

Peter Eisenman and the Myth of Futility

Daniel Libeskind

Peter Eisenman's penetrating critique of the object, and of the correlative methods underlying its constitution, opens the subject of architecture to consequences that are more radical than those implied by his previous syntactic studies. In those works he brought the assumptions underlying the making of architecture to the very edge of consciousness, while presupposing the validity of the contemporary image of history that dates at least to the eighteenth century. This image of a one-line history, having an obscure beginning in remote practice and progressing to a happy or unhappy ending through the present, is actually the armature of a typological system in which the logic of formalization unfolds itself as a dialectic of consciousness.

In the present statement, however, Eisenman's discoveries concerning the discontinuity of order are no longer compatible with this view. The empirical facts (borne out by the analyses presented) are actually at odds with a developmental picture of the history of architecture that dominates the public's consciousness in the guise of progressivist, positivist mythology. In fact, Eisenman has suggested that "meaning" does not run along the line of time (history); that it is to be found, rather, in its cross section as presence. As a rupture of a continuous system, "meaning" cannot be apprehended as an unfolding hierarchy but rather as a field in which "outbreaks of presence" articulate a scale running between compact and differentiated symbols. Furthermore, it is from the peaks of a more differentiated symbolization in architecture that one can grasp its more inarticulate longings.

We are shown that the pattern of structuring representation in architecture runs out of synchrony with the story of its creation. The "genesis" (*ex nihilo*) of architecture's forms, the "exodus" of meaning (from social context), the "empire" of logic, the "apocalypse" of fulfillment have here given way to another kind of inquiry.

Eisenman's inquiry—a product of a different trajectory—mirrors and at the same time disillusiones ideas concerned with the fabrication of objects. The entire notion of the development of a historically sophisticated typology crumbles when we are

introduced to facts that have no future. The theoretical axis of investigation has been tilted away from architecture's cultural diffusion and aligned along the "outbreak" of rupture that is independent of human intentions and from a singular history.

Throughout his interpretation Eisenman disavows an immediate order whose horizons are lost in the indefinite. The idea of indefinite space and indefinite time existing in a homogeneous medium of Newtonian cosmology compels us to make assumptions about meaning (of objects) in that universe. That meaning must be covered by an apprehension that goes beyond the limited experience we actually have of them. Thus theories have to be constructed (be they semiotic, typological, or historical) as ideal models of how this "meaning" can be experienced.

What Eisenman shows, however, is that if we can experience a "meaning" through such fictitious model, then we have reached an aporia. All that can actually be experienced in this impasse is the fact of an unfulfillable demand, of rupture—and no verifiable model can ever be constructed of that. History is no longer conceivable as a stream of types or of signifiers but as a participation in an ongoing process of presentness having no future. I anticipate here my conclusion: that despite the author's reticence, eschatological overtones color Eisenman's interpretation, which has shifted from an analysis of what is said of objects eternally to the concrete saying in the present and the perennial difference it makes. Seen in this manner the present work is a challenge to those practitioners whose faith in modernity is only a nostalgia for paradise, as well as to those architects whose political acumen is never more than deferred theory.

We can summarize what the "futility of objects" actually entails. For Eisenman, thoroughgoing syntactic exploration is followed by what he calls "decomposition." This operation strangely reveals that all that was once woven together as architecture's memory can today be released to an idly drifting space. But in this drift, architecture discovers its own maturity. Thus, "coming of age" signifies that surrogate sources outside of architecture's immanent logic have

been deprived of their illegitimate supervisory function. The kind of post-modernity that is involved with transformational-compositional principles is no more than a crutch in the present dilemma, a quasi-sacrosanct absurdity veiling its own lack of authority. The architect, however, must continue "making" even if there is nothing that goes beyond his endeavors. According to Wittgenstein, "architecture immortalizes and glorifies something, hence there can be no architecture where there is nothing to glorify." How then is one to resolve the paradox that "negative dialectics" reveals?

According to Eisenman's argument, there is no alternative but to enter the rupture between the order of being and making. By divesting itself of humanism, architecture makes visible the *horror pleni*, not *vacui*, of reality. The sign of architecture in the present—its authentic post-modernity—is a trace of the nonhuman haunted by the image of its own inhumanity.

The humanism of architecture as a tradition, both classical and modern, is correlative with the metaphysics that is overcome in the process of surpassing the object. The subject of rupture is in effect the surpassing of humanism. One can say that insofar as the architect thus discerns his true authority, he is by this very fact proposing a humanism of a higher sort. Whether or not the ideally constituted object remains is a matter of indifference. Intrinsicly, the architect's relation to the process of making appears now more fundamentally as the original relation that the process has to man: a relation by which the process projects its contents and throws amidst objects. But this negativity must not be thought too empty. It is not, in fact, a deficiency of architecture but rather its own withheld treasure.

Eisenman implies that architects would be foolish to take advantage of this weakness in objects by trying to bring them back from their tatters (in the act of "random, unconscious recording of information in an unconscious way") to a false fulfillment. Ultimately, to remain true to facts one must design as if meaning was not presupposed. Such a formulation reminds one that the initial (syntactic-structural) phase of the author's

investigation reduced the being of the object in order to free the nucleus of its significance. The second phase might be called a reduction of meaning, which in suspension reveals its own inner temporality.

The technique of suspended judgment, which is a trademark of any pure phenomenology and in Eisenman's work is the very core of a futureless present, has "turned" to reveal—albeit casually—its own backbone of nonbeing (decomposition, void). We must emphasize the importance of the theory of suspension or reduction whereby a final term of the means-ends relation is deferred into an indefinite future, be that future called "void and null" or placed in the present gnostically as a process of "future-in-the-present."

Twentieth-century science, as well as art, in mediating the gulf between appearance and reality (substance and process), has exposed the immanent self, enclosed in corporeal being to a finite consummation in which all souvenirs of myths and legends must be surrendered. Modernity on which one can now reflect with epochal consciousness is in the process of retrieving a memoryless past—the perfect counterpart to a futureless present.

But Eisenman accepts his own evidence: What meaning can one possibly impute to a gestalt-oriented reading of structure when the results undermine the idea of personal psychology in the very act of fighting the harder for it? The poignancy with which Eisenman fights the demons of the bourgeois and exorcises the magic of architecture can be measured by a distancing that hypostatizes the nightmare of a time deprived of direction, a time that will bring nothing. Just as Narcissus reflectively sought to reconcile his identity with the world and to leave no difference, thereby giving up his own self, so the architect has been moving toward a realm of impersonal production in line with his criticism of a political condition that makes consumption impersonal and production transcendental.

Eisenman's importance lies in the radical secularization of architecture's object, done not against it but henceforth in its own name. To accept that architecture

is cut off from transcendent grounds is to realize that its meaning is now participating in its own alienation. The "first fall" of the object into knowledge was not its last devolution. It turns out to have been a mere promise of the "second fall," whereby the object itself becomes a testament to its own futility.

That in brief is the summary of the content of thought that is both powerful and provocative. The renunciation of myths and stories about content is followed by a phase in which a meaningless process (any process that has no *telos*, according to Aristotle) undergoes its own conclusions in order to remain destinyless and thus authentic. Since Auschwitz and Hiroshima, the makers of architecture have had to face the humiliating prospect of dwelling in a world where human suffering is mirrored in the emptying of the object and its existence "outside of man's experience." The subject undergoing this process of "futilization" is thus finally made truly profane (that is, rational).

In discussing the immanent logic of the process of making, Eisenman has dared to probe deeper than his own implicit philosophical framework allows. I find that in following the consistent development of deconstructions, he has remained faithful to his own positive empirical outlook while describing a phenomenon of architecture that does not allow itself to be reduced to this system. This phenomenon, which he calls "the frozen shadow of man," can be characterized as the emergence of transcendence within a system that is both hermetic and solipsistic.

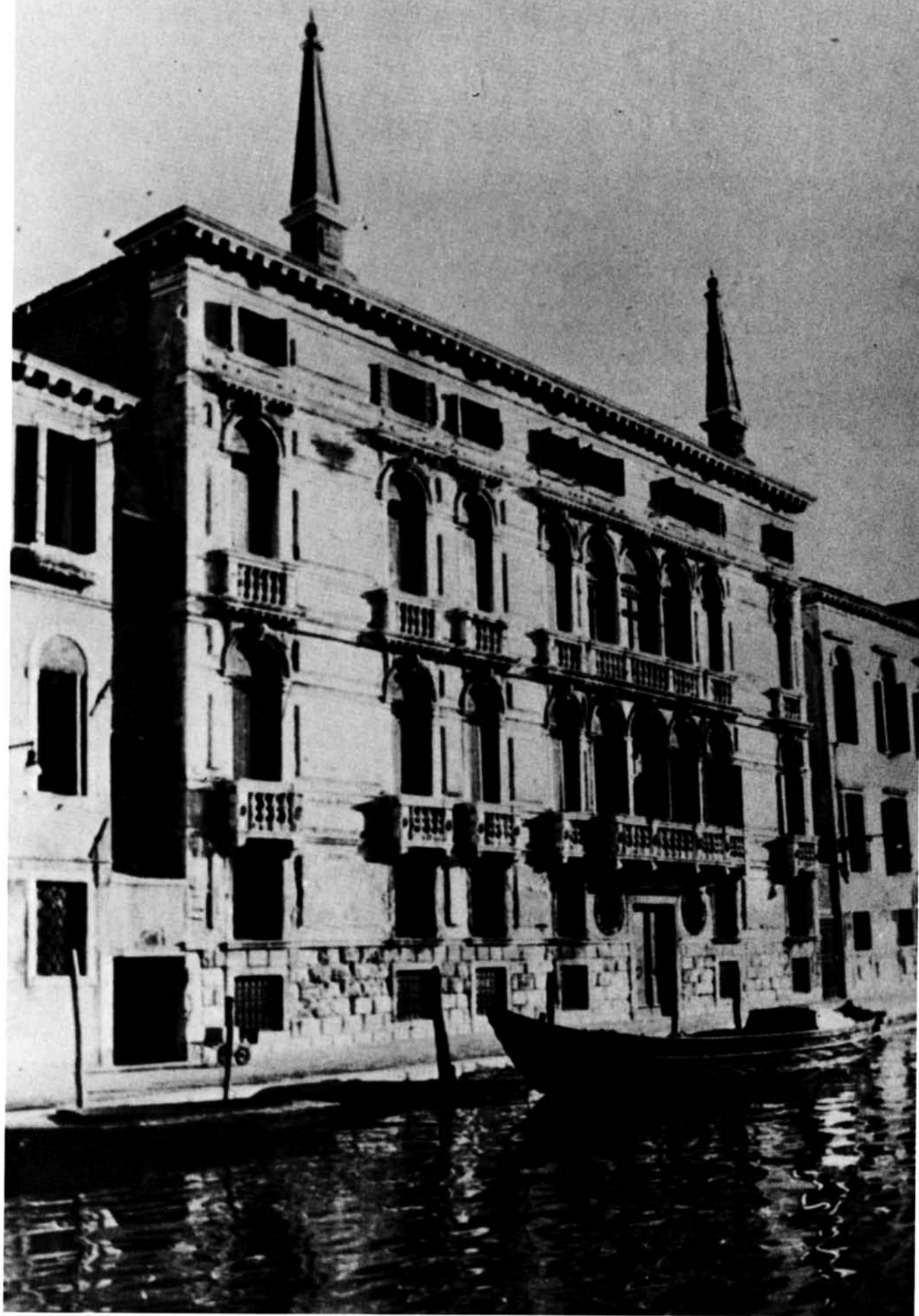
Though the work speaks about the "immanence of ends" and of "the division of the object from itself," it does so from a dimension that is tacitly yet fully engaged in the world. The ends of autonomy or of the object that "explains itself" are implicated in a horizon having temporalization as its essence. This existential dimension is the very core of the tensions articulated in the processes undergoing scrutiny.

