Buildings and Values: An American Urban Aesthetic

Eleanor Regina Kaatz
Loyola University Chicago

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BUILDINGS AND VALUES:
AN AMERICAN URBAN AESTHETIC

by
Eleanor Regina Kaatz

A Thesis Submitted to the Faculty of the Graduate School of Loyola University of Chicago in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of Master of Arts
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1976
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VITA

The author, Eleanor Regina Kaatz, daughter of the late Frederick Kaatz and the late Theresa (McDonough) Kaatz, was born March 29, 1914, in Chicago, Illinois.

Her elementary education was obtained in the parochial schools of Chicago and Oak Park, Illinois, and secondary education at Siena High School, Chicago, Illinois, where she graduated in June, 1932.

She attended Mundelein College and Loyola University of Chicago, receiving the degree of Bachelor of Arts with a major in philosophy, from Loyola, in February, 1971.

The author also graduated in Interior Design, from Ray-Vogue Schools in Chicago, where she has been on the faculty for over twenty-five years.
CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This paper is being written with a concern for the preservation of human values in a world that seems to be no longer human, but technological; a world in which we have ongoing and continuous construction of variable environments. Prior to the present era, there seemed to be only one world, this was the world that existed at a person's birth. Even if portions of the world were constructed, they were constructed slowly, so that accommodations to the environment were possible, and even easily achieved. Cities were almost taken to be "natural", for they were in existence at the time of most persons' birth and continued to exist beyond the death of all persons. The only exceptions to the continuity and preservation of cities would be such events as a natural catastrophe or the destruction that resulted from war. Both kinds of events were generally understood by all to be dominantly irrational. When such things occurred, the persons whose environment was disrupted were suddenly thrown into panic and shock; but at least the world was recognized to be temporarily unreasonable. Shortly there would be a return to the lawfulness of nature with its seasonal rhythms, and to the lawfulness and continuity of ordinary life in the city.

Throughout a person's life, his/her environment would be consistent and stable. Nature and its places, including rivers, mountains, valleys, deserts, hills, lakes, forests,
plains, were in existence at a person's birth and they [the places] would outlast the existence of many, many generations. Cities also persisted in existence beyond the life span of many generations. Even major buildings, cathedrals for example, would be constructed over a period of time. It was not infrequent for three generations to work on some public building. Public building, once in existence, continued without interruption for generations and sometimes even centuries. It was even common to preserve the remains of some public buildings, while the buildings were incapable of being used for anything except a partial monument.

With the techniques and materials that have been created in the last two generations, the natural and stable environment has been altered. It is not that there was never a previous alteration of environment, but the alterations that took place in the past were both fewer in number and occurred over a long period of time. Recently, the alterations were increasing in number, so that they are quite common. And, of equal significance, the alterations were of a sudden duration. It is not merely that our reflections are occurring at a time of concentrated construction of cities; cities are being constructed today at a rapid pace. Our focus is upon the rapid destruction of existing facilities and the on-site reconstruction of an alternate building. This occurs because large cities now have aged to the point where many older buildings are inadequate in size and/or facilities. The problematic situation is grounded in how the changes affect the emotional life of the urban residents; the changes involving demolition and reconstruction of buildings.

Today we are also confronted with a new factor in the construction of buildings: this is the micro-economic system that permits a small scale evaluation of the financial feasibility of the destruction of an old building and the
construction of a new building. Perhaps, for the first time in the history of the world, we have a situation in which a concentration of financial support has become the major concern of the entire building project. Thus, the new factor in the construction of buildings is the science of finance and the consequent focus upon financial profit. Previously, the profit or gain that came as a consequence of the new building also was social, political, aesthetic, or ideological, rather than exclusively economic or financial. However, in our technological world,

Man has been reduced by economics to a maximizing computer. He is supposed to be concerned only with choices between alternatives which can be reduced to the common denominator of money calculation.

With the micro-economic system, now we are able to make some judgment about the functioning of older buildings in relationship to alternate possibilities and the costs of construction. Some older buildings are quite adequate in the micro-economic evaluation; others are judged to be borderline, they are economically profitable; while still others, though not as productive of profit as would be preferred, require some advance or technological innovation before they will be razed and rebuilt with new structures; finally, there are those buildings that are economically counterproductive and shortly will be razed and have a new structure in existence and operation within a dozen or so months.

This study is not, however, an examination of the economics of new buildings. It will be an exploration of the micro-personal and human values that are involved in this technological phenomenon of the rapid replacement of old buildings with new buildings. This study will be an attempt to explore some of the issues of personal values in a technological society. It is an attempt to raise the issue of architecture and its relationship to persons; to raise the issue of values
in the context of the stability of the past and the transformation of the present urban situation; to explore the relationship between the form and use of the public building and the values of the citizen; to raise the general issue of the general obligation of the leaders of the community relative to the problem of need for stability on the part of the citizens; finally, this study will attempt to suggest some norms that can be used in the judgment of the value of older buildings.

Though this study will focus on items, objects, and factors that seldom seem to find their way into a philosophical discussion, this is clearly to be understood as a philosophical exploration. We will be concerned with values, traditions, aesthetics, personal support systems, and norms that are to be used in judgments. Traditionally, this range of concern always has been considered to be philosophical. Yet, technology appears almost to defy traditional philosophical categories. Herein we have an indication that new aspects of values are in operation in the urban situation, and, consequently, new questions, new objects of examination, new concerns, and new perspectives are involved in any proper philosophical exploration.

Perhaps the most easily recognized area of newness is that a philosophical concern for the destruction and construction of buildings will involve philosophy in a new time dimension, that of the future. Almost the entire consciousness of philosophers has focused upon the present and the past, for at no time in the past have men had the genuine opportunity of constructing a new environment for themselves. What alternate focus existed among philosophers has hardly been recognized. Yet, there is at least one philosopher who has dealt with the problem of constructing the world in the future. Reference, of course, is being made to Plato and The Republic. The issue for Plato was how the educational system should be
constructed so that the most capable person would become leader and how the best minds would be trained for positions of leadership.

In recent years, the German philosopher, Ernst Bloch, has directed his studies toward future oriented philosophizing.

But even though there is at least some precedent in the philosophical tradition for focusing on the issue of judgments and values that are at the basis of our activity in the future, none of the prior work has been concerned with the specific constructed environment in which many persons live their day-to-day lives.

The context of this study is the City of Chicago, and, specifically, the main building of the Chicago Public Library. This building was subject, some few years ago, to the possibility of destruction. The response to the possible destruction, on the part of many persons, both citizens of the city as well as former residents, was spontaneous, extensive, and great in number. Many persons, without being exhorted or requested, wrote letters to diverse city leaders and expressed their feelings about the expressed intention of the destruction of the main building of the Chicago Public Library.

These letters have been used as the basis for our description of the personal, aesthetic, emotional reaction of the citizens to the destruction of a valued portion of the environment. For, once it is recognized that persons have developed a series of expectations of environmental support from the urban complexity, then the issue of the differentiation of expectations from diverse portions of the urban environment arises.

A specific typology of public buildings almost naturally appears. Or at least it appears without complex analysis, for persons do expect specific and varied support from various public buildings. On the basis that such a typology
seems almost to lie merely below the surface of urban experience, it is possible to then describe the function of the public building that we select and thereby explore the feelings, reactions, presumptions, and expectations that citizens associate with specific types of buildings.

The conclusion has two dimensions. One is a preliminary concern for the stability of the urban environment. An attempt will be made to establish criteria for the judgment of the significance of buildings. The criteria will, of course, have to do with qualitative norms and be based upon human values and aesthetic standards relative to human urban needs. The second aspect of the conclusion will be an attempt to indicate to architects, builders, technicians, and engineers, the sort of concerns that must be used in the entire architectural/urban process. The concerns are not new, but here an attempt is made to group them in a way that renders them readily applicable to buildings being evaluated. Also, an explicit attempt will focus upon the values that are necessary for the proper stability of the environment. For only with a stable environment can it be expected that persons, i.e. citizens, will have the proper support systems to lead emotionally healthy lives.

Note

"Not all new things are necessarily good nor are all old things bad." Edward T. Hall, The Hidden Dimension

In most large cities today, older public buildings are being razed and replaced with new structures. Such changes in the urban landscape are disturbing to many of the residents of the city, for discontinuity of environment appears to adversely affect the citizens. Yet it is precisely these disturbances that offer the opportunity of philosophical exploration and an understanding of the city at a new level. There is some clear evidence that different structures evoke different reactions from the populace. The removal of a certain building might effect only a mild response of disapproval, while merely the announcement of the possible demolition of another building will produce a great out-pouring of concern.

Viewed in the context of the recorded history of civilization, large scale construction and also large scale demolition (which occur rapidly) are recent phenomena. Humans have not lived with this kind of situation, made possible by modern technology, for many decades. It is a new state of affairs, an unfamiliar situation which persons are trying to understand.
The demolition of a building disturbs not only the physical image of the city, but also it disturbs the emotions of the urban residents. The daily newspapers report many and various reactions to the removal, or even contemplated removal of urban architectural items. A whole new area of thinking about the city in relation to the emotional life of the citizens is thus brought into focus. We begin then to wonder how the city affects persons as total human beings, not just physical, biological beings who work and live and move about in the environment, but emotional beings who have deep, personal feelings; beings who feel joyous, sad, remorseful, happy, bored, exhilarated.¹ One begins, too, then to wonder about the relationship between the urban landscape and the urban residents.

It was believed that human emotion was only private. Now there is evidence that there is also an emotional awareness related to the urban environment; "an emergent style of social self awareness."² The urban environment, which is shared by the residents of the city, is just now beginning to be recognized to have some on-going and significant relationship to the human psyche. The urban populace is developing a social awareness, and changes in the urban landscape are indicative that the urban residents are quite sensitive to the dimensions of the environment, yet on a level of consciousness that is not readily perceived.

