A THEORY OF CHANGE IN ARCHITECTURE
(with limited metamorphosis)

Most architectural theories
have so far tried to simplify architecture.
The point, however, is to complexify it.

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An introduction

If 'metamorphosis' (Mm) is considered to be a significant or a useful concept to introduce into architectural discourse and theory or into 'environmental social sciences', this project should not be launched without examining at least the following problem areas:

1. Possible objects of (what might tentatively be considered as) metamorphic processes in architectural design, practice, discourse and education.

2. Theoretical, philosophical and linguistic status of 'Mm', particularly, as a metaphor with multi-disciplinary, multi-cultural and multi-media background.

3. The concepts of 'change', hence, exchange, development and transformation. This is because these concepts could be the least contentious ones when the flamboyant concept of 'Mm' is brought down to do some hard, theoretical work.

4. The capacity of the recipients to receive and do worthwhile work on the concept of 'Mm', in particular, architectural design, practice, theory, discourse and education. And,

5. On the basis of the above, at least some speculative extrapolations on current contexts.

1
The primary objects of possible Mm

'Mm' is first and foremost a concept. It has been in existence in a variety of discourses for some time describing a range of physical, natural, mythological, cultural, ... phenomena. However, this range has not so far included architecture. In the event of such an inclusion, the new concept is most likely to begin work by scanning the field that it enters in order to find existing objects to latch on to, to inhabit or to transform. The most likely set of objects it would find might include 'Architecture' (or, 'architecture'), 'building', 'city', 'space', 'environment' and 'form'. For the purposes of this paper and for various contextual and conjunctural reasons, I will briefly examine the first two concepts.

2
'Architecture' and 'building'

'Architecture' (hereafter, A') is like that of 'God'. You either believe in it or not. Architects, art historians and tourists love their Capital A. The fact that they do love the concept of A (and leave poor buildings (hereafter, b') to those without proper education, imagination or taste) is not in itself a sufficient proof that there really exists such a superior object.
Let's briefly look at the significant differences between 'A' and 'b' — however, as concepts in architectural discourse and theory, and not as physical phenomena out there!

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>'Architecture'</th>
<th>'building'</th>
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<td><strong>essentially</strong></td>
<td>as ideal</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>perceived as</strong></td>
<td>always already finished (almost without a process)</td>
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<td><strong>central objects</strong></td>
<td>'Architecture' / 'buildings of Architectural interest' / 'space', 'form', ...</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>defined in</strong></td>
<td>aesthetic terms</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>aspires to be</strong></td>
<td>art</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>systemic definition</strong></td>
<td>total whole with signifying parts that carry the significance of the whole</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>made by</strong></td>
<td>the Architect (singular)</td>
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<td><strong>description of design / production process</strong></td>
<td>is designed, composed or created</td>
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<td><strong>modes of evaluation</strong></td>
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<td><strong>objects of</strong></td>
<td>theories, doctrines, manifestos, controversies, ...</td>
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<td><strong>theory and history</strong></td>
<td>'Theories and history (not histories) of Architecture'</td>
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<td><strong>epistemological appropriation</strong></td>
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<td><strong>linguistic identity</strong></td>
<td>adjectival / literary nouns / literal</td>
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<td><strong>ideal metaphors</strong></td>
<td>music, poetry, painting, Nature, (occasionally, cars)</td>
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<td><strong>favourite myths</strong></td>
<td>primitivism, naturalism, science fiction</td>
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<td><strong>expected qualities</strong></td>
<td>pleasurable, tasteful, cultural satisfaction, ...</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>contents</strong></td>
<td>reflects (part of) society / embodies Zeitgeist and high ideals</td>
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<td><strong>contexts</strong></td>
<td>other Architectures / Architectural discourse and ideology / patronage</td>
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<td><strong>subjects</strong></td>
<td>generally, enlightened clients</td>
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<td><strong>meaning</strong></td>
<td>symbolizes</td>
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<td><strong>problem type</strong></td>
<td>anomalies, ambiguities</td>
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<td><strong>failure type and location</strong></td>
<td>compositional, stylistic, Orders, fabric, structure, material</td>
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<td><strong>research</strong></td>
<td>historical, aesthetic</td>
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Against this well-entrenched belief system I would argue that:

- There is no 'Architecture', but architecture. There is no theoretically formulated distinction between those buildings that are believed to be 'Architectural' and those that are not. Yet, it can be proposed without theoretical risks that all buildings are buildings. In this sense, 'architecture' refers to the area and the practices covered by all design and building activities, including their education, and not to a privileged class of buildings.

