positively, as a physical project, rather than a pure icon, I drew concrete vaults like those used by Corbusier in the Post-Modern (designed 1937) villas at Jaoul, outside Paris.

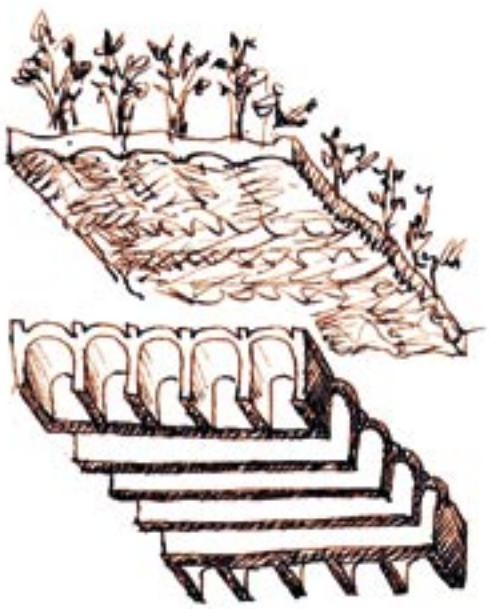
JOA had learned, by now, to approach every problem by adding 'iconic engineering' to our armoury of weapons. I had also seen, on the television, a biography of C.S.Lewis the author of the 'Narnia' stories which my children (but not I) had, long-ago, read, and which were undergoing a revival after the release of the recent film. I had been struck by a scene in which the young Lewis was presented, by his elder brother, with a little garden made of mosses and plants set into the upturned lid of a biscuit tin. The film surrounded the object with an unearthly glow as the author recounted this miniaturised model as the first of what became, for him, a series of ecstatic experiences, situated in Nature, that he characterised as "religious". I recalled Jefferson's opinion of Britain's primacy in the culture of gardening. When I added to this my own understanding of the nature of the roof garden as the the Arcadian cargo of the 'rafted' entablature, aboriginal prototype of the age of Gold to which all civilisations both aspire and take as their originary model, I began to work on what seemed a promising campaign.

I adapted the design for Haverleij, which I anyway liked, to a saner purpose. I raised it upon two floors of 'workspace'.

In this way 'working', whether Handicraft or Robotic, could return to the better parts of the residential areas from which the soon-to-expire smokestack culture of the 19C had seen them, anachronistically, evicted during the late 20C. Much of 'work' is now clean and can be relatively quiet. 'Work' could help to pay off the mortgages of the duplexes and houses above them, and reduce commuting.

Indra Kagis McEwen described in her "Socrates' Ancestor", MIT Press 1993, that "techne precedes philosophy". Philosophy, that is to say the understanding of the truth, must, therefore be suffering from the present banishment of techne to 'business parks', 'industrial estates' and third-world workshops. It was always the function of logos to mediate by reasoning, and narrating, linkages between the oppressive ontology of physis and the too-mobile imagery of eidos. I argued, in Lecture Six: 'Tricorso', that logos departed from early 20C Architecture because of the inadequacy of Western iconic technique. But this absence is now cemented by the increasing disjunction between the all-physical, crinkly-tin-shed, culture of the industrial suburbs, and the all-iconic, 'starchitect' funfair that has descended onto the ruins of the 19C city-centres as they attempt the artificial respiration of Retail-led Regeneration.

Shopping was undermined by the out of town warehouse. Now it must compete with the Internet. My sense is that only the conjuction of working and living, the two functions deliberately banished by mid-20C British town planning, can provide a fertile ground, a "Garden of Work", for the regeneration of urbanity.



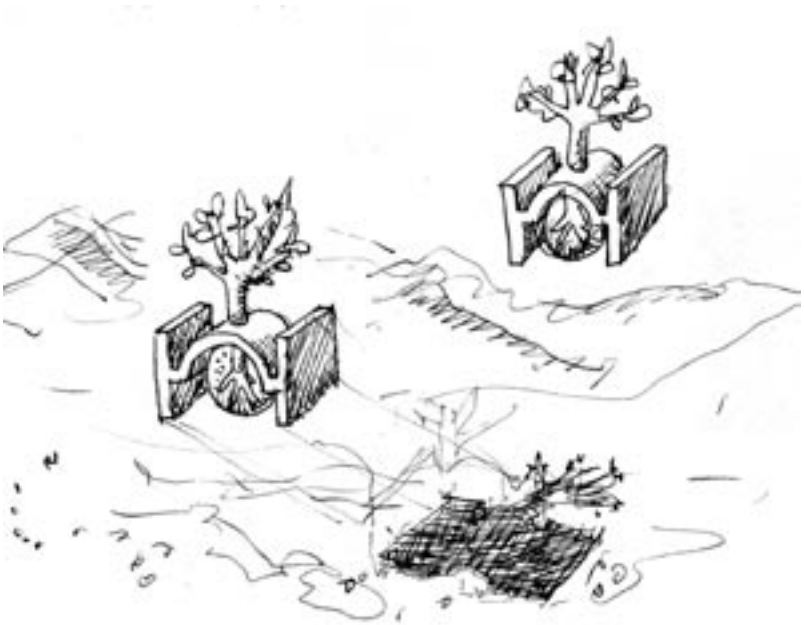
the hypostylar garden of infinitude carried by industry.

We learn the mechanics of syntax while babbling babes. This artifice of language binds us to a symboliferating fate. Mediation is 'native' to us. The fabrication of the means by which 'reality' may return to our species, fated to manufacture similitudes, is the fundamental 'work' which afflicts all humans to a degree unknown by any other living creatures. What more proper than that we accept, recognise and 'symbolise' this role of 'work' as the 'real' foundation of our human(ised) lifespace?

The spherical rootball of the transplanted tree, seeking its fertile ground, cuts into the vault of the workplace.

Here it feeds on the work that supports the 'symbolic garden'. This is the ethical, hence beautiful, successor to the Arcadia that Corbusier failed to 'find' under his uprooted, and, inevitably, destroyed city - victim of his misanthropy.

Contemplating the garden-in-a-tray that grows from the 'work' of man, will satisfy the craving to look out upon a landscape of ethical truth. It succeeds the dissimuative 'natural' savagery of Corbusier's lonely urbanite as he views, like an acquarium-fish, the razing of his city and its planting-over with jungle.



A new variation upon my understanding of the Entablature as a trabica volatus rationibus in which the pediment of the pyra reveals not the solar orb but the root-ball of a tree - the tree of the Garden of Eden, locus of the primordial age of gold, that is brought by the Raft of Reason, along with its fertilisiing 'earth-mound' of 'work. What we have here is a 'modern' synthesis of the 'heavy' mountain of the genius loci with the 'light', or cargo, of enlightenment, carried by the entabled 'Raft of Reason'.