Human feelings may sometimes be dissociated from actions; feelings may be only on the periphery of awareness but still be the generating factor of one's actions. The implicit, covert, and out-of-awareness culture patterns are more difficult to explicate than the more readily observable explicit, in-awareness, and overt culture patterns. However, the first group, as well as the second, is operative in human behavior and when explicated can shed light on persons' behavior. Skills and learned procedures, too, as well as feelings can be out-of-awareness and still be the grounding of smooth per-
formance. For example, driving a car, playing the piano, and using a typewriter are activities based upon learned skills but not dependent upon a fully conscious realization of each motion of foot and hand. In fact, it is only when something does not respond properly, the accelerator, the piano key, the typewriter key, that the item enters one's awareness fully. A change in situation causes an item to enter one's full consciousness. So, too, we can parallel the situation of human feelings and the urban landscape. The implicit or out-of-awareness image of the urban landscape provides the milieu for persons' day-to-day activities. While the landscape remains constant, it is a supportive factor for daily living. But when an item is removed from the urban landscape, when there is a change, then there is a corresponding shift in human reaction to an awareness of a different situation. A supportive prop is withdrawn. Day-to-day activities are performed in a different milieu.

The changes involving a negative aspect, such as the removal of a building, are those which have precipitated some of the public reaction. Removal of an environmental item can produce a sense of loss, and loss is a situation that is difficult to handle. Large cities now have aged to a point where some building renewal is continually necessary and this kind of change evokes reactions from the citizens which indicate the feelings that have persisted within their experience of the city. In renewing certain areas of large cities, some buildings have been demolished. It is the removal of some particular structures that is a distressing factor in the lives of many urban residents; while the removal of other structures appears to have little or no effect. This difference will be used later in a typology of structures.

Urban persons, like all others, develop the self by interacting with their environment. Though this has always been so, the appearance of the modern city (a new phenomenon
in the history of mankind) has given us a new awareness of the relationship of persons to their sustaining environment. Urban persons strive, like individuals located anywhere, to develop their full personhood. The urban dwellers are dependent upon those possibilities for development which are offered in the urban environment. The city, considered as a whole or as an entity, is the home of the urban community, the extended family of persons who reside in it. The city dwellers require not only the physical provisions of housing, transportation, communication, food service, and medical care, but they need emotional support, too; support which provides for aesthetic needs, for the development of creativity, support which enables human beings to become more truly persons. Persons need cultural nourishment from the urban landscape. For them, the landscape needs to be more than just a silhouette of architectural shapes. It has to have some richness of meaning. In addition to forming an orderly pattern for way-finding and orientation, buildings can maintain the cultural heritage of an urban area; they can be records of the history of the city and the accomplishments of persons; they can be the means of offering possibilities for the continuing human development of personhood. Just as a residential structure is only a house when it is built, but the family makes the structure a home, so too the public experiences with particular buildings seem to take these urban structures out of the category of merely being part of an identifiable environment and make the buildings bearers of supportive relationships. The city is only an architectural framework unless it becomes the container, the bearer of supportive symbols. Buildings that sustain memories and associations, that yield aesthetic enjoyment, and that strengthen one's identity, all convert abstract structures into a sustaining environment. The emotional support within a family group, not the financial provisions, constitutes a home. Likewise, meaningful architectural structures can provide emotional support for the
Frequently, however, the current city landscapes are planned largely by calculating the cost in dollars and cents for the urban space that is both limited and scarce. Yet this is done without consideration for human values and human emotions. Often the planners have been forced, by financial competitive pressures, to be indifferent to the human dimension. Buildings constructed primarily from a sole perspective of economic concern usually are unable to take account of the human concerns of the occupants or the citizens who inhabit urban space.

It is not being suggested that economic planning be ignored, but that the exclusive economic perspective also take account of such things as the emotional support and the cultural nutrient which persons need in the urban landscape; the urban environment needs meaningful structures to which the citizen can relate warmly or respond aesthetically.

The demolition, then, of those public buildings with which persons have formed a deep public relationship, means the loss of familiar objects, the loss of part of the supportive urban landscape, that portion of the urban landscape that has enabled them to develop their selfhood. Each person relates in his own way to the urban environment, and draws from it the sustenance he needs for his day-to-day living in the urban community. When part of that environment is removed, there is a lessening of ties with the landscape, a diminishing of response to one's surroundings. Thus, we are aware that the environment of the city affects persons' lives in supportive, though diverse, ways.

A building can be a landmark or a guide post which reinforces one's sense of direction. One feels reassured in his travels when oriented toward a certain structure. For example, a glance from a bus window will indicate to one that
he still has a distance to travel, or that he is nearing his destination. Frequently, this sign post or indicator is a familiar building. Removal of that certain building, which serves as a physical landmark, diminishes one's sense of security and one looks for another guide post to reaffirm his direction. Familiar buildings along one's route can be reassuring objects.

A sense of direction and order is necessary for everyday living, no matter how simple or complex one's daily tasks may be. To become confused, disoriented, or lost, for even a brief time, is a disturbing situation. One must have the reassuring feeling of being "located" in his environment before he can accomplish even a simple task. A sense of order is a necessary ingredient for human living. Disorientation and chaos engender unreasonableness.6

It is a primordial fact that human beings have to find some pattern in their environment in order to be able to function at all. Whether it is primitive man in a prehistoric universe, or the first English colonists arriving on uncharted American forest land, or twentieth century persons in the complex surroundings of a large city, it is necessary that persons establish some meaningful relationship with their environment. Each person structures his surroundings in a way that is meaningful for him, but the need to structure it is fundamental. One must have a sense of direction, one must be oriented to his surroundings in order to function.7

In a natural environment, hills, valleys, rocks, ponds, rivers, trees, the sun by day and the stars by night, all can serve as indicators. In an urban environment, the architectural structures serve as way-finders. But a building can be more than a reassuring landmark. It can contribute to one's appreciation of the landscape. The form of the building can add beauty to the environment and thus provide a source of pleasure for the urbanite. A building can enhance one's day-
to-day living by providing a pleasing object to perceive; something that is pleasant and supportive and even produces a feeling of exhilaration.

A building can have still additional meaning for persons. To many city dwellers, a building may represent a segment of civic history, a record of civic culture. Structures are built for certain functions, at different times; they are constructed in various architectural styles and with different ornamentations. Buildings are records (in stone, steel, and marble) of activities and attitudes of different persons who live during different eras. They are part of the records of a community and its accomplishments, as well as its feelings, beliefs, and even values. Knowledge of the history of a certain structure (its design, its purpose, the name of the architect, perhaps even having a parent or relative who worked on the building) gives one a sense of emotional security by fostering a warm and meaningful relationship of identity to the structure. Even though responses to historical structures can change over two or more generations, they still retain a symbolic identity for even partially diverse shared feelings.

Knowledge of a structure can be a basis for communication with others, in relation to the building itself and also in relation to the urban landscape, of which the building forms a part. For example, the Water Tower in Chicago, which survived the devastating city fire of 1871, is a cherished landmark. It still conveys the idea of survival of a great catastrophe and the phoenix-like determination to raise up, from the ashes, an even greater city. Many young persons, today, are interested to know more about this segment of urban history as symbolized by this structure. They inquire about its original function, and exchange ideas about its subsequent significance. We can observe, then, that buildings can be supportive to the urbanite, both perceptually and
emotionally. Buildings can have the quality of making one feel more "at home" in the city. But, in order to contribute a home-like element to the urban environment, a building must have some quality which elicits a response from persons. In order to establish a relationship, there must be not only the out-going attitude and feeling of a human subject, but there must be something evocative in the object toward which one's feeling is directed. In a sense, there is a reciprocity, even though the object be inanimate. 8

Perhaps an example of a natural phenomenon will clarify two different kinds of relationship. In our technological era, the moon has become an object of scientific research. Relationship with it has been mathematically computed and scientifically experienced. The moon has been approached and actually reached by acting precisely, specifically, and under the most rigidly controlled and mechanized conditions. This relationship to the moon is a cold, awesome, mechanical experience.

However, for centuries, romanticists have approached the moon through song and story. The moon has elicited lyrical music and romantic visions. Human hearts have poured out their innermost feelings and directed them toward or about this silvery glowing moon, unhampered by expensive hardware. Human beings have related freely, spontaneously, warmly, and joyously to the same cosmological object that the scientists view as a thing to be computerized. Both approaches are real; we have ample evidence of both. On the one hand, the relationship is cold and calculating, merely using the object for mathematical formulae. Over against this situation, we have the warm, human relationship; an out-pouring of feeling and emotion.

And, so it can be with buildings, too. Many of our urban structures are merely useful, in a mechanical, routine way. There is no feeling of affection for those structures;
persons experience these buildings as things, cold and sometimes oppressive things, things to be used. However, there are some buildings which evoke a warm, human response; buildings to which persons relate meaningfully. These latter buildings have accrued pleasant associations and memories; they have become symbols of eras and events. These are the buildings which elicit an out-pouring of human feelings, the buildings which are supportive to persons, the buildings which make the city more "home-like." 9

So, the removal of an older structure, which has been meaningful in the lives of persons, can produce a sense of loss, whether it be the loss of a familiar landmark, the loss of an aesthetic form, or the loss of a segment of the history and culture of the city. Loss is the severance of a relationship; a separation of a subject from an object to which it has formed an attachment. A lengthy association with an object may produce a strong attachment which is painful to disrupt. Admiration, affection, and joy are some of the deep personal feelings that strengthen this attachment or relationship. Added to these emotions (and reinforcing the strong tie) are the memories of pleasant experiences in relationship to the structure. Considering these warm, human connections to an architectural structure, one begins to be aware of the distress that can be produced by its removal. Loss produces a longing, or a searching for replacement of the lost object. If none is available, there is still need for comfort or assuagement. New objects do not come equipped with past experiences and supportive memories; these are qualities that accrue to an object through long association. It takes time to build a meaningful relationship. Regardless of the specific or detailed personal responses educed by major changes in the urban landscape, we are now beginning to recognize that these major changes do adversely affect persons.
However, in order to replace the aging urban structures with newer buildings having more adequate facilities for the purposes they are meant to serve, and also with buildings that produce greater economic return, the removal of some older buildings is inevitable. The number of inhabitants increases, but the amount of land remains the same. The limitation of land is a major factor contributing to the urban problem, which can be restated thus: in a large city, under what conditions is it feasible to retain some of the older buildings, which ones, and how many? Which older buildings will contribute most to the well-being of the community; to the common good of all the residents of the city? What kinds of structures are most meaningful to persons?

Earlier, we called attention to the fact that different buildings evoke different responses from the people; different buildings mean different things to different persons. The impending demolition of some structures elicits only mild reactions, while the imminent razing of another building precipitates vigorous response from the community. This situation leads us to wonder "how" persons relate to different architectural structures, and what are the different relationships established with particular buildings? Why do reactions vary so widely? In what ways does the urban landscape affect the residents of a large city?