- Architecture cannot be about bricks-and-mortar alone, yet, nor should it be about a mythical idea, an ultimate goal, or an art devoid of broader responsibilities.

- If anything, architecture is a web of practices, actions, relations and connections — all to do with producing built objects. As such, architecture is connected to almost everything, but is not everything.

- 'Architectural objects' are made up of, or come about as a resultant of the combinations of a number of elements, agents, forces, intentions, objectives, representations and relations which are at different degrees of complexity and development, and at different orders with respect to each other and to the 'others'.


damped tide rises
• Whatever else 'A' is or is not, or however much it might be a useful concept, and even when it is assumed to apply only to built form, it cannot be applied to every part, every aspect or every moment of every (supposedly) Architectural building ('Ab'); Even without spoiling the fun by reminding the social and the anti-social use of particular Abe, we can quite legitimately ask how it is that columns may be A, but not the plumbing of the same building, or the proportions of the 'front' might be A, but not necessarily those of the 'back'.

• If the concepts of 'architecture' and 'building' need any source of richness, it should be sought not in a mystical 'A', but in a complex, comprehensive, critical and contradictory understanding of life and as much of its built framework as possible. The key to this expansion can not, however, be found in the notions such as 'Architecture' or 'Environment', but in the very object itself.

• But, what is the object of 'A', or 'a'? And, could it not be that this question charts probably the most fundamental task for architectural theory and criticism to undertake?

• A theory of architecture that takes its name and its central object for granted cannot be a 'theory' by any definition.

• An object that can be known is epistemologically superior to one that claims to be a know-all, or beyond knowledge. The fact is that buildings can only partly be known even when we apply all available disciplines and methods at our disposal is only to be expected from a knowable (as opposed to a presumed) object. An object that is presumed to embody mysterious spirits would keep putting devices such as primitive origins, strikes of genius, divine proportions or borrowed metaphors between itself and the observer. A, presented through aesthetic spectacles, hegemonic cultural frames or quasi-religious paradigms, is perceived at best as the focus of an alien experience. Those bs with no Architectural pretensions, on the other hand, can obviously be lived in, experienced and felt, but mainly by their occupants.

For outside observers such as us, A is at best an object of perception, while b is one of cognition (i.e. no doubt a contentious distinction from the point of view of traditional psychological paradigms, but it needed to be made in this particular context).

• For social science approaches, A is a non-object except when the former can break its restrictive empiricism and see A as an ideological object in the sectional discourse of architecture. But bs cannot be studied in so-called environmental social sciences (ESS) in a way that the importance of built form and space deserves as long as the epistemological status of the traditional domains of architectural history, theory and discourse are left unchallenged. For, what is there to be known scientifically if the analysis

(a) takes for granted the tautology that 'Architecture is all about Architecture', or

(b) ignores the fact that it is 'ordinary' buildings where most people (if grudgingly) live?

Thus, what opportunity is there for a social science approach to enter the field except either as subservient to a professional ideology or as a subversive source of largely inconsequential provocation that can be ignored without penalty?

• For education, A is an absent presence. It is everywhere in schools, but it cannot really be taught. (For, generally speaking, only what is knowable would also be teachable). Buildings, on the other hand, are infinitely knowable and eminently teachable — and not only in technical or mundane terms, but poetically and metaphorically too!

• Yet, as long as it identifies itself with 'A' while continuing to produce the producers of mediocre b's, education will lack fully formed teachable object/ves. The solution is not simply a matter of trying to design better 'Architecture', but defining the right objects to design.
Uneven use of metaphors in architectural discourse

- The concept of 'architecture' is one of the most popular metaphors, architectural discourse is a similarly fertile source, and if not checked, the latter itself could be taken over by metaphors coming from other areas.

- Describing a concept (e.g. 'metamorphosis') as metaphor in the context of a critical examination should not be taken to be reflecting on its truth or falsity. Nor is it implied that metaphor is 'false' whereas literal, by implication, is 'true' knowledge. If anything, world would have been a meaningless place to live in if we did not have language, music and poetry — all of which thrive on metaphors and creative errors. The question is not therefore whether 'metamorphosis' is a good metaphorical concept to have, but whether architectural theory, architectural discourse or ESS can handle such a rich new concept.