I found that the icon I developed was of a tree whose root-ball had cut, like the giant rotary scoops of open-cast mines, through the rough concrete vaults of Corbusier's villas at Jaoul. It had come to lodge in that foundation of Techne on which all long-lived cultures depend. This supporting 'fertilisation' of a 'forest' of trees, if then made to support an hypostylar planting array which reified the 'Forest of the time before Time began', would transform a mere 'square garden' of the literal sort typical of Le Jardin Anglais into an authentic Garden of Eden reifying that Time of beatific infinitude before the catastrophe of Somatic Time began.

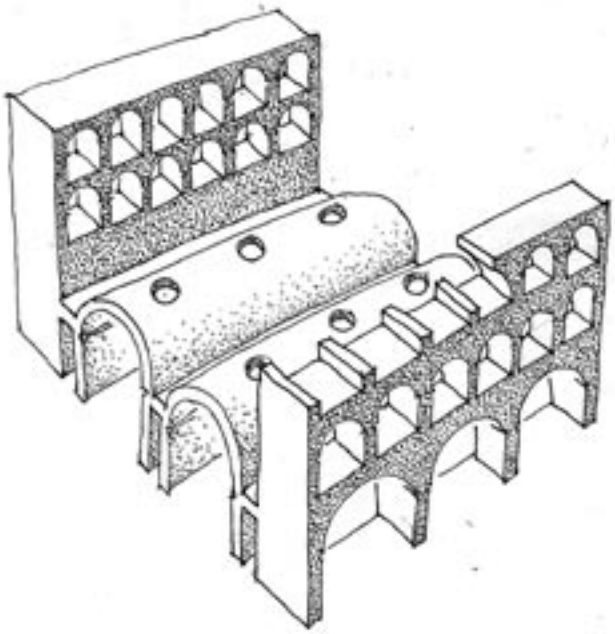
The big discs of glass, which must be embedded into the floor of this roof-garden in order to skylight the workplaces below, would then glow at night, illuminating the natural trees and bushes. These lights would, ideally, be vertical beams with the etymologically grounded meaning of the columnar trabes as beams, baums and booms of that 'columna lucis' which brings forth 'beings', and so Being itself.

The beam-baums of the enlightenment that is a 'working life'.

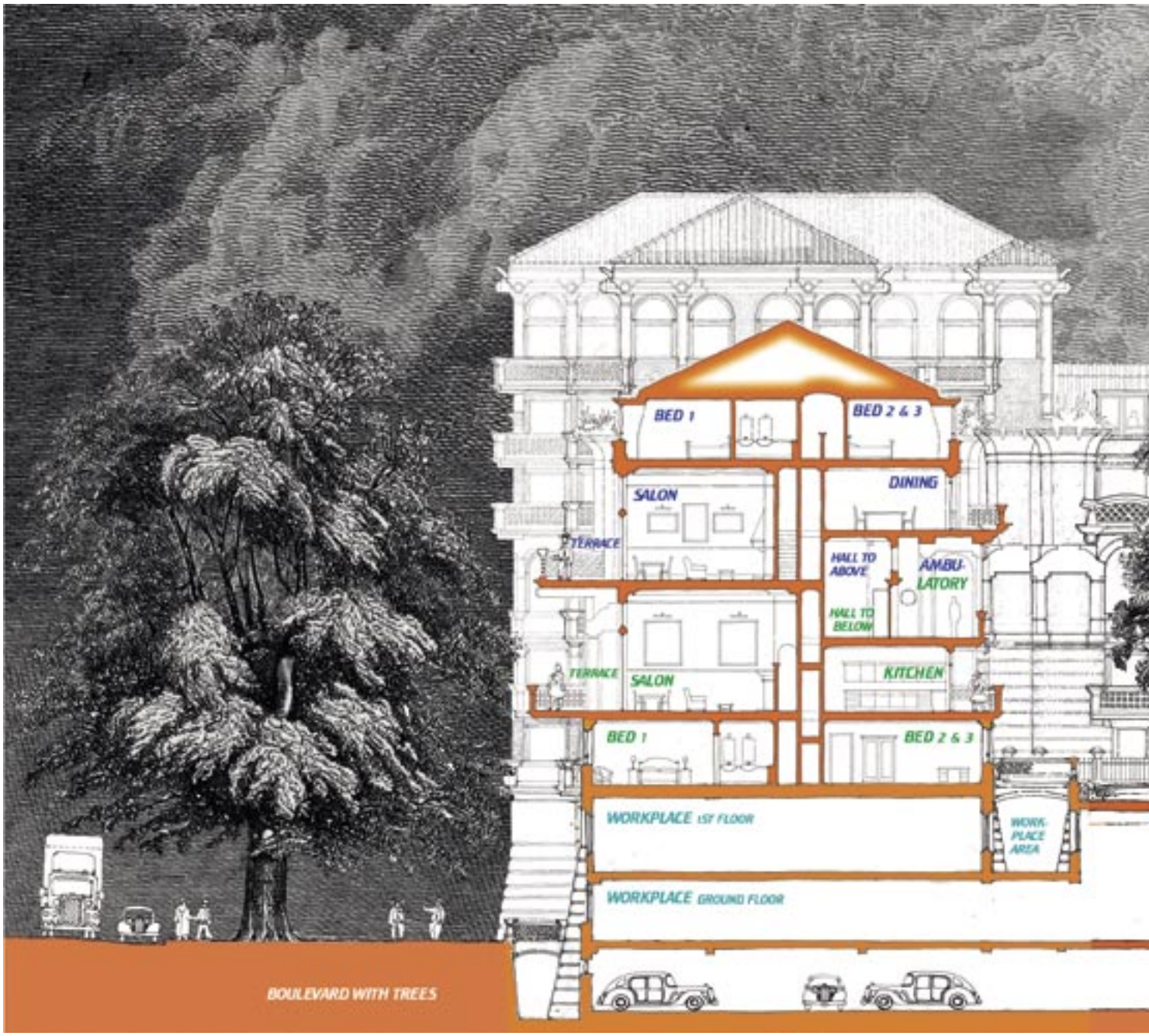
Alternating with the natural trees, these columnar 'beams' will bring into being the conceptual landscape of the Garden of Eden, that Forest of hypostylar infinitude that is the figure of Time before it was corrupted by History.