The urban landscape is largely an architectural environment, by and large it is a man-made environment. Yet many persons are born into an already-made environment of a city as if it had always existed. Persons are aware of many buildings as they travel about the city, many of which they see only as exterior surfaces; in the case of others, they know of interior surfaces. Some buildings enter into one's experience slightly, if at all. Other buildings can even become part of the urban environment that contributes to the specific development of
individuals. Persons experience a far greater number of buildings in a distant, perceptual way than they experience directly and intimately. For example, individuals observe, sometimes only vaguely, and at other times more clearly and distinctly, many buildings they pass by every day. A perceptual experience may be only a useful glance at a landmark for purposes of orientation; just a reassuring glance to ascertain one's location or a recognizable environment. Or, the perceptual experience may not be a practical one, but rather an aesthetic one, an emotionally rewarding view of a pleasing structure. For example, the fluid lines of contour, the balancing of segments creating an interesting silhouette, or the contrast of sculptured area and plain surface are different ways in which a building can be interesting and pleasing to observe. A pleasing configuration of building materials provides some beauty in the urban landscape. Conversely, one withdraws his glance from unpleasant structures, such as buildings in shabby or neglected condition. Also, there are the seemingly endless, repetitive high walls of glass and steel with no apparent differentiation. These buildings, when unrelieved by some contrast or ornamentation, produce an apathy resulting from generalized boredom; a feeling of boredom produced by the monotony of singleness of environment. In addition to being negatively aesthetic, a group of undifferentiated buildings is a weak landmark because it lacks a significant indicator whereby a person can establish his location. A person becomes lost in a milieu of repetitive structures. Where many buildings look alike, it is difficult to find a specific location. Though the entire configuration may be supportive by way of being an habitual environment, it is certainly a low point on the aesthetic scale.

Then there are some buildings in the city with which persons have an entirely different association. While persons experience the inner spaces of some buildings as they merely
walk through, there are other buildings whose inner spaces are experienced as supportive and having warmth even though the person may merely walk through, or perhaps work within. And, there are still other buildings where persons live or even share the inner spaces of the structures.

Urban buildings can be classified in three large, generalized groups according to their functions in relations to persons. The following typology provides a framework for categorizing most of the public urban structures.

1. Functional structures are built to fulfill the physical needs of the citizens. These buildings facilitate such activities as transportation; communication; legal, medical, and food services.

2. Shelter structures provide space for the fundamental, existential activities of everyday living, such as eating, sleeping, living, working; places wherein persons exist. This group includes the large multi-unit metropolitan structures, not the single family homes of residential neighborhoods.

3. Aesthetic structures provide for intellectual, spiritual, and artistic needs. These buildings enable persons to fulfill the intangible, human exigencies; the psychical and emotional needs.

The following schema lists urban buildings in these three general groupings, though not necessarily in the position on the continuum which is relevant to each individual. It is only a generalized scale, with functional buildings at one pole, and aesthetic structures at the opposite pole, with shelter structures (a neutral group) in the center. The center group can be inclined toward either pole.
Churches
Schools
Libraries
Museums
Conservatories (horticultural)
Theaters
Concert halls

Apartment buildings
Office buildings
Hotels

Sports arenas, Gymnasia
Department stores
Newspaper plants
Telephone exchanges
Post Offices
Hospitals
Banks
Municipal buildings
Factories
Railroad stations, Airports
Warehouses
The buildings which are most meaningful to persons are those which encourage individuals to develop their human capacities; their intellect, aesthetic appreciation, the activities of caring about and sharing with others, and freedom of choice; freedom to choose those pursuits which enable one to become more fully human; freedom to pursue the greatest human prerogative, i.e., the optimum development of the person.10 Since persons are simultaneously individuals and social beings, this freedom can be exercised only in a milieu of regard for the freedom of every person.11 Included in these uniquely human activities are creativity, a sense of novelty, the deepening of understanding of one's self and one's fellowman, acquiring alternate viewpoints of different situations, and learning the customs and cultures which are different from one's own. The buildings which are most meaningful are those which enable persons to enhance the quality of their lives. Those buildings seem not merely to be not beyond human dimensions, but supportive of the human. Further in the chapter, we will examine more closely some specific types of buildings.

Each human being, within the variegated urban environment is a complex entity, with multiple needs; and each of these human beings is a unique entity, having different requirements from every other human being. In his day-to-day living, each individual experiences a different combination of buildings, and in a different sequence, from every other individual. No two persons have identical experiences, even though they move about in the same general milieu. Each person relates differently to each structure because each individual is constituted differently.12

In addition to human differences, buildings differ also. Different structures, because of their varied functions and not only because of their aesthetic qualities, provide the bases for different responses from different persons. Individ-
uals establish different relationships to the separate structures, contingent upon the purpose of the structure, and also according to one's own needs and preferences. Each person forms his own relationship to a building.

Some relationships to buildings are useful, but boring; others are beneficial, but not thoroughly enjoyable; others are pleasant and aesthetically rewarding. The purposes of any structure influence differently the life of each urban resident who relates to it; and each human being, because of his unique differences, relates differently to each structure. The raison d'être of each building is its purpose or meaningfulness for individuals. The buildings of the urban landscape affect persons in many varied ways, entering into their lives differently, according to ways in which persons relate to the structures.

Since it is the nature of large cities to have a diversity of public buildings, we might begin such an exploration by selecting five different kinds of buildings from our typology of urban structures, and attempt to describe their place in the emotional life of the urban resident. For example, how would individuals relate to a railroad station, a hospital, a bank, a department store, and a public library? It seems reasonable to suggest that if we could theoretically postulate that the buildings were fairly equal in such characteristics as strategic position as a landmark, an aesthetically pleasing form, and historical significance, that there might be very little difference in the human response to the various structures. But there is another aspect of architecture, and that is its usefulness. Why have the buildings been built; for what specific purposes have they been constructed? Considering each of the five kinds of structures from the perspective of function, we can inquire how persons relate to each type of building?

What is the significance of a railroad station in the
lives of persons? What meaning does it have for them? A railroad station (offering commuter service) is experienced almost daily by many persons in a metropolitan community. They have a long, continuing association (for discrete, brief periods of time) with this building. The conditions upon which one interacts with a railroad station are routine, prescribed, and programmed, and therefore limiting and perhaps even bypassing human freedom and creativity. The operation of a railroad station is governed by precise schedules and strict time tables. Persons relating to the function of this building do so on the railroad's terms, not according to their own choosing. A railroad station offers almost no opportunity for creativity. Its only usefulness derives from the fact that trains converge upon and depart from this place. Aside from being a terminal and a point of departure, the building tends not to be meaningful. It is only a place in which persons and trains converge. And, the repetition of almost identical quotidian travel, from home to work and back again, produces feelings of tediousness and boredom in the persons who come and go to and from this place daily. Or, perhaps, the building functions best when it does not distract the commuter from her/his trip, when it impinges least upon one's life.

Now, we might inquire, how does one relate to a hospital? What meaning do persons find in a hospital? A hospital does offer persons some goal to be achieved, some progress to be made, namely, the overcoming of ill health. A healthful state is a highly desirable state of being, but the state of illness is one that demands relief. Thus, one's actions, when in a state of illness, are not always actions which are freely inaugurated. Frequently, too, the condition under which health is achieved and illness is removed, is not very comfortable. The discomfort which is endured in order to improve one's health is such an unpleasant experience that the hospital building is seldom (if ever) regarded with any genuine affection. Some persons even go so far as to identify a hospital
with a site of death.

In addition to physical discomfort, the role of the self is really diminished in a hospital. The individual agent is not the author of his own actions, but rather is required to acquiesce to all sorts of decisions, actions, procedures, and maneuvers made for him by many other persons. One relinquishes only grudgingly his capability of initiating his own actions, of controlling his own activities, of asserting his own identity. Such a limitation of personal freedom, as found in a hospital, engenders deep feelings of frustration, which in many cases are accepted for the sake of improved health and the alleviation of illness.

There are, on some occasions, slight glimmers of an effort on the part of the hospitals to offer some small relief from the very strict limitation of personal freedom. They are offering a token opportunity for choice by permitting food selections from menus, but still within prescribed limits for individual patients, such as salt-free and sugar-free diets. Aside from this small provision for personal selection, almost all other personal and even intimate activities are controlled by hospital personnel and even routine, not by individuals themselves.

Then, too, there are those who lose their loved ones in a hospital, and the grief is overwhelming. In such situations, great sadness marks one's relationship to the impersonal hospital building. The sustaining factor in times of sadness frequently comes from other persons who lend understanding support and comfort. For the hospital staff have no room for acknowledging their losses.

A hospital is a structure to which persons seldom go voluntarily. Decisions to become hospitalized usually are imposed upon the person in some way, frequently by a physical condition which requires attention or even an emergency which is hardly under human control. A hospital, instead of offering
opportunity for the development of self, restricts and con-
strains the human agent. It is almost as if the hospital
says that it will protect your health, but living takes place
elsewhere.

Continuing our inquiry, we ask how persons relate to
banks? What meaning does a financial structure have for in-
dividuals? Does it have any different significance for per-
sons than either a railroad station or a hospital? What pos-
sibilities for human response, for creativity, imagination,
and choice, do banks offer?

Most all options that banks extend to their customers
are subject to strict rules and regulations of higher, con-
trolling financial organizations. Customers have some choice
but the choices are possibilities offered by the bank, not
possibilities of the customer's own creative design or inven-
tion. The only opportunity for novelty or creativity on the
part of the customer is the way or combination of ways in which
he avails himself of the services which the bank offers. And
this is only a novelty or creativeness that is achieved on the
conditions laid down by the bank, and even controlled by the
latest international financial moves.

Persons interact with a bank differently than they do
with either a railroad station or a hospital. In the two lat-
ter instances, a person relates to the building in order to
derive a direct benefit for the physical self. One goes to a
railroad station to board a train which transports one to a
desired destination; one goes to a hospital to obtain healing
of an illness. As a result of interacting with these two kinds
of buildings, something happens to the individual. Either he
is in a different location, or he is in a state of good health.
However, regarding interaction with a banking structure, there
is a factor apart from the self, a commodity, i.e., money.
When persons use banking facilities, something occurs apart
from the person; something happens to a commodity outside the
self. Any action inaugurated by the person does not react
directly upon the person, but upon an object exterior to the person. When one deposits money in a savings account and allows it to remain there for a length of time, some interest accrues to the money; the money increases quantitatively. When one writes checks against one's checking account, the money in that account decreases quantitatively. In each instance, a change occurs in the commodity; a change which is exterior to the person.