One would have to ask Eisenman about the kind of world that would allow itself, as if by a Hegelian "ruse of reason," the prerogative of coming-into-being-through-process-without-ends as an end. What does his

system imply by isolating its principles (which are a bulwark against figuration and subject matter) in order to emerge into an openness that has no retrospect and no fear? How, finally, is the process of constituting an object, albeit an unfulfillable one, to be delimited, if the nonmeaning or lack of "ground" is already woven with all that is meaningful?

These are not meant to be rhetorical queries. Without doubt the insoluble element of Eisenman's deconstructive hermeneutic is the very one that has proved to be the nemesis of all philosophies of immanence, the one against which even the "best hung lamps have come undone" (Valéry): the problem of the consciousness of time. The crisis of reason that dominates our perspectives today can be seen as the inarticulateness with which the overlapping area between relations of identity and nonrelations of identity is described. The locus of rupture is therefore what defines our participation in reality. This "metaxy" or in-betweenness of existence, suspended as it is between the here (now) and the there (then) and participating in both, is the tension that keeps Eisenman's work in its truth. But one can speak of an "immanent process" only in relation to a "transcendent ground." Immanence, like transcendence, cannot be used as an absolute adjective to anything, but only as a correlative specifying this tension of consciousness which both prophecy and philosophy have articulated and whose symbols form the basis of thinking.

I would like to suggest that a critique along Eisenman's fundamental deontology of architecture must sooner or later encounter the fact that the nonexistent ground of architecture can be misplaced somewhere in the immanent hierarchy of being—made into an object. Furthermore, the technique of imputing or ascribing such a ground to an object of experience is precisely what defines a myth. With this conclusion I have come back to a suggestion made earlier that the entire process of decomposition and difference has a directionality and a goal, however unable one is to articulate this teleology in anything but a mythical form.



1. Palazzo Minelli, showing building as it existed in 1980.

The Futility of Objects:

Decomposition and the Processes of Difference

Peter Eisenman

History is not continuous.¹ It is made up of presences and absences. The presences occur when history is vital and continuous, deriving its energy from its own momentum. In architecture the continuity is defined by categories of processes and objects. These are often consonant with the destiny of man: the universal order of man, God, and nature, as defined in a particular continuity. The absences are also vital, but of a different nature. The absences are ruptures between a continuity which has ended and the next one which has not yet begun. The vitality of the rupture is derived from the energy that rushes in to fill the void. In the past there have been many periods of rupture, each characterized by a change in what was perceived to be the order of the universe and in the categories representing that order in architecture.

In the fifteenth century there was such a rupture. It was assumed that through the powers of reason and will man could alter his place in the order of the universe relationship which, prior to that time, had been hierarchical and theocentric—God had mediated between man and nature. Anthropocentrism was a radical change. The objects man made in the Renaissance attempted to symbolize this new destiny. Thus, the form and order of ideal towns of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries were thought to represent the form and order of “harmonic” man. This period, however, was also defined by a changed consciousness concerning what previously was an unconscious making of architecture. This change was first articulated by Alberti in his idea of composition.² The conscious idea of a compositional process changed the relationship between the object and what could now be called the process of design. Here was a direct correspondence between a cosmological change and an architectural one. (It will be argued that all such changes in cosmology have been mirrored by and in architecture.)

Again in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries when man began to study man, he could no longer be said to

occupy the center.³ He gradually drifted away from his former anthropocentrism. This prompted another condition of rupture, perhaps not as definitive as the Renaissance, but just as important for architecture. It was promoted by the introduction of an ideological statement of intent prior to the process of making. Where previously theory and ideology were derived from existing objects, now it was the objects which followed from and contained an explicitly stated ideology.⁴

Modernism was another attempt to wipe the slate clean, to break from the historical continuity of the previous four centuries. Primarily, modernism was thought to be a rupture with the continuity of classicism. Modernism expressed this rupture not only through a change in the object and its relationship to man but also in the process, the object's making, thereby changing its own internal history. The hierarchical relationship between man and object began to dissipate. Objects became autonomous. The resulting distance created between the modernist object and the creative subject was articulated through a more or less autonomous process of making.⁵

While the *tabula rasa* of modernism was not thought to be man-centered, it was, ironically, willed by man; his mythic shadow loomed more importantly than had been realized. Then, in 1945, those shadows became frozen realities, marked forever on the consciousness of man in the stones of Hiroshima and the smoke of Auschwitz. While the ruptures of the Renaissance and modernism were created by man in the eclipse of history, the ruptures of 1945 were created by history in the eclipse of man.⁶

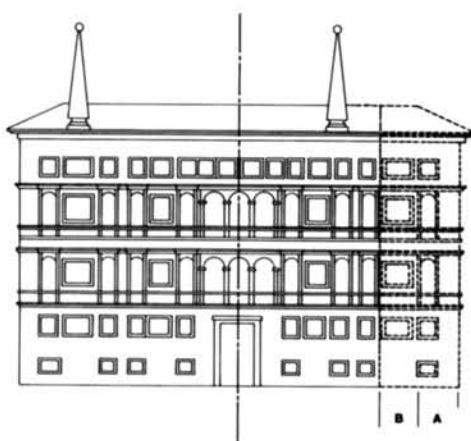
A new sensibility exists. It was born in the rupture of 1945. This sensibility was neither predicated in the tenets of modernism nor brought about by their failure to achieve the utopia of the present. Rather, it emerged from something unforeseen to modernism, in the fact that not since the advent of modern science, technology, and medicine has a generation faced, as it does today, the potential extinction of the entire civilization. This suggestion of an end *in* the present shattered the classical and triadic condition of past, present, and

2. Palazzo Minelli, (c. 1709), front elevation by V. Coronelli, showing asymmetrical location of the main entry.

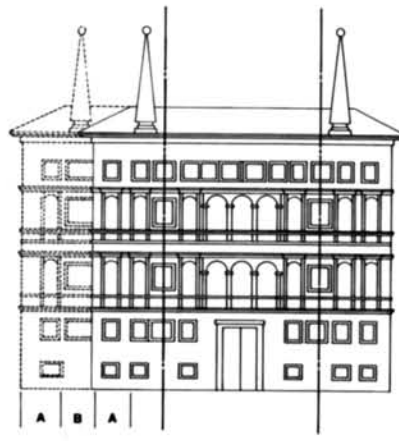


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3. Palazzo Minelli, showing addition of missing AB fragment on right.
4. Palazzo Minelli, showing subtraction of AB fragment of ABA bay on left, producing a symmetrical condition about two axes.



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future time and, thus, its progression and continuity. Previously, the present was seen as a moment between the past and the future. Now the present contains two unrelated poles: a *memory* of this previous and progressive time and an *immanence*, the presence of end—the end of the future—a new kind of time.⁷

In this new time a new sensibility has developed called post-modernism.⁸ In the context of this new time, the term does not define a harmless period after modernism, nor does it merely signify the erasure of modernism and the resurrection of the classical. Rather, it proposes a transgressive or negative aspect which is at the root of its own definition.⁹ It suggests that the relationship and nature of objects and processes sustained by a previous history are no longer operative. Underlying this is another view of history—that what was previously understood as the rupture between the classical and the modern can now be seen as aspects of the same continuity; first, in terms of the nature of the architectural object and its capacity to signify; second, in terms of the idea of the process of design.

The architectural object of both classicism and modernism contains the idea of original perfection. That is, the significance of any specific object is, in part, understood by some reference to simple type forms. The specific object does not so much represent type forms as it is significant of this relationship. In the classical, these type forms were ideal and “natural,” characterized by symmetries, central axes, and a hierarchy of elemental parts. In the modern, type forms were platonic and abstract, characterized more easily by references to dynamic, asymmetric, mechanistic structures than the hierarchical types of the classical. Each presumes that significance can inhere in an object and that such meaning accrues, at least in part, from the relationship of the object to the type form. Thus, each presumes a stable origin of the object as sign; an ordering of signs which, as Foucault says, is a mirror to the ordering of the world and the order of being itself.¹⁰

Composition—the classical process suggests that the ends are as stable as the origins; transformation—the modernist process concerns the idea of process as time. As processes, composition and transformation, in their

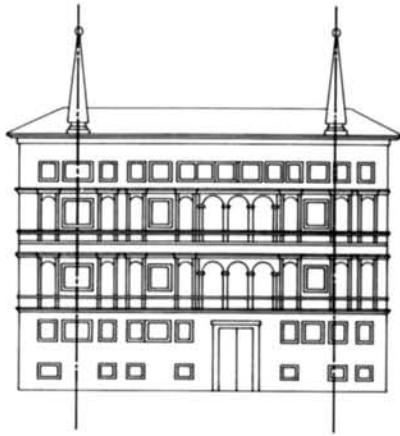
supposed differences, were thought to have defined a rupture. However, in fact, both presume that type forms are linked by an internal history to an object. Both assume that these origins are pure and ideal; on the one hand natural, on the other abstract. The classical sought congruence with the natural; the modern was concerned with its opposite. Yet, ultimately, the abstractions of modernism were brought into an order through strict compositional means.

In composition the idea originated in an order outside man—in the transformation of the natural through an order, or system of rules and proportions. In the classical, a building’s autonomy was not complete within itself; it was related to the transcendental condition of nature. The classical proposed that the natural or ideal order was identical to a substance. And to the extent that this was so, the object appeared as natural.

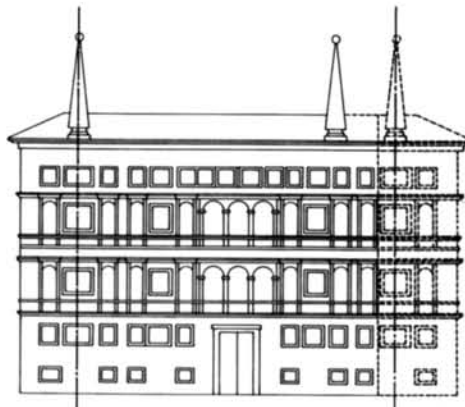
Transformation in its specific modernist sense had no such recourse to a natural or conventional order. Transformation, while it did not necessarily suggest any ideal order, presumed that the significance of the final form resided, in part, in the process itself; in the capacity of the object to reveal its own origins and processes, to register back to an original type, by a kind of reverse mental process. It was hermetic and internalized.

Thus, if the classical and the modern were seen as an inherent part of architecture, they were so through two constant ideas: one, the capacity of meaning to inhere in a form; and two, the grounding of the processes of composition or transformation in the idea of a type. These two ideas can be considered the traditional and continuing aspects of both classicism and modernism. And in this dual sense they share the same roots. No matter what the style or ideology displayed in an object—whether neoclassical or modern—the classical contained an unchanging attitude toward the relationship of the object to the process. So what was formerly seen as a rupture between classicism and modernism is, in the context of these two ideas, now a continuity and, what is more, a continuity which

5. Palazzo Minelli, showing two roof pinnacles as a datum defining two different axes of symmetry.
6. Palazzo Minelli, showing movement of right pinnacle to correspond to the position of the left, to recreate a stable condition of origin.



