CRYOGENICS IN ARCHITECTURE
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In the past every self-respecting civilization kept a meticulous record of its existence, be it in the cultural or the economic sphere. Such records, especially of the latter kind, were not always meant to last forever. Their temporality was in accordance to their practical use. The duration of such yearly or seasonal inventories was thus determined by the regularity of their upkeep. Therefore, although safeguarded against theft or abuse in guarded storage spaces inside palaces or temples and monitored by scribes, administrators and high priests, these records were accordingly inscribed on perishable materials, such as on raw clay.

The Minoan Paradigm

So far I am referring to the clay tablets of Linear A and B of Minoan and Mycenaean scripts, found in abundance on the island of Crete and on the Greek mainland. Their survival in our age was purely accidental since the destructive fires, often the fate of prehistoric palatial complexes, perfectly baked these tablets. One involuntary accident in History had thus preserved the tablets, originally not meant to deserve conservation. Yet when first unearthed and published, these tablets were indecipherable, a riddle. Another accident then was the decipherment itself; let us call it a side effect of WW2 and its need to fabricate intricate code systems. Michael Ventris, a major contributor to the break of the Linear B code, had actually served at the British Foreign Office during the War. His special training helped him approach the problem from an unexpected angle, identify the mysterious script as Greek and solve it. By the way, Ventris was a trained architect.2

Thanks to the decipherment of Linear B, we now possess a means to penetrate some of the secrets of the last phase, the Mycenae, of the Minoan civilization. The tablets mostly consist of lists of things, abbreviated inventories of trade transactions and produce loads; very few let us have side-glimpses at the culture itself. Interpretation, let us call it creative translation, is still the most important feature of the ‘reading’ process of Linear B tablets. Knowledge is still a risky business, based on circumstantial evidence.

My contention is that the above paradigm is full of references to the general subject of keeping records, of architecture among other things, and applies to the particular issue of this session, that is, fragility. To prove this, I will first present some general arguments about pre-historical cultures then I will jump to the present, to the typical situation identified with a historical culture setting like ours.

Records are not by necessity meant to be sacrosanct tokens of eternity; records could or even better, should, be destroyed or let to perish. No matter how elaborate and rich were those palatial settings where records were produced and stored; there wasn’t enough space to accommodate them. A pre-historical king couldn’t afford to amass those huge quantities of records through time. It was obviously considered a useless task; people in those days took much delight in their life and don’t seem to be frustrated the least from such lack of recorded memory. Their concerns lay elsewhere. For once, religion was of primary importance; it was through its practice that questions about existence and the meaning of life were chiefly answered. These people were well versed in architecture and after each violent period of upheaval their custom was to rebuild ruined towns and structures on top of their former site. It thus seems that their notion of record was primarily of a spatial character, not of a temporal one. The interest in the past was conditioned by practical considerations: previous foundations of buildings or rubble from ruins could possibly be of some use; otherwise, the

entire past was swept away to allow new forms to emerge. The past was not a burden, a dead weight that would seem to annihilate the present and threaten the future. In my view, this was a uniquely happy and creative period in man’s history. The notion of Modernism would rather be unthinkable in Minoan times.

Modernism and the Manic Collector

Let’s now move fast forward to the present. Modernism is a key driving force in our culture nowadays, dressed up as an insatiable quest for reaching for the future by transgressing the present. To do so, Modernism had to lighten the burden of the past; by a single stroke, the Modernist rhetoric decapitated history. There is no need to expand on this subject; it is a well-established fact.

Nonetheless, the Modern Movement in architecture is nowadays counted among venerable historical movements; it is embalmed, sanctified, and meticulously studied and recorded. Although its prewar manifestations are historically unique and fully identifiable, its postwar so-called sequel (some consider it a universal triumph) is a completely different matter. For one, it is nowadays uniformly accepted as a dominant ‘style’, and that identification has guaranteed its continuous existence. It is uniformly international, no doubt. But is it still Modernism? Is it the legitimate heir to the throne? Few would agree on this issue. Most of the difficulty in my opinion lies in the fact that the Modern Movement, even as early as the mid ’30s, developed all the traits of an established, institutionalized ‘style’, therefore lost all its revolutionary fervor.