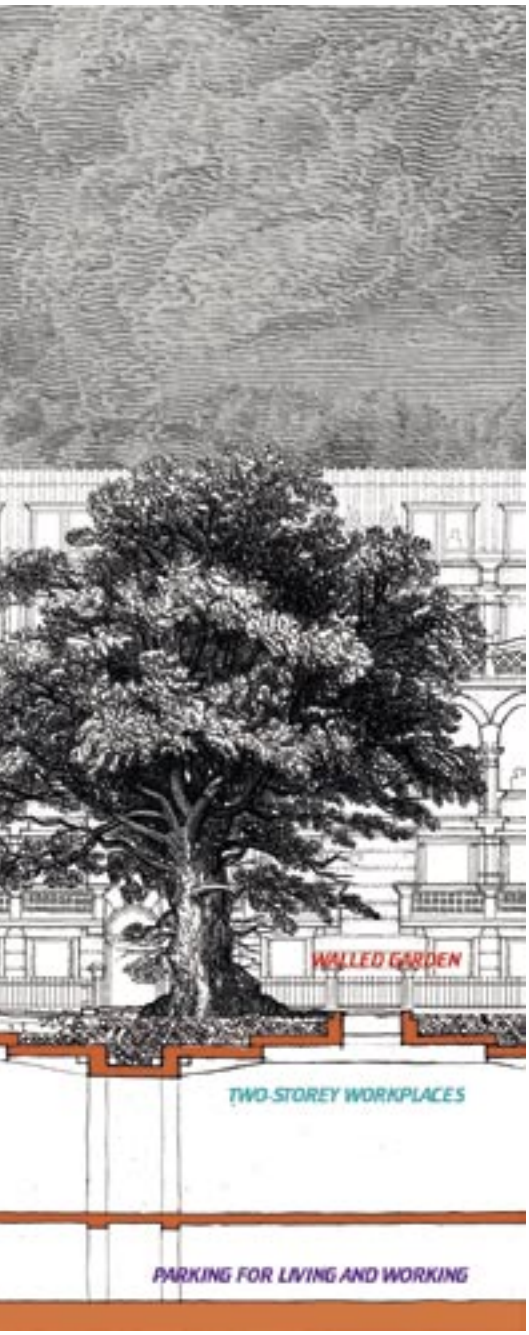
A section through the typical wall around each city-block shows the two floors of workplaces beginning at street level. the parking for both workplace and residence stretches below the whole block. The two duplexes, Du1 & Du2, are accessed either by internal 'disability', lift, or from the Ambulatory Am.

The big balconies of the two-storied main rooms (D2 & D3), of these houses and apartments, look out over the street. The richly-decorated ceilings of these rooms are seen, as were those the Palazzi of 18C cities (and JOA's Judge Institute), from the street. They make the sides of every boulevard into a theatre in which one sees and is seen. They also, though now only single-storied, look out over the internal sky-gardens of the Squares with an equally balconied theatricality.



The largest trees can be planted in the areas of deep earth over the lines of anti-gravity walls and pillars.This will be, naturally, the best-watered earth. The crowns of the vaults must be perforated to allow daylight into the workplaces. These will become rows of 'beams of light' which serve to reify the figure of the 'columna lucis' - completing the hypostylar Forest of Infinitude with the real trees.


BED 1
BED 2 & 3
SALON
DINING
TERRACE
HALL TO ABOVE
AMBU-LATORY
HALL TO BELOW
TERRACE
SALON
KITCHEN
BED 1
BED 2 & 3
WORKPLACE 1ST FLOOR
WORK-PLACE AREA
WORKPLACE GROUND FLOOR
BOULEVARD WITH TREES



This cross-section through a 'Handy Square', reading from the bottom upwards, shows a basement containing car parking under the whole 100 x 100 Metre footprint. Evidently this underground accommodation can be increased. Above this is two storeys of 'Workplace'. Secondary, Mezzanine, structures can be built within this. The space is top-by rooflights that are discs of thick, frosted, glass. This can not be easily broken. It also prevents direct sunlight from distracting anyone doing a difficult task.

The roof of the Workplace becomes an Inner Garden. Here we find four floors of accommodation split into two Duplexes that are accessed from the 'Ambulatory'. The Salons, with high ceilings and big terraces are placed together so as to shield the bedrooms from noise. The Salons, deliberately face over the streeet. To show beautiful ceilings to the street, in the way that they are to be seen at night in Rome, is a mark of true urbanity. In 1991, I engineeered this nocturnal 'splendor' for the Judge's 25M-high ceiling . It is a sight obtainable from Tennis Court Road. Today, all that remains to properly complete the rhetorical urbanity of that building is to install an iconically-literate ceiling (and, yes, an iconically-literate floor).

Six-storey towers are placed at the corners . Here they are all apartments, of different sizes, whose elevators have direct, keyed, acceess to them. But these four towers could also be Offices.

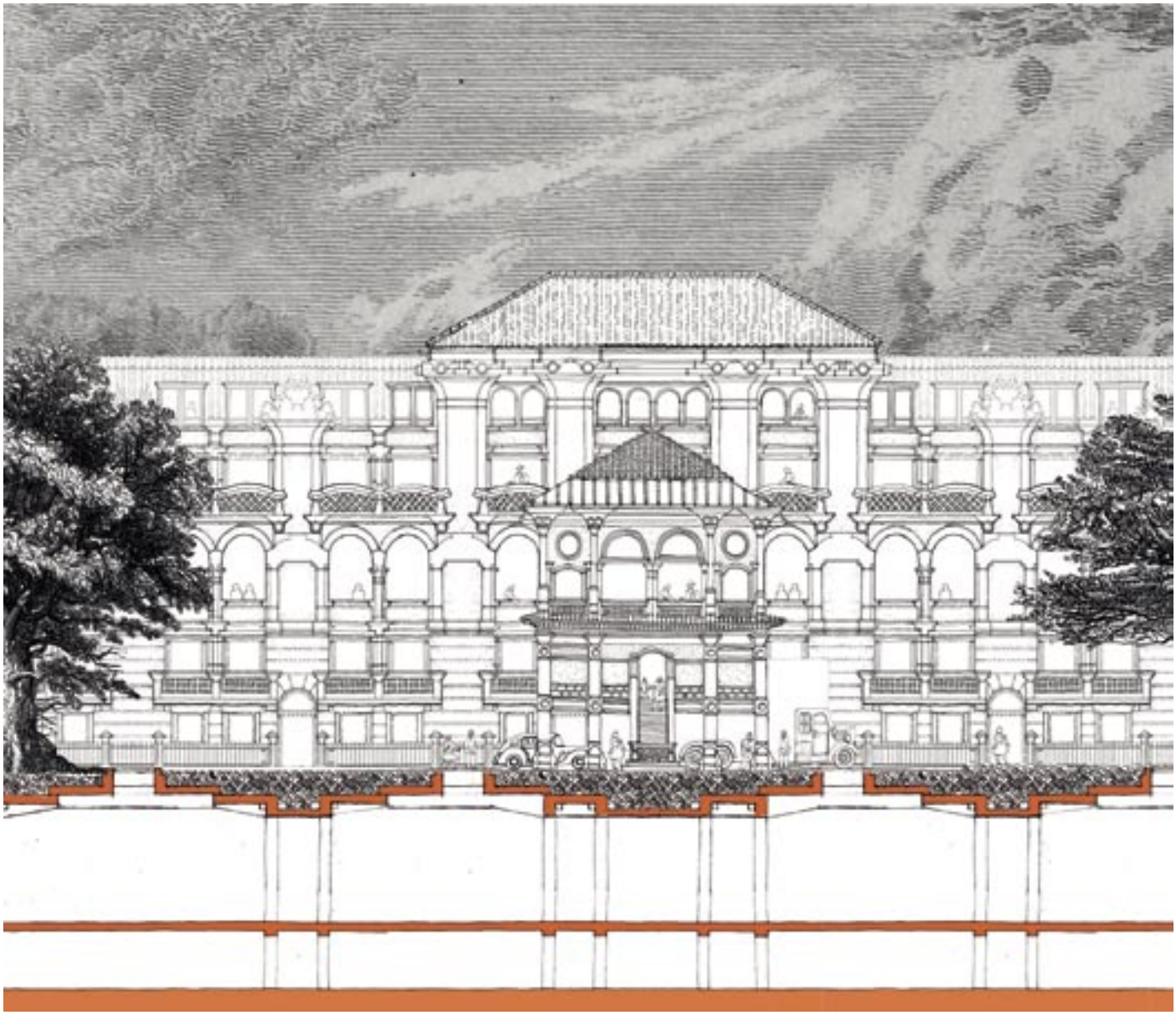
I named this 'Robotisation' of Haverleij a 'Handy Square'.

