

Chapter 5: The Team Ten and the humanization of architecture

Postwar engaged users as activators of change

This chapter examines the Post-CIAM generation, placing particular emphasis on Le Corbusier's diagram sent in 1956 to the tenth CIAM at Dubrovnik. With this letter Le Corbusier called attention to a turning point within the circle of the CIAM, maintaining that after 1956 its dominant approach had been characterized by a reorientation of the interest towards what he called "action towards humanization". It examines whether this humanizing process is part of a crisis or an evolution, on the one hand, and compares the directions that were taken regarding architecture's humanization project within a transnational network, on the other hand. In 1957, Ernesto Nathan Rogers, in "Continuità o Crisi?", published in *Casabella Continuità*, considered history as a process, highlighting that history can be understood as being either in a condition of continuity or in a condition of crisis "accordingly as one wishes to emphasize either permanence or emergency"¹.

An important instance regarding this reorientation of architecture's epistemology was the First International Conference on Proportion in the Arts at the IX Triennale di Milano in 1951, where Le Corbusier presented his *Modulor* and Sigfried Giedion, Matila Ghyka, Pier Luigi Nervi, Andreas Speiser and Bruno Zevi intervened among others. The debates that took place during this conference epitomize the attraction of architecture's dominant discourse to humanization ideals. In a different context, the Doorn manifesto (1954), signed by the architects Peter Smithson, John Voelcker, Jaap Bakema, Aldo van Eyck and Daniel van Ginkel and the economist Hans Hovens-Greve and embraced by the younger generation, is interpreted as a climax of this generalized tendency to "humanize" architectural discourse and to overcome the rejection of the rigidity of the modernist ideals.

Despite the intensity of the debates during the late 1950s such as those between Reyner Banham and Ernesto Nathan Rogers in the pages of *The Architectural Review* and *Casabella Continuità* or the critique of BBPR's Torre Velasca by Peter Smithson and Jaap Bakema at the 1959 CIAM conference in Otterlo, there are certain common denominators characterizing the rejection of the rigidity of the modernist ideals in different national contexts. Their affinities are related to the socioeconomic conditions of the post-war context and the reconceptualization of the relationship between architecture and urban planning. Within such a context, the conflicts between the protagonist figures representing different national contexts became an engine of regeneration of architecture's scope, revitalizing the architects' role in the transformation of post-war societies. These debates not only are of great importance for understanding the shift between the CIAM and the post-CIAM philosophy, but also shaped the ideals and vision that dominated the architectural scene of the 1960s and 1970s. A common preoccupation was the concern about the humanist aspect of architecture. As Ákos Moravánszky remarks, "[h]umanism as a program that places the human being in the center of the universe was embraced by all sides during the Second World War and in the years of reconstruction"². Moravánszky also underscores that humanism "[i]n the postwar years [...] provided an ideal common ground for liberal and socialist positions"³.

The cross-fertilization between *The Architectural Review*, *Architectural Design*, *Casabella Continuità*, *Arquitectura*, *L'Architecture d'aujourd'hui* and *Forum* can inform our comprehension of the exchanges and cultural transfers regarding architecture between the UK, Italy, Portugal, France and Holland. All the above-mentioned architecture journals contributed to the dissemination of Team Ten's concerns. Of great significance regarding the reception of Team Ten in France is the special issue of *L'Architecture d'Aujourd'hui* in 1975 devoted to Team Ten and titled "Team 10 + 20". The journal *Arquitectura* was one of the most significant architecture journals in Portugal in the 1950s.

Important for understanding the exchanges between Portugal and Italy is Nuno Portas, who was among its main contributors. His article entitled "Literatura arquitectónica I: L'Architettura, cronache e storia" was published in *Arquitectura* in 1957⁴, while "A responsabilidade de uma novíssima geração no Movimento Moderno em Portugal" ["The responsibility of a brand new generation in the Modern Movement in Portugal"] appeared in the same journal two years later, in 1959⁵. The former is useful for grasping the cross-fertilization between Portugal and Italy in general, and the Portuguese journal *Arquitectura* and the Italian journal *L'architettura: Cronache e storia*, founded in 1955 by Bruno Zevi in

Rome, more specifically, while the latter is important for understanding how the generational shift and the inauguration of the 3rd series of *Arquitectura* contributed to the reorientation of ideas regarding architecture in Portugal. The issue 57/58 of the journal *Arquitectura*, published in winter 1957, was the first issue of the 3rd series of the journal and represents a turning point since it is linked to a new generation within the Portuguese context, which was more open to European debates than the previous series of the same journal.

The post-war context in Portugal was characterized by an intention to reinvent the connection between the architects and the social, economic and political setting within which their practice was inscribed. This reinvention of the architects' role within society was related to the intensification of multidisciplinary approaches and the opening of architecture toward social sciences, geography, economics, anthropology and so on. The intensification of multidisciplinary in architectural discourse and the critique of the principles of the Athens Charter were two central characteristics of this attempt to strengthen the articulations between architecture and its social, economic and political context. Regarding the sharpening of the multidisciplinary facet of architectural discourse, Portuguese architect Pedro Vieira de Almeida's approach is worth noting, while the relationship of the Portuguese architect Amâncio Guedes, a.k.a. Pancho Guedes, with Team Ten should not be underestimated. The latter, who was dean of the Department of Architecture at the University of the Witwatersrand, and a professor at the Faculty of Architecture of the University of Lisbon and the Architectural Association in London, perceived architecture as an open-ended discipline. Guedes had studied at the Escolas das Belas Artes in Porto. Since 1962, when he was invited by the Smithsons to attend the meeting at Royaumont, he participated regularly in the Team Ten meetings.

As Jaap Bakema notes, the Dutch group of CIAM consisted of two groups: "Opbouw", which was related to Rotterdam, and "De 8", which was linked to Amsterdam. Of great significance for the dissemination of the ideas of Team Ten in Holland is the Dutch journal *Forum*. In 1959, it initiated a new series of which the first issue was devoted to the thematic 'The story of another idea'. This issue was distributed to the architects that attended the 1959 CIAM meeting in Otterlo, where Aldo van Eyck, Alison and Peter Smithson and Jaap Bakema announced the death of the CIAM. As Pedro Baía underscores, in his article entitled "Appropriating Modernism: From the Reception of Team 10 in Portuguese Architectural Culture to the SAAL Programme (1959–74)"⁶, this issue of *Forum* represents a turning point. A statement signed by Alison and Peter Smithson that was published in the 7th issue of *Forum* in 1959 was

later included in the British journal *Architectural Design*, where the death of the CIAM was also announced⁷.