Since a person's relationship with a bank is dependent upon a mediating factor, i.e. money, there is a feeling of remoteness from the architectural structure itself. Perhaps this is a reason why banks are attempting to introduce some humanness into banking surroundings, in order to encourage customers to feel a deeper personal relationship to the building. In addition to endeavoring to add some decorative quality to their surroundings, banks also are trying to be more human in their services. They stress the concern of the employees for the needs of the customers; a gesture to be friendly and helpful. Banks also try to diminish the giantism of their image in order not to overwhelm the customers with their magnitude. Thus, we have smaller departments within the larger structures; an attempt to restore some balance between the bank and the customer.

However, despite the efforts of banks to create warmer and more gracious atmospheres for the bank users, still the nature of the banking structure is such that it offers very little opportunity to persons to exercise freedom of choice; very little direct opportunity which enables an individual to grow intellectually, emotionally, creatively.

Now, we might inquire about the significance of department stores in the lives of urban residents. Stores offer their customers many options for selection and choice, plus the aesthetic benefits of just browsing in order to feed one's imagination, or to create "needs" within the person. If the architectural plan of the store is one that facilitates com-
fortable movement about the building and if the atmosphere is pleasant, customers react favorably to the physical layout or floor plan. Since many department stores have become very large architectural structures, the store managements have tried to re-introduce a more human scale into the buildings by dividing some areas into small shops, with varying atmospheres. This is an effort to try to enable customers to react more warmly to the different departments; to feel some semblance to small, neighborly shops.

Buildings continue to become larger but human beings remain about the same size, thus the scale becomes disproportionate, even threatening, and inhuman. As stores increase in size, they decrease in humanness, until they become purely economic operations, impersonal and faceless. It is precisely the absence of individual store owners that generates a feeling of anonymity in customers. The gigantic size of the retail structure is required by the colossal size of the mercantile operation, but the awesome size of the store only serves to emphasize the impersonal atmosphere. Merchants, who formerly were known as persons, now are replaced by remote corporations, or even conglomerates who operate assorted businesses. The human element, the personal contact, has vanished with the sheer size of the store, leaving the customers to carry on with an impersonal, computerized establishment.

One of the worst unsolved problems in the renewal of cities is the loss of those healthy small enterprises of a kind and character that large-scale projects increasingly and tragically destroy.14

Stores are somewhat similar to banks because relationships to stores also involve commodities outside the self, namely, the merchandise. However, unlike money, which has to be exchanged for useful items, the merchandise has a more personal relation to the individual. Items such as clothing, home furnishings, food, and books, are all separate from the self, but still are closely associated with the per-
son. Clothing is worn, home furnishings are used, food is consumed, and books are intellectually grasped.

The activity or "art" of shopping, although carried on in an impersonal atmosphere, is nevertheless closely associated with the person or the shopper. "Where" one shops, "what" one selects, and "how much" one spends are criteria by which one's peers frequently judge a person. "How one shops" is often interpreted as indicative of one's life style and degree of sophistication. As Thoreau observed, we are concerned with "not what is truly respectable, but what is respected".15

But there are other ways in which persons relate to a store, ways which lie outside the activity of purchasing merchandise; ways that react more directly upon the person, ways that are experienced with deeper feelings. For example, one remembers, nostalgically, visiting the store to view the Christmas and Easter decorations; perhaps having lunch with family members and friends in one of the store's restaurants. By providing facilities for food service, the stores attempt to create a more personal and intimate atmosphere; the introduction of some humanness into a merchandising establishment. Food service originally was provided so that customers would not have to go home for lunch.

A department store offers some options for personal choice. One can enter the building and browse through the various departments, enjoying the displays; seeing new and sometimes quite innovative merchandise. In itself, this can be a pleasant experience. If one wishes to buy an item, he can choose from an assortment of goods, and buy whatever he can afford. A person is free to select whatever items he wishes, provided he can pay for them. In purchasing merchandise, freedom of choice is contingent upon the economic factor. So, in relating to a department store, one experiences some degree of freedom and a sizable degree of restraint.
Regardless of the admiration and affection one might feel toward the architectural structure itself, one's personal freedom is limited in his relationship with a store.

But let us suppose, as an hypothesis, that one has ample means to purchase the goods of the store. Would the removal of economic constraint really be beneficial? Would it benefit the further development of the person? Would it enable a person to grow intellectually, emotionally, creatively; to become more fully human? Would freedom of choice, exercised in the acquisition of material goods, enable a person to develop the self? Would it really enable one to develop one's uniquely human potential? If so, it would seem, in some way, to make the development of self dependent upon material goods. If not, it would seem that the development of self is dependent upon some other activity, rather than the acquisition of material goods.

Continuing our inquiry into the significance, for persons, of various urban buildings, we now ask how the residents of a city relate to a public library? Why, and when, do persons come to a library? What do they derive from a library; how is it meaningful to them?

Of the five kinds of public buildings we have been considering, the library is the only building voluntarily visited by such a wide age group, from young children to the most senior of citizens. As we cited earlier, almost no one freely chooses to become hospitalized, but numerous persons choose to visit a library. Very young children also visit hospitals and department stores, but not voluntarily, except to see Santa Claus in the stores at Christmas time. However, in the instance of a branch library, a very young child will ask to be able to attend the story hour.

Of all five kinds of public buildings, only the library
offers its facilities without direct charge. The use of library services is not contingent upon an economic factor. Also, library users probably are of more diverse backgrounds, educationally, culturally, and economically, than those who relate to other kinds of public buildings. A library is an environment wherein individuals can exercise personal freedom. The environment and purpose of the building are conducive to the self-realization of persons.

A public library makes minimal demands upon the individual. One is free to enter the building and read the books all day long, without even giving one's name. If one wishes to withdraw a book from the library, there are minimum requirements. One must be a resident of the metropolitan area, be literate, give his name and address, and agree to return the book when it is due, or pay a small fine.

In addition to the freedom of entering the building and using its facilities, there is possibility for freedom of choice in selection of available material. Persons can choose from a myriad of fields of knowledge, in any sequence they wish to follow. The library does not have pre-requisites of reading backgrounds, nor does it require qualifying examinations for reading the books of one's choice, or an examination after a book is read. One is free to select and read books in any order whatsoever.* Persons can be innovative and imaginative in their perusal of library materials, thus enabling them to initiate their own reading programs, to pursue their own goals; to interact with a public library on one's own terms, not those of the library (aside from the minimum requirements).

* Many libraries have separate children's and adults' sections, and it is difficult for young persons to draw out a library book from an adult section. There have been some discussions about the possibility of enabling persons, regardless of age, to withdraw books for which they have the reading ability.
The library promotes, develops and nurtures personal freedom through its expansiveness of choice, not just alternate possibilities or options, but multitudinous opportunities. Persons can broaden their perspectives spatially and temporally, learning about day-to-day living in many parts of the world far distant from one's own immediate vicinity, and sometimes at a far distant point in history; they can acquire alternate viewpoints concerning different situations.

The reasons for persons coming to a library are as diversified as the material which the structure contains. Sometimes, persons' requests even exceed the material contained within the immediate building. In such instances, the library endeavors to obtain material from sources outside its own building, as for example, from another library or from the state archives.

The residents of a city come to a library seeking knowledge in order to fulfill all sorts of human needs. Some come in search of information to fulfill a school assignment. Others want knowledge to help them develop their skills in their professions and trades, while other persons are looking for books to assist them with hobbies and handcrafts. Then, there are those who are eager to learn about foreign cultures and customs, anticipatory to traveling to other countries. Many read for cultural enrichment, desiring to know more about history, religion, literature, music. Some read for relaxation, tranquility, and an escape or a respite from the pressures and problems of everyday living. Others may be searching for some enlightening perspectives on moral values. The library is an environment to which persons relate in order to develop their selfhood, to become more truly human. The library enters deeply into the personal life of an individual, into the very process of the development as a person.

It is the nature of human beings to strive to grow as
persons, to press toward self-realization, to attempt to develop an identity. Persons search for self-fulfillment. This quest for fuller intellectual development, for deeper understanding, is the differentiating attribute of human beings, setting them apart from other natural beings. The capacities given to human beings strive to be used. There is, within the person, a dynamism goading the individual to search out, in the environment, those things which will enable him to grow and develop as a happy, fulfilled person. Given this uniqueness of being, how then can persons begin to act in order to pursue their goals?

In a very broad sense, we might say that persons can begin by learning to know about themselves, about their fellowmen, and about the world in which they live; in short, by beginning to acquire some knowledge.

A person needs to know himself; to discover some self-image, some ideal, some goal toward which he can strive. Since the self is not developed in isolation, but in community with other selves, it would seem also that one needs to try to understand his fellowmen. Day-to-day living is a reciprocal activity; persons responding to other persons. One interacts, also, with one's environment in order to achieve greater personal development. So a deeper understanding of one's surroundings also is contributive to self-realization.

If, however, one has begun to identify some goals, has gained some perspective of his human situation and the direction in which he would like to move, and then is unable to pursue paths of inquiry and learning which will enable him to develop his personness, then feelings of disappointment, disillusionment, frustration, and anxiety ensue.

But if one is able to search out knowledge which enables him to reach out toward his goals, to begin to develop a desired self-image, then one has hope, an enthusiasm for living, a sense
of well-being. As one gains more knowledge, greater understanding, and clearer insights, one also experiences confidence, a firmer identity, joy, serenity.20

The search for knowledge, the growth as a person, is continuous; it is part of being human. Unfortunately, persons sometimes equate the quest for learning with the "school years", the early ages of man. In reality, one continues to be a human being throughout the duration of one's lifetime, and the human capacity for the development of the quality of one's life always is present. Regrettably, it sometimes concludes with the termination of formal schooling, and lies dormant. Thus the joy of being fully alive is greatly diminished.

When persons use a library in their search for knowledge, the experience affects persons directly, enabling them to grow as individuals, to achieve self-initiated goals, to accomplish self-inaugurated projects. The fulfilling of human needs produces a rewarding sense of well-being, joy, exhilaration; all of which enhance the quality of one's life.

The person that is, is always striving toward the person that can be, toward a fuller realization of one's abilities, or even a growth of abilities. One values the opportunities that enable one to achieve a greater personal realization.21 Benefits derived from interacting with a library bear more directly upon the uniquely human quality of persons, their feelings and emotions, than relationships with many other types of buildings.

When using the facilities of a library, then, persons frequently are searching for information to help them achieve self-initiated goals. The goal may be a simple one, such as finding a book which provides pleasant, relaxing reading, or the goal may be more complex, e.g. acquiring information which is helpful in developing a useful skill, which in turn will
enable one to find a more satisfying job. Whatever the goal may be, an opportunity which enables one to pursue that goal, and achieve it, produces feelings of satisfaction, fulfillment, hope, joy, enthusiasm, well-being. Because of the experiences associated with the building, the library has the most uniquely human milieu of the five kinds of buildings we have been considering. It is also the most democratic of the five architectural structures. It is more open to the entire population of a city. It does not require special educational levels, or financial credit ratings, in order to use its facilities. The same knowledge, even profoundly scholarly information, is available to all who sincerely want to use it.

Buildings are constructed for specific purposes, that is to fulfill certain human needs, such as transportation, medical service, shelter, food, clothing, knowledge. Interaction with the different structures produces different experiences; some boring, others pleasant, many useful. The quality of experience related to each structure becomes associated in one's thinking with the particular building wherein the experience occurs, and memories of the experience accrue to the building itself. Thus, the buildings which have enabled one to achieve the most fulfilling goals are those to which persons relate most warmly; those are the structures which are most meaningful to persons.

If, in addition to offering the manifold opportunity for personal development, the architectural environment of a building is also aesthetically beneficent, then persons relate even more deeply to the structure. They cherish it as an art form. If a building which has provided rewarding opportunities for persons is also a building which is pleasing in form and/or in decorative ornamentation, then there is a strong human linkage to that building. The aesthetic quality of the structure reinforces an already meaningful association. Seemingly though, it is fundamentally the lived experiences within
the building which are meaningful to persons, and then the aesthetic significance. However, the two do not necessarily operate sequentially. When both aspects of a building are present, the feelings of meaningfulness and aesthetic response are coexistent within the person.

As within a family, it is the close relationship of the family members which enables persons to relate warmly to the family home, whether it is a small, simple structure or a large, ornate building. The important factor in the relationship is the deep, personal feeling one has for the family group; the support, understanding, encouragement, love, and shared joy among the family members. This, in turn, becomes associated with the architectural structure, the structure which was built (or selected) to be a dwelling for the family. Therefore, a very simple, or even deprived, homestead often is regarded with love, and affection, and nostalgia; a palatial home sometimes can be very cold and almost impersonal. If, however, the family group is an understanding one, supportive of each member's needs, and if the architectural structure is also a very beautiful one, this is indeed a happy combination of events.

So too, in the larger context of the urban community, the pleasant and rewarding experiences related to a public building can enter deeply into one's personal life. When this structure is also architecturally significant, then a person establishes a strong link to both the function and the form of the building; both its purpose and its image, or visual quality, become meaningful to an individual.

It would seem, then, that the difference of meanings for persons is grounded in a two-fold relationship to the architectural structure, both the purpose it serves and its aesthetic quality, but the emphasis seemsto be directed toward purpose. If a building is meaningful to persons in a deeply
human way (something that enables them to develop as persons through relating to it), then it would seem that the structure has value, not only for the individual, but also for the community; many individuals responding to the same meaningful structure, a situation conducive to harmony in the community.

Perhaps this theory of meaningfulness can begin to shed just a faint ray of light on the question of why some structures (of aesthetic and/or historical significance) are demolished and others (sometimes seemingly less important) are spared. According to our theory, drawn from our observations, the answer would seem to reside in the significance of the building for persons, not only in the building itself. The value of the building, then, is a human value, founded on meaningfulness to persons, not an economic value based on the intrinsic worth of the materials in the structure.

Perhaps (and only perhaps) this is why Chicago lost the Stock Exchange Building, a fine example of the work of Adler and Sullivan; and the home of Robert Todd Lincoln, certainly a building of historical significance. Since aesthetics and history did not deter the wrecker's ball from swinging against these buildings, we might ask, "How did persons relate to these structures; were the buildings meaningful to them?" Perhaps (and again, only perhaps) this theory of meaningfulness to persons will cast just a bit of light on the above situations.

The considerations of this chapter have produced an hypothesis of "meaningfulness" and its value for individuals, and indirectly its influence on the status of urban public buildings. However, it is only an hypothesis. In the next chapter, we shall examine some concrete statements of meaningfulness, spontaneously expressed by urban dwellers, statements concerning a public building.
1 W. H. Werkmeister considers the human being as "a knowing, feeling, self-active, and creative person." Man and His Values, p. 4.


4 Abraham Maslow, in his own contribution to the volume he has edited, says, "The role of the environment is ultimately to permit him or help him actualize his own potentialities, not its potentialities. The environment does not give him potentialities and capacities, he has them in inchoate or embryonic form ...", New Knowledge in Human Values, p. 130.

5 Kevin Lynch, The Image of the City, p. 48.

6 Ibid., "The need to recognize and pattern our surroundings is so crucial ... that this image has wide practical and emotional importance to the individual." p. 4.

7 "... one cannot live in a 'chaos' ... any orientation implies acquiring a fixed point." Mircea Eliade, The World, the City, the House, talk given at Loyola University of Chicago during Centennial year, 1970.

8 Martin Buber maintains that a reciprocity need not imply any consciousness or agency on the part of an object, but rather some quality to which persons can respond. I and Thou, p. 40.

9 "both subject and object contribute to the experience ... any aesthetic experience is interactional." W. H. Werkmeister, op. cit., p. 186.

10 Abraham Maslow, op. cit., p. 130.


12 Abraham Maslow, op. cit., p. 122.

13 The concept of the importance of inaugurating one's own actions and achieving one's identity is well stated by Werkmeister: "Each individual strives toward his own self-realization in his own individual way. In and through this striving, as in and through the conception of an ideal self-image inherent in it, a valuational framework, an order of rank of values, becomes manifest." op. cit., p. 26.


15 Henry David Thoreau, Walden, p. 20.

16 Abraham Maslow, op. cit., p. 126.
CHAPTER III

A COMMUNITY RESPONDS

The following pages are a report of my study of the letters which were written when there was the possibility that the main building of the Chicago Public Library might be razed and be replaced with a new structure. The letters are in three different files, namely those of the Mayor of the City of Chicago, the Commission on Chicago Historical and Architectural Landmarks, and the Chicago Public Library. However, since all the letters pertain to one specific situation (the uncertain predicament of the main building of the Chicago Public Library) and all focus upon the one event, I am considering them as one body of correspondence. But I have separated the letters in another way, that is according to feelings expressed in the contents.

Some letters express anguish, distress, and sadness at the contemplation of losing a cherished building. In these letters, there is a passivity, a resignation akin to the undergoing or enduring of a sorrow over the imminent loss of a treasured object. These feelings arise because persons regret that a building, at one time so significant, apparently has outlived its usefulness.

Consider the building as a work of art, as one values a fine painting, then it would not be abandoned just because it is old.

The Palace of Versailles is old, too.
Other letters disclose more active feelings. These writers express anxiety and tension; fear that the demolition of the building really will occur. They try to externalize their feelings by describing the futility of destruction. They are pleading for some way of averting this annihilation. They are trying to emphasize certain aspects of the situation in order to impress those who have authority to save the building.

The art work is irreplaceable.

The craftsmanship cannot be duplicated.

How could anyone ever destroy the mosaics?

Even if the building must be razed, isn't there any way of saving the mosaics?

Progress does not have to destroy good things.

Chicago has a name for great architecture, but is losing it to the image of demolition and replacement by steel structures.

In other letters, one senses even greater inner turmoil. There is frustration; frustration of being unheard or not respected. There are feelings of being thwarted. There is an urgency in these letters; a harried searching for someone to whom the writers can appeal. How can they make certain that their voices will be heard? How can they get a message through to someone who really will help to save the building? Many letters reflecting these feelings are addressed to both Mayor Daley and his wife, and a number of letters are written directly to Mrs. Daley. The letters addressed to Mrs. Daley are written as if conversing with someone who will understand the situation, someone who will have empathy for the feelings of the residents of the city. These letters seem to have found an intercessor who will plead their cause for preservation of a building that symbolizes the urban culture; a building replete with meaning for many persons.
These correspondents seem to feel that a woman will be protective of a beautiful object. Her gentle, maternal nature will be conducive to preservation and nurturing, because a woman’s role is that of sustaining and nourishing life. Historically, men have been hunters and warriors, providing food and fending off both wild animals and human enemies. The masculine role, because of its nature, has at times been largely destructive, but woman’s role has been preservative and conducive to growth.

The correspondents who have addressed their letters to Mrs. Daley seemingly believe that men will be more likely to swing the wrecker’s ball at the structure and demolish it, in order to build a new building, but a woman will be gently protective of the structure, and more patient in trying to work out an alternative to destruction. Traditionally, it is woman’s role to watch over life and sustain it. When men gradually withdrew from a nomadic, hunting, warring existence to a quieter, more domestic way of life (quietly planting crops, instead of wildly stalking game), communities began to take root, villages grew into towns, towns developed into cities.

Demolition is quick, vigorous, and loud, but growth is slow and quiet. Thus, the letters written to Mrs. Daley are directed confidently to a mediator who will be both understanding and effective. Some persons, as if they were trying to reinforce their pleadings, expressed the following sentiment:

... would withdraw support from the Mayor if he does not preserve the Library.

Then there are those letters which particularly emphasize the recently developing social awareness, the public emotion, the community response.

This is not a private building but a public one, so the public should have a voice in pleading for its preservation.
We who are not heard in public places want our views known.

The building must have some significance if it can evoke such emotional reaction.