A 'block' is something physical. Being easy to imagine, it is handy to manipulate conceptually. Clarity can be useful in the chaos of the lifespace-design industry. The footprint of this particular design, which is that of its workplace-floor, is close to 100 x 100 metres. I do not believe that this number is overly significant. How could it be with a plot-geometry as anorthogonal as Britain's? The more direct origin of the name, was that our hands have ten fingers. The 'square' of ten is one hundred and this Handy (square) Island, or 'isola di mano', contains around 100 homes.

The island-block is the oldest urbane form - going back some 9000 years. It is still the best. I sketch a new incarnation. Not so much a 'machine for living' as a 'working home'. Sleeping and working should be kept close together so as not to waste time commuting.

Dividing anything by a hundred makes it affordable.

Paying only one per cent of the cost of gardeners, porters and people who look after swimming pools and gymnasia creates an economy of scale which places their services within the reach of many. The resident's committee who orders these things is usually focussed around the Square Garden. Tender plants, such as flowering bushes fragrant with scent, can not look after themselves in habitats so dense with humans. They must be encouraged with husbandry throughout the year and and protected by rules of behaviour like the prohibition of football. Very large square gardens can accommodate tennis courts, basket-ball courts, bowling greens and so on.



There are four points of access for motor vehicles to the Duplex 'houses'. These are situated under small 'Kiosks', in the middle of each side of the Square. Unloading can take place out of the weather. Lifts and Stairs take the Visitor up two floors to the Ambulatory around the entire Square. Four Duplexes can be grouped around their own vertical lift access. A shaft is built, capable of taking a lightweight, chain-driven disabled elevator which can move a wheelchair, and other bulky objects up and down from each floor of the duplex to the level of the Square Garden. It could be taken further, through the Workplace level and down to the basement parking. But this might best be left to a group of individual property-owners. Any breakdown in such a lift, that occurred in the Workplace level would have to be capable of access in unsocial hours.

It must be obvious, by these late pages, that the tendency to house humans, especially 'ordinary' humans, in shoeboxes, so typical of the 20C, had nothing to do with the cost of building. JOA proved capable of building with a modest grandeur at every level of cost, from the £110 per square metre of distributive warehouses upwards. Architecture, even of the splendour that I sketch here, is affordable on a project of this density.

What is important here is to cut out the huge-on costs of 'planning' a lifespace by an industry in which no part, from the top to the bottom, has the slightest idea of what the plan is that they are all attempting to realise. And the key to this radical economy is to substitute an effective lifespace-design and procurement 'culture' for the time and money-wasting farrago that wastes money in the ever enlarging and deepening chaos of public design and public procurement today.

The Handy Square is the sort of 'ready-made' solution that is needed.

This Section illustrates the Double-height vehicular access to the Workplace. In practice each side of a Handy-Square' would be suited to different User. One side might be more profitable for retail outlets. Another might do for inner-city warehousing and distribution. Another for light industry. There is little significant difference in the spaces that they need. A mezzanine floor can always be constructed inside the two-storey shell.
The Duplexes have a real 'piano nobile'. This is not because it is intended that they be inhabited by Aristocrats. But it is intended that the people who live in them should both be en-nobled as their own houses, in their turn, en-noble their city. They do this promoting the individual versions of that truth to which they, individually, subscribe, by projecting it with Augustinian 'Splendor' onto, especially, their ceilings.

Yet there will be resistance to its adooption. I will recall the verdict of the Italian Architecture Critic Fulvio Irace when he described our Judge Institute as "both archaic and hyper-modern". ***The Handy-Square recalls the design of pre-modern 'palaces' in which the Prince (short for 'Principe' - or Numero Uno) occupied the upper floors while the armies of servitors worked, below him, to supply his needs. It might, equally well, recall the design of the many Utopian Communities invented during the 19C to serve the needs of equally Utopian social prescriptions. Yet there are less problematic forbears. Perhaps one may suggest the North American system oif 'condominiums'.***

By being elevated, I conceived that these four little Kiosks, one to each side of the Handy-Square Island, would catch the sun. Alternatively, when it was too hot, one could catch some elevated breeze in the shade. I saw this first in Bokhara, where the great square courts of the madrassehs varied the level of light and shade in each of their four, centrally-located, exedrae. I imagined the inhabitants of the Square coming out of their apartments in beautifully patterned house-gowns (rather than grubby anoraks and trainers) and walking around the Ambulatory (which is glazed in winter but open in summer) for some gentle exercise. They would call on each other, or, if not wishing to be so intimate, find a chair in one of the four Kiosks and read a paper, or play chess with an acquaintance. Human beings are capable of these modest cultivations. How can we encourage urbanity in the vertical battery-silo-apartments we inherit from the 20C?

The Porte-Cochere Kiosks also give vehicular-free access to the Square Garden from every Apartment and Duplex. A stair leads down two floors to the level of the Garden. Parents can rest assured that their children, of all ages, can reach the garden for play without running across even the lightly-trafficked access road . Taking the lifts and stairs two floors down from the Garden lands one at the Street. Here a porte-cochere shelters persons and vehicles entering at Street level. A further descent will reach the Basement floor of the parking garage.