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7. Palazzo Minelli, showing movement of left pinnacle to correspond to the position of the right, producing another stable condition of origin.

sustained four hundred years of the history of architecture.

Now, if the objects and processes of the classical/modern continuity are no longer sustained by the present sensibility (in fact it will be argued below that the classical objects and processes are the only ones that cannot be related to the new conditions of time), then how does one model a new relationship of objects and processes more congruent with the present post-modern sensibility?

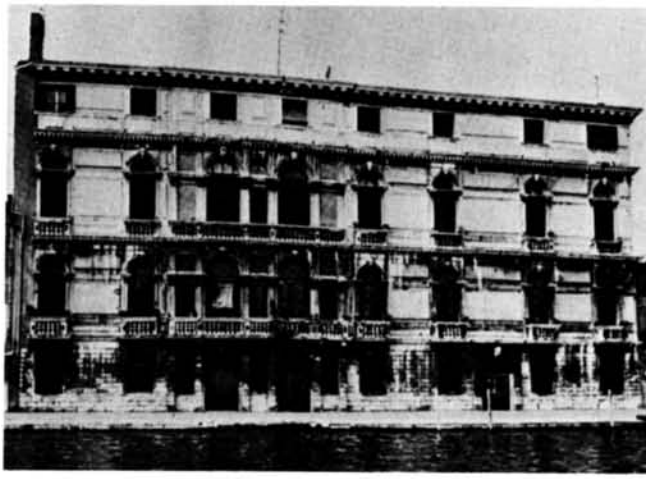
First, by the reintroduction of history not as a merely simplistic reaction to modernism, nor as a literal classicism, but rather in the concept of the negative which is imbedded in the classical tradition, it brings potentially a new dimension of interpretation to the idea of history. Second, by the introduction of the negative of the classical, it proposes the possible inversion of the nature of the object, its capacity to hold meaning, and the inversion of the processes of composition and transformation, thus erasing the basis of the concept of type. And finally, by the introduction of the idea of the negative of the classical the impasse created by modernism's erasure of history is avoided.¹¹

At some distance from modernism, there seem to be other objects and processes which have existed that have contained such a negation of classical models. In their impure nature (purity being an aspect of both modernist and classical type forms) they propose an *other* condition for the object and, more importantly, an *other* process of making outside the classical/modernist definition.

This essay is an attempt to sketch certain aspects of this negative of classical composition by deconstructing a series of buildings which are used as heuristic approximations of this sensibility—as beginnings rather than the ends they really are. These reveal and simultaneously begin to suggest an alternative process of making called decomposition.¹² To begin to locate this idea of decomposition it is possible to propose three categories of objecthood, each of which in turn begins to suggest a process of making which displays a trajectory moving away from the classical idea of compositional processes and objects. Provisionally, these categories,

seen within a classical/modernist continuity, can be said to be not-compositional.

The first category originates at the very heart of the classical without being compositional. This category can be called precompositional in that it fundamentally concerns variations in symmetry from natural existence—additions and subtractions to simple bilateral structures which occur almost without design in plan or elevation. If composition in the Albertian sense concerned order and the making of order, that is, the transformation of some order giving type, then precomposition is essentially the denuded framework of order and not really the product of composition. While certain asymmetries may be present they do not represent the transformation from a type form. Any number of simple buildings, whether classical or not, display such asymmetry. For example, there is an asymmetrical location of the main entry in the Palazzo Minelli (Fig. 1) as illustrated by V. Coronelli (1709) (Fig. 2). There are several explanations which clarify this asymmetry, each implying a reference to a simple symmetrical type. First, the main entry usually defines the central axis of a previous ideal state. To sustain this interpretation an *AB* fragment of an *ABA* bay has to be read as missing on the right (Fig. 3). Such a reading presumes that previously there was an ideal state of classical unity, an order from which this right-hand element was subtracted. In a second reading, an ideal condition is defined by two symmetrical axes taken through the two bays of solid panels. This reading requires that an *AB* fragment of an *ABA* bay be subtracted from on the left (Fig. 4) to restore a preexisting unity. In either of these two cases, the location of the two roof pinnacles is anomalous. If, conversely, these pinnacles are taken to be a datum, if they define two symmetrical axes, (Fig. 5), then two other readings are possible. The first suggests that by moving the right pinnacle to correspond to the position of the left pinnacle (Fig. 6) or, conversely, the left pinnacle can be moved to correspond to the position of the one on the right (Fig. 7), a stable condition of origin is recreated. In each case, an understanding of order comes from the idea that there is an original unity from which elements have been added or subtracted to produce what seems to be an incomplete building. Since

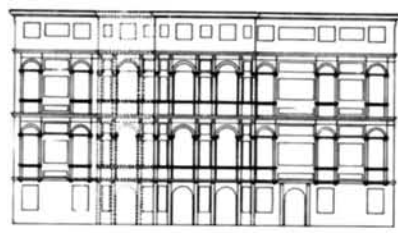


8. Palazzo Surian, showing building as it existed in 1980.
9. Palazzo Surian, showing central element moved one bay to the right, restoring classical symmetry.
10. Palazzo Surian, showing subtraction of right bays, producing a symmetrical condition.

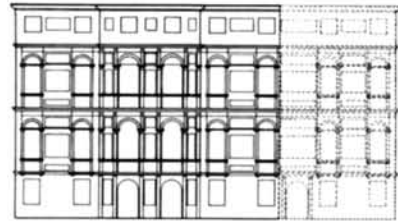
composition in Alberti's definition is finite and does not admit such additions or subtractions, the process which produced the actual object is not strictly compositional. Palazzo Minelli, in classical terms, is precompositional because (1) what seem to be transformations are only additions and subtractions; and (2) what seems to be a type form is only derived from a primitive vertebrate symmetry, commonly found in natural order.

A second category which begins to move the trajectory of the design process away from the classical actually concerns the composite rather than the composed. Buildings in this category, while the result of a design process, basically concern overlapping, the superimposition of two simple types by a process of addition. The result is not usually a stable, finite order but, as in the precompositional, an unstable one. Any number of buildings from sixteenth- and seventeenth-century Venice illustrate this second category. They are more additive than compositional in that they contain and display the process of working toward an order rather than an order itself.

A version of the composite can be seen in the Palazzo Surian (Fig. 8)—a first interpretation, proceeding in similar fashion as in the precompositional, questions the asymmetrical location of the central element. If this is moved one bay to the right (Fig. 9) it restores a classical symmetry. Two other similar interpretations are possible, assuming that the twin entry doors of the central element are, in fact, the center of some single unity and that it is the elements on either end which have been added or subtracted. Either the right-hand end (Fig. 10) is an anomaly and can be subtracted, as in the drawing by Antonio Visentini (Fig. 11), thus returning the building to an original unity, or a similar element to the one taken away in Figure 11 can be added to the left, again re-creating a stable, original unity (Fig. 12). All of the above interpretations are reductive, in that the complexity of the existing facade is interpreted as an irregularity of a single classical type. A third reading is possible, although it is also reductive; it takes into account much of the intentional complexity present in the facade rather than reducing it to the inconsequential. Here, the building is an overlapping of two models, as opposed to the composing of disparate



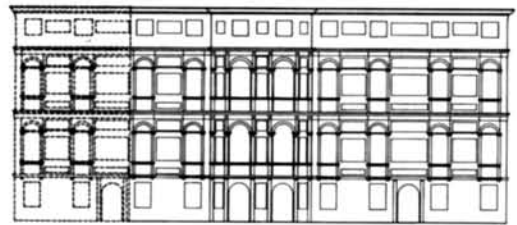
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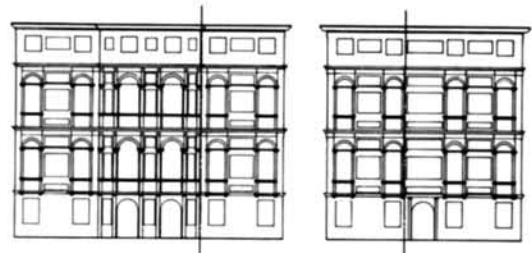
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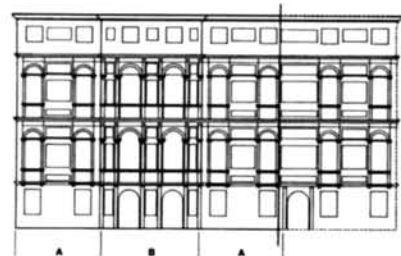
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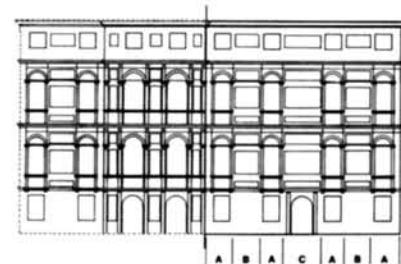
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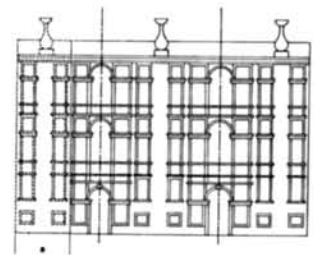
- 11. Palazzo Surian, by Antonio Vincentini, showing simple symmetrical palazzo.
- 12. Palazzo Surian, showing addition of several bays to the left, producing a symmetrical condition.
- 13. Palazzo Surian, showing Palazzo as an overlapping of two types.
- 14. Palazzo Surian, read as ABA type.
- 15. Palazzo Surian, read as ACA type.
- 16. Palazzo Foscari ai Carmini, as it existed in 1980.
- 17. Palazzo Foscari, showing addition of a B bay to the left, restoring symmetry.
- 18. Palazzo Foscari, (c. 1709), by V. Coronelli.
- 19. Palazzo Foscari, showing addition of an A bay to the right, creating a simple symmetry about the two dominant chimneys.
- 20. Palazzo Foscari showing addition of a fragment of a right end bay to the left end producing a symmetry about the axis of the central chimney.
- 21. Palazzo Foscari, showing a reading of alternating ABAB elements, from left to right.



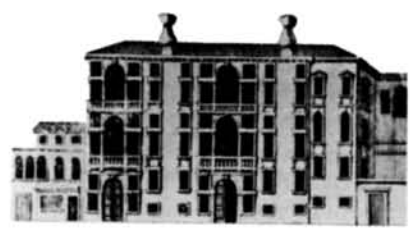
simple wholes, which when pulled apart reveal the collision of two types (Fig. 13). It can be read as a centralized ABA type (Fig. 14) or as a less centralized ACA type (Fig. 15).

In the Palazzo Surian there is no transformation of the original types. Instead of one original base, the building is merely the superimposition of two simple types. Since composition involves some form of transformation of a type to a specific form, such superimposition is merely another aspect of the composite.

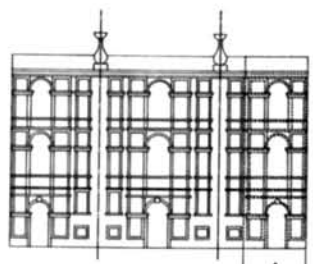
A third building, the Palazzo Foscari (Fig. 16) combines aspects of both the other buildings but suggests a third category which can tentatively be called extracompositional because it seems to be at the periphery of the idea of classical composition. Upon first appearance, it is a literal fragment of some complete real (as opposed to ideal) building that had existed as a unitary whole. This interpretation is possible because within a dominant and classical mode of thought when viewing a classical organization, it is normal to think in terms of classical unity and bilateral symmetry. Thus, the initial interpretation assumes that an end bay on the left was "cut off" to accommodate a later and larger adjacent building. Inherent in this interpretation is the idea that the building would have been something like the reconstruction in Figure 17. In this reading the two major arched elements with their two axes of symmetry suggest some form of original condition. In the eighteenth-century drawings of the building (Fig. 18), however, this is not the case. The building as it stands today is, except for minor details, as it existed then. In another reading a second symmetrical original or type form emerges. If the two dominant chimneys form two dual axes of symmetry, then an element composed of a third major arched opening flanked by small windows on either side (Fig. 19) can be added to the right to complete the "composition." In another reading, part of the end bay on the right (the line of vertical windows and its adjacent blank surface) can be added on the left to produce a symmetry about the axis of the central chimney (Fig. 20). If these were the only readings, there would be nothing more to command attention. Assuming that the Palazzo Foscari as built is the complete and original intention, that it is a fragment



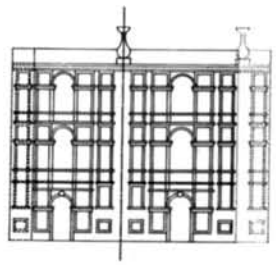
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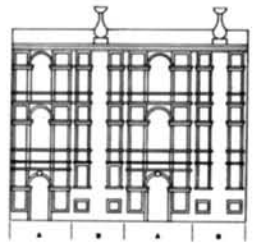
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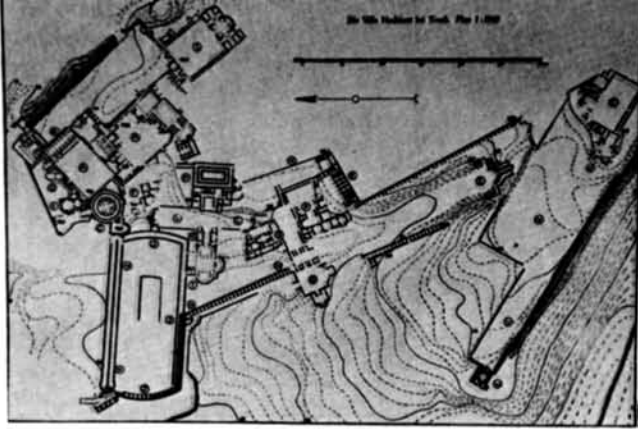
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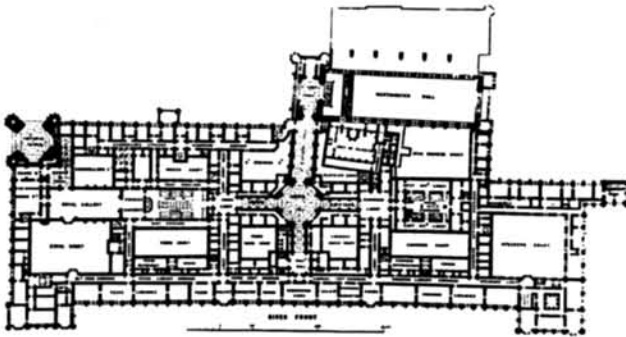


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24. Hadrian's Villa.
 25. Houses of Parliament Competition by Charles Barry.
 26. Palazzo Della Torre by Andrea Palladio, showing alignment of window and door openings.

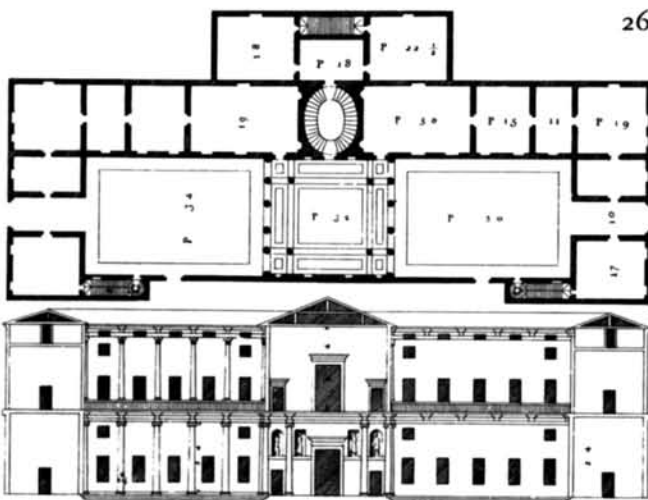


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by Charles Barry, it becomes anomalous but not arbitrary, in the context of what seems to be classical composition.

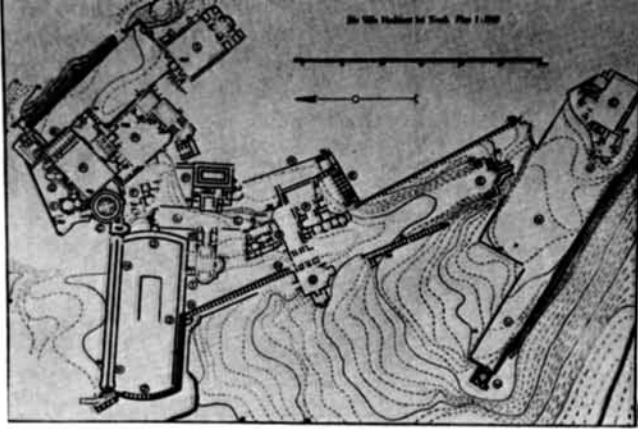
If in Palladio there is an ordering of volumes like beads on an invisible organizing string, and if in Louis Kahn there is a grid of servant and served spaces derived from the functionalist and technological shadow of the Beaux-Arts (which is also present, to a lesser degree, in the Le Corbusier of the Villa Garches), then the ordered volumetric relationships in the Fabrica Fino are neither Palladian, Beaux-Arts Academic, nor Corbusian. It is an entirely *other* order of gridded or interstitial space.

Within classical formal analysis, Palladio's layered spaces are connected by the proximity and alignment of window and door openings (Fig. 26), and the *poché* of the walls define the negative or void spaces; Scamozzi's spaces in such a context become positive and volumetric, while the walls are the edges of the volumes rather than the containers (Fig. 27). In the entry facade (Fig. 28) two segments of space define double symmetrical axes of entry in the *ABCBA* symmetry. There are two sets of solid *A* bays on each end, two sets of single void *B* bays which contain the central set of four solid *C* bays. However, behind this symmetrical facade is an order of space which belies and even negates such a formal analysis. A hint of this is the little triangular projection on the roof line over the right entry. It is not a mere accident of drawing, or a functional modification, but a signal of what is to come on the interior.



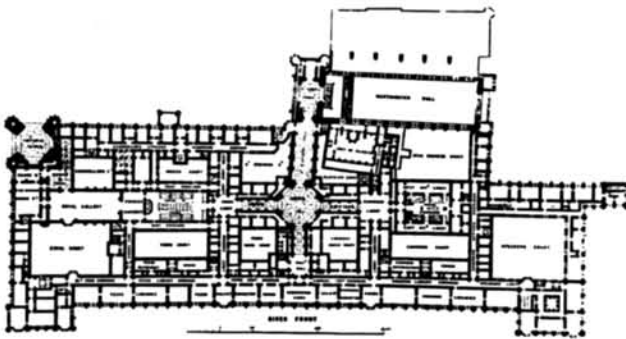
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In plan, in front of the left and right entries are two partial symmetries which take the form of two interlocking tee-shaped elements (Fig. 29). The left entry is in the vertical segment of the tee; the right entry is in the horizontal segment. This is the first indication of this *other* order, understood by the following analysis: each time there is a search for classical similarities or sameness in shape, form, or number, something is confounded. In the samenesses of the Fabrica Fino there are always differences. For example, both major spaces have an antechamber, a row of columns, and a lozenge-shaped ceiling vault with a peripheral strip (Fig. 30) not seen in any of the other



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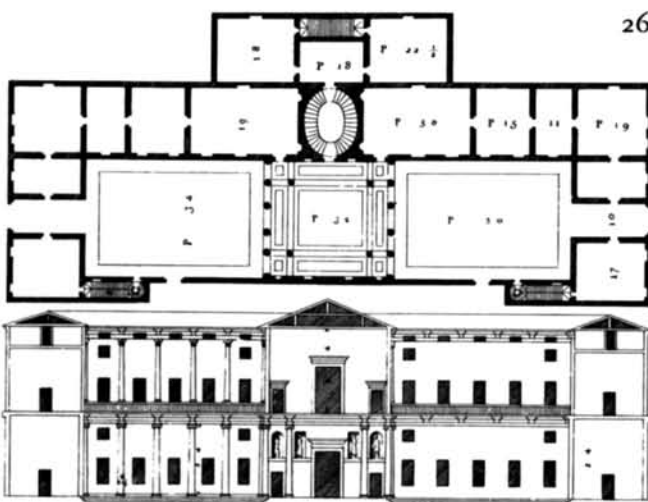


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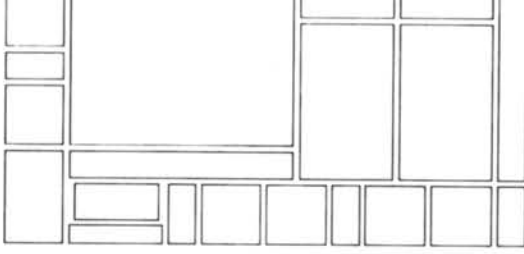
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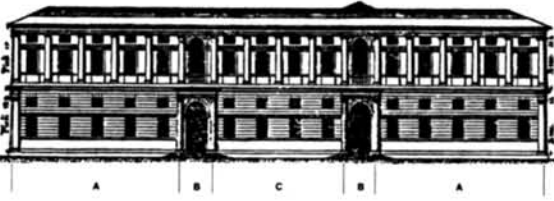
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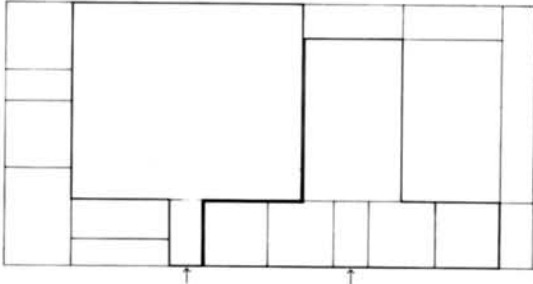
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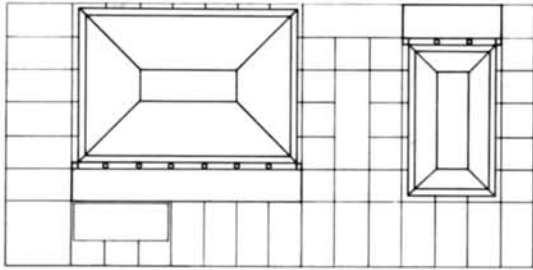
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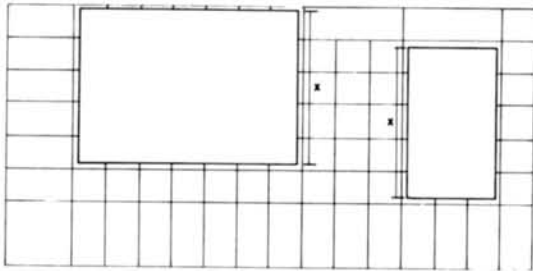
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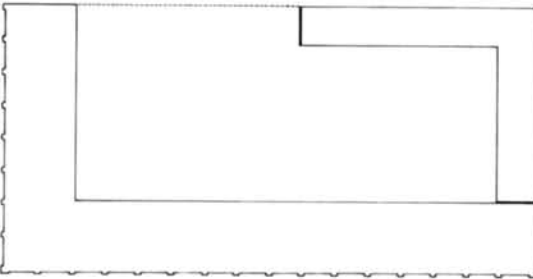
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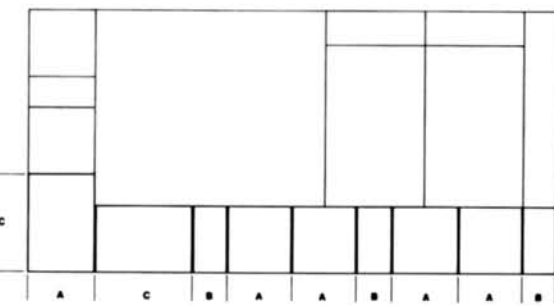
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27. Fabbrica Fino, showing spaces as positive and volumetric and walls as the outer edge of the volumes.