We are beginning to realize that the urban environment (consisting largely of buildings) affects the residents of a community somewhat akin to the way that one's private environment (home) affects him as an individual. Most persons have at least some small part in determining their private home environment in order to make it compatible with their needs. But until recently, the larger community environment in which most persons live their day-to-day lives has been left to a few relatively unknown persons to plan. Now, the urbanites are beginning to feel that a public building is their building. It is really only a matter of ratio in relationships. One's personal living space is on a one-to-one basis; with family members, the home space is reckoned on a basis of several persons to one structure; and on a civic or public basis, it consists of many residents relating to a public building. The city becomes a large extended family and the public structures are shared by the urban community. So the newly developing public emotion is a development of personal emotion.

Still another aspect of the community response is manifested in the letters. The feelings expressed in the various letters are oriented toward different temporal perspectives. Many of the correspondents are reacting to the situation as it is, together with its ominous possibilities. But there are others who take a more retrospective view. (Later we will cite those who assume a future perspective.)

Feelings of regret are expressed by those who look to the past. They lament the loss of many other buildings in Chicago; buildings which, they feel, had architectural significance and should have been preserved. They fear that the
library building, too, will slip into the past history of the
city. They have feelings of dismay over what has happened to
many other buildings. Their letters comprise a litany of
lamentations.

Too many old buildings are gone.

Hold on to some part of what is slipping away quickly.

Have only one library, but many other buildings which
contribute little [to the quality of urban life].

Keep a little tradition. We have lost so many old build-
ings.

People travel to Europe to savor the beauty of older
buildings and we are so prone to destroy ours.

Then we travel miles in search of some beautiful struc-
tures.

Europe is proud of its old buildings.

Europe respects its past.

Don't destroy our heritage.

... not putting a parking lot on the Acropolis.

Keep it for the people. Use dollars to preserve, not to
destroy.

There are structures in worse condition that could be
torn down:

Other persons express deep feelings of reproach, as if
they personally are assuming the guilt of the city for allow-
ing the possibility of this demolition. They seem to subject
themselves to an obligation of responsibility for the build-
ing; a sort of transferring of the responsibility from the
city and the library organization to themselves. Their let-
ters contain questions reflecting deep feelings of reproach
which the correspondents are experiencing. Their unanswered
questions reveal a deep confusion; an irreconciliation.
Why demolish something artistic when improvements of blighted areas are sorely needed?

City and society must economize on more than dollars and cents. What about history, art, and human feelings? Don't put everything on a dollars and cents economy. There are other values.

What are we saving in Chicago?

Why does Chicago tear down beauty?

A deep longing for beauty and a yearning for something to satisfy that longing is reflected in many letters. These correspondents seem to give evidence of a personal inner emptiness as they move about in the urban milieu; an emptiness which is not filled by the newer environment, the smooth gleaming surfaces of glass and metal. The blandness and repetition of many features of the new structures elicit feelings of monotony and boredom. These structures provide for the biological exigencies of those persons who live within them, but contribute little to the aesthetic needs of the ordinary citizen; the needs that constitute truly human beings. Many persons feel that they cannot relate meaningfully to the cold configurations of steel and glass and concrete.

Cannot react aesthetically to the up-ended shoe-boxes of glass and steel.

Chicago need not be all steel and glass, a little relief for the eye is needed.

Tired of concrete!

Library provides food for the soul and we need the nourishment.

High rises are fine, but a little contrast is welcome.

The capacity to enjoy beauty, to feel exhilarated, to want to share with others the joy of seeing a beautiful object; these are part of the complex entity which is the human self. All organisms strive to actualize their capacities (from acorns,
through the hierarchy of being, up to persons) and if they are thwarted, their growth is stunted, their state of well-being is deficient.²

Persons develop their capacities by interacting with their environment, and city dwellers must relate to an urban milieu. Therefore, the urbanites interact with their surroundings in search of self-fulfillment. When the milieu seems "empty", not much satisfaction can be drawn from it; there is a lack of nourishment for aesthetic needs.

Historically, cities have developed through the complementary efforts of the masculine and feminine roles, the strength and vigor of man and the gentleness and nurture of woman. Within the city, built and protected by the strength and vigor which is symbolic of masculinity, one should be able to find and be nourished by the peace, beauty, and tranquility which symbolizes womanhood. If the city is to continue developing in the way in which it came into being, it will have to continue to have comforting, reassuring, nurturing, aesthetic, feminine qualities; a milieu in which persons can fully develop their humanness. It will have to be an environment to satisfy aesthetic as well as physical needs.

Many of the correspondents not only are longing for beauty, but also have an educated awareness of the techniques required to produce an intricate art form.

Building has lapidarian significance, incorporating nature's mineralogies and geological materials.

Educate people to the beauty of the Library.

... the cosmati inlays.³

... the tesserae.⁴

... the Favrile⁵ domes are irreplaceable and of great significance for size and design.

... Carrara marble.⁶
... Connemara marble. 7

Correspondents using specific art terms express deep feelings of admiration for the excellence of the craftsmanship, which is evident in the mosaic murals, the grand staircase, and the large art glass domes. They express respect and admiration for the quality of the art forms.

There are still other writers who have feelings of isolation, discontinuity, and rootlessness. Life lacks a richness when it is lived in discrete eras, each severed from prior situations. Such living is shallow and superficial; it has no background against which to view each presently occurring situation. When one lives without a significant past, there is no depth to lend a fullness of meaning to the events of everyday living. Each day is a sterile experience, bringing nothing with it to add zest to living. Thus, they have a sense that the destruction of a heritage de-humanizes persons, by stripping away the conditions for the unique human activities of recollection, comparison, and evaluation.

Persons have broad temporal perspectives, extending both into the past and into the future. This wide temporal concept of being is supportive to humans; it enables them to relate events of past and present, and to extend their plans into the future. Persons plan and organize their lives by using both archaeological and teleological perspectives. A broad view gives both order and orientation to human living. Removing the conditions that support human life diminishes the humanness of individuals. It deprives persons of the opportunity to maintain their rich contact with the environment. Limiting the human environment or diminishing its richness reduces the quality of human life.

Need a few roots.

Good to build new, but need roots and strength of old.

Please save link with the past.
Heritage is expressed in buildings and symbols, as well as in ideas.

Need history and culture symbolized by the building.

Preserve a sense of history for Chicago and for America.

Concern for ecology should include concern for historical structures.

Heritage of the past contributes to the future.

Library building is a dialogue between generations.

Some persons express concern for the future. Many of these correspondents wrote about their children and their grandchildren. These persons are concerned that they may lose a physical continuity with the past. Thus, their children will lose actual contact with the same past. These persons want their children and grandchildren to be able to walk through the interiors of the Library, climb its grand staircase, experience different vistas, and observe the play of light on the colors. To actually see and enjoy an artwork is to culminate the aesthetic experience.

Preserve it as a legacy.

Preserve it for future generations.

The United States is young, save an architectural example for posterity.

Save it for the children.

Have respect for tradition and instill it in children.

If we have no regard for such heritage, we have little hope for our future.

Other correspondents feel a pride, an elation; they feel rather "special" to have such a building in our city. They feel the satisfaction of ownership, even though that ownership is shared by every urban resident. Nevertheless, there is still a feeling of personal relationship to the building. Persons enjoy sharing it with others, especially
with out-of-town visitors.

The Taj Mahal is larger than the rotunda, but not more beautiful.

Save the art treasure.

Save our unique building for citizens and visitors to the city.

Proud to show it to others.

... it adds to the importance of Chicago.

Want to share its beauty with others.

Building impresses all who enter it.

... third and fourth generation Chicagoans, want building preserved.

Why are there no picture post cards?

Still more of the letters concerned with children are the happiest pieces of correspondence; children, symbols of the future. These letters radiate the joy felt by parents and grandparents who bring children to see the building. These letters do not express sadness and dismay, but rather feelings of brightness and cheer. Many of these letters recount happy visits to the Library.

A building is an art form particularly suited to children. A building's large three dimensional form comprises spaces to be explored. One has to move about to really see the structure. Since children like activity, and their attention span is short, a building provides the variety which appeals to young persons. Places to walk through, stairs to climb, art work placed low enough to see close up, and other really high surfaces that require stretching and looking way up; these are activities that make an art expedition an enjoyable venture for young folk. The experience of sharing a treasure seems most joyous when shared with children. Their wide-
eyed expression and genuine enthusiasm are so refreshing. If they feel like speaking loudly and excitedly, they do. Their response is so real, so honest.

... take the children, ages five through twelve.
... grandparents bring granddaughter.
... grandmother brings grandchildren.
Bring nine year old son.
Want it for grandchildren's enjoyment.
... sons age ten and twelve find it exciting to scan the mosaics.

Other letters reflect a shift in attitudes toward public monuments. People want something vital, dynamic, and on-going; not a static monument to a past event. They do not want a memorial to an event in history that occurred once and is now past. The shift is toward a social landmark not a political landmark, one with a wider temporal dimension, a landmark that recognizes the past, is useful in the present, and has significance for the future; a landmark which persons can experience, one in which they can participate.9

Building is an artistic, living landmark.

Would be a "living" landmark.

These, then, are the deep inner feelings of the populace for a cultural event in their city. This is the anguish, anxiety, frustration, dismay, reproach; it is the emptiness and the rootlessness. It is also the concern, the pride, and the joy of the urban dwellers in relation to a treasured symbol. And it is also the hope that this treasure will be spared for future enjoyment, the hope that a cultural legacy can be handed to future generations.

These are the deep inner experiences of men, women, and children; persons from grammar school age to senior citi-
zens; persons of varied educational backgrounds; those of many different occupations and professions. The letters are written by residents of high-rise apartments lining the lake shore and by persons living in the far reaching neighborhoods of the city; by some living in the suburban perimeter, and former residents now living across the country.

This is a public expression of human feeling, a public emotion evoked by a cherished symbol; a symbol replete with meaning for many persons. In the correspondence, the inner experiences of many persons are vitally felt and freely expressed. This is the spontaneously articulated outpouring of the feelings of the populace, not a survey or a questionnaire designed to evaluate opinions and feelings. The correspondence is not a selected sampling. It is an unplanned, voluntary response of urban dwellers across the city and extending into the suburban perimeter, plus former residents now living in various areas across the United States. While some letters in this correspondence are written by professional persons who have architectural and historical understanding of the situation, I have included only those written by the "lay persons". I have included the letters of the ordinary citizens who have no evident connection with any professional group, and have excluded those who might be concerned for the sake of a special interest. My concern has focused only on those pieces of correspondence written by "the people". Their valuation of the structure is rooted in their own feelings.