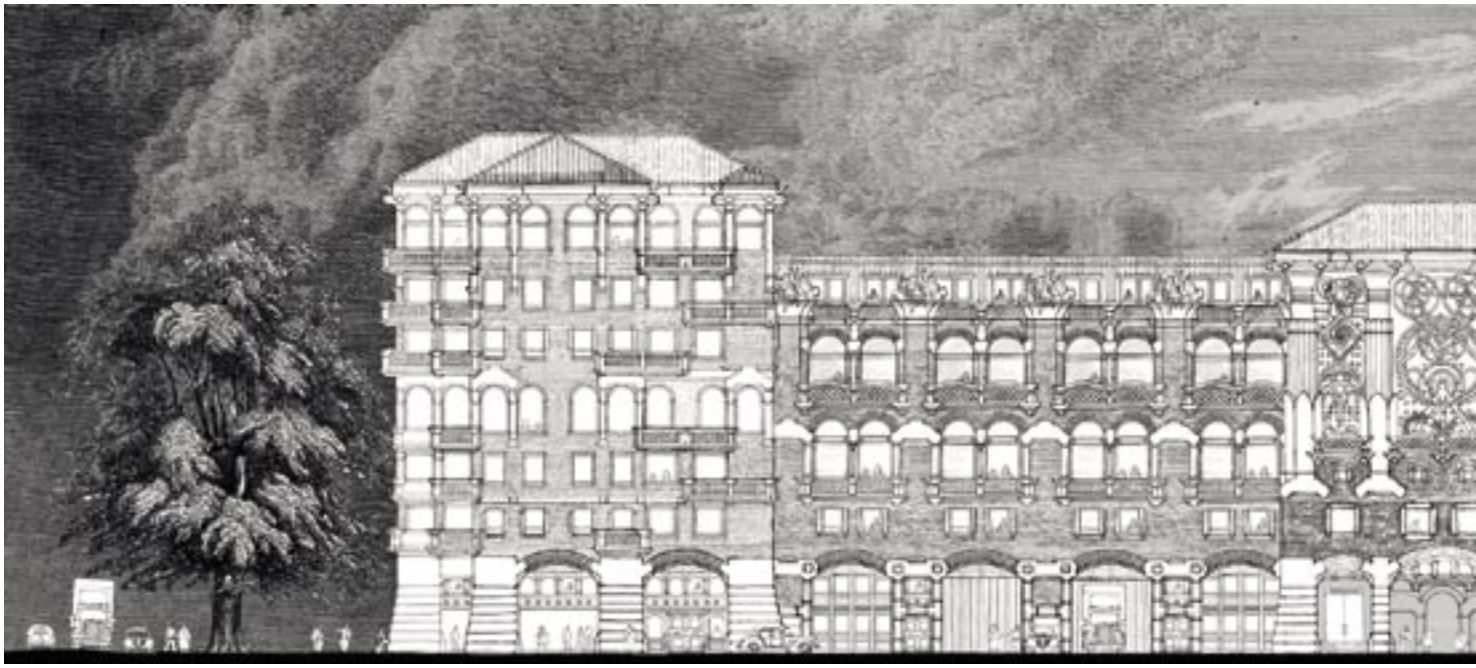
A healthy respect is certainly needed for the socio-political, and behind that, the cultural, ethical and moral fabric needed for the success of the level of Urbanity here sketched-out. For what we propose is nothing less than an 'ideal' relation between "Work' and 'Culture (that is to say Human Being)'. Work, and the marvellous 'Technologies' it now commands, has to be brought into the sort of relationship to 'Being' that the Handy Square, and beyond that 'the City' (however that should be), projects.

'Work' is admitted into the 'sacred space' of Urbane Being.
But it is placed into a position of subservience. 'Work' is, as in the Adamic myth, both the result of the burden of knowledge and the way to Revelation and Enlightenment.

A point perhaps worth making, is that the original, late-19C, project for a Modernist Utopia, was that mass-production made its products so cheap that all could afford them. Such processes required much capital and clever Engineers. Those who tended the production-lines had to be aware of the underlying technologies. The work itself might be repetitive. But it would be well-paid and brief. What in fact happened, as we can see from the social project behind the rebuilding of the West after WWII, was the exportation of such work, and the Class with which it was associated, to the Third World. The West was at first only 'locally' sub-Urbanised. Today, in the 21C, it has been Nationally, and even 'Continentally' sub-urbanised.

THE NEW INDUSTRIAL CITIES ARE IN THE EAST .

The new pseudo-Rustic Suburbs are in the West, amongst the rusting ruins of their erstwhile Commercial and Industrial 'Empires'.



This side of the 'Handy Square' shows the central, three-arch, street-level entrance to the ramp that circles up two floors to the level of the Square Garden. The square windows above are those of the exercise room and sauna, and above that, all the way up to the central roof, are the inscribed glass walls of the triple-volume swimming pool. This room is the largest public volume of the composition. In a previous century, and another insititution, it might have been a chapel. In the early 21C it would, I judged, be more likely as a temple to the cult of the healthy body. But that should be no bar to inscribing it to suit a creature capable of entertaining ideas. Mens sana in corpore sano.

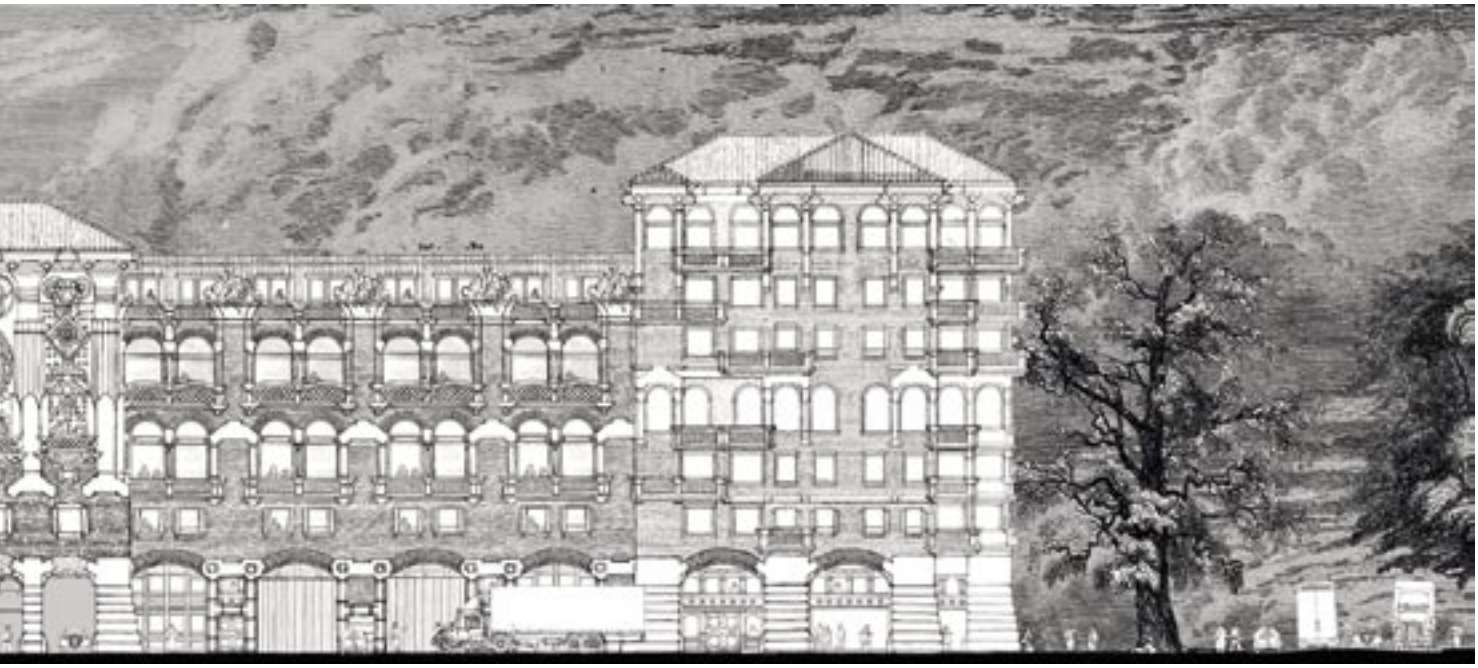
The entrances and facades of the 'workplace' institutions alternate a two-storey-high vehicular door and a single-storey personnel entrance with a single floor above.These entrances are all shown as arched openings into battered walls. My earlier chapters describe some general reasons for this. A particular reason, in this case, is to signify that it is 'work', in general, that supports the flower of 'culture' represented here, by the dwellings around a garden. 'Work' is identified with the 'Mountain of the that which was always there', or the generic fate of a symboliferating humankind. 'Living', or the cult of Domesticity, and beyond that, but essential to this project, that of Urbanity, is brought about by the advent of the Raft of Reason. It is the 'arrival' of the Raft of Reason onto the Mountain of Labour, when mediated by the catastrophic strike of the Columna Lucida, that engenders the creation of Urbanity.