28. Fabbrica Fino, showing *ABCBA* symmetry.

29. Fabbrica Fino, showing partial symmetries in the form of two interlocking "tee"-shaped elements

30. Fabbrica Fino, showing antechamber, row of columns, and lozenge shaped ceiling vault within the peripheral strip of both major spaces.

31. Fabbrica Fino, showing relationship of length to width of the two major spaces.

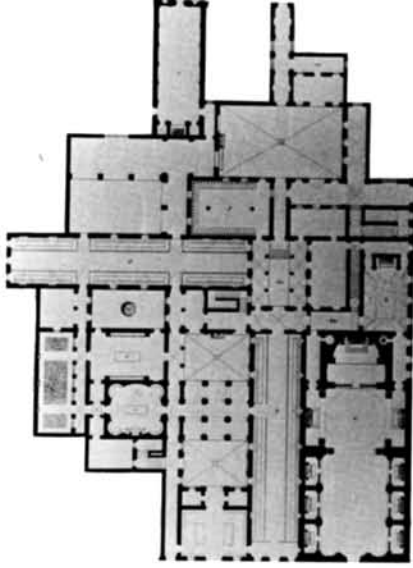
32. Fabbrica Fino, showing two dissimilar exterior bands.

33. Fabbrica Fino, showing irregularity in spatial alternation in front exterior band.

spaces. These samenesses are confounded by the fact that the entry to one is conceptually from the front, the other from the rear. Interestingly, the length of one is the same as the width of the other (Fig. 31).

There are also two different exterior bands of space (Fig. 32) which surround the two major spaces. These function as servant and served spaces, passage and arrival; they are marked by samenesses—central, square, vaulted, pavilionlike spaces punctuated by slots of rectangular, unvaulted spaces. One larger el-shaped band extends down the left of the building and across the front, and a second, smaller el-shaped band extends partially across the back and down the right. The left front band is marked by regular intervals of flat pilasters on the exterior as opposed to the right rear band, which is flat. However, this regularity on the left front is again denied by the order in the spaces behind the facade. The spaces begin in a regular alternation of one rectangular *B* bay and two square *A* bays. Reading from the right there is *BAABAAB* rhythm interrupted by a staircase in a *C* bay and by an anomalous bay at the bottom left-hand corner. This anomaly is read from the front as a square *A* bay, but from the left it is read as a rectangular *C* bay (Fig. 33). Thus, as in the Palazzo Foscarini, the only reading of an order in these bands is that of an inconclusive succession of spaces. Such a reading denies the hierarchies of the classical for a sequential or successional order, which calls attention not to merely size differences between bay elements but rather to the interval, the implied void—that which has been left out—between elements. This alternating and inconclusive succession does not fall within the classical canon of symmetries and asymmetries, single or multiple axes. The idea that the object is incomplete and can be completed by addition of one bay or subtraction of another again derives from the classical preconception of an ideal image.

Whereas in the Venetian examples the buildings appear to be the composite of two or more types, transformations from some simpler base conditions, this is not the case in the Fabbrica Fino, which in its suspension of progressive time suggests another aspect of this third category. The plan is a series of jewel-like fragments frozen in motion and time, in a next



34. Palazzo Pellegrino, showing complexity of interlocking and complementary axes.

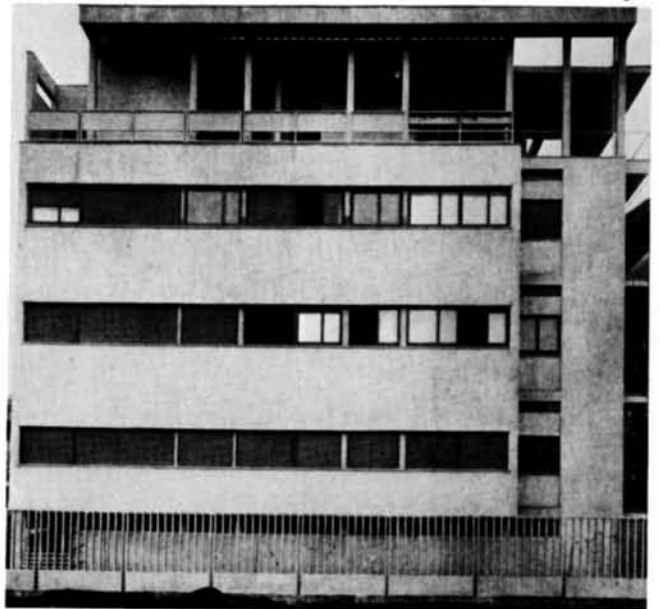
instant clicking into place in some equally unstable or incongruous condition. These fragments are neither arbitrary nor gratuitous. There is a strong sense of an immanent order which denies a reading of the plan as merely complex fragments. Equally, it is not a complexity which is a transformation of a classical unity, such as the interlocking and complementary axes of the plan of the Palazzo Pellegrino (Fig. 34). There is a centralizing, symmetrical, or stable order in the *Fabrica Fino*, which is only fragmentary and does not sustain an explanation of the entire building from a single or even multiple set of beginnings. It is only our will to see order as a transformation of a type form that causes us to see the whole or the pieces as a series of fragments. Instead these fragments suggest suspended "differences"—that the compositional process which controls them rather than being at the periphery of the classical may be at the center of some *other* order.

There is one final aspect of this third or extra-compositional category which can be seen in Giuseppe Terragni's Giuliani Frigerio apartment block of 1939 in Como.¹⁵ It concerns a form of reading which is outside of the classical/modern canon. Initially, a modernist dialogue between implied and actual volume can be read, particularly on its north facade (Fig. 35). Neither reading is dominant enough to be clearly taken as the primary reference; volume and plane coexist ambiguously in an unresolved fashion. While a volumetric reading predominates from a frontal viewpoint, where the building appears more massive (Fig. 36), a planar reading predominates from the oblique viewpoint, where the open corners reveal a system of layered planes (Fig. 37). Such a modernist reading focuses attention on a shift from the classical architectural datum or reference plane—which provided a structure for the interpretation of an object by the observer—to a datum which acts internally to structure the incongruities of the object. However, it is not in the context of an internalized datum (one which is essentially modernist) that the apartment block becomes significant to this discussion, but rather when the building suggests an *other* form of reading, a condition exposed in the unresolved symmetries and asymmetries of the north facade.



35. Giuliani Frigerio Apartment Block, Como (1939), G. Terragni.

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36. Giuliani Frigerio Apartment Block, frontal view from which it appears more massive.

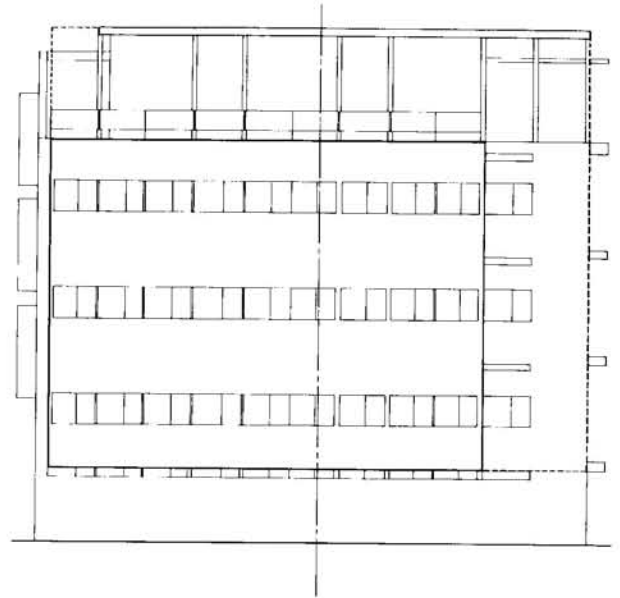
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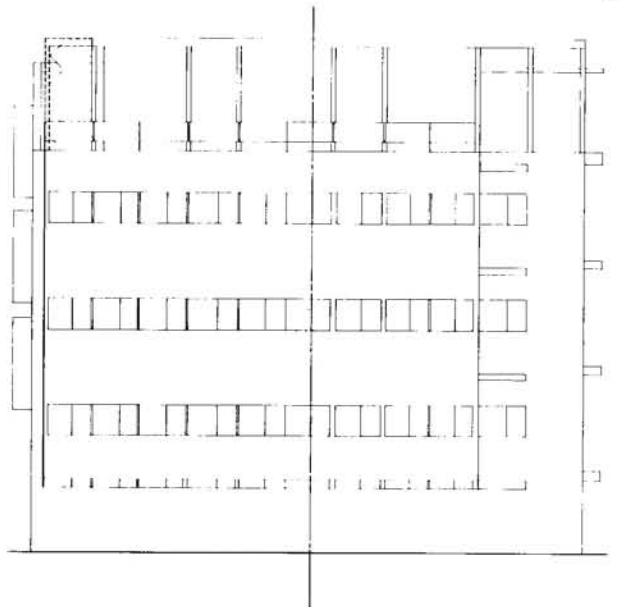
37. Giuliani Frigerio Apartment Block, corner view from which a planar reading is revealed.

38. Giuliani Frigerio Apartment Block, showing the projecting three-story volume as a possible base condition with its axis of symmetry.
39. Giuliani Frigerio Apartment Block, showing extension of tap frame to align with the left edge of the projecting volume.
40. Giuliani Frigerio Apartment Block, showing shift of three-story volume one *B* bay to the left.
41. Giuliani Frigerio Apartment Block, showing horizontal slots in second *B* bay on the right.
42. Giuliani Frigerio Apartment Block, showing horizontal window at the base of the facade as another possible base condition.
43. Giuliani Frigerio Apartment Block, showing addition of a single *B* bay to the left, producing a symmetrical condition.
44. Giuliani Frigerio Apartment Block, showing symmetry produced by a shift of the bent frame one bay to the left and the projecting volume one bay to the right.
45. Giuliani Frigerio Apartment Block, showing *BBABABABB* bay condition produced by the movement in Figure 44.