Among the episodes that are vital for understanding what was at stake in the post-war Italian context are the foundation of the Associazione per l'architettura organica (APAO) by Pier Luigi Nervi and Bruno Zevi in 1945 and the approach developed by Ernesto Nathan Rogers in *Casabella Continuità* during the post-war years. An important instance regarding this reorientation of architecture's epistemology during the post-war years in Italy and the embracement of humanism under the label "New Humanism" was the "primo convegno internazionale sulle proporzioni nelle arti" ("First International Conference on Proportion in the Arts") organized in 1951 in the framework of the ninth Triennale di Milano. Le Corbusier publicly presented his *Modulor*. Sigfried Giedion, Matila Ghyka, Pier Luigi Nervi, Andreas Speiser and Bruno Zevi were among the participants who attended this event, while Giulio Carlo Argan refused the invitation. The debates that took place during this conference epitomize the attraction of architecture's dominant discourse to ideals of humanization. In conjunction with the above-mentioned conference, among the exhibitions held during that same Triennale, I could mention "Architettura. Misura dell'uomo" ("Architecture. Measure of man") and "Architettura spontanea" ("Spontaneous architecture") since both reflect the prevalent attraction to humanism. Ernesto Nathan Rogers curated the former in collaboration with Vittorio Gregotti, Lodovico Meneghetti and Giotto Stoppino, while Giancarlo De Carlo mounted the latter.

The post-war attraction to the ideals of humanism had already been apparent in London, within the context of the Warburg Institute, where the publication of Rudolf Wittkower's *Architectural Principles in the Age of Humanism*⁸ in 1949 played a major role, but also in Italy, through the foundation of the Associazione per l'Architettura Organica (APAO) in 1944, which was driven by the conviction that modern architecture's liberation from rigid functionalism would allow humanism and democracy to serve as liberating forces within post-war Italian society. In order to grasp what was at stake in the architectural debates in Italy during the post-war years, one should bear in mind that there was a tension between the Milanese and the Roman contexts. The differentiation between the Milanese and the Roman scene is related to the contrast between Ernesto Nathan Rogers's approach and Bruno Zevi's vision respectively. Both Rogers and Zevi played an important role in the dissemination of architectural debates given that, at the time, they directed two major journals engaging in these debates, such as *Casabella Continuità* and *L'architettura: Cronache e storia re-*

spectively. The contrast between the post-war architectural debates in Milan and in Rome can best be explained by pointing out that the former city was much more closely related to Team Ten than the latter.

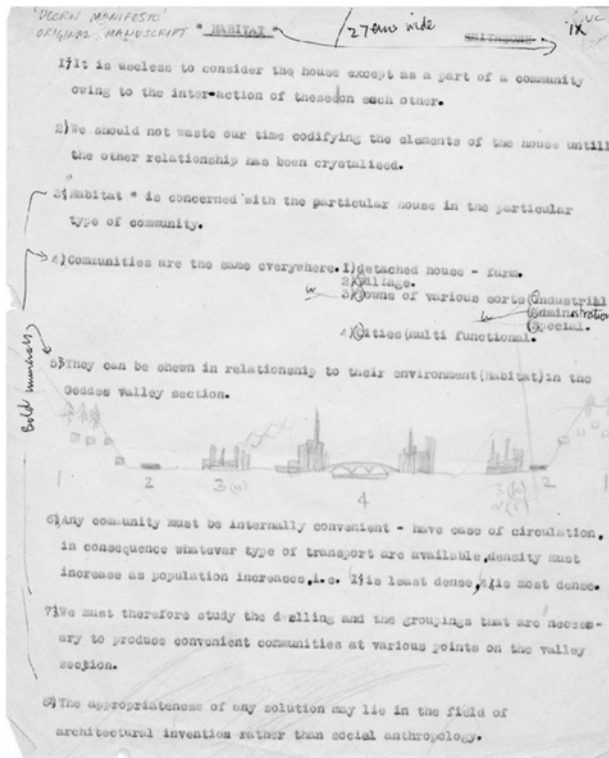
The CIAM summer schools, many of which were held in Venice, had an important impact on the Italian post-war architectural debates. The Italians who took part in the CIAM of 1953, held in Aix-en-Provence on the theme “The Charter of Habitat”, were: Franco Albini, Ludovico B. Belgioioso, Luigi Cosenza, Ignazio Gardella, Ernesto N. Rogers, Giovanni Romano, Giuseppe Samonà. Ignazio Gardella and Vico Magistretti. According to Eric Mumford “[u]ntil the end of CIAM the Italian group would remain one of the most active and productive national groups”⁹. Rogers added the subtitle *Continuità* to the name of the journal *Casabella* in 1953, that is to say the year of the CIAM in Aix-en-Provence. In 1957, Rogers wrote, in “Continuità o Crisi?”: “Considering history as a process, it might be said that history is always continuity or always crisis accordingly as one wishes to emphasize either permanence or emergency”¹⁰. Giancarlo De Carlo and Ernesto N. Rogers attended the last CIAM, held in Otterlo in 1959, two years after the former had resigned from *Casabella Continuità*. De Carlo presented “Memoria sui contenuti dell’architettura moderna” in Otterlo, while Rogers presented the Torre Velasca. Peter Smithson and Jaap Bakema criticized sharply BBPR’s Torre Velasca, when it was presented at the 1959 CIAM conference in Otterlo. Peter Smithson argued that it was aesthetically and ethically wrong and “a bad model to give because there are things that can be so easily distorted and become not only ethically wrong but aesthetically wrong”¹¹. He described it as a model with dangerous consequences and blamed Rogers for not being aware of his position in the society.

5.1 The Doorn manifesto as a fruit of generational conflict

The post-war context was characterized by the intention to “re-humanize” architecture, and the Doorn Manifesto was pivotal for this project. The rediscovery of the “human” and the intensification of interest in proportions are two aspects that should be taken into account if we wish to grasp how the scope of architecture was transformed during the post-war period. The interim meeting at Doorn, which was organized by Jaap Bakema and Sandy van Ginkel, took place in January 1954. The Doorn Manifesto or “Statement on Habitat” (Figure 5.1), which is often considered to be the founding text of Team Ten, was named after the city in which it was formulated and was signed in 1954 by

the architects Peter Smithson, John Voelcker, Jaap Bakema, Aldo van Eyck and Sandy van Ginkel and the social economist Hans Hovens-Greve who shared “their desire to produce towns in which ‘vital human associations’ were expressed”¹².

Figure 5.1. Team Ten, typescript of “Habitat,” also known as the “Doorn Manifesto”, 1954.