Yet, right from the start, there was evidence of a major conflict between revolution and practical reality. This had mostly to do with time duration. In implementation, the Modern Imperative was subjected to change, that is to unavoidable adaptations and permutations. The shift from revolution to routine thus proved surprisingly short in duration. In fact too short for the average historians’ comfort, therefore spreading confusion among experts about the legitimate extent of the Modern Movement in post-war architecture. Hence all those efforts at distinguishing variants of modern architecture, such as critical regionalism, or adding prefixes to the original word, such as post-modern and so on. Charles Jencks was particularly good at this sport.3

In general terms then, in dealing with the Modern Movement we seem to have in our hands a system that spreads open like a fan and is characterized by a dubious context. This would be just fine if we were studying the phenomenon from a typical historian’s perspective. But right now we are concerned with preservation, an issue crucial to our discussion. So we have to ask two things: what is worth preserving in material and in recorded form – every conceivable thing in existence or selected precious segments or samples of the whole? The first question reminds one of Noah’s Ark; God on that occasion had given a tangible, practical answer. Irrespective of the answer we give today to that first question, we still have to face another one: which would be our general criteria beyond regional particularities or local politics? Maybe I am mistaken, but I feel that this question has not been raised often enough in earnest on a universal basis – the only deserving one for such a so-called “International Style” as the one we are dealing with today.

In that context, one can ask yet another, somehow naïve question: Why do we keep records today, to begin with? To explain this habit, one has to shift to the related notion of collecting memorabilia as a contemporary mania.4 Susceptible to fads or fashions, this is virtually an epidemic of colossal dimensions. Collecting Modernist specimens is obviously only part of this mania. Yet this sounds strange: as I noted above, Modernism essentially despised the past and all its manifestations. Therefore, at least theoretically it should be against preserving anything stemming from this most suspect past. Nevertheless, since the Modern Movement has fallen into the hands of historians, also noted above, its admirers have succumbed to a strange infatuation with that unthinkably sinful past.

4 For the beginnings of collections in the 18th century leading to the creation of modern museums, depositories of valuables, see R. Schaer, L’invention des musées, Gallimard, 1993.
As seen from another angle, the cult of collecting is an attribute of contemporary life, that is, a natural by-product of the instant availability of vast sediments of material culture – an eclecticism of unheard-of dimensions that is capable of defeating any effort to define trends, movements, or any other way of categorization. This fantastic catalogue of alternatives, this wild freedom to seek new ways to express the here and now could justifiably be connected with the essence of modernity, its initial drive for experimentation and for novelty; certainly not with its dogmatic aftermath, its well-known absolutism. In such a context, this dizzying succession of manifestations of our material culture demands some rudimentary type of keeping records. We need such records in order to be sure that we are not repeating the past, therefore that we are breaking new ground. Even if this were an allusion, as some believe, the truth is that, in view of this overall vitality and creativity, record keeping would never seriously threaten our ability to push forward.

Admittedly, the above is an optimistic, courageous approach to the contemporary architectural scene. What we essentially say here is that if the system is productive, that is, creatively innovative, we don’t have to worry about anything. Not even about keeping records. But if the system becomes stultified, if it shows signs of petrification, keeping records then is a bureaucratic procedure, a superfluous burden that would make things even worse. What is really the case today? It’s hard to tell: the unprecedented, tremendous mass of new construction that takes place all around us is something we cannot ignore. As I said, it’s doubtful whether it is actually Modern Movement architecture or not. This would be irrelevant. A far more important question is whether this architecture is worth our attention. In historical terms, whether this large mass of construction deserves to survive for future generations, forever. Therefore, it is a question of defeating the forces of natural (or man-imposed) obsolescence or deterioration, of death.

Order and Eternity

Let me now take another approach in order to deal with the essence of keeping records in contemporary society. Aside from whichever technical matters concern the activity itself (to be discussed later), there is a substantial philosophical issue at hand. The basic concept underlying the preservation of records, of developing archives to be more exact, depends on the assumption that there exists an order, a higher-level organization, in the world to which everything should comply. An archive is a human-scale replica of the divine order. The best to my knowledge account of such an endeavor is a short story, actually a less than a page long, by Jorge Luis Borges titled “Of exactitude in science”. In this, a fictional character, J.A. Suarez Miranda, describes the “craft of Cartography” in a mythical empire, whereby successive efforts were made to provide a map of the Empire “that coincided with it point for point”. After many generations attempted to reach this goal, the project was finally abandoned and the Map was left “to the Rigours of sun and Rain.” Only a few “tattered Fragments of the Map” survived in the desert. This ironic reminder of human folly represents the unlimited belief in salvation through technology, which is rather a metaphysical matter. If there were a one-to-one relationship between what is produced in the architectural field and what is preserved, then we, in our own so-called “Empire”, have reached the unthinkable point of no return: we have become ourselves an artifice, the man-made “Map” of the world in place of the real world.