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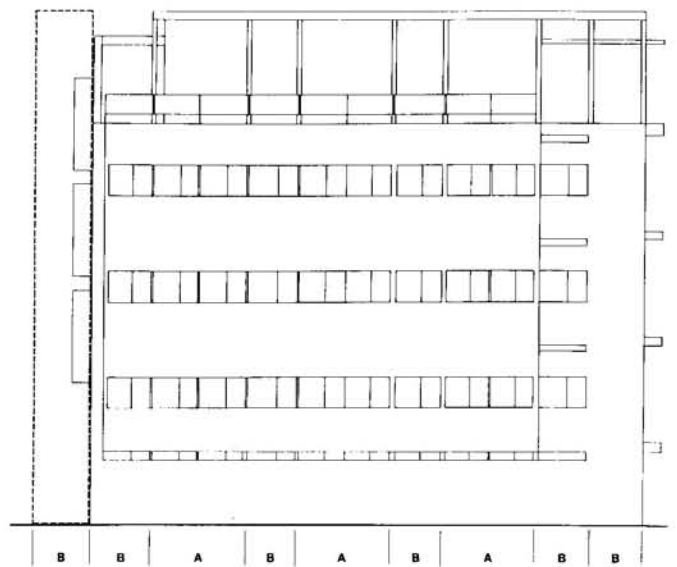
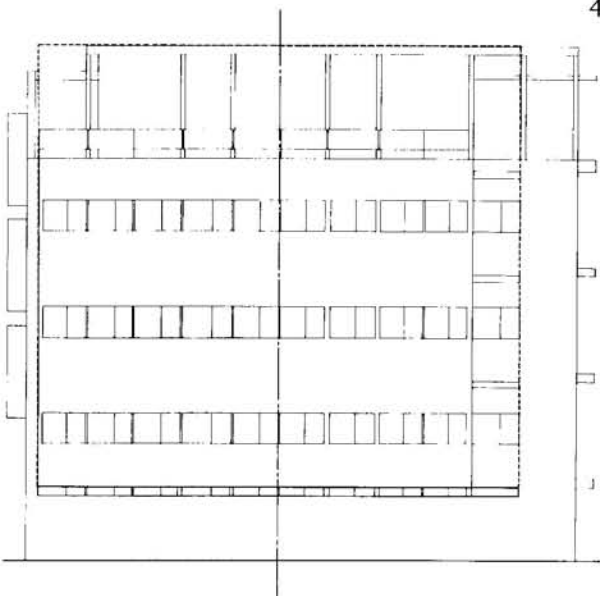
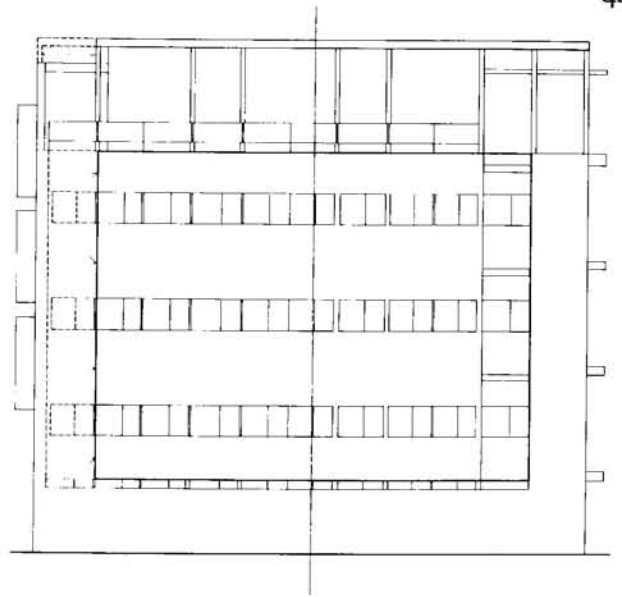
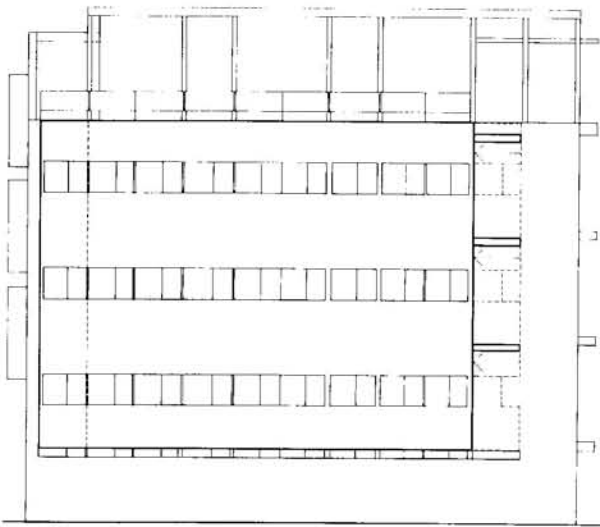
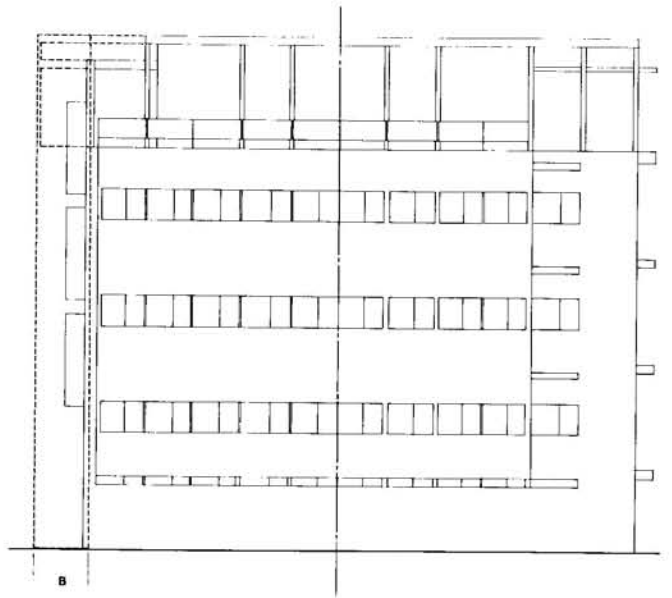
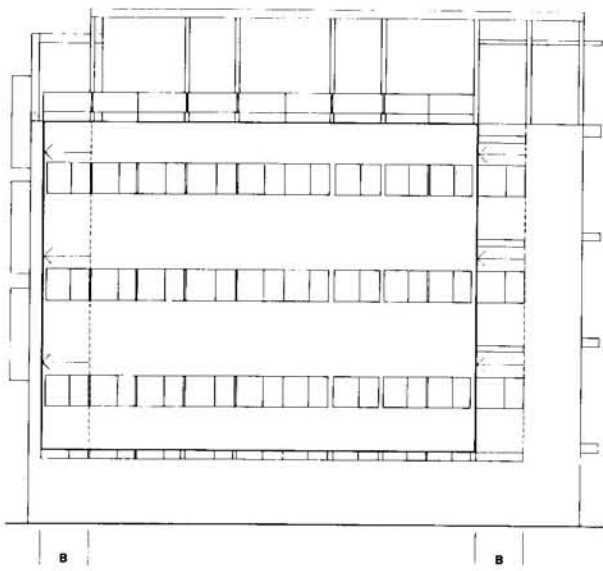


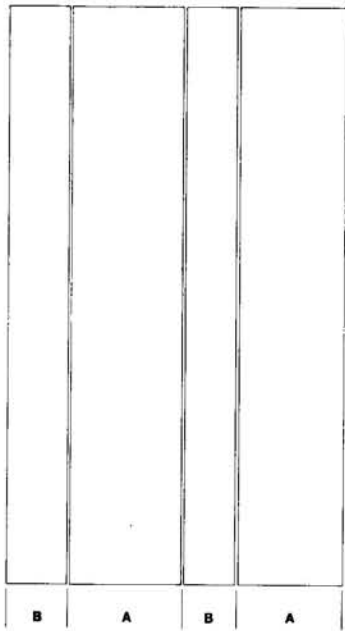
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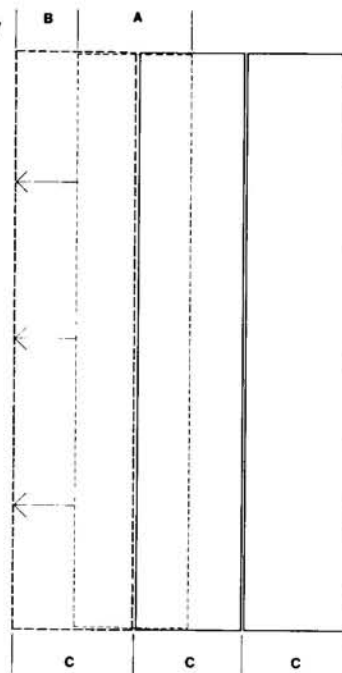
The asymmetric position of the projecting three-story volume first suggests a set of simple origins. In the front-back dimension, there is an alignment of the three-story volume with the forward edge of the bent frame. This suggests an original type with an axis of symmetry (Fig. 38). However, in the side-to-side dimension these two elements are not aligned. To produce an alignment the top frame can be extended to the left edge of the facade (Fig. 39). Now only the three-story volume is in an asymmetric position. A clue to its location can be found in the two anomalous *B* bays on the right. In one interpretation the three-story volume has been shifted one *B* bay to the left (Fig. 40). This interpretation gains validity when reading the three horizontal slots in the second from right *B* bay (Fig. 41), as the metaphorical tracks along which the three-story volume has been shifted one bay to the left. Obviously with a reverse movement, the three-story volume can be returned to a symmetrical position, thus covering up the slots and eliminating the anomalous *B* bay. This resolves the previous anomalies, but again suggests other anomalous readings in terms of classical interpretation. For example, the length of the horizontal windows at the base suggests another axis of symmetry as the order of a previous condition (Fig. 42). Then by adding a single *B* bay to the left, moving the bent frame one bay to the left and the projecting volume one bay to the right (Fig. 43), a symmetrical and stable original condition is obtained (Fig. 44), with an overall reading of *BBABABABB* (Fig. 45). All parts in this juxtaposition have been derived from a simple, stable, symmetrical condition. Thus, a more complex and less obvious process of transformation temporarily resolves the asymmetric conditions as first presented on the facade. However, there is another, more disturbing oscillation which is not resolved by recourse to a formal polarity of symmetry/asymmetry or plane/volume. It is indicated by the eccentric or incomplete bay system. Reading from left to right across the top, there is a *BABABABB* reading, where an *A* bay is slightly narrower than two *B* bays. It is the extra *B* bay on the right which is the important signal for an *other* form of reading.