- In the light of the examination of 'A' vs 'b' above, it can be observed that the association, in architectural discourse, of certain architectural phenomena with artistic techniques (e.g. proportion, rhythm), literary tropes (e.g. ambiguity, parody, metaphor) or linguistic elements (e.g. language, sentence, quotation) is almost solely confined to 'A', and seldom to 'ordinary buildings'. Thus, in the absence of a radical transformation of architectural discourse and professional and educational practices, an introduction of new metaphors into architectural discourse will almost certainly apply to (high) 'A'; thus, by-passing the rich poetry in ordinary buildings and endless ambiguities in their use. But more to the point, it may fail to notice the whole range of changes, exchanges and transformations in ordinary (non-A) buildings.

Not constrained by the over-self-conscious academism stuffed into much of 'Architectural buildings', ordinary buildings and their content change far more continuously, far more implicitly, far more comprehensively but far more quietly than the always controversial and interest-laden changes to existing Abs. Ordinary built form is constantly transformed into raw materials for other ordinary buildings, urban spaces into presumably more relevant ones, or uses and users into new uses and users.

High As travel in drawings, are studied with reverence, and are measured, debated, analysed, made into symbolic capital or 'heritage', put into crates, mummified in museums, abstracted into mathematical formulas, ... and frozen into canons (from which they can hardly manage to get out in order to experience anything like an uninhibited intercourse with fellow Abs, let alone get fully transformed into a butterfly!) The same ruling ideology and its discourse which
set the standards of social conduct, represent vested interests and regulate people's behaviour, also device means of regulating what is and is not permissible as architecture.

Significant for the task of reconciling architectural discourse with ESS is to understand the extent to which social sciences can or should take architectural discourse seriously. In the present architectural 'scene' whose main characteristics is a combination of formal promiscuity and social indifference, the first thing that the self-declared liberators of architecture seem to do is to swiftly move from the so-called straight-jackets of a socially-aware architecture to the good old concept of high A without so much of a demonstration that there are no alternatives to 'either A or b' syndrome. They then go on adding classical orders, cardboard pediments, crashed cranes or rubic cubes, often over old spaces, old functions, old forms and old interests.

Skirts may indeed be changing, (or being replaced by trousers), but what is underneath is the same.

• Finally, a diagnosis is in order: in pathological communication, metaphor is not necessarily the liberating device that it is in language and poetry. When metaphor is confused with what is meant, or is made to look like what it stands for, or used as a device to divorce design from research, analysis, criticism, creativity and experimentation, it would be high time to transform the frame of reference, move outside the suspect discourse and go for meta-metaphors, that is, to theories, in order to relate the elements of architectural practice and its communication to each other and make them more intelligible.

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Uneven changes and (ex)changes in built phenomena

When a stone is thrown
from one side of a window,
the glass is broken from both sides.

Questions:
• What sort of change is architectural and urban change?
• What, precisely is it that changes when architectural and urban change takes place?

Level 1: observations and analysis
• Most changes in built form have no precise beginnings and no absolute ending.
• There can be no snapshots of built form that is good forever. By the time the camera winds the film, statistics reach the computer, drawings are faxed to the site office or the books run of the press, reality would have changed irreversibly.
• Changes in built phenomena are continuous, uneven, intricinsically contextual, not always predictable or detectable, and not always physical or spatial.
• What one can see in space may be hiding what one cannot. A row of columns can make up a barrier — if not in space, than in behaviour; if not in behaviour, than in cultural norms.
• Every wall has (at least) two sides. What is 'inside' for people is one of the two 'outsides' of a wall. When a stone is thrown from one side of a window, the glass is broken from both sides.
• It is not only the space or the form (—in general) that change, but the differences between
  (a) their spatial / physical characteristics,
  (b) their rate of change,
  (c) the new composites that each change(s) affect,
  (d) their boundaries, orders, hierarchies, meanings, representations,
(e) their concepts.

• To understand changes in the built form those in between just as much as those in the phenomena may have to be understood.