The above allegory, in broader terms brings together three concepts we have been discussing so far: modernity, recording and collecting. The fictively “complete” record of the Empire, the ultimate Map, is a utopian dream attained by scientific progress, a clearly modernist notion. Only that impossible quest could exactly correspond with “reality”, without anything being left out. Still, it was not reality that was actually sought, but the order underlying it, the artificial, man-made replica of the world. In sum, man strives to go beyond his nature and is defeated.

But such a melancholic conclusion is perhaps too far fetched. In reality, there is no such order as the assumed one at the base of the archetypical Archive. Whereas the love of eternity is an undeniable force behind all religions, there is evidence of a completely different setting in reality. Still, despite the fact that our daily-performed actions in many ways defeat the notion

of eternity, its impact on contemporary culture seems not to have diminished the least in the recent past. An explanation for this paradox may lie in the property of fragility.

We nowadays strive to preserve vestiges of our material civilization, all the more emphatically because we realize that everything in this world of ours is so fragile and perishable. Our times in fact emphasize the cult of the present, the quality of youth and by that, the constant flux of being. Impermanence is not simply a result of transience but an essential ingredient of change. On the other hand the exact opposite of change, eternity, is brought forward as a value to counterbalance this incessant flow.

How is fragility connected to modernity? Fragility, frailness, the ephemeral are all attributes of the same concept – that existence is constantly negotiated at the cutting edge of the present. The Modern Movement, one should be reminded, abhorred monuments, which are symbols of timelessness. So instead of building with marble or stone, this love of stretched skin that enfolds all the precious innards of a building prompted architects to apply principles much close to the Japanese love of temporary, delicate structures that can withstand earthquakes because they are light and flexible, yet barely protect one from the elements. The German Pavilion in Barcelona by Mies van der Rohe was the epitome of this ideal: a temporary structure built of precious materials for an exhibition. So fragility was inbred into the Modern Movement although in its revolutionary fervor, it proclaimed that it was based on universal, eternal truth.

Yet this isn’t the only contradiction one can detect in the area we are examining. For example, there is a strange contradiction between our practice (purification, clearing away of useless debris, selective memory) and theory (the strife for complete records). To cite just a minor but telling example, the house of Constantinos Parthenis, a renowned Greek painter, built before the Acropolis is torn down as an affront to the eternal monuments. The house has survived only in a picture by another, younger painter, Spyros Vasiliiou, who happens to live nearby and is keen on observing his surroundings with meticulous care. Mind you, he is not a scientist but a recorder, rather a collector of unpresumptuous contemporary scenery. He therefore ‘collects’ the Acropolis as an eternal landmark and the Parthenis house as a transient curiosity with equal care.

The Technological Imperative

Claude Chabrol, the well-known French film director, once asked: “We can’t have everything; where would we store it?” This little phrase contains a great truth: that the thrills of collecting go hand-in-hand with the agony of finding a place for the treasures amassed. The combination of delight and fear has a familiar Freudian undertone which should be kept in mind as we discuss our subject, especially when we enter the area of technological progress, which we are now ready to do.

An overwhelming flood of information is made possible through the use of modern technological advances of a limitless capacity to process and store records. The insatiable need of information speeded up the development of such tools and their mass distribution. This has created an explosion of knowledge, and architectural records form part of this overall trend.

Still, can this logic apply to the art of forming archives? Which are so far the findings of such an application? When was there a ‘better’ history written or a better criticism conducted, when we knew less and by a different procedure, maybe at a different depth, just because there was less to know therefore knowledge was more precious because it was more restricted or now, when we claim we have it all in our hands?