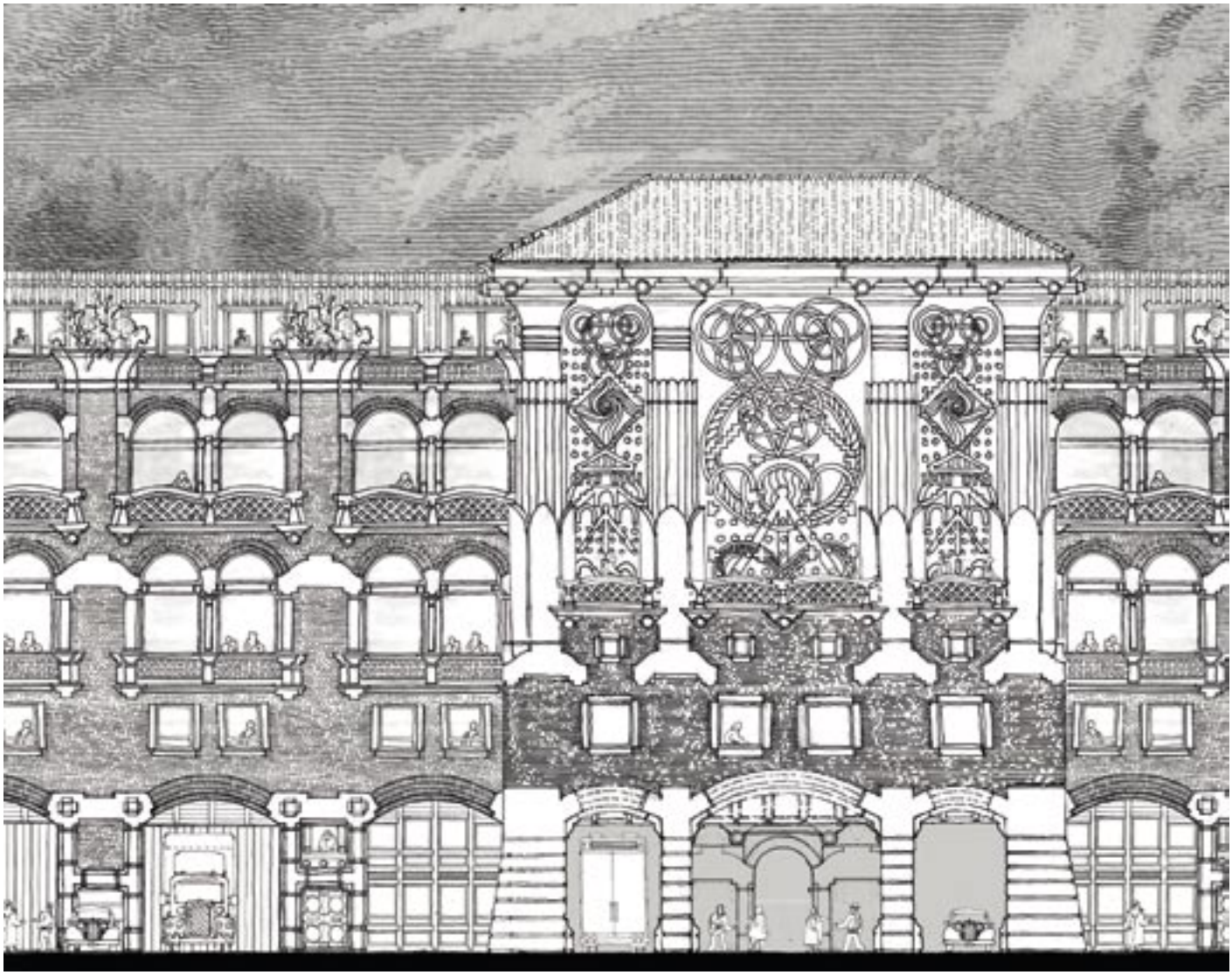
The Handy-Square Island embodies this narrative. But it must also represent it with the order and grandeur necessary to 'pulchritudo splendor veritatis est'. For, as the 20C has so tragically illustrated, without 'pulchritudo' the enterprise of Urbanity will fail.

The rump, or residue, of this newly-'outsourced' Western Working Class were offered cheap loans in order to bring them up to the standard of living prescribed for the suburbanised middle class filtered-out of the Haptics by the system of Meritocratic Education. But the salaries of these remaining Workers' was depressed by competion with the Orient. They proved unable to repay the loans. The result was the Subprime Mortgage fiscal catastrophe of 2007 and streets of empty tract housing.

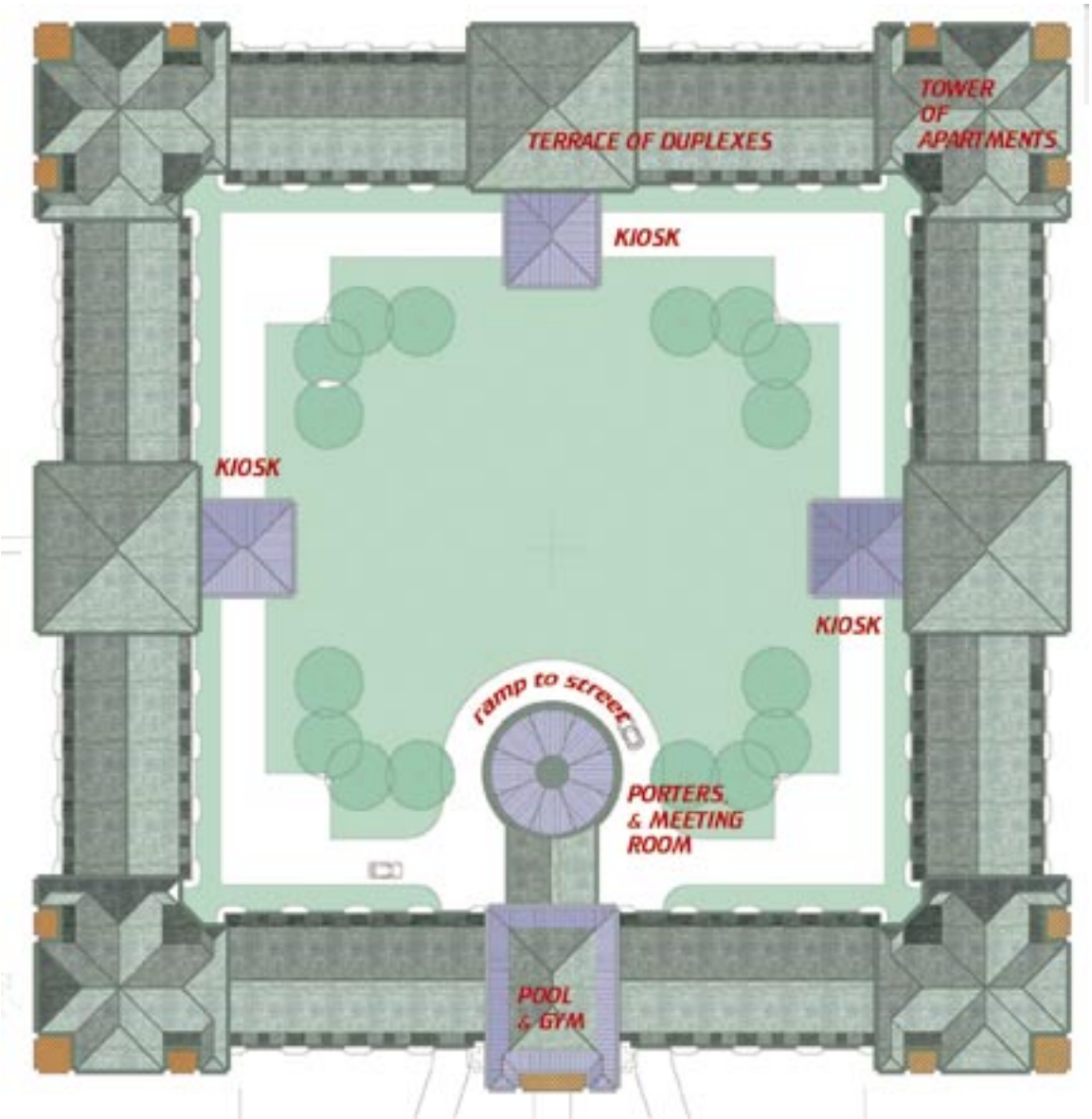
But to create anything better, like a city, and beyond even that a city with an Urbane culture, we need to build in city-block-sized tranches of capital loan and mortgage repayment. To succeed one needs to be able to successfully plan a whole section of a city, and by inference, the city, as a 'whole' itself.

It may be thought that we should be guided by the idea that what is needed is a 'Balance' between conflicting 'urban functions'. This is not so. Urbane Architecture is not the happy result of a 'legalistic' process concerning 'restrictive covenants' to discipline, constrain and limit 'functions' so that they can 'live' together. The work of the 'Urbane Architect' goes beyond the demarcation, as with a Conveyancing Solicitor or a Realtor, of single-use plot-boundaries. Urbanity itself can never be achieved until many apparently incompatible activities and utilities work so much 'better' together than they do on their own that they can be said to constitute a 'whole that is greater than its parts'. To achieve this needs much physical ingenuity. But it needs more even than that rare skill. It requires, it is no exaggeration to admit, a technique notable by its complete absence from both contemporary practice - as well as theory. It is the capability to project a very strong, complete, functional and complex idea of 'the whole' of a complete city. Without such a 'model' none of the comprehensive planning needed to achieve Urbanity can either be proposed or executed. Such 'models' no longer exist.





The three-storey glass windows of the Swimming Pool are shown to be inscribed with a vertical reading of the Fluvial Narrative. I draw it merely to draw something. Many alternative inscriptions could be legitimtely invented. JOA would research a more industrialised inscriptional technique than the conventional stained glass. Using large-scale, cost-effective techniques to 'script surface' is the best way forward. It does not mean the end of craftsmanship, or hand-work. I hand-painted the 1/36th-scale original of my Shaper Ceiling. Scanchrome would have merely enlarged Inigo's hand-painted, 4.2M-long tempera modello. Computers save much of the drudgery involved in the application of Architectural Graphics.



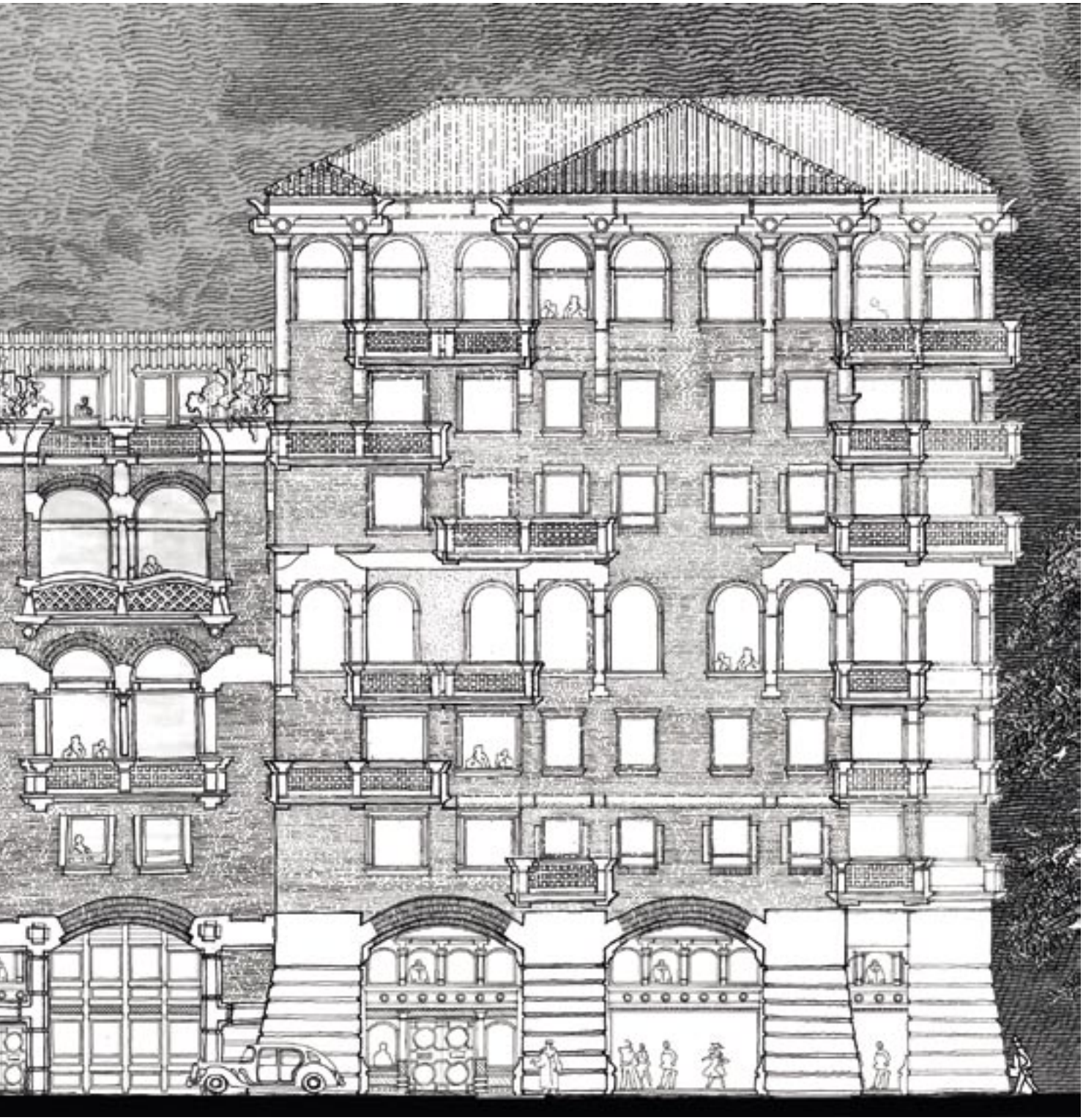
The Square is shown closed. It is, of course, possible to open it to the outer street. But this will allow street noises to enter. The only way to achieve real quietude and stillness in a city is to be inside a courtyard with no large doorways to traffic noise. Alberti understood this and said so half a millenium ago - another truth suppressed by the 20C.

The Dimensions of a Handy-Square are not arbitrary. They are 'positively real' balancings of sociality and privacy, open-ness and closedness, distance and closeness to the ground and the street, work and play - all have to be balanced and judged. The result is a sublime urbanity at 464 dwellings/hectare including streets.

THE EFFECT OF A 'PICTURESQUE' VARIATION IN THE HEIGHTS OF BUILDINGS IS TO FORCE HIGH WINDSPEEDS DOWN TO GROUND LEVEL.

MICROCLIMATICALLY, IT IS BEST TO ERECT ALL BUILDINGS TO A REGULAR HEIGHT OF 25-30M (the same as big trees).

Hopefully a self-explanatory diagram! Yet it is one that Architects have consistently ignored for the whole 20C!



The 'towers' of apartments at the corners have neither windows nor facade to the Square Garden. Their entrances to the street are connected to the Garden and to the Ambulatory. So they offer four alternative entrances to the Handy Square. This makes eight in all. If this becomes too difficult to supervise in periods of lawlessness then access can be controlled by swipe cards and video porterage. Urbanity is too important to be sacrificed to an over-precious cult of 'privacy'. What is the difference between a porter across a counter and saying hello to his face on a camera intercom? I have shown the apartment-towers one storey higher than the terraces of Duplexes. They could be two or three floors higher than the roofs of the row-houses without throwing too much shadow over the Square Garden.

Fifty years of struggle have taught me that the sine qua non of Urbanity is the way a culture 'gets and spends' - or Lives and Works. The Anglo culture appears irremediably suburban. If it strives for anything it appears to strive for an ever greater privacy and dispersal towards what one can only describe as a total rusticity. In moments of despair at the Anglos i call my Handy-Square an Urbanité. This rhymes with Corbusier's Unité but opposes even Corbusier at every turn. Corbusier is the most Suburban of 'French Urbanists'.

AFTERWORD for the THIRTY FOURTH LECTURE: 'THE HANDY-SQUARE'.

'Industry', that is to say just 'work', is here placed, iconically, exactly where it should be, as the support of 'the good life'. When Eve received self-knowledge concerning the Tree of Life and passed this on to Adam, Mankind was cast out of the Forest of the Infinite Present and had to enter the Flow of Time that became History. Knowing what can be is the human affliction. Working to create it is the human joy and the human burden.

Mark Jarzombek relates J.B.Alberti prescribing the peace of a "Philosopher's Garden" at the centre of every city. Every 'Handy-Square' has one such. What is Philosophia but Knowledge and from what nourishment must it draw its sustenance but Work? In JOA's now demolished project in Kensal Road the small 'office' space was backed-up by a far larger space that was either used for the storage of 'break-bulk' goods or for some work carried-out by human hands. This double-height room could be lit by skylights. But it was often made into two floors. In the case of the Handy-Square, I have suggested large, heavy-glass discs let into the grass of the garden above. I found such amongst the woods of Welbeck Abbey where JOA built the ten Craft Workshops shown in www.johnoutram.com/welbeck.html. They lit the underground roads built by the Fifth Duke of Portland to light his carriage, and those of his friends, as they drove, for kilometres, under the thousands of acres of his ducal estate. The coal-baron, owner of thousands of earth-moving miners, did not like being looked-at by his Ducal Staff. At night these subterranean roads were lit by wall-mounted gas-lights, like the torch-bearing arms in Cocteau's La Belle et la Bete.

The building above, around its London-inspired Garden Square, was invented for a Dutch Client. Its idea took three days to realise. It must have been based, after thirty-five years absence from this field of design, upon my largely fruitless years in London's City Hall. For five years I did nothing except try to invent every variety of urban dwelling, only to return to the Terrace (or Row) House. In the case of the Handy-Square I placed two of these, one upon the other. I reversed their vertical order so as to place the two (potentially noisy) living rooms together.

It is a common complaint, aired in the Architectural Press, that the 20C never invented a universal, common and successful 'house-type', suitable to its own 'modernising' propositions, so that could be mass-produced to "solve the housing problem". Whether this Handy-Square will be that I must leave to History. I know only that its iconics are sound.

There is much talk of 'Sustainability'. Cultures are not sustained by 'Nature'. Nature is indifferent to the fate of Humankind. Cultures are sustained by the 'work' of human beings - the talking, talking, thinking, imagining animal.