

## Issues of Modernism and Postmodernism in the 1960s, 1970s, and 1980s

International responses to CIAM urbanism and the hegemony of doctrinaire, earlier “international style” modernist planning and architecture: the proliferation of a series of new attitudes and interpretations of architecture, all of which seek liberation from the doctrinaire approaches of the CIAM modernist outlook.

In America, a major response came from Robert Venturi, Denise Scott Brown, and Steven Izenour's *Complexity and Contradiction in Architecture*, 1966, and *Learning from Las Vegas*, 1972: books that reject a purist, “high art” view of modern architecture, and champion the populist, commercial, and everyday main street and billboard as perfectly legitimate components of modern culture and building. The “duck” versus the “decorated shed.” Adoption of looser attitude toward popular culture and past cultural references as more democratic and inclusive, less elitist – even though Venturi hails from an elite background and, in effect, more or less co-opts “low” culture in the name of “high” culture. Examples of Robert Venturi's and Denise Scott Brown's work include the **Vanna Venturi House**, 1966, near Philadelphia, PA; unbuilt project for a **Football Hall of Fame**, 1966. Resurgence of an architecture of image: Phillip Johnson, **AT&T Headquarters**, New York City, 1984, the synthetic post-modern vocabulary combining shifted scales, popular culture, and historical references in the provision of corporate symbol/image in a 1980s skyscraper.

Architectural modernity in the later 20<sup>th</sup> century: the placement of human experience in some conscious relation to history and society, whether as a populist claim (Venturi's “main street” commercial glorification, e.g.), an accommodationist reform strategy (Duany and Platy-Zyberk at Seaside, e.g.), or an ironic commentary on conditions of modern global capitalism. Peter Eisenman and the New York Five (aka “The Whites:” Peter Eisenman, Richard Meier, Charles Gwathmey, John Hejduk, and Michael Graves), who derive an autonomous “neo-avant-garde” architecture that insists on the possibility of autonomous architecture – but in a manner different from Venturi and the “Greys” (Venturi, Charles Moore), who favor a “messy vitality” in their architecture, as opposed to the Whites' preference for formal purity.

Whites' “structuralist” language for generation of universal forms, drawing on the visual language and vocabulary of earlier modernists in the 1920s – esp. Le Corbusier and De Stijl. Examples: Peter Eisenman, **House VI**, 1970, Cornwall, Connecticut. Richard Meier's acropolis of art: **J. Paul Getty Center for the Arts and Humanities**, 1986-96, Santa Monica, California, with numerous allusions and quotations from modern architecture in a “hill town” setting. Compare to the ironic commercialization of classicism in Charles Moore's **Piazza d'Italia**, New Orleans, 1975-79. Postmodernism's serious play and plethora of historical references – “quotations” of the past – at James Stirling and Michael Wolford's **New State Gallery** (“**Neue Staatsgalerie**”) in Stuttgart, Germany, 1984. Quotations promoted in the profession in part through a reengagement with history (also in architecture curricula), and through such exhibitions as the Venice Biennale of 1980, “The Presence of the Past,” in which history is re-presented in a variety of guises by Venturi, Aldo Rossi, and others.

The postmodern turn in Europe: Aldo Rossi's *Architecture of the City*, 1966 (appears in same year as Venturi and Scott Brown's *Complexity and Contradiction*). Pursuit of rational typology for architecture that rejects strictures of pure functionalism; reassertion of the general type versus the specific model to be simply reproduced; reassertion of art's explicit role in architecture: the city in its entirety, and its component parts, as a collective work of art that emerges over time. Rossi's **San Cataldo Cemetery**, Modena, Italy 1971-1984, as one of many reinterpretations of historical typology of forms, historical memory. Also his **Casa Aurora**, Turin, Italy, 1987. Rob Krier and the further pursuit of urban typology.