There is a certain analogy to the myth about written knowledge, inserted by Plato in his dialogue Phaedrus (LIX) and wonderfully exploited by Jacques Derrida in his book La pharmacie de Platon. Socrates recounts, as he calls it, a “tradition of the ancients”, whereby an old god, Theuth, presents to the god Thamus a gift, “the use of letters”. Thamus though is reluctant to accept the gift since, as he says, “this discovery of yours will create forgetfulness in the learners’ souls, because they will not use their memories; they will trust to the external

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written characters and not remember of themselves. The specific which you have discovered is an aid not to memory, but to reminiscence, and you give to your disciples not truth, but only the semblance of truth; they will be hearers of many things and will have learned nothing; they will appear to be omniscient and will generally know nothing; they will be tiresome company, having the show of wisdom without the reality."\footnote{I. Edman, ed., The works of Plato, the Jowett translation, Modern Library Books, 323.}

Uniformity and standardization, exactitude and stability of manifestation, which characterize the written word has thus impoverished the richness of meaning. Recently, in an attempt to compile a vocabulary of technical terms used by the Greek vernacular architecture, I was amazed to discover a bewildering variety of meanings for terms that were commonly found in many parts of the country; the reason being that Greece at the time, in the lack of a central administrative center, was a mosaic of self-sufficient communities and also because the diffusion of knowledge was entirely oral. This rich variety expressed the period’s multiplicity and complexity, now completely lost, and on the other hand it apparently did not create any confusion since each notion was closely locked within its local significance and use.

One may now wonder what is the architectural equivalent to oral communication? In my opinion, which I have extensively put to practice over the years by doing research in the architectural sediments of Greek settlements, the use of records is an admittedly valuable instrument in extracting knowledge and understanding about architecture designed and constructed. Still, it’s only secondary to the value of experiencing architecture, in forming a living bond with architecture. In view of such a relationship I would argue that names and dates, or any other similar aid to identifying and categorizing an architectural specimen is a most useful aid to enrich our rapport with it but not enough, in the absence of all the rest, to ensure its understanding. I am referring to real “truth” to be distinguished from the “semblance of truth” in the previous quote from Plato’s \textit{Phaedrus}.

Let us now move to another, perhaps more practical, issue connected to the notion of records and archives. Let us consider the architectural archives as a primarily material, tangible object (\textit{res}). The physical existence of the evidence (in the form of drawings and photos, of handwritten and published documents, or of personal mementos) needs to be arranged in an orderly fashion in appropriately equipped storage spaces, something not always feasible or available. In order to succeed, this process needs certain levels of capacity for in-flow rates and for bulk volume stored. If such levels are exceeded it would most probably mean a breakdown of the system, a disaster. This threat is not as far-fetched as it sounds at first hearing. In the absence of any reliable data, I can only suspect that the speed of technological progress in the field is not indefinitely guaranteed.

Still, there is an additional trap, of technical nature, to reconsider. The often bulky, cumbersome raw material collected, in its tangible form we mentioned above, begs to be transformed to other, easier to handle media. Nowadays we have all the needed technical know-how to do so; therefore we enthusiastically proceed with the job. Yet we are faced with unpredictable failures of the available technological means to preserve things. We are told, with an increasing sense of imminence, that current methods will soon become obsolete and fail, and that nothing can ensure the survival of present records after the next few decades. As a matter of fact, the experts advise us to resort to keeping paper copies of documents in order to steer completely clear of trouble. If this is true, then we fall back into the previous impasse: lack of storage space, something we had supposedly bypassed by using modern technology.

It is rather strange that at the beginning of the 21st century, we are still discussing the availability of space in conventional terms, and that we are concerned about storage space for our precious architecture collections and museums. The operation of a typically modern city after all depends on the existence of wholesale trade areas that occupy vast zones on its periphery. In a similar way, we will soon need equally large, fail-proof storage vaults for our records. Like underground silos for secret weapons or, if we go further back in time, like sacred cemeteries.

The above may mean that even if new methods and ways were developed to cope with such matters, this would probably mean that the situation might not be as favorable as it looks.
today. This seemingly naïve remark though reminds us of the painful fact that technology has boosted up our expectations to such an extent that we now feel deceived.

How far are we then willing to go in order to preserve the stupendous records we have been amassing up to the present? What would be the limit of growth for such an activity, or the acceptable limit to the expenditures needed for it? Answers may be hard to arrive at, but at least we now have a fair notion of an approaching threat to our reckless collecting frenzy.

Apparently, difficulties, no matter how severe, cannot heal us from the sickness of collecting. In view of this impasse, one would naturally resort to cryogenics. This scientific branch deals with cases similar to that discussed here. In the absence of a feasible, guaranteed method to preserve any perishable object, cryogenics freezes it to −180 degrees. There is a widely spread myth that Walt Disney has underwent this treatment after his death, so that whenever the appropriate to his ailment medicine will be discovered, he would be revