

# 44 LECTURES ON THE 'WAR OF THE ARTS OF PEACE':

TERMINAL FRAGMENT FROM:

INTRO TO THE WINTER CAMPAIGN'.

*(...for "Splendor" turn to the end of Page Three).*

*...If this novel, fascinating, tragi-comic 'reality' of the human condition was to be revealed, and we were to achieve a certain nobility by revealing it in public, then our story must be told. Architecture used to be the medium through which such 'hidden realities' were revealed (and mainly to the 'interior'). In our innocence, I and some others of our post-WWII generation, aimed to invent an Architectural 'Universality' capable of entering the work of Corbusier, Mies, Wright, Aalto and even Buckminster Fuller into a generalised, even 'generic' medium. The effort required that one hunt down every and any attempt at an Architectural 'Modernity' and subject it to analysis. This is recorded throughout the 44 Lectures, but especially in Lecture 9: 'What Taboo?'*

*A semiological level of this universality, as is described in Lecture 4, 'The Great Escape', had been achieved by 1961. While never carried-through to a state which might please a professional linguist, it allowed me what I needed. This was an 'equalised' access to all Architectures, anywhere, and at any time. I needed this if I was to not only decrypt the Medium but re-build it into an effective contemporary tool: a tool that could satisfy the dictum of L. B. Alberti that "Architecture was the paradigmatic Medium of Civilisation".*

*Universality came easily to me. My father had been born in Cawnpore, India, and my Mother in Rosario, Argentina. I was born in Malaysia. We registered the extreme limits of the tsunami of London's capital that had swept Britons, our language and*

*our culture, all over the globe. The Architecture of Mogul India was, if anything, more familiar to me than that of England, or France, or Finland. They were all both equally promising or equally useless to my needs. One of the key components of my architectural decryption of Hellenism is a Vedic cosmogony received from J.C.Kuiper, a Dutch ethnographer working in Indonesia. And why not? Mesopotamia was their mutual origin. My access to these Architectures was through travel. But I came to know them mainly through my slow purchase of over two thousand, largely 'old', books.*

*The 44 Lectures appear set out as an Academic Year - with Winter, Spring and Summer Terms. This 'Academicism' is a disguise. I have lectured only very occasionally. These 44 Lectures are not primarily verbal, or even visual. They are the invention of a Practitioner, not a Professor. I call them "the Practitioner's Revolt".*

*I am interested in the How, What and Why of inventing Architecture in the barren desert of the Architecture Autre 20C. Talking about Architecture is a largely useless activity, as any Architectural Academy will prove and any Practising Architect (what the Savants call a 'Practitioner'), will confirm. The Architectural Academies have lled- up with clever Musicologists, Physicists, Psychologists, Pugilists and other experts in everything except Architecture - a medium in which they have neither training nor practice. They have neither skill in the Medium nor, one must observe, much interest.*

*The Savants see themselves as assisting, in the Marxist manner of the Intellectual Midwife, in what has become the main project of 'Modern' Architecture. This is to birth 'L'Architecture Autre'. I use the French term because to do so is to assist the idea of an Architecture that is 'strange', 'other' and unheimlich. What is desired is an Architecture that is NOT - that is to say NOT ARCHITECTURE as it has been known, more or less, for the last nine millenia. One may observe the utility of a body of knowledge, like Anthropology, which excludes any direct cognisance of Architecture as such. It begins with the promise of an Otherness which is generic. These are the Savants and these are the Academies which currently train the 'Architects of the Future'. Mies van der Rohe advised: "Never talk to your Client about Architecture".*

*contemporary Professor is strict in this discipline. From 'Baukunst' to Koolhaas' 'Age of Trash' is a straight line.*

*These Lectures are, speaking bibliologically, some 500 'double-page spreads'. They have to be 'scanned'. One should begin by allowing the eyes to wander over their profusion. It is why I say that these Lectures have been 'scripted' rather than 'written'. It would be natural to observe, first of all, the profuse (some 3,000) illustrations. Architecture is closer to Graphics than to Text. Architects conceive graphically and communicate their instructions graphically. This too has gone out of fashion with the Architectural Academies and their many Professors who can neither draw nor build - only talk and compute. One might then read one of the long captions to some Graphic. These are all printed in a Burnt Umber Palatino Italic Bold in ten point. They are uniform - as opposed to the Main Text, which is as animated as the page of a Tabloid.*

*The Graphics are extensively textualised, which may offend those who believe, as Le Corbusier suggested, that Graphics should be 'pure' - that is to say 'meaningless'. The text, in exchange, is graphically agitated by changing point size and type face and even colour - from paragraph and sentence and even word to word. Nor are these adjustments entirely 'logical' in their detail. But these 'pollutions' are not without purpose. Whereas I suggested that talking about Architecture was often fruitless I do also believe that 'theory' entails the 'understanding' of one Medium by conceiving of its 'ideas' in another. The act of translation illuminates an idea like no other.*

*Buildings and words being so far apart, as Media, I bring to my aid, in these Lectures, a third Medium, which I call 'iconocrypt'. These are neither buildings nor their merely graphical models. An Iconocrypt might be called, in Vedic metaphysics, Architecture's 'subtle body'. They are images (which proximates them to Buildings), but they are images which have been generated verbally (which proximates them to Text). This is why I prefer to use the word 'iconocrypt' to denote them.*

*I describe the invention of this process in Lecture Six: 'Tricorso'. It was provoked by the need to 'publish' the ideas in JOA's first two large projects. The ideas were 'hidden' in the buildings. I knew that only 'iconocrypts' could reveal them. But how to invent them? Miscegnation and pollution (of the hemispheres), is the norm, integration the ambition and an Iconically Engineered Lifespace the Project.*

*The creative imagination works best in darkness because it has to. What else can one do when it is dark except go to sleep and dream? It is why I associate this WINTRY First Volume with VENUSTAS, customarily the last of the Vitruvian trilogy. VENUSTAS is uninterestingly translated as 'BEAUTY'. My key to unlock this Latin riddle is the expression "Pulchritudo splendor veritatis est". Keats said "Truth is beauty, Beauty Truth". Being English, and unused not to bright sun but to the inky shadows real brightness throws, he omitted the word 'splendor'. Splendor means 'shining'. "Beauty is the 'shining' of Truth". Picasso understood this when he said "Art is the Lie that shows us the Truth". Kant would have agreed. We cannot aspire to apprehend 'the truth' that is to say 'what is'. This is the 'meaning' of SHADOW. Reality is beyond being visible. We can, however, somehow apprehend it through the illusion, the bright imagistic solarly of Art, or whatever Medium it is that 'shines' for us.*

*This was the epistemological error of L'Architecture Autre as it 'Turned towards Engineering'. Appearances can never be 'real'. It shows a strange ignorance of Science that 'the turn' occurred at the very moment physicality vanished from Physics. It was Goethe's quarrel with Newton's theory of colour that Newton downgraded 'appearance' to be a 'secondary reality'. Appearances, especially if 'artificial' and even more artificially 'coloured', correspond not to Things, as the Haptics of High Tech fancy, but to Ideas. "Appearances", when taken to the level of symbols, "lead" as Ricour proposes, to "thought". "Thinking is", however 'subconscious' "always of "something". These "somethings" can be most efficiently evidenced by words. 'Appearances' are, therefore, not so much 'technical' as 'textual'.*

*This is the function of DECORUM:- it inscribes the 'shining' of that splendor implied in the Vitruvian 'VENUSTAS'. I place it in Volume One because its technique must be the first thing an Architect masters. It was the first of the techniques we used to learn. One will never emerge from the darkness of ignorance and incompetence without it. Depiction is a component of the three masteries which enable the practice of the 'Tricorso'. The others are Building and Writing. It is the technique published in AA Files No. 2 (wholly ignored at the time), and used in JOA to generate the iconology of our own Iconic Engineering, or Decorative Surface-Scriptings. Its Emblem, an Eye inside a Mouth upon a Hand, all cut in stone, is on the back cover of this Volume One.*

*VENUSTAS offers the student the greatest difficulty. He must begin with it because it will take him the longest to master. 'Splendor' is coloured Black, the symbol of darkness, ignorance and the infinitude of the Imagination.*

**'VENUSTAS' is a fitting subject for the WINTER CAMPAIGN.**