Usually it is assumed that when a bay system is asymmetrical or incomplete, it is the result of the





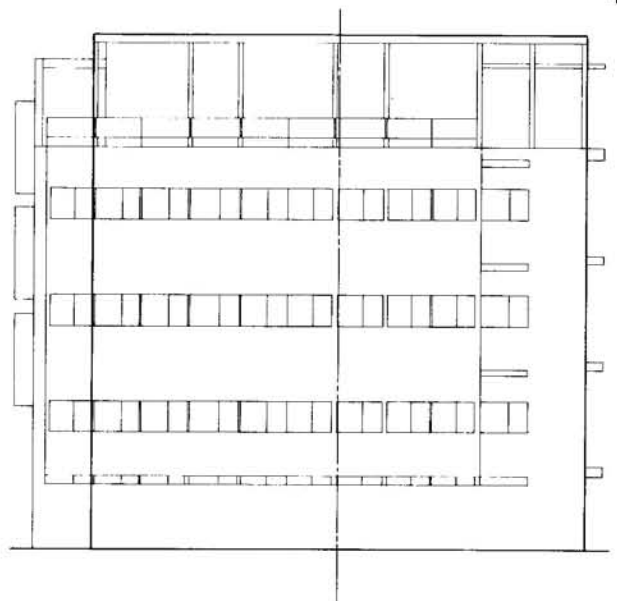
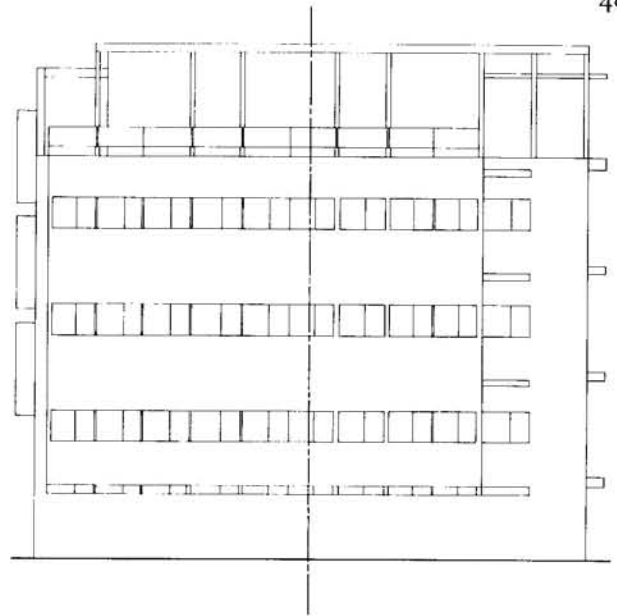
46. Showing *BABA* bay condition resulting from a single transformation.

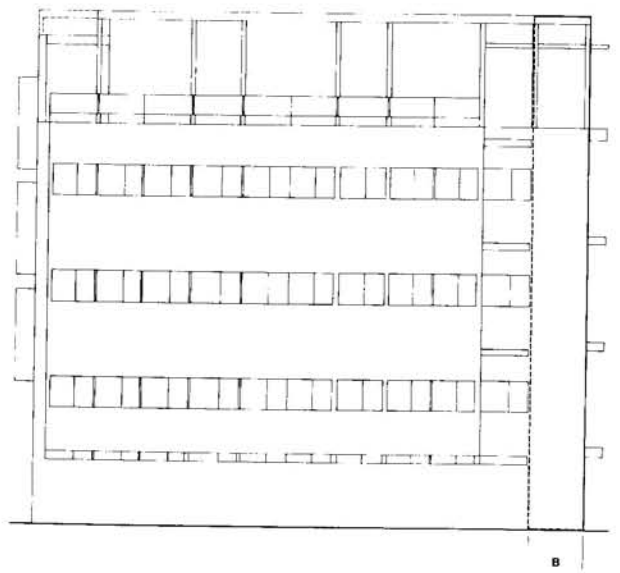
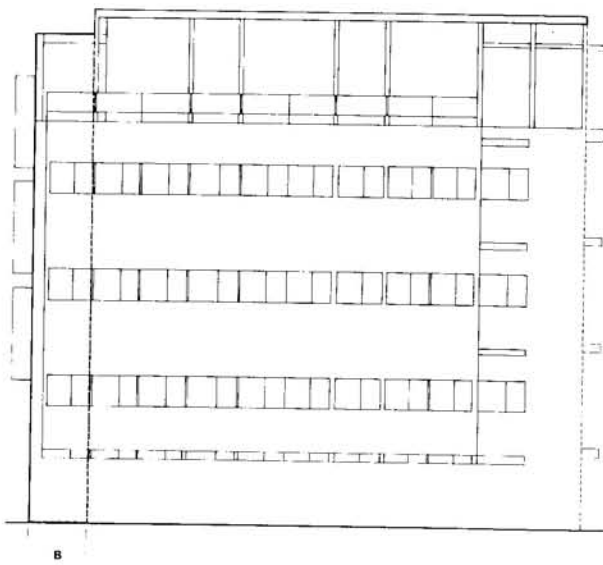


47. Showing *CCC* base condition.

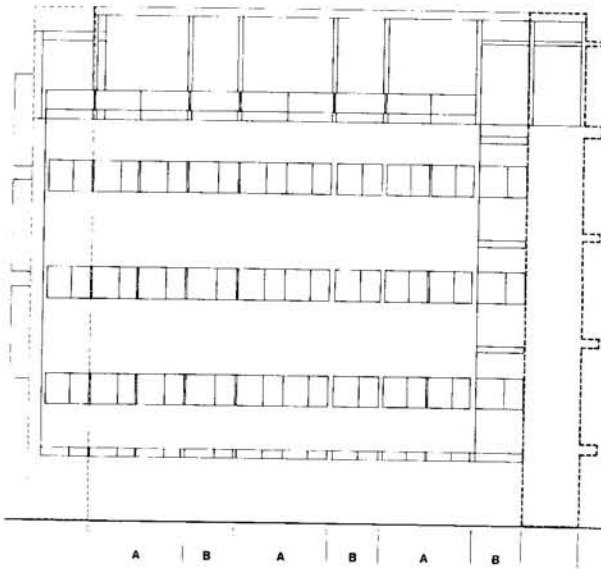
transformation of one or more stable type forms. For example, in the diagram (Fig. 46), the *BABA* alternation can be assumed to have resulted from a single transformation. For if the process is reversed and the *B* bay is shifted an *A* distance to the left, it produces an unambiguous and symmetrical *CCC* ideal type (Fig. 47). While it appears that the complex bay structure of the north facade of the Giuliani Frigerio apartment block can be explained in this way—as a composite of two overlapping systems which will disentangle to reveal a rather simple and stable original condition—this is not the case. First, the axis of symmetry (Fig. 48)

through the real physical center of the facade does not engage any of the actual column or mullion lines. Moreover, there are further suggestions in the incomplete outline of the bent frame at the top of the facade that there are other axes of symmetry which could define other original states. For example, if the bent frame is the initial definition of a former ideal state, then it suggests an array of readings. First, the axis of symmetry is not the same as in the previous example (Fig. 49). Second, there is now an extra *B* bay, this time on the left (Fig. 50), not contained within the bent frame. This extra bay must be mentally brought back into the frame or read as an unaccounted-for addition to the original condition defined by the frame. Yet just under the horizontal part of the frame there is another asymmetry. It is now the rightmost or second *B* bay that becomes an anomaly in what would otherwise be an *ABABAB* alternation (Fig. 51). Thus, instead of collapsing a bay on the left, the option would be to shift the bent frame one bay to the right (Fig. 52). Now the frame is symmetrical in relationship to a regular *BABABAB* alternation below it, provided that the extra right *B* bay (Fig. 53) also can be mentally incorporated back into the facade (Fig. 54). This produces a *symmetrically* positioned bent frame at the top, yet a set of *alternating* bays across the facade immediately below it. Here, then, are two autonomous and incongruous readings; they are of a different order. One is classically symmetrical and defines composition; the other is linear and alternating and denies composition. The north facade of the Giuliani Frigerio apartment block is then the signal and the embodiment of an immanent object more complex and impure than its object presence; it opposes reduction or distillation into something

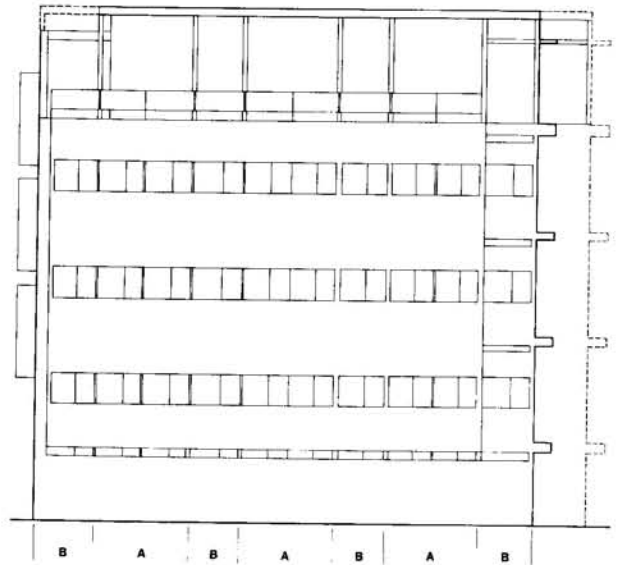




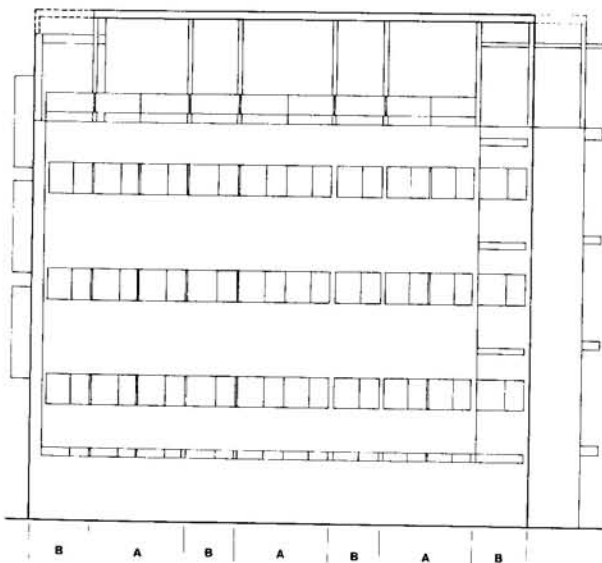
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48. Giuliani Frigerio Apartment Block, showing the axis of symmetry through the real physical center.
49. Giuliani Frigerio Apartment Block, showing alternative base condition as dominant proposed by a reading of the bent frame.
50. Giuliani Frigerio Apartment Block, showing extra *B* bay on left not contained within the bent frame.
51. Giuliani Frigerio Apartment Block, showing asymmetry resulting from the second or rightmost *B* bay.
52. Giuliani Frigerio Apartment Block, showing another symmetry produced by a shift of the bent frame one bay to the right.
53. Giuliani Frigerio Apartment Block, showing anomalous *B* bay on the right produced after the shift of Figure 52.
54. Giuliani Frigerio Apartment Block, showing the anomalous *B* bay incorporated back into the facade.

simpler. The apartment block never reaches a neutral or "zero" condition.

The original condition is as inconsistent and shifting as quicksand, making the object appear to be in flux, transition, or instability on the one hand and tending to a condition of stasis and simple geometry on the other, refusing a single interpretation in favor of a more complex condition. In the case of the north facade of the Giuliani Frigerio apartment block, there seems to be no stable or original condition from which such an internal history can either begin or be read. The object, as an initial state of complexity, and the process, as the will to simplify, are played out in the architecture; they endlessly celebrate a process which they cannot complete.

