This paper addresses the conference theme of how urban places are produced and transformed under the historical conditions of modernism and post-modernism. Let us first define what the distinction between "modernism" and "post-modernism" means to us. First, we agree with Zygmunt Bauman that this distinction is important first and foremost (perhaps even solely) in the context of the self-awareness of the intellectuals, and in relation to the way the intellectuals perceive their social location, task and "rallying point". We do not think these terms primarily describe "actual conditions", so much as intellectuals' (including designers') perceptions of these. We therefore see "post-modernism" as a new (and helpful) concept for addressing the current conditions of producing, transforming and consuming urban places; but we think these conditions themselves are still articulated primarily along the axes which Anthony Giddens uses to define "the conditions of modernity": that is, amongst others, capitalism, the nation state and lifestyle choice. Our interest, in this paper, is to compare the intersections between these axes and architectural culture, in Britain and Greece.

In post-modernity, designers have abandoned the modernist feeling that there is one valid canon of "good design". For the art called post-modern, the central question is how to locate, identify, set apart a particular world, knowing well that this world is merely one of the many possible and coexisting, and that the exploration of this world, however profound, is unlikely to bring us any closer to universally binding truth, or findings able to rightfully claim either general, or exclusive validity, as Bauman puts it. This position encourages a new, broader awareness of architectural culture's potential.

This does not, however, mean that "anything goes" in terms of what is built, primarily because architects do not themselves have sufficient resources to build. We therefore see architectural culture, in capitalism, as evolving through a market for architectural services. Competing with one another in this market, various architects set out their stalls with different design ideas, offering to exchange these for material or symbolic rewards: material rewards through fees from patrons who have sufficient resources to build, and symbolic rewards through being "taken up" by the cultural elites, so acquiring "cultural capital". In this market, patrons are most likely to buy the forms (and justificatory arguments for these) which seem best to further their own current interests: in capitalism, mostly economic interests tempered by the need for planning permission. Word spreads, amongst architects, that those forms and arguments are bankable, so they will be replicated by other designers. Gradually they will move into the mainstream of architectural culture to become self-conscious "movements", now experienced by individual designers as "given".

We see this market primarily as part of the process of architectural production. Most ordinary people can affect it only at arms-length, and only if their purchasing power can influence patrons' decisions about what to build. Even the richest individuals, however, can only have this effect on a tiny proportion of the environment they experience in their everyday lives. Most people experience most built places only as consumers of the experiences which they offer.

From the post-modern perspective, capitalist culture has implications for consumption just as much as for the production process we have already outlined. We agree with Giddens's that
"lifestyle choice" - choice of the kind of person one would like to become, as Bauman puts it - is crucial to life today. We also agree with Colin Campbell that there has developed, as an aspect of lifestyle choice, a new "romantic ethic" guiding people's consumption, so that (to quote Bauman again) choice has turned into a value in its own right; the supreme value, to be sure. What mattered now was that choice be allowed and made, not the things or states that are chosen.\footnote{Campbell}.

Clearly, this "romantic ethic" is called into play, as a key to environmental judgement, when people (inescapably) consume urban places. If choice has become the supreme value, as Bauman suggests, then we should expect that urban places which offer high levels of experiential choice would be valued by many users.\footnote{Campbell}

Urban places can offer experiential choice at the levels of form, use and meaning. Variety of land-use seems to be fundamental here, because it unlocks variety at the other levels. Firstly, places with varied uses will contain varied building types, of varied forms. Second, they will tend to attract people across class, race and gender divides, at varied times, for varied reasons of production, consumption and exchange. Third, because the different activities, forms and people provide rich material for perception, users are likely to impute varied meanings to such places.

The experiential choice offered by any particular physical arrangement of land-uses depends on how mobile its users are: highly mobile, car-using people can benefit from a variety of activities even when these are spread over a wide area. But relatively few people are highly mobile: poor people, children, disabled and sick people, disabled people, parents with young children, and even (generally) women - overall, a high proportion of most populations - are mostly not. For most people, then, the greatest experiential choice comes from places with a close "grain" of different uses within walking distance: places we shall call "mixed-use areas". Experiential choice, however, cannot be reduced to mixed-use. For example, we can imagine mixed-use areas whose potential for visual variety (say) is suppressed by some particular system of planning control. Or, alternatively, there is always potential for increasing the experiential variety of single-use areas by (say) designing them to simulate the presence of mixed uses: simulation, after all, is often held to be a key characteristic of post-modern culture.\footnote{Campbell} Nonetheless, although some particular land uses (prisons, abattoirs and the like) are regarded negatively, the logic of our argument suggests that in general, because of their fundamental importance in promoting experiential choice, mixed-use areas would be highly valued by many people, whilst a coarsening of their grain would be regarded negatively.

Our argument so far suggests a hypothesis which we shall now explore. It suggests first that (patrons willing) fine-grained mixed-use will be encouraged by designers, who will also promote choice of visual experience in its own right. If patrons fail to accept fine-grained mixed-use, we may expect to find attempts to simulate it. Let us see how this hypothesis stands up to practical experience, in the capitalist nation states of Britain and Greece.

One aspect of capitalist property development is the long-term transformation of mixed-use areas into single-use "zones". In capitalism, most buildings are produced as commodities to be sold at a profit. The prices purchasers can pay for them vary widely. Typically, a profitable company (say) can pay more for a given space than an unemployed teenager can afford. The highest prices will come from the richest potential purchaser who wants space in the building's particular location. Locations which are attractive to the richest users - because of good accessibility, environmental quality or whatever - will therefore attract the highest prices, whilst only relatively unattractive locations will remain for the less well-off. This leads to a gradual "zoning" of uses, so that those with different levels of buying-power become spatially segregated within the city as a whole, thus coarsening the land-use grain. The rate at which this happens in different places, though, is strongly affected by how land is owned and traded.

In Britain, there is a long tradition of owning land primarily for financial investment purposes through the "leasehold" system, in which large blocks of city-centre land often revert to an original owner after others have been given a lease to use it for building purposes during a set
period. This system creates opportunities for re-assembling large single-ownership blocks once the leases have expired. These large blocks can often be developed into single projects, because large amounts of capital are available through the long-term investment programmes of pension funds and insurance companies. Indeed, these "financial institutions" often seek large projects for economies of scale.

These larger developments replace groups of differently-aged buildings by all-new constructions. This has important effects on the rental structure of such areas. The original buildings would have been constructed when costs were relatively low, and little money is now tied up in them. Also, there is often little demand from prosperous tenants to rent old buildings, because these lack modern facilities and offer no boost to tenant prestige. All these factors keep rents low. Because of high construction costs and interest rates, however, even modest new buildings have to charge relatively high rents to break even. Redevelopment therefore implies that rents must rise considerably. These increased rents reduce the variety of uses, because only the most prosperous can afford them. Thus redevelopment, with its high rents, reduces variety of uses: ironmongers and greengrocers give way to boutiques and offices.

The reduced variety of experiences which this implies is exacerbated by the reduction in visual variety which comes from replacing several differently-aged buildings by a single larger one. Even when conservation-oriented planning struggles against this, as in historic cities like Oxford, the effect is very marked.

The Greek situation is very different. Here, urban land was mostly sold freehold in relatively small plots by the original agricultural owners, and continues to be held by individuals who frequently use it at least partly for their own dwelling or business purposes. Here it is much more difficult for developers to obtain large sites: usually only one or two adjoining small sites are available at any one time. This encourages small-scale incremental redevelopment, which is reinforced by the relatively small amounts of capital available to most Greek developers, and the restricted involvement of major financial institutions in development. Consequently, central area redevelopment in Greece does not usually create large areas of building constructed all at once, so far more variety of use - and therefore visual variety - remains, as compared with similarly-located areas of British cities; though this situation is gradually changing. Though planning regulations do not restrict land-use in most areas, there is evident even in Greece a change towards commercial uses as land value expectations increase: ground floors change from (say) plumbers to boutiques, whilst flats above may be rented for offices. New central-area developments are mostly banks, offices and shopping centres, with most housing development now happening in the suburbs. All this, however, is far less marked than in Britain.

As we should expect, the coarsened land-use grain in British central urban areas seems to be regretted by many designers. A review of recent urban design literature in English by John Punter, shows very clearly that closely-grained mixed-use is valued by a wide range of influential authors. For the reasons outlined above, this is extremely hard to achieve in practice: the economic forces transforming mixed-use areas are too powerful to be controlled by designers or by local political pressure, no matter how well-articulated. What is possible, however, is the visual simulation of the mixed-use area's variety of experiences, by making single-use projects look like the older (and more mixed-use) areas they replace. Articulated with local political power through British planning's "development control" process, these simulation pressures are hard for architects to resist, unless (like, say, Richard Rogers) they have considerable cultural capital: see, for example, Rogers' Lloyds Building. But the widespread political pressure supporting simulation means that it is attractive to developers seeking planning permission quickly, and therefore simulation in practice has had to be absorbed into mainstream British architectural culture. Post-modern culture is therefore used by British designers largely in simulation mode, and this appears to have considerable public support. For example, a large recent poll showed 81% of respondents "liking" the "simulation" complexity of Quinlan Terry's Richmond offices, whilst only 12% liked the modernist Lloyds building.
In Greece, where much of the mixed-use variety of experience remains, there is (as we should expect) no particular discussion of them in the design literature. However, a recent preliminary survey of 40 Greek and British people\(^1\), with comparative experience of Athens and London, suggests that London-based Greeks regret London’s relative absence of mixed-use local areas, which shows as an important feature distinguishing the two cities. It seems likely, therefore, that silence about mixed-use in Greek design literature is merely because its absence is not (yet) seen as a problem.