Credits: Collection Het Nieuwe Instituut/TTEN, 9-1 (Team Ten archive), Rotterdam

The Doorn Manifesto suggested the replacement of the CIAM grid by the “Scale of Association”¹³. In the Doorn Manifesto, Team Ten presented their “Scale of Association”, which was a kind of re-interpretation of Patrick Geddes’s Valley Section. This gesture demonstrates Team Ten’s intention to replace the four functions — dwelling, work, recreation and transport — of the Charter of Athens by the concept of the ‘human association’, on the one hand, and to incorporate within the scope of architecture reflections regarding the impact of scale on the design process, on the other hand. One can read in the draft statement for the tenth CIAM: “This method is intended to induce a study of human association as a first principle, and of the four functions as aspects of each total problem”¹⁴.

In order to interpret the fact that any French delegate of the CIAM did not sign the Doorn Manifesto, we should retrace certain events related to the French context, which preceded the meeting in Doorn. One of them is a meeting that was held in May 1952 at Le Corbusier’s office in Paris and that was organized by Sigfried Giedion in collaboration with Walter Gropius, Mary Jaqueline Tyrwhitt, Cornelis van Eesteren, André Wogenscky, Sven Marcklious, Wells Coates, Godfrey Samuel, Jean-Jacques Honegger, Steiner, George Candilis, Ernesto Nathan Rogers and Bill Howell. In this meeting Le Corbusier described the attitude of the old generation as “too rigid [...] especially on social issues”¹⁵.

An issue that dominated the discussions during this meeting in Paris was that of the transitional status of the next congress. This should be related to the fact that the CIAM IX, that would be held a year later, in July 1953, at Aix-en-Provence, coincides with the arrival of many new members representing the younger generation, such as the Indian architect Balkrishna Vithaldas Doshi and the Finnish architect and theorist Frans Reima Pietilä among other. It was at this congress that Alison and Peter Smithson presented their Urban Re-identification Grid. Another event that was held in Paris was the interim meeting on 30 June 1954 organized by the CIAM Council and attended by Sigfried Giedion, Walter Gropius, Le Corbusier, José Lluís Sert, Jacqueline Tyrwhitt, Jaap Bakema, Aldo van Eyck, Georges Candilis, Rolf Gutmann, Bill Howell, Peter Smithson and John Voelcker. It was during this meeting that CIAM X committee (CIAX) was appointed. Three additional meetings were also held in Paris with the objective to prepare CIAM X, on 14 September 1954, 14 April 1955 and 4 July 1955 respectively. That of April 1955 was organized by Team Ten and took place at Candilis’s office with the presence of Bakema, van Eyck, the Smithsons, Voelcker and Woods. As we can see in the unpublished correspondence

conserved at the Fondation Le Corbusier in Paris, Ernesto Nathan Rogers wrote to André Wogenscky on 27 April 1955:

On the question of these famous “young people” I think I have always been very clear – and you will remember my frequent intervention trying to fight what I call the “youth complex” and criticizing this definition “young” that threatens to divide the CIAMs according to the date of birth and not according to the vitality of the spirit¹⁶.

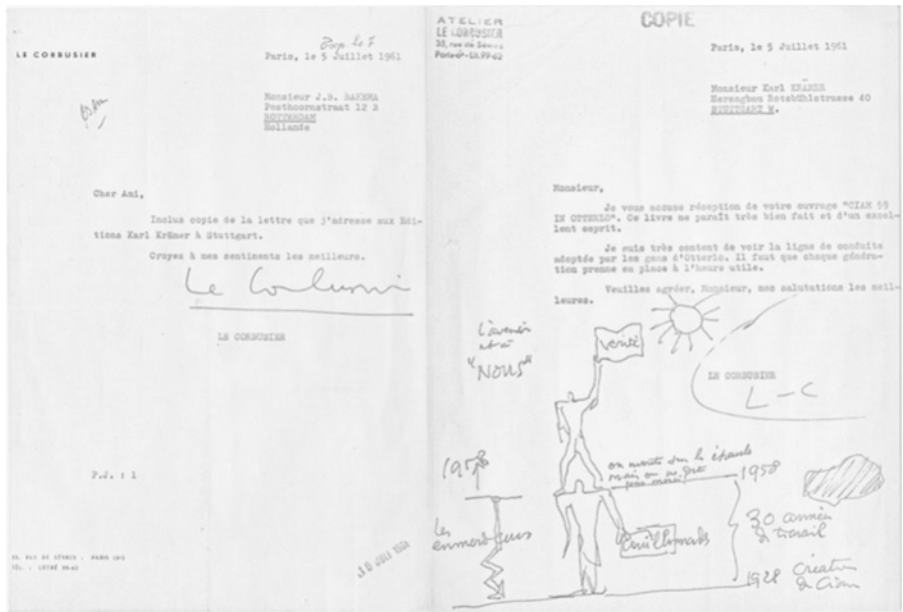
In 1956, during the opening of the CIAM X held at Dubrovnik, Sert read Le Corbusier’s “Letter to CIAM 10”¹⁷ (Figure 5.2), in which the latter was declaring that the ideology of the first era of CIAM was no longer relevant. What is worth noting is his remark that the older generation of the CIAM could not understand “the direct impact of the situation”. More specifically, Le Corbusier wrote in this letter:

It is those who become 40 years old, born around 1916 during wars and revolutions, and those then unborn, now 25 years old, born around 1930 during the preparation of a new war and amidst a profound economic, social, and political crisis – thus finding themselves in the heart of the present period the only ones capable of feeling actual problems, personally, profoundly, the goals to follow, the means to reach them, the pathetic urgency of the present situation. They are in the know. Their predecessors no longer are, they are out, they are no longer subject to the direct impact of the situation.¹⁸

In the same letter he also invited the members of the CIAM to “continue to thrive with creative passion and idealism”¹⁹. Five years later, after the meeting at Otterlo, Le Corbusier also wrote in a letter he addressed to Karl Kramer in 1961 regarding the book *CIAM '59 in Otterlo*: “Every generation must take its place at the right time”²⁰. This letter was accompanied by a sketch illustrating the emergence of Team Ten out of CIAM, which showed Team Ten on the shoulders of CIAM. Of great significance for understanding how the generational conflict is linked to the emergence of the Team Ten out of the CIAM is the fact that the CIAM X was structured around two groups representing the two conflicting generations. As Nicholas Bullock notes, in *Building the Post-war World: Modern Architecture and Reconstruction in Britain*, the group representing the older generation focused on “the work of CIAM since its foundation in the form of a charter similar to the Athens Charter”, while the group representing

the younger generation tried “to extend the work of CIAM to include the latest thinking”²¹.

Figure 5.2. The letter that Le Corbusier wrote to Karl Kramer in 1961 regarding the book CIAM '59 in Otterlo.



Credits: Collection Het Nieuwe Instituut/BAKE, g83-2 (Bakema archive), Rotterdam

5.2 The CIAM X and distrust in the concept of the “new”

One of the central concerns of Team Ten was, as Alison and Peter Smithson noted in 1956, to rethink “the basic relationships between people and life”²². A concept that they employed was that of doorstep. As the Smithsons emphasized in a draft written that same year containing instructions to the different groups who would take part in the CIAM X meeting, Team Ten started their “thinking at the bottom with the primer contact at the Doorstep between man and men”²³. Of great interest for understanding the epistemological shift

linked to the dissolution of CIAM and the emergence of Team Ten, is Jaap Bakema's distrust in the concept of the "new". Characteristically, he noted, in a draft written on 7 February 1956, during the preparations for CIAM X: "New' was too much a slogan developed in times of specialization [...] In our days "new" will be more the result of integration of existing possibilities"²⁴. This concern of Bakema's about the osmosis between the existing and the new brings to mind Van Eyck's talk at the CIAM X, entitled "Is Architecture Going to Reconcile Basic Values?", where he emphasized the issue of morality as well as the need "to gather the old into the new' through the rediscovery of 'the archaic principles of human nature'"²⁵.

The goal of the CIAM X, held in Dubrovnik between 19 and 25 July 1956, was to challenge the assumptions of the Charter of Habitat (Figure 5.3). During this meeting, which neither Le Corbusier nor Walter Gropius attended, the younger generation consisting of Aldo van Eyck, Jacob Bakema, Georges Candilis, Shadrach Woods, and Alison and Peter Smithson established a new agenda for mass housing, "Habitat for the Greater Number". It was at this CIAM meeting that the Smithsons presented their "Fold Houses". A number of meetings preceding the CIAM X were held in London, Doorn, Paris, La Sarraz, and Padua. The main question that was raised during these meetings was how to challenge the Charter of Habitat. The debates that were developed reflect not only the conflicts and disagreements between the older and younger generation, but also the contrast between the different national subgroups. Eric Mumford has characterized the CIAM X as the end of CIAM for its national groups and most of its members, while Francis Strauven has highlighted the fact that "[t]he suicide and resurrection that were decided upon in Dubrovnik had a devastating effect on the national CIAM groups"²⁶.

Regarding the abandonment of the CIAM ideals during the CIAM X, Reyner Banham has remarked that "[t]he sense of the end of an epoch was so strong that the Congress accepted the fact of death with comparative calm..."²⁷ The identification of that moment as a turning point becomes apparent in Josep Lluís Sert's statement in the report of CIAM X where he declared: "As for tomorrow – which begins with this year 1956 – my friends and colleagues the road is clear, but beware we are coming to a turning point!"²⁸. After the meeting at Otterlo, the news of the dissolution of the CIAM was disseminated through articles in the two major UK journals of the time that published architectural debates: *The Architectural Review* and *Architectural Design*. In the first page of relevant text in *Architectural Design*, one can read: "It was therefore concluded that the name of CIAM will be used no more in relation to future

activities of the participants"²⁹. Alison Smithson was the guest editor of a group of 30 pages of texts, which were published in this issue under the title "Ciam Team 10". Among the contributors were John Voelcker, Aldo van Eyck, Georges Candilis, Alexis Josic and Shadrach Woods, Jaap Bakema, Louis Kahn, Kenzō Tange and Giancarlo De Carlo.

Figure 5.3. *Jaqueline Tyrwhitt, Report of CIAM 10, Dubrovnik, August 1956.*

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REPORT OF CIAM 10, DUBROVNIK, AUGUST, 1956 *11 236 Rq*

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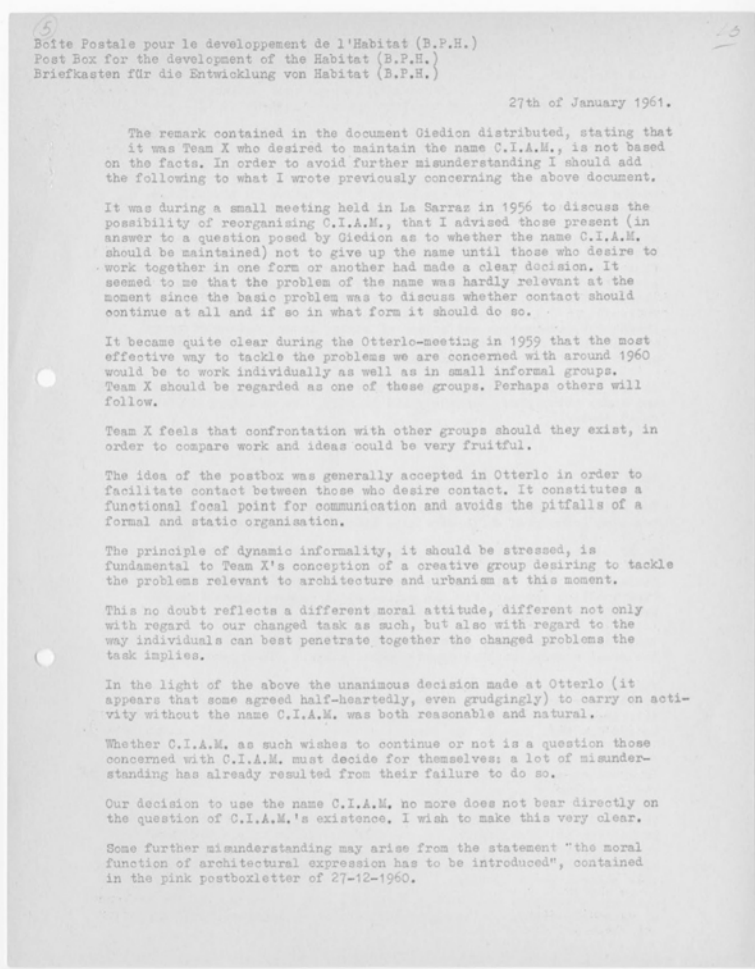
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In order to understand the vision of the English delegates of the CIAM one should examine the debates that were developed within the British CIAM Chapter, the MARS (Modern Architectural Research) Group, which was active between 1933 and 1957 and was involved in the preparation of the 1951 congress at Hoddesdon, which was devoted to the theme “The Heart of the City”. According to John R. Gold, “[t]he younger members clearly saw MARS membership as their passport to participation in CIAM congresses, in which they were passionately interested.”³⁰

5.3 After the Otterlo meeting: The “Post Box for the Development of the Habitat” as an agent of dynamic informality

Of great significance for understanding how the debates after the meeting at Otterlo in 1959 evolved are the Newsletters of the “Post Box for the Development of the Habitat” (B.P.H.), containing eighteen issues circulated between September 1959 and July 1971. These were established by Bakema, who had organized the last CIAM conference at the Kröller-Müller museum in Otterlo, in order to keep contacts on the subject of habitat alive on an international scale. They constituted a means of communication avoiding “the pitfalls of a formal and static organisation” since it was based on the “principle of dynamic informality”³¹. Bakema, who signed the Newsletters as “Postman Bakema”, was convinced that this means of communication reflected a “different moral attitude” from that of CIAM. He insisted on the necessity to introduce “the moral function of architectural expression” and believed that the main differentiation between the vision of CIAM and that of Team Ten concerned this aspiration to put forward the “morality of architectural expression”. This ‘Postbox’ can be treated as an archive of exchanges between the various international avant-gardes during the 1960s. In the Newsletter of 27 January 1961³² (Figure 5.4), Bakema highlighted a distinction between the “social responsibility” and the “morality of architectural expression”³³. He underscored that the former is contained in the latter, while the opposite is not true and claimed that the CIAM – even though they in certain cases, mainly during their first years, paid much attention to social responsibility – neglected the significance of the moral aspect of architecture.

Figure 5.4. *Post Box for the Development of the Habitat (B.P.H.), Newsletter 27 January 1961.*



Credits: Collection Het Nieuwe Instituut/BAKE, g119-5-1 (Bakema archive), Rotterdam

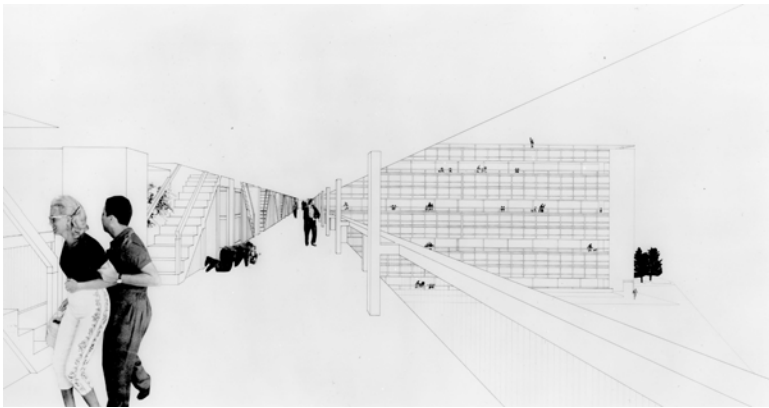
Jaap Bakema's concern about the "morality of architectural expression" cannot be thought without bringing to mind the humanist values. Similarly, Roger's temporally driven aesthetic model and his search for continuity reflects his endeavor to embrace the social reality of the post-war era. This can also explain his close relationship with Enzo Paci's approach. Van Eyck's desire "to gather the old into the new" through the rediscovery of 'the archaic principles of human nature'³⁴ is also an expression of this appeal to humanism, as is Alison and Peter Smithson's effort to rethink "the basic relationships between people and life"³⁵. Undoubtedly, despite their disagreements, the different personalities that formed Team Ten, coming from varied national contexts, shared a determination to reconcile the past with the future. Simultaneously, an affinity between the different agents of dissemination of the principles on which the shift from CIAM to Team Ten was postulated is their aspiration to disapprove of the mere search for the new. What connects them is their conviction that architecture had the moral target of situating the human at the center of its reflection. To conclude, I would claim that the generalized belief in humanism within the post-war context in Europe is founded on the wish to shape the conceptual tools that would provide such a role for the architects as citizens and as agents in the transformation of society, which was a central preoccupation within these different national contexts during the post-war years.

5.4 Alison and Peter Smithson's collages as reinventing established reality

Alison and Peter Smithson used photographs of existing celebrities, such as Marilyn Monroe and Joe DiMaggio (Figure 5.5), French actor Gérard Philipe and first prime minister of Independent India Jawaharlal Nehru. This tactic of introducing figures that were protagonists in the news in their architectural drawings for projects concerning social housing buildings, as in the case of their collages for the Golden Lane Estate project (1953), shows that they intended to reinvent through their architecture the established reality. Golden Lane Estate, which occupied an area flattened by wartime bombing, was one of the most defining public housing projects during the post-war reconstruction era in Great Britain. It was rather provocative to introduce in the visual representations concerning the design of council housing blocks of flats famous figures such as Marilyn Monroe and Joe DiMaggio. The contrast between Ali-

son and Peter Smithson's anti-aesthetic stance and their choice to use figures that were part of the present culture in their collages could be interpreted as an invitation to challenge existing reality and its conventions. The incorporation of existing figures in the images functioned as a gesture of integration in the architectural representation of fragments of existing context and reality.

Figure 5.5. Alison & Peter Smithson, "street-in-the-air" collage for the Golden Lane Housing project, competition, London, 1952. Drawing and collage with Joe DiMaggio and Marilyn Monroe, 20 1/2 x 38" (52 x 97.5 cm).

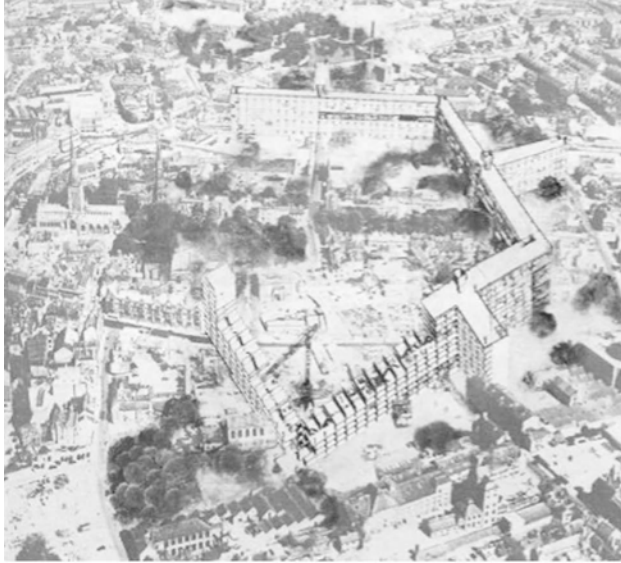


Credits: Smithson Family Collection

In the collages of the Smithsons for the Golden Lane housing project, the contradiction between the reproduction of photographs of famous figures of the time and post-war context intensifies the impression of the contrast between the status of the inhabitants of the Golden Lane housing building and the old British society. The starting point of the strategies that the Smithsons in their collages for this project was the intention to show how the way of life of the dwellers of the housing complex would be opposed to the parochial British model. In their text entitled "The 'As Found' and the 'Found'", Alison and Peter Smithson interpreted "the 'as found' was a new seeing of the ordinary, an openness as to how prosaic 'things' could re-energize our inventive activity."³⁶ This belief in the capacity of the "as found" to revitalize the way one sees the

ordinary is very present in the aesthetics of the collages for the Golden Lane housing project.

Figure 5.6. Alison & Peter Smithson, the Golden Lane Housing project, competition, London, 1952.

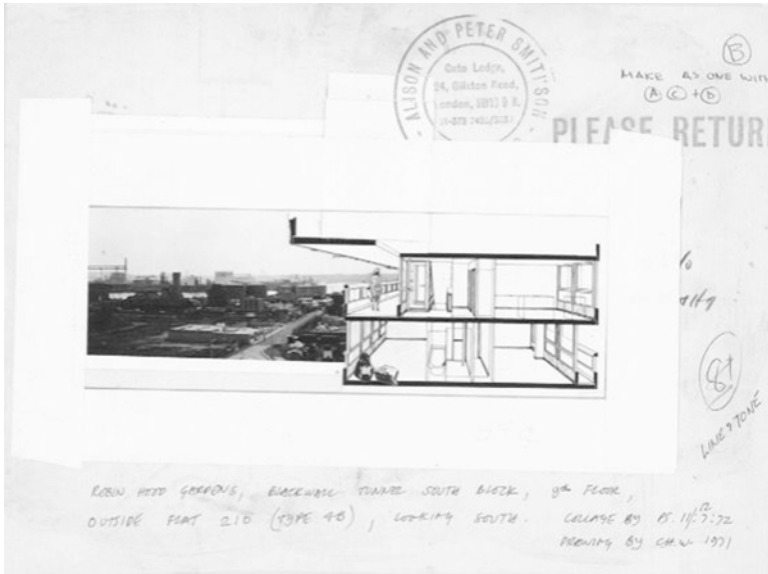


Credits: The Alison and Peter Smithson Archive, Special Collections, Frances Loeb Library, Graduate School of Design, Harvard University

The Smithsons produced two types of collages: the first type concerns the perspective views with reproductions of human figures, such as the collage with Marilyn Monroe and Joe DiMaggio for the Golden Lane Housing project (1952) or the collages with human figures for the Economist Building (1964) and the Robin Hood Gardens (1972); the second type of the Smithsons's collages concerns the bird-eye collages that they produced in order to show how their projects would be inserted in the existing urban fabric. For a collage they produced for Golden Lane Housing project, they used a photograph to represent the urban context and they drew their design proposal as a continuation of the photograph (Figure 5.6). For the Robin Hood Gardens, they also produced a col-

lage of the plan. Their collages for the perspective views of the Robin Hood Gardens show the relationship between the cityscape, the street-in-the-air and the flats (Figure 5.7).

Figure 5.7. Alison and Peter Smithson, Robin Hood Gardens, 1966–1972; collage showing relation between cityscape, street-in-the-air and flats.



Credits: Smithson Family Collection, London

The strategy of inserting famous figures in their collages aestheticized social housing projects and should be interpreted in relation to the attention Alison and Peter Smithson paid to the ambiguity between consumerism and citizenship. Their strategies contributed to the construction of the following paradoxical fiction: by inserting contradictory fictions in the same image—the dream of being part of the high society and of being able to have access to the latest products of their epoch and the dream of being part of the transformation of the society—they manage, in a sense, to bring together consumerism and citizenship. Moreover, the way their buildings were photographed reinforces the aforementioned strategy. The human figures, despite the fact that

The diagram of the vistas and routes that Alison and Peter Smithson drew for their project for the Robin Hood Gardens housing estate shows how much attention they paid to circulation (Figure 5.8). According to Dirk van den Heuvel, this project could be “characterized as a rather early urban renewal project”³⁷. The impact of the British Welfare state agenda on the design strategy of this project has been analyzed by Nicholas Bullock, in “Building the Socialist Dream or Housing the Socialist State? Design versus the Production of Housing in the 1960s”³⁸. The replacement of design with the production of housing that is analyzed by Bullock in the aforementioned text is related to the shift from an understanding of the addressee of architecture as individual to its understanding as user. The Smithsons, through their project for the Robin Hood Gardens housing estate, aimed to upgrade the ordinary and the anonymous to an apparatus for social change. They analyzed their attraction to the ordinary and the anonymous their book *Without Rhetoric*, which was published a year after this project, in 1973³⁹.

5.5 Aldo van Eyck's ethnographic concerns and the search for “the truly human”

The open project as compositional device played a preeminent role within the circles the so-called Structuralist Movement in the Netherlands or Dutch structuralism⁴⁰, which was developed mainly between 1955 and 1980. Protagonist figures of this movement were Aldo van Eyck (1918–1999) and Herman Hertzberger (1932–). The main characteristics of buildings that are connected to Dutch structuralism are the elaboration of repetitive elements in their composition, on the one hand, and their capacity to be adjusted to a variety of functions, that is to say their adaptability to change, extension, and reprogramming, on the other hand. A typical example of this stance is Aldo van Eyck's Municipal Orphanage in Amsterdam. Moreover, social preoccupations were a defining component of Dutch structuralism.

The so-called Dutch structuralist architects often used modes of representation that challenged the conventions of former generations. Of great significance is the fact that in the case of Dutch structuralism the buildings are considered as “open structures” and are opposed to buildings that are conceived as complete “works of art,” or “closed” structures⁴¹. This shift from a conception of architectural artefacts as “closed” structures towards an understanding of architectural artefacts as “open structures” is useful for understanding

the transformation of the status of architectural drawings and the emergence of attitudes vis-à-vis the fabrication of drawings that are compatible with a conception of architectural artefacts as “open structures”. Moreover, the use of colors in architectural drawings played an important role in the case of Dutch structuralism.

Dirk van der Heuvel, reminds us that “structuralism never turned into a real movement or an organized group”. He claims that the common parameter of the approaches of different architects that are related to Dutch structuralism is the way they conceived “the relation between the user and architecture”. For him, “Dutch structuralism is about making open-ended building structures by the repeated use of basic elements”. He sheds light on the fact that the way “the elements [...] are linked [...] facilitate[s] multiple uses and future growth and change”. He also underscores that Herman “Hertzberger was the only architect among the Dutch structuralists to declare explicit relations to the French linguist Ferdinand de Saussure and anthropologist Claude Levi-Strauss, referring for example to the former’s distinction between *langue* and *parole*”⁴².

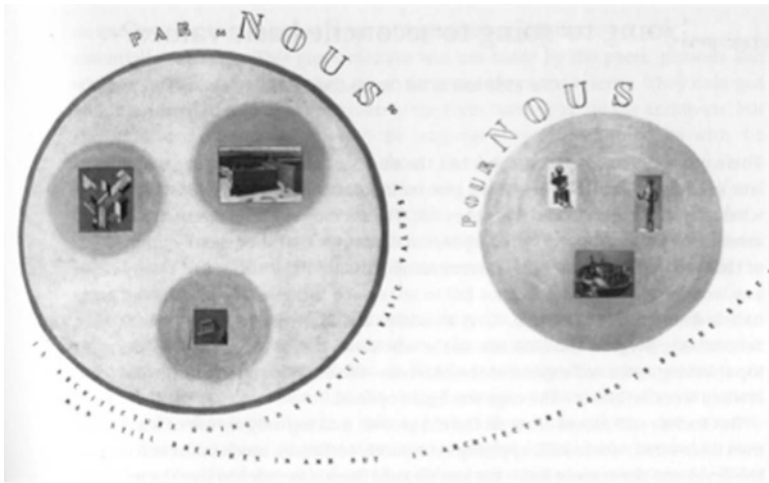
The search for the human through architecture and urban planning was seen as the antidote against the homogeneity and monotony of the universal solutions of the previous generation. Aldo van Eyck returned from his Dogon fieldwork in 1960. What is paradoxical is the fact that in many instances the ethnographic interest in different ways of building and living, as that of Aldo van Eyck in the Dogon, is not a symptom of an acceptance that there is no universal model of conceiving human experience. Instead, the opening towards other cultures should be interpreted as part of a strategy of redefining a new universal model of what is “truly human”, to borrow an expression used by Aldo van Eyck.

Aldo van Eyck’s ethnographic interest could be related to the fact that he believed that discovering the ways in which other cultures build and live could help him grasp what he labelled “truly human”. The encounter with different cultures was, for him, a way to come closer to what he called “the mystery of man”. He declared:

It is possible for us to discover different cultures and by so doing enrich ourselves, not by copying, not by eclecticism, but by more deeply understanding the mystery of man [...] It is not a question of history when I study a house in Ur or a Greek house from the period of Pericles. I only want to see, to enjoy the marvel of a house which is truly human, for each time I

see a house which is truly human, of whatever period, I am enriched. It's not a question of form but a question of human content⁴³.

Figure 5.9. Aldo van Eyck, the original Otterlo circles, 11 September 1959; left: a contra-construction of Van Doesburg (1923), Temple of Nike in Athens (424 b. C.), Houses at Alouef in the Algerian Sahara; right: 3 bronze age sculptures: a Sardic statuette, an Etruscan statuette, a Cypriot burial gift.

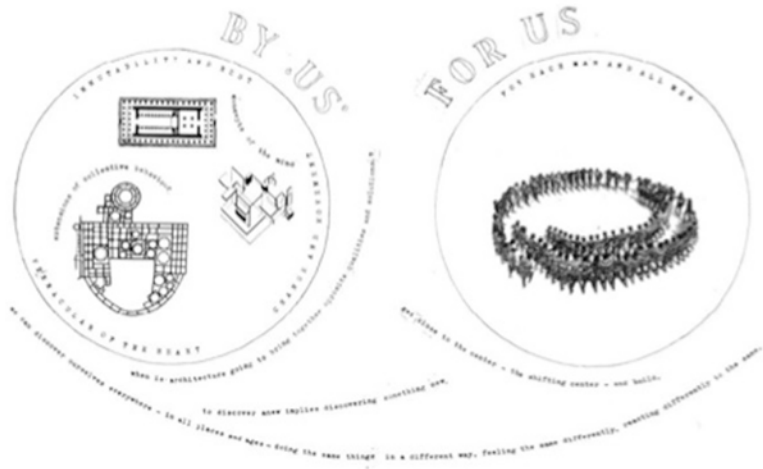


© Aldo van Eyck. Credits: Archives Aldo & Hannie van Eyck architecten, Amsterdam

What attracted Van Eyck in Dogon's attitude was their endeavor to make "the world system graspable" and to bring "the universe within their measurable confines; they made the world a habitable place, they brought what was 'outside,' 'inside'"⁴⁴.

As Sarah Deyong has argued, the approach of the Smithsons was based on the investigation of "patterns of association" in traditional cultures. Their designs were based on the translation of these traditional patterns into new patterns. Such a case is Golden Lane Housing project by Alison and Peter Smithson, where "they transposed the English vernacular of a neighborhood street into the modern context of a high-rise apartment building"⁴⁵.

Figure 5.10. Aldo van Eyck, *Otterlo Circles*, 1959–62. s, Later version of the first in 1959. Left, Parthenon, Pueblo Arroyo in New Mexico (11th century), a contra-construction of Van Doesburg; right, dancing group of Kayapo Indians from the Orinoco basin in Venezuela.



© Aldo van Eyck. Credits: Archives Aldo & Hannie van Eyck architecten, Amsterdam

Aldo van Eyck first presented the “Otterlo Circles” diagram at the eleventh CIAM, held in Otterlo in 1959 (Figure 5.9 and Figure 5.10). In the same CIAM meeting, Giancarlo De Carlo presented his housing complex in Matera (1954)⁴⁶. Van Eyck, through the “Otterlo Circles” diagram, tried to render comprehensible how a balance between the classical, the modern and the archaic could be possible. In the left circle of the diagram, he illustrated three architectural paradigms that are emblematic for the principles of the classical, the modern and the archaic: the Parthenon for the classical, a De Stijl counter-construction by Theo van Doesburg for the modern and a Pueblo village for the archaic. For him, the classical represented the notions of “immutability and rest”, the modern epitomized the concepts of “change and movement” and the archaic was related to “the vernacular of the heart”. What he argued was that these three traditions should be reconciled. He believed that architecture could be compatible with contemporary reality only if these traditions are mutually sustained.

As Francis Strauven has argued, in his lecture entitled “Aldo van Eyck: Shaping the New Reality from the In-between to the Aesthetics of Number”, the right circle intends to communicate the significance of “the reality of human relationships”⁴⁷ for architecture. The group of people who dance Kayapó Indians symbolized the necessity to transform architectural scope in order to embrace the “constant and constantly changing” human reality. During that same CIAM, Van Eyck gave a talk entitled “Is Architecture Going to Reconcile Basic Values?”⁴⁸. In this talk, Aldo van Eyck raised the following question: “Man still breathes both in and out. When is architecture going to do the same?”⁴⁹ Van Eyck also argued in 1962: “What you should try to accomplish is built meaning. So get close to the meaning and build!”⁵⁰ With these phrases, Colin Rowe introduced his text in the exhibition catalogue *Five Architects*⁵¹ a decade later.

Notes

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- 3 Ibid., 23.
- 4 Nuno Portas, “Literatura arquitectónica I: L’Architettura, cronache e storia”, *Arquitectura*, 59 (1957), 45.
- 5 Nuno Portas, “A responsabilidade de uma novíssima geração no Movimento Moderno em Portugal”, *Arquitectura*, 66 (1959): 13–14.
- 6 Pedro Baía, “Appropriating Modernism: From the Reception of Team 10 in Portuguese Architectural Culture to the SAAL Programme (1959–74)”, *Footprint*, 5/2 (2011), 50.
- 7 Alison Smithson, “Ciam Team 10”, *Architectural Design* (1960): 175–205.
- 8 Rudolf Wittkower, *Architectural Principles in the Age of Humanism* (London: The Warburg Institute, 1949).
- 9 Eric Mumford, *The CIAM Discourse on Urbanism, 1928–1960* (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 2002), 65.
- 10 Ernesto Nathan Rogers, “Continuità o Crisi?”, *Casabella Continuità*, 215 (1957): 3–4.

- 11 Peter Smithson cited in Oscar Newman, ed., *New Frontiers in Architecture, CIAM '59 in Otterlo* (New York: Universe Books, 1961), 94–97.
- 12 Dirk van der Heuvel, Max Risselada, eds., *Team 10: In Search of a Utopia of the Present 1953–1981* (Rotterdam: NAI Publishers, 2005), 43.
- 13 Marianna Charitonidou, “From the Athens Charter to the ‘Human Association’: Challenging the Assumptions of the Charter of Habitat”, in Katarina Mohar, Barbara Vodopivec, eds., *Proceedings of the international conference of the project Mapping the Urban Spaces of Slovenian Cities from the Historical Perspective* (Ljubljana: Založba ZRC, 2020), 28–43, doi: <https://doi.org/10.3929/ethz-b-000426865>
- 14 Draft statement for the tenth CIAM with Patrick Geddes’s valley Section, CIAM Congresses and Team 10 Meetings, Collection Het Nieuwe Instituut, Rotterdam.
- 15 “Conseil CIAM”, May 1952, Archives of the Fondation Le Corbusier, Paris, FLC D3-1-2-8.
- 16 Ernesto Nathan Rogers, letter to André Wogenscky, 27 April 1955, Fondation Le Corbusier, Paris, FLC D2-8-339.
- 17 Le Corbusier, Message to the tenth CIAM at Dubrovnik: “Crisis or Evolution?”, 23 July 1956, Archiv Institut für Geschichte und Theorie der Architektur (GTA), ETH Zurich, CIAM archives, 42-HRM-X-17.
- 18 Le Corbusier cited in Kenneth Frampton, *Modern Architecture: A Critical History*, 3rd ed. (London: Thames and Hudson, 1992), 271–272.
- 19 Le Corbusier’s message addressed to the 10th CIAM, 23 July 1956, Fondation Le Corbusier, Paris, FLC D3-7-121-127.
- 20 Le Corbusier, letter sent to Karl Kramer in 1961 for the book *CIAM '59 in Otterlo*, Collection Het Nieuwe Instituut, Bakema archive, BAKE, g83-2,
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- 22 Alison and Peter Smithson, Draft Framework 4, 1956, concept document for CIAM X, Collection Het Nieuwe Instituut, Rotterdam; van der Heuvel, Risselada, eds., *Team 10: In Search of a Utopia of the Present 1953–1981*.
- 23 Alison and Peter Smithson cited in Dirk van der Heuvel, Max Risselada, eds., *Team 10: In Search of a Utopia of the Present 1953–1981*, 50.
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- 31 Newsletter 27 January 1961, Post Box for the Development of the Habitat". Collection Het Nieuwe Instituut in Rotterdam, Bakema archive.
- 32 Post Box for the Development of the Habitat (B.P.H.), Newsletter 27 January 1961, Collection Het Nieuwe Instituut in Rotterdam, Bakema archive, BAKE, g119-5-1.
- 33 Ibid.
- 34 Van Eyck cited in Newman, ed., *New Frontiers in Architecture, CIAM '59 in Otterlo*, 28–29.
- 35 Alison and Peter Smithson cited in Dirk van der Heuvel, Max Risselada, eds., *Team 10: In Search of a Utopia of the Present 1953–1981*, 50.
- 36 Alison and Peter Smithson, "The 'As Found' and the 'Found'", in David Robbins, ed., *The Independent Group. Postwar Britain and the Aesthetics of Plenty* (Cambridge, Mass.; London: The MIT Press), 201–202.
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- 38 Nicholas Bullock, *Building the Post-war World: Modern Architecture and Reconstruction in Britain* (London; New York: Routledge, 2002), 321–42; Bullock, "Building the Socialist Dream or Housing the Socialist State? Design versus the Production of Housing in the 1960s", in Mark Crinson, Claire Zimmerman, eds., *Neo-avant-garde and Postmodern. Postwar Architecture in Britain and Beyond* (New Haven: The Yale Center for British Art and The Paul Mellon Centre of Studies in British Art, 2010).
- 39 Alison and Peter Smithson, *Without Rhetoric: An Architectural Aesthetic, 1955–1972* (London: Latimer New Dimensions, 1973).
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 - 43 Aldo van Eyck, *Writings. Collected Articles and Other Writings 1947–1998*, vol. 2, edited by Vincent Ligtelijn and Francis Strauven (Amsterdam: SUN, 2008), 200–01. Text originally published in 1959.
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 - 46 See John R. Gold, *The Practice of Modernism: Modern Architects and Urban Transformation, 1954–1972* (London; New York: Routledge, 2007).
 - 47 Francis Strauven, "Aldo van Eyck – Shaping the New Reality from the In-between to the Aesthetics of Number", Study Centre Mellon Lectures, Canadian Centre for Architecture, 24 May 2007.
 - 48 van Eyck, "Is Architecture Going to Reconcile Basic Values?", in Oscar Newman, Jürgen Joedicke, eds., *CIAM 59 in Otterlo. Documents of Modern Architecture* (London: Alec Tiranti, 1961), 26–35.
 - 49 van Eyck, *Writings. Collected Articles and Other Writings 1947–1998*, vol. 2, 203.
 - 50 Alison and Peter Smithson, *Team 10 Primer* (London: Studio Vista, 1968), 7.
 - 51 Colin Rowe, Introduction to *Five Architects: Eisenman, Graves, Gwathmey, Hejduk, Meier* (New York: Wittenborn, 1972). Reprinted in K. Michael Hays, ed., *Architecture Theory since 1968* (Cambridge, Massachusetts; London: MIT Press, 1998), 74.