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<th>FORM</th>
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<td>SPACE</td>
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<tr>
<td>IDEAS, CONCEPTS, DISCOURSES</td>
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<tr>
<td>Social, cultural, legal, economic …</td>
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<td>CONTEXTS, boundaries</td>
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Level 2: analysis and theorizing

A postulate from Level 1: Most changes in built form have no precise beginnings and no absolute ending. There can be no snapshots of built form that is good forever. 

A Level 2 Question: Where should an analysis of change start from? Do transformations or Mm have clear beginnings or identifiable ends? Can we identify with some certainty a change as primarily, metamorphic? If, however, we accept that theoretical concepts do not necessarily need to be describable empirically, what would be the means adequate to describing holistic, syncretic, complex processes that are referred to as 'metamorphic' changes?

• Even the simplest built phenomenon does not change in total or all the time. Parts, components, elements and aspects have their own timetables, procedures, priorities, trajectories, manifestations, effects, …

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• Any change entails differences in time — between what was before and what is after, and in space — between what was and is here. But, not all differences are equally observable, equally significant or equally effective. The point for research and for designerly interventions is to
distinguish the differences that make a difference from those that do not. Incessant classifications of styles, spurious labelling of trends or constant re-aligning of personalities is not a substitute for understanding such vital differences.

- Changes in built form are variously perceived, observed, experienced, studied, theorized, designed, introduced, built, interfered with, participated in, ... by various agents, but almost never without the mediation of some mode or medium of representation. Simplistic varieties of architectural mind may assert that buildings can be understood by a quick look at their front façades in the course of architectural tourism, or the drawings can tell us what we want to know about them. Yet, in looking at buildings, observers may be seeing them as drawings made into 3-D, but while looking at drawings they might also 'see' forms, spaces and people that do not really exist on paper.

- To put it simply, urban and architectural phenomena cannot be understood fully or directly as obvious and unproblematic givens (—if they were that simple we wouldn't need intelligent individuals like ourselves devoting our lives to them), but

  a) they already exist in our minds as tradition, as habits, as precedents, as archetypes or genotypes, in short, as exemplars of built reality that we happen to know; and are represented in drawings, colour photographs, writings, theories, numbers, EE$SS$E, electronic data, 'isms, associations, ... hence.

  b) they are given to our senses not purely as they appear to our cameras, nor without the filtering, colouring or classifications of previous knowledge, but as unevenly complex combinations of all that.

Any change is affected, or happen, as much in physical reality as in their representations. Therefore, an understanding of change has to unravel the interactions and exchange between not just physical or social phenomena, but between their detailed representations too.
'Metamorphosis' (Mm)

A building is not a cockroach,
Built form is not a beetle,
Society is not a cocoon,
City is not an oriental carpet

has been flagrantly disfigured by it. On looking at
these shapes it is clear that they do not comprise a
pair; if we were to see the left wing in isolation we
do not immediately ask for its right-hand counterpart;
the composition is dead. And still less viability is
expressed in example 3, for here the two wings ex-
hibit their detachment even more aggressively by
reason of the fact that each is marked by a complete
whole, having symmetry about its centre axis. In
example 3, Nature shows how the duality of the wings
has been completely and elegantly resolved by the

Now, a building is an atrocity and an abortion if it is
split down the centre by a narrow vertical dividing
member into two equal symmetrical parts. This
truth has already been established. Let us consider
for a moment how it is possible, keeping the central
member fairly constant in width, to resolve the duality
of the wings by modification of their shape. The very
use of the word 'wings' is sufficient to offer a sug-
gestion as to the solution of this particular problem.

Fig. II illustrates these butterflies, two of which
are freakish and the third natural. Example 1 shows
a pair of rectangular wings, a shape which Nature
could not recognize because the principle of unity

In the course of making some observations on architectural discourse and advancing arguments
on concepts of change and metaphor, references have already been made to the concept of
'metamorphosis' either to exemplify theoretical issues, or to instigate and provoke early
reactions. Even if one forgets, dismisses as pedantic or does not agree with part or all of that,
the single epistemological question that I would want to raise in this paper can be summarized as
follows:

What happens to architectural theory, architectural history, architectural
research, architectural education and 'environmental social sciences', in
other words, to the dominant architectural and environmental discourses,
when a new concept such as 'metamorphosis' is introduced into their
otherwise peaceful narrative — but, this time not as a visual pun, as a
graphical riddle or as a literary metaphor, but in an epistemologically
maximalist, analytically moral and conceptually 'non-A' frame of
reference?