The *ABABAB* reading of the Palazzo Foscari had created the potential for a new system of reading, but in the context of a classical interpretation, it was an anomaly. The *ABABABB* reading of the facade of the Giuliani Frigerio apartment block, however, is not a mere anomaly of a modernist order suspended in time. It is already intentionally incomplete, even within a modernist system of reading. Whereas the modernist idea of dispersal, incongruity, and fragment is ultimately projected to return the system to closure, the Giuliani Frigerio apartment block is a set of fragments which is fundamentally incomplete. Each time a condition of origin is suggested visually, its resolution in the actual building is refuted. It would seem that a shift of bay here or volume there would indicate a single axis of symmetry, but when the mental move is in fact made, something else becomes unstable and suggests another axis of symmetry. These incongruent axes, in themselves, are a straightforward definition of the idea of difference; they signal the impossibility of a return to a type form. They represent the division of an object from itself. No longer does the vertebrate object represent the vertebrate nature of man. If the modernist object is alienated from its social setting, now this *other* object suggests an alienation from itself—from the former congruence of object and process. It is the ultimate *negation* of what in the classical and modern is a dialectical process concerning the relationship of a type form to a physical object.

In the periods of historical continuity, prior to the rupture of 1945, the extraclassical categories such as the ones proposed above are seen to be provisory and transitional; this is in the nature of historical processes. The Palazzo Foscari, the Fabrica Fino, and the Giuliani Frigerio apartment block all contained assumptions based on familiar elements such as bay relationships, symmetries, and so on. Yet they also contained relationships which seem to deviate from the accepted canon of a particular continuity. These deviations could occur at any time. This does not mean that they should or will occur. Yet now these peripheral or extracompositional phenomena, which had previously been seen as deviant, are fixed and mandatory. In the particular rupture of history today and the break with progressive time, what was formerly seen as aberrant now becomes symptomatic of this *other* sensibility.

It is possible now to look at these extracompositional aspects and see them as something else. It is here that the idea of decomposition suggests itself. If in the past architecture was classically conceived as beginning at ground zero—a type form—then composition and transformation can be characterized as plus vectors from this zero point. In decomposition, there is no type form, there is no ground zero. If anything, the process of decomposition is a minus vector returning to a ground zero which is now in the object. This minus vector is, in one sense, the negative of the classical idea of composition. But it is also something more than a mere negativity. It is no longer possible to return the object back to an acceptable canon or press it forward to an impossible future. It is not immediately understandable how the object has been derived, nor can there be any projection into the future as to what its ultimate destiny might be. Rather, the process of decomposition sets in motion its own historical judgment, this time as a fiction as opposed to a real history, because in an irretrievable past and a futureless present, the object has no past or future history, only a present condition as a suspension of past and future. Decomposition manifests the preserved traces of a process which has no ideal past and a future that is only in the present. In a futureless present—an immanent immanence—there is a removal

of the extrinsic, conventional identity and significance from the object.

In the classical object, significance was possible at the most fundamental level of formal integers, precisely because of a relationship to a type form. In decomposition, since there is no type form, there is no relationship between the object and this something else which formerly allowed for significance to accrue. In this sense decomposition now requires a suspension of our previous modes of deciphering.

In the past, objects in their passive duration have held significance precisely because there was a future which could endure linear temporal analysis. Without such a future the object no longer holds significance in the traditional sense. Since the capacity of meaning to be inherent in an object is fundamental to the idea of the classical, when such a possibility is denied it becomes the ultimate negation of the classical.

The idea of *decomposition* as the negative of the classical now allows the north facade of the Giuliani Frigerio apartment block to be read as precisely what it is: Instead of being an extreme or peripheral category of the classical/modernist canon, it is now the exception which becomes the departure for this *other* order. Even in the context of this one building, the process of decomposition is something far less easy to discern than composition but is, in fact, of potentially greater significance to the present condition of man.

Decomposition becomes clear when one considers that the Giuliani Frigerio apartment block cannot be read as a linear sequence in time. There is no order to its views. They are atemporal; they do not add up; they are not simply the sum of a recognizable series of geometric or spatial conditions. While classical architecture is understood as one moves through space and through an accumulation of a number of perceptions initially ordered by an architect, the Giuliani Frigerio apartment block is about the act of passing in, out, and around the building in a random, unconscious way, each time recording the information unconsciously in a memory that is totalizing. But as the architecture is no longer complete but rather a series of fragments—objective differences—the role of the individual is no longer

discursive. The individual is no longer called upon to explain, as was the case from the time of Alberti, the actual experience of architecture. Instead, the architecture exists outside his experience. It explains itself. But this alone would define a modernist object.

Decomposition goes further in that it proposes a radically altered process of making from either modernism or classicism. Decomposition presumes that origins, ends, and the process itself are elusive and complex rather than stable, simple or pure, that is, classical or natural. However, decomposition is not merely the manifestation of the arbitrary, the intuitive, or the irrational or the making of something simple from something complex. By proposing a process which at root is the negative or inverse of classical composition, the process uncovers (or deconstructs) relationships inherent in a specific object and its structure which were previously hidden by a classical sensibility. Rather than working from an original type toward a predictable end, decomposition starts with a heuristic approximation of end, an end which is immanent within the new object/process. The result is another kind of object, one which contains a nonexistent future as opposed to an irretrievable past. In one sense it is making by analysis, but not the traditional classical formal analysis.

Whereas an analysis of composition and transformation tends to cement objective relationships between parts, analysis in decomposition suspends these relationships. It is no longer useful to analyze the bay and the order of bays—the main elements in a classical typology. The bay now becomes merely a counter in a process of voids and differences. As in the *Fabrica Fino*, the object or nature of the object resides in that process which constitutes its differences—the implied voids between bays. It is a nature now grounded in process, not in being; it is no longer based on the substance of the object. In decomposition the object is no longer identical to a substance. It now resides in how the elements are made and kept, that is, in their processes. It is a form of autonomous making, different from that of modernism or, for that matter, classicism.

If, in the past, nature was summoned to suggest

continuity, now the products of nature have begun to create conditions where this continuity is coming to an end. What was previously autonomous and consistent is now no less autonomous and no less consistent.

Decomposition proposes an autonomy that is as universal as the classical or the modern. It is just a part of a different universe. It is a new naturalness now in an unnatural state.

The removal of the identity and significance from objects signals a uselessness—a futility in terms of its former conditions of being. If the nature of objects has changed, then typical propositions which formerly were a manifestation of that nature can no longer be represented in the object but only replicated by it. The futile object and the process of decomposition are no longer arbitrary objects and anomalous processes, nor a mutation of classicism. In this new time they may have become, albeit accidentally, the destiny of architecture today.

1. This should be compared to Franco Rella's opening sentence in the introduction to *Il Dispositivo Foucault* (Cluva Libreria Editrice, 1977, p. 7). He uses history as discontinuous (*la storia e discontinuita*). The difference between the negative discontinuous and the not-something is important to the following discussion.
2. Leoni Battista Alberti, *On Painting*, Yale University Press, New Haven and London, rev. ed., 1966, p. 67–85. It should be noted that the particular aspects of Alberti's definition being invoked here concern circumscription, that is, the nature of the units or the place an object occupies, and composition, or the rule or order by which the parts fit together, and last, the requirement that members ought to have certain things in common such as size, function, kind, and color.
3. Michel Foucault, *The Order of Things*, Vintage, pp. 344–348.
4. Charles Rosen, *The Classical Style*, Norton, 1972, p. 171.
5. Transformation as a modernist process has been characterized by Francesco Dal Co: "it's design gathering the traces of a now private order of its own original perfection." See Francesco Dal Co, "Notes Concerning the Phenomenology of the Limit in Architecture," *Oppositions* 23 (1981), p. .
6. This differs from Robert Jay Lifton's idea that "unlike earlier imagery—even that associated with such catastrophes of the middle ages—the danger comes from our own hand, from man and his technology. The source is not God or nature." See "The Psychic Toll of the Nuclear Age," *New York Times Magazine*, 26 September, 1982, pp. 52–66.
7. The term *immanence* is used here in the Kantian sense of immanence as opposed to transcendence (see *Critique of Pure Reason*, p.). The term *immanence* as it is used here speaks of a latent but present reality, of an object in its presence without concern for its future or its past.
8. As presently understood in architecture, the term *postmodern* (usually with a capital *P* and a capital *M*) is a kind of one-to-one reaction to modernism. If modernism was seen to be abstract, then *postmodern* is literal; if modernism was elitist, then *postmodern* is popular. The term as it is used here is not so much a style as it is a fact of time, a period that defines another sensibility outside the condition of modernism. Its use here is both polemical and tentative. It is polemically intended to open up and free a term that has been until now occupied by the reaction to modernism. It is a tentative term in that it may not adequately define the rupture that separates the present sensibility from modernism. However, since this sensibility will be seen to be also active from the sixteenth to the twentieth century, it can be argued for the moment that any temporal prefix, such as *post-anything*, is not useful for this discussion.
9. The negative aspect of post-modernism, as used here, is more closely related to the discussion in "Re:Post," by Hal Foster, *Parachute*, 26 (Spring, 1982), pp. 11–15. This negative is fundamentally different from Francesco Dal Co's use of the term. Dal Co says the term *classical* has become "the negative backbone of contemporary developments in architecture." For him it is not the classical that has changed but rather its relationship to contemporary architecture. What is being proposed here is that it is the compositional processes (and not the relationship of the classical to contemporary architecture) that have been changed and, in a sense, inverted to model an idea of the contrapositive. Francesco Dal Co, *op. cit.*, p. .
10. Herbert L. Dreyfus and Paul Rabinow, *Michel Foucault Beyond Structuralism and Hermeneutics*, University of Chicago Press, Chicago, 1982, p. 19.
11. The idea of the negative proposed here, while similar to that of Manfredo Tafuri (see *Heterotopia* and Piranesi *The Sphere and Labyrinth*), MIT Press, 1984) contains another idea. It is more of a heuristic approximation of a contrapositive that will be argued is immanent within any object. Thus it is outside of the traditional metaphysical dialectical use of the term negative. It is not either inversion or against something, but rather it is a something other within a something without being the something; the idea here being that something other has been covered up by our need to read positivity as a dominant order.
12. *Decomposition* as a term may only be a heuristic approximation of what is actually intended. In the first case it must be distinguished from the literal use of the term in the sense of something actually decomposing. Second, decomposition is meant to suggest the contrapositive of composition in the sense that it is cited above. That is, it is something latent or immanent within the process of composition (thus it is *not* composition). It is used in the nonmetaphysical dialectical sense that Derrida uses in his idea of *différance*. The idea of composition presented here differs substantially from that proposed in my article in *Architecture and Urbanism*, January 1980, or in my book *House X*, Rizzoli, New York, 1982. For a more detailed analysis of an aspect of the decompositional process in a synthetic, as opposed to an analytic, context, see my book *House X*, *op. cit.*
13. This is a title of a three-volume collection of drawings by Antonio Visentini. The Visentini drawings used here are from Elena Bassi's *Palazzi di Venezia*, La Stamperia di Venezia Editrice, Venezia, 1976.
14. What is interesting about the Visentini drawings is that their reductive quality does not always mean that there is something taken away, that there is something less than the actual construction. For example, see the Palazzo Labia, in Bassi, *ibid.*, p. 245. In each case, through addition or subtraction, the actual is made to conform to something that more closely resembles a classical or ideal type.
15. It should be noted that this discussion of the north facade of Giuliani Frigerio apartment block differs substantially from my text in *Perspecta* 13/14, 1978. For a more complete discussion of this building, which has been passed over by current historians of the period, see my forthcoming book *Giuseppe Terragni: Transformations, Decompositions, and Critiques*, M.I.T. Press, 1984.