Many different values are to be found within our everyday lives. There are economic values based on dollars and cents, such as the cost of land and the return, in dollars and cents, from the investment in a certain piece of land. There are functional values grounded upon measurements of space; space for storage purposes, and sizes of space for study areas. There are ethical values concerning actions one "ought" to take in certain situations. And there are aesthetic
values, the immeasurable human values rooted deeply in hu-
man feelings; feelings evoked by a certain object or situa-
tion. It is the human values which are conveyed in the many
letters written in response to the precarious situation of
the library building.

We cannot help but wonder why this structure has
duced such warm response when other buildings, some of great
architectural significance, have been removed from the urban
setting and there was only mild reaction to the situation,
and sometimes almost none at all. How, then, has so much
meaning accrued to one structure? Would the mosaics have
been so valued if they had been in one of the other four
kinds of structures discussed in Chapter I? Has our hypothe-
sis been borne out by the correspondence? What really is the
role of architecture in relation to persons; in relation to
the community? We shall explore this concept further in the
next chapter.
Notes

1 Lewis Mumford, The City in History, pp. 10-12


3 So many marble workers in mosaic designs, during the Italian Renaissance, bore the family name, Cosma, all such workers became known as "cosmati". Encyclopedia of World Art, Vol. III, p. 830.

4 Name given by the Romans to the minute basic units or small components of mosaic designs. Ibid., Vol. V, p. 326.


6 Italian white marble of statuary quality. Inland Architect, Vol. 30, 1898. Also, the following information is from National Geographic, Vol. 146, No. 5, November, 1974, p. 627. This white marble from Carrara, Tuscany, Italy is from the same quarries as the marble that Michelangelo used for his magnificent sculpture.

7 Dark green marble from County Galway, Ireland. Inland Architect, Vol. 30, 1898. Eight inch circles of Connemara marble, together with mosaics, are inlaid in the Carrara marble balustrade of the grand staircase.

8 Now, colored post cards are available at the Library. There are several different views, including the mosaics and the grand staircase.


10 Robert O. Johann, in Building the Human, states, "Feelings are not arbitrary, isolated occurrences taking place under our skins. They are the pervasive and unifying qualities of the interactive process between person and environment that is human life itself." p. 19. Concerning human feeling, John Macmurray says, "Feeling, then, when referred to an object, is valuation; and the most general discrimination in valuation is the acceptance or rejection of a possibility in action. We have seen that action is choice; it implies the realization of one of a number of possibles and the negation of the others." The Self as Agent, p. 190
CHAPTER IV

ARCHITECTURE AND PERSONS

Architectural forms produce an environment which persons experience intimately. "For it is in and among buildings that we live and move and have our being ..."¹ The differentiating factor between architecture and other art forms (such as painting and sculpture) is its purpose or usefulness. Architecture has a practical constituent, as well as an aesthetic one. Other arts may have some use, such as music designed to provide rhythm for dancing, or a religious painting which has an instructional purpose; but they need not have any usefulness or purpose. Art forms in general, with the exception of architecture, are designed to be aesthetic objects, without practicality.

Architecture is the only art form into which persons enter. They move about in its inner spaces, and work and live within them. When, in addition to its usefulness, the interior of a building is decorative, it becomes an art form by which one is enveloped. While viewing the form, one is being physically supported by it, and moving about within it. Sometimes, the very floor upon which one walks is beautifully patterned in colored marbles or fine woods. The staircase one walks down can be masterfully wrought of fine white marble from the same Tuscany quarries which yielded the marble for
Michelangelo's sculptures, as is true of the grand staircase of the main building of the Chicago Public Library. A building is simultaneously the art form one is viewing and the environment in which one is viewing it. As one moves through the inner spaces of a structure, new vistas open out and different perspectives of various areas are possible; different shapes and forms emerge as one changes one's viewpoint. These unique relationships occur only in an experience of an architectural art form.

The environment of the city dwellers is largely architectural. Urban architecture provides the backdrop against which everyday life unfolds. Architecture is the setting for the drama of everyday living. Architecture is not an additive art form; it is not like a picture which is added to an interior to ornament it. Rather, architecture provides the conditions for everyday lived experiences. Architectural structures are provided for a variety of purposes in order to fulfill the many needs of the urban residents.

Architecture, from prehistoric eras forward, has been closely associated with day-to-day living and, of all the art forms, it has remained so. The earliest examples of dwellings are the primitives caves of prehistoric peoples, and even these crude shelters were decorated with wall drawings. Other art forms, too, began as objects closely associated with everyday life, but as time progressed, many of these art objects (originally produced as beautiful artifacts) were removed from a useful context to a remote gallery of some art museum. Even as the early art forms were being developed and perfected, they still were produced for useful purposes; temples were built, poems were written, poems also were dramatized, and statues were carved for purposes of instruction, communication, and commemoration. Beautifully proportioned vases, bowls, and pitchers (e.g. those made by the Greeks) were used to hold water, wine, oil, and grain. Somehow, we have forgotten the everyday function and usefulness of these objects and
think of them only as decorative items or "museum pieces". They are placed in a gallery and viewed out of context with everyday lived experiences. They are seen as isolated objects, set in a sterile background, apart from a vital, ongoing way of life. Originally, they were not separate from regular or ordinary daily activities. Gradually, even the art forms produced as objects of beauty (without practicality) also have been removed from close association with everyday life and set apart in museums. Separating out the aesthetic concept from everyday lived experiences has tended, over the years, to cause us to forget to include aesthetics as an ingredient of daily life. Somehow, the human need for, the longing for, and the joy of responding to beauty have been forgotten in a world concerned largely with the economics of production. But persons still have aesthetic needs.

The art form of architecture, which because of its nature cannot be removed to art museums (except for a few small examples), has in many instances been stripped of its decorative qualities and been produced as a bland, monotonous, repetitive form, economically successful but aesthetically barren.

Architecture remains just as closely associated with day-to-day living as it has been from prehistoric times. Structures still are built for specific activities of living; worship, recreation, mercantilism, medical care, education; but the function, alone, is all that is frequently considered. Architects seem totally unaware of human feelings and emotions; they are overwhelmingly concerned with the economics of their projects. Granted, architecture is a very costly art form to produce. Other great works of art can be created with a minimum of expenditure. Great literature can be written with paper and pencil, a fine painting might require only a couple yards of canvas, several tubes of paint, and a brush.
But of all the arts, architecture requires not only costly materials, but technological methods which are expensive to provide.

Recent archaeological research has enabled us to discover the human dimension in prehistoric caves. As we have cited, these primitive shelters were adorned with wall drawings, some of which are still colorful after thousands of years. We do not know why human beings surrounded themselves with art forms, but we do know that they did so. Therefore, decorative wall surfaces are not recent. They are both very old and very closely associated with everyday lived experiences. They may have been produced for ornamentation, or for a record of achievement (such as hunting) or as part of myth, magic, or ritual.

Architecture, from early ages forward, has been a heavily value-laden art form. It manifests attitudes toward various functions carried on within its structures. A building not only reflects the style of an era and the level of technology of its time, but also the regard for the purpose of the structure. For example, the Chicago Public Library main building, constructed just prior to the beginning of the twentieth century, records not only an architectural style of the time but also the high regard of the citizenry for the purpose of the library. The finely handcrafted mosaics decorating its inner walls reflect an attitude of appreciation for the function of the building. A treasure house of knowledge was significantly ornamented with the finest available quality of wall treatment. These mosaics are a tribute to all the human growth and intellectual development for which purposes the building was constructed.

Buildings such as the Chicago Public Library exemplify the reciprocity which holds between persons and buildings. Structures are built for specific purposes, they have special
functions. When their form is artistically produced so that persons respond to it aesthetically, then the quality of the personal experiences within the structure is enhanced. The interactions of persons with those buildings are rewarding, fulfilling experiences. "Form follows function" but the better the form, the more it contributes to a rewarding function. The quality of human life is somehow changed through relationships to such buildings.

If many residents of a city have had rewarding experiences through relating to a certain building, then they have a common or shared basis for their experiences. In the instance of a public building, many persons respond (each in his own way) to the structure. But it is the same structure that is meaningful to all. It is an object that symbolizes certain experiences and it is these experiences, however varied, which they hold in common. These experiences might include intellectual growth, development of a skill, cultural enrichment of one's life; but underlying these experiences is the rewarding feeling of fulfillment consequent upon the achievement of a goal. Persons, then, develop a sense of community because of deriving personal benefit from relating to a common structure.

Architecture, then, becomes a value symbol. It becomes a two-fold symbol which both signifies and promotes. It not only symbolizes personal development and social interaction, but it fosters both activities.
Notes

1 Irwin Edman, Arts and the Man, p. 106.

2 "... architecture affects human relationships in space ...", Hugh Dalziel Duncan, Symbols in Society, p. 94.

3 John Dewey, Art as Experience, p. 3.

4 In Culture and Democracy, Hugh Duncan discusses the architectural philosophy of Louis Henri Sullivan and comments on the reciprocity of form and function. Duncan observes that, "Form and function are interdependent." p. 588. Ibid., "... given a certain kind of act, such as selling groceries or worshiping God, how could the space in which this act is performed be so designed that the essential qualities of the act would be enhanced by the formed space in which the act took place? Sullivan tried to convince his fellow architects that this question of how to think of architectural space as a determinant of human relationships must be faced by architects ..." p. 411.

5 John Dewey, op. cit., Because of the interaction of persons with their architectural environment, "... human life itself is also made different ...", p. 231. Ibid., "Buildings enter into and help shape and direct life ...", p. 232.

6 "Human experience is essentially shared experience. The environment with which man interacts is not simply and utterly physical. It is not engaged merely in terms of its immediate impingement on the human organism. It is dealt with primarily as being also for others, as being something in common. Things are imbued with meanings that have arisen in a context of cooperative activity which involves common and shared ways of intending and relating to them." Robert O. Johann, Building the Human, p. 43.
CHAPTER V

NEW BEGINNINGS

There are three reasons why this chapter cannot be called a Conclusion. 1. The paper has not been written as a closely argued philosophical treatise, designed to prove a point. Rather, it has presented some theory and some facts about a current urban situation, in order to try to bring it into sharper focus and lay it open for further exploration. 2. Since the purpose of the paper is to present the urban situation for further study and consideration, it would seem incongruous to attempt to write a conclusion, which by its nature connotes termination. Having just opened the subject for further exploration and consideration, it would seem untimely to conclude it. 3. Since the thrust of the paper is directed toward the future of cities, thus giving the topic an open-ended perspective, it is unseemly to be conclusive about future happenings.