Therefore, questioning Mm and Its adoption:

Some fundamental questions must be asked before going ahead with an adoption of Mm:

- What sort of event, action, process (or whatever) is architectural and urban Mm likely to be?
- What precisely does 'metamorphose when it metamorphoses'?
- What are the objects, variables, agents and structural parameters of this adoption?
- If the object of Mm is built form, the question is whether that object is refined enough to receive a highly sophisticated, if ambiguous, multi-perceptual, external concept?
- If in fact it is, the second question would be whether the existing architectural discourse and architectural theory are of sufficient sophistication to integrate such a new concept?
- But, if Mm is not itself such a sophisticated concept in the first place, what justification is there for borrowing it from outside the field?

and, opening up Mm before adoption:

When isolated philosophical, scientific or artistic concepts such as Mm are applied to socio-spatial phenomena various epistemological effects would arise:

i. Such applications may at first make the reality of the phenomena in hand somewhat more visualisable, more concrete or more graspable;

ii. They may help define some new aspects and new problems which might hitherto have existed only as undefined occurrences;

iii. By concentrating only on specific aspects of the phenomena they may create the impression that the whole is much more knowable and much more theorizable than the case might have been before.

The last point needs some expansion first: when, for example, the idea of 'change' is isolated as a significant aspect, it is likely that it will be (mentally) isolated from other, possibly contradictory, aspects and processes. It becomes the focus of attention almost to the exclusion of other considerations.

Yet, the fields described as 'socio-environmental' or 'socio-spatial' are not developed enough to take rigorous accounts of the social in the spatial and the spatial in the social — even as static parameters of each other, let alone as constantly changing ones. These fields rely largely on borrowed paradigms from social sciences and overlay them on a background of largely pre-theoretical architectural formulations. Change, which is still an unsettled concept in the former becomes an intuitively obvious in the latter. Consequently, while paying attention to detail borrowers sometimes ignore the whole, or vv, or while metaphorizing in generalities they fail to see what, precisely, is and is not changing, and how.

Therefore, the central thesis of this paper is that there are so many different changes, resistances to change and sheer lack of change in socio-environmental phenomena that

(a) our highly selective disciplinary horizons do not cover them all;
(b) they are not all metamorphic, hence;
(c) raising the ontological status of our object by attributing to it a radical capacity to change might be premature.

• At present 'Mm' is not a properly theorized concept in architectural theory for us to use it without rigorous scrutiny. It needs to be bracketed (in "...") or as Mm) for as long as necessary.

• Mm is a metaphor as much as a concept, referring to a philosophical view of life just as much as, and at the same time, to a natural or physical process.

• As quite likely to happen in architectural discourse, and if taken as a metaphor (— a metaphor that is meant), architectural Mm cannot simply be an aspect of an undefined (or, ill-defined) object (i.e. 'A'). A theoretical examination of the Mm in architecture might therefore be in order:

I. Mm as a metaphor pertaining to 'A' >>>

   hence, a pathology of communication is likely when a metaphor that is meant is applied to a concept ('A') which is itself a metaphor for something else that does not exist, or

II. Mm as an aspect of 'b' >>>

   hence, an inadequacy of architectural knowledge is exposed whereby the latter cannot explain the complex transformations that take place both in the design and production of buildings and in their forms, spaces, functions, use and relations throughout (and beyond) their life-spans.

• If Mm pertains or refers to a natural process, its concept does not do so to the same extent. It is primarily a cultural concept that might occasionally be given scientific status with varying degrees of justification or success. I can see the futility of trying to put this suggestively rich concept into
a definition that would be free of cultural baggage or colloquial determinations. However, it can be said that while we should not subscribe to the sectarianism of completely dissociating different modes of human knowledge from each other (in particular, scientific from pre-scientific, objective from subjective, mythical from theoretical, artistic from scientific, etc.), nor should we ignore the fact that some of these knowledges do not mix well.

• There is no harm in tracing the mythological origins in the history of the concept of Mm, but such an insight should not necessarily inform our understanding of the changes in built form that can provisionally and speculatively be described as metamorphic. (Similarly, it is one thing to recognize as culturally real, and study, the myths of creation that kept religious ideologues together for thousands of years, but it another thing to expect that biological research should be guided by Professor Adam Firstmansky and Ms Eve Firstwomanson — no doubt leaning on Laugier’s Primitive Hut).