In Greece, therefore, there is no perceived need to try to simulate past “atmospheres” of mixed-use, so Modernism is still on the mainstream architectural agenda. As late as 1986, in 28 interviews with established Greek architects, exploring what they considered the most important development of the previous two decades, only two mentioned post-modernism at all\(^1\). Soon, however, this began to change: by 1989 trends in contemporary Greek architecture are characterised by the gradual infiltration of post-modern attitudes in design, as Constantopoulos put it\(^2\). Even so, post-modernism has certainly not replaced modernism. Unlike in Britain, Tournikotis tells us, modernism has not been “overthrown” in Greece: while, internationally, the “post-modern” condition was founded on broad questioning of the social and urban principles of modernism, in Greece it merely succeeded the previous trend, without disputing it\(^3\).

The “open” potential of post-modernism is therefore not - or not usually - used for simulation, except in touristic areas where simulation of “the past” is seen as a saleable commodity for other reasons. Greek post-modernism is used instead to address more limited problems of experiential choice: the lack of visual variety in certain typical situations. The first, according to Constantopoulos, is the saturation of large urban centres, and especially Athens, with modernist apartment blocks creating an urban vernacular on a large scale\(^4\). The problem here is that rigid planning regulations have generated continuous, uniform building volumes, whilst the formal limitations of Modernism have had insufficient flexibility to create compensating small-scale visual variety. Here the major move away from modernism has been the revision of the role of decoration - no longer considered to be a crime by architects, says Constantopoulos\(^5\). In a second situation, post-modernism is used for visual variety in larger commercial developments, created in suburban situations where larger sites are found. Here tenants still value “modernity”, so visual variety is achieved by expressionist juxtapositions, for example of columns and pediments against modernist curtain walls. Thirdly, and for directly commercial reasons, small shopping centres seek attention through flamboyant post-modern gestures. In all these cases, Greek post-modernism is not used to simulate the past, as it is in Britain, but to keep “up to date”. Greek modernism continues to exist as part of post-modern pluralism, but has acquired connotations of “old-fashioned architecture”\(^6\): perhaps roughly the opposite of how most British architects perceive it.

To summarise, our paper shows how a given aspect of capitalist development pressure, interacting with the different inherited characteristics of different nation-states, can encourage the development of radically different form-vocabularies and canons of good design. Physical form and design ideologies are strongly tied to economic forces, but intervening factors ensure that the one is never a mere reflection of the other.
NOTES

1. Bauman (1991), 103
2. For discussion see (e.g.) Giddens (1991)
3. This is the first, preliminary, result of the European Urban Design Exchange (Alcock, 
Bentley, Butina, 1992)
4. Bauman, op cit, 30
6. Giddens, op cit, Chap 1
7. Bauman, op cit, 169
9. Bauman, op cit, 169
10. Bentley et al 91965)
11. Bentley et al (op cit), Chap 2
12. See, e.g. Baudrillard (1988)
13. Rasmussen (1940)
15. Bentley et al (op cit), Chap 2
16. Punter (1990)
17. MORI (1989)
18. Nikolakeas (ongoing)
19. Architecture in Greece (1986)
20. Constantopoulos (1989), 63
21. Tourniotis (1989), 70
22. Constantopoulos, op cit, 63
23. Ibid

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1 The erosion of mixed-use areas in Britain (Source: Bentley et al, 1985)

2 The retention of mixed-use areas in Greece: a block in central Athens, 1992
CAPTIONS FOR ILLUSTRATIONS

3 1970's apartments in Athens
   (photo: C. Dorées)

4 1960's shopping centre in Athens
   (photo: C. Dorées)

5&6 1980's office block in Richmond, UK, designed by Quinlan Terry as a single,
     new-laid scheme
     (photos: I. Bentley)