And so, we have come, not to an end, but to a new beginning, a threshold from which to take a new look at old cities; a look from a human viewpoint, not just from the perspective of the planners' drawing board.

Most city planners earnestly want to take whatever remedial steps are best for the viability of large urban areas. But many of them are thinking solely in terms of buildings; removing certain old structures and
replacing them with new ones. Planners are ignoring, or perhaps are unaware of the human dimension of cities, especially that human dimension which lies beyond physical needs; i.e., the emotional needs of persons.¹

However, the human dimension of the situation is obtruding itself. The voices of the urban residents are clamoring to be heard. This fact is corroborated by the many letters spontaneously written in behalf of the main building of the Chicago Public Library. Thus the planners are confronted with the irreducibility of cities to only their architectural component.

Fundamentally, cities are large numbers of persons living in proximity. The architectural structures are there only because they are required to facilitate personal living. The architecture provides the environment, the man-made milieu wherein persons may develop their selfhood, and live in harmonious community with other persons.

But the fundamental humanness of cities has been obscured by the sheer size of the structures. Buildings have become so overwhelmingly out of scale with humans that persons have become forgotten in the urban scene.

The "Library correspondence" not only has brought into focus an awareness of the humanness of cities, but also has confronted city planners with the irreducibility of persons to their physical component. Even if planners are aware of numbers of persons and the space they occupy, they have not always been aware of their feelings and emotional needs. The correspondence has helped to further a consciousness of personal needs; needs beyond biological requirements.

As we have observed in examining certain kinds of buildings drawn from our typology of urban structures, some buildings contribute to more than just the physical needs of persons. Some buildings facilitate intellectual growth and
development, some fulfill aesthetic needs.

A careful, thoughtful inventory of existing urban structures sometimes leads to the rewarding "discovery" of a significant older building, one that carries a large segment of the history and culture of the area. Retaining this type of structure can enhance the quality of urban life. It has been thought that it is not as economically profitable as, perhaps, re-using the land for a new mercantile establishment. However, it is just now being realized, through study and research, that it is economically feasible to put older buildings to a new use. Also, there is the beginning of an awareness that aesthetic enhancement, as well as economic gain, is a desirable ingredient in the total quality of city life.

When a significant building is "discovered", and renovated and refurbished for continued usage, there is a genuinely pleasant and rewarding feeling akin to the pride of possessing a family treasure, a feeling of having some identity, some roots. When such a discovery occurs, then rather than acting like a parvenu who hastily tries to acquire the status symbols appropriate to his position, a city can restore and preserve a building which symbolizes its cultural and historical heritage.

Such is the current situation of the main building of the Chicago Public Library. It is being renovated and restored as a cultural center and popular library (a research library is being established at another location). While other cities have built large, new cultural centers, Chicago has "discovered" a building which already embodies a rich cultural heritage, and which itself is an important art form because of the magnificent mosaics ornamenting its interior.

The building itself is not so colossal (as some new cultural centers are) that it will be a challenge to keep
filled with significant and exciting art exhibits and performances. Rather, it is quiet but elegant, comfortable but gracious; a building which engenders civic affection and pride; a building which is perduring because of the spontaneous outpouring of the deep feelings of the urban residents.

The event of the Chicago Public Library is only one manifestation of a beginning social awareness of the influence of urban environments on the residents. Evaluation of buildings, in terms of human values, is beginning to develop in some cities, but there is much work to do. A shift in emphasis, a re-orientation of effort, is clearly needed. Instead of studying, exclusively, the technological possibilities of building larger buildings and taller buildings, perhaps we need to study persons. We need to re-examine our concept of humans in order to ascertain what kind of environment is needed to enable individuals to grow and develop as total persons; intellectual, spiritual, emotional, physical beings. Then we need to re-examine our concept of a city, stripping away all its accrued technological definitions, in order to re-discover the fundamental nature of a city. Fundamentally, a city is not an aggregate of architectural structures; it is a large group of persons, who through interacting with the environment, are endeavoring to develop their selfhood and endeavoring to live in harmonious community with other persons. The city is human.

There are two points which I should like to make. First, I do not wish to imply, nor to encourage the extrapolation, that only libraries or their equivalents are significant architectural structures. I do, however, intend to place some emphasis on the observation that architecture, in order to be meaningful to persons, has to be contributive to the fuller development of the person. Architecture should not diminish the self, but rather help to maintain the self
and, when possible, aid in its greater development. Second, the main building of the Chicago Public Library is an unusual example, and indeed may even serve as a paradigm, of a large public building that is being restored, renovated, and refurbished at the commission or request of the citizens. Recent literature concerning the inhumanity of modern cities stresses the discontinuity of communication between those who plan large urban buildings and those persons who subsequently occupy them. The latter have no voice in the planning of buildings which are being constructed for them. The former seem oblivious to the future occupants. However, the Chicago Public Library is being restored and refurbished in direct response to the urgent requests of concerned persons. This may indeed be a paradigmatic situation in large, contemporary urban communities.

If this paper has served to stir some thoughts, to unsettle some concepts, to provoke further study, then it has accomplished its purpose. It did not set out to prove a point, but rather to try to open a new horizon.
Notes

1 Karl Jaspers observes that, "All the more brightly shines the genuine, unswerving, never-failing scientific attitude, whose very critical awareness of its limits leaves room for every other source of truth in man." Way to Wisdom: An Introduction to Philosophy, trans. Ralph Manheim, p. 157. Ibid., Without philosophy, Jaspers maintains that science becomes "meaningless correctness". p.159.


3 Commenting on the relevance of philosophy for examining our problematic situations, Robert Johann says, "Philosophical inquiry emerges in response to tensions and conflicts inherent in human life itself. ... Because it [philosophy] bears on the quality of life itself, it must begin and end there. Not artificial or contrived issues are its starting-point, but the actual shape of life as it is lived in the world today." Building the Human, p. 47.
CHAPTER VI

SOME PROVISIONAL NORMS

FOR EVALUATING BUILDINGS

There are adequate criteria for judging the quantitative dimensions of a building; its size, structural soundness, functional appropriateness, and economic value. However, there is a dearth of guidelines for ascertaining the qualitative status of an architectural structure, and it is precisely this dimension that should influence the decision to retain or to demolish an older urban building.

The human value criterion for evaluating an architectural structure may be applied by asking the following questions.

1. Do persons regard the structure as significantly representative of a portion of urban history; architectural, civic, or social? Since architecture is one of the major fine arts, does the building provide a representative example, perhaps the only example in the city, of an era in architectural history? Has the structure been the site of civic history; have important events occurred here? Has the building been the location of significant social events; does the building recall an urban life style that is part of one's civic heritage? As a value carrier, does the building provide a link in the historical record of the
city? Continuity with one's past is important, without it one experiences feelings of rootlessness and emptiness.

2. Does the building offer opportunities for the development of the self, the exercise of human freedom of choice and creativity; does the building enable a person to achieve a clearer, firmer self-identity; a greater self-realization? Buildings such as libraries, schools, science museums, art museums, churches, botanical conservatories, all offer opportunities for freely pursuing one's goals. Thus, does the building offer opportunity for such intellectual development and/or cultural enrichment which are both compatible with our current life style and contributive of a unique input to the mix of everyday living?

3. Does the building help to enhance the quality of one's life? Does a feeling of well-being and exhilaration follow from having visited the structure for whatever opportunities it has to offer?

4. Do persons derive aesthetic enjoyment from the building as an art form? Aside from its function or purpose, is the building perceptually pleasing, interior and/or exterior-wise?

5. Does the building have significant form or ornamentation which offers contrast to the many new smooth surface, homogenous form, sterile appearing buildings? Some contrast of surfaces is necessary to raise sensory input to an acceptable level. When senses are deprived of exterior stimulation, the individual becomes confused and disoriented. Contrast is a necessary phenomenon; without it, objects are unidentifiable. Human beings have an adaptive range for handling sensory inputs. Both deprivation and overloading of the adaptive system are damaging to the individual. ¹

6. Is the scale of the building proportionate to its
location; is the building well related spatially, to the area it occupies and to its neighboring structures? If it is of medium size, does it provide an architectural respite from over-crowding in a high density area; does it afford the "breathing space" so necessary for urbanites?

While very little is known about something as abstract as scale, I am convinced that it represents a facet of the human requirement that man is ultimately going to have to understand ...2

In allocating the spatial environment, and in designing the architectural objects placed in that spatial context, some of the measuring media to be included should be "the hidden dimensions of culture"3 which disclose human needs for leading healthy lives as social beings. Persons interact with other persons according to their respective cultures, and all actions and interactions of daily life occur in space, contingent upon the diverse culture patterns of persons.

In offering the above criteria, I am not recommending an architectural stability that is rigid, static, and without flexibility. I recognize that change is a necessary factor for growth in any situation. The city, like any growing, developing entity, gradually must replace some of its architectural components. But I emphasize that processes of growth are slow paced and continuous, like growth and development in plants and persons. It is destruction that is rapid and disruptive.

What I am recommending, then, is an environmental balance and continuity. I recommend an environmental equilibrium that is achieved through rational, rather than solely economic and technological planning, an environmental equilibrium that is measured according to human values.
Notes


3 Ibid., p. 167.
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Contains additional sources not specifically referred to in the Notes, but which have contributed to the climate of thought within which I formulated the paper.


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Other Source

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Unpublished Material

Letters from the files of:
1. The Chicago Public Library
2. Commission on Chicago Historical and Architectural Landmarks
3. Department of Development and Planning, City Hall of Chicago
The thesis submitted by Eleanor Regina Kaatz has been read and approved by the following committee:

Dr. Robert M. Barry, Director
Professor, Philosophy, Loyola

Dr. Mary L. Schaldenbrand
Associate Professor, Philosophy, Loyola

The final copies have been examined by the director of the thesis and the signature which appears below verifies the fact that any necessary changes have been incorporated and that the thesis is now given final approval by the Committee with reference to content and form.

The thesis is therefore accepted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts.

May 18, 1976
Date

Robert M. Barry
Director's Signature