For some time, architectural theory, anxious to find an origin to the rather unoriginal and unprovable idea of ‘A’ has been allowing itself to be seduced by the mysteries of natural structures or the myth of ‘primitive’ man, women or huts, but ESS should surely be wiser, hence more cautious, but also much more imaginative than proceeding on a naturalistic or primitivist path.

• Mm might be to do with changes taking place in time, but, either as a concept or as a description of phenomena it is not as yet a historical concept. Not only the socio-spatial, but also the concepts of change and transformation should be historically situated.

• Architectural mind is conditioned to see snapshots even where action never stops. It gets thrills in constraining spaces into slide frames and delights in freezing music while the melodies of life could be far more enchanting (if also noisier) than the beauty of the notes on paper.

• Traces of Mm should be sought not only in forms, shapes, social activities, urban contexts and types — to name just a few possible conjunctures, but in the problematic relationship between architectural practice and human history.

• Put simply, what may seem to be eternal, profound, veritable, momentous, ... changes in ‘Architecture’ would be nothing of the sort when cooled down analytically or/and warmed up with a bit of humanity: The more architectural theory (AT) and architectural history (AH) claim to have spotted changes in ‘A’, the less they notice what goes on in/around buildings. The more AT and AH talk about ‘Great Architecture/s’, the more they get silent about the contexts, the
contents, the supports, the producers, the history, ... The desire to identify and define
supposed changes in 'A' takes up so much intellectual energy that the unceasing
transformations in everyday life are effectively left out of architectural perception.

Finally, it would be instructive to observe the way in which change (even 'metamorphosis') is
often defined by individuals, institutions or disciplines who declare the inevitability of change in
everything — except themselves!

'... with the passage of the year the sun
imperceptibly changed position and those who
sat on the porch had to change their position
little by little without being aware of it.'

(G G Marquez, One Hundred Years of Solitude)

7

Postscript: metamorphosis of contexts
—or, a digression from really important research matters

There is more to stones than stones. A practice,
its discourse, its theory, its history and its
education that cannot see the world beyond
stones cannot lay the corner stones of a more
civilized world.

Take care when taking a section through a brick
wall, it may bleed.

Adoption or no adoption, some uncomfortable facts may describe rather graphically what the
paper may have failed to do so in so many convoluted words, hence, momentarily moving our
attention from the text to the context:

In a year as significant as 1991, cities were again in the news: Baghdad, Beirut, Belfast and more
recently Tbilisi and London. Is it not a historical fact that beneath every Great City and under
every Great Architecture there lie thousands who killed and/or get killed while building, invading,
defending, or simply, inhabiting, them? And, is it not also a historical fact that thanks to the
patronage of the Great Residents of those Great Architectures, the unending metamorphosis
continues — building > destroying > building > destroying > ..., hence, perpetually providing
work for undertakers, looters, doctors, builders, town planners, architects, interior designers,
generals, contractors, material suppliers, decorators, landscape designers and historians?
Additionally, I will reiterate the rather pessimistic case that the immediate global context made up of such developments as the collapse of the 'Walls' and the ‘Curtains’ (hence, revealing the ever-presence of new ones), or the retreat of the collective conscious (even in a supposedly Union Europe) does not provide promising ecological, cultural, epistemological and designerly conditions for a meta-metamorphic change in our field. If anything, old orders and old rules are very much in force in most spheres of life — spheres that should certainly matter more than changes in architectural or academic fashions.

Nevertheless, we can probably extrapolate a methodological lesson out of all this: The changes — the palatable as well as the unpalatable types, brought about by the commissioners and the commissars of Great A as well as by “ordinary” people living ordinary lives in ordinary buildings are so much a part of the process of urban, architectural and social changes that architectural theories or environmental social sciences that do not (or cannot) account for, say, General Schwarzkopf as the architect of surgically asserting Western civilized values or fatally laying carpets on the cities of an alien people on which US and UK companies could then build new Critical Regionalist architecture, thereby doing their bit in transforming the Old Order into a New one, ... are deficient not simply on historical or moral, but also on scientific and epistemological grounds. Above all, they would even be lacking a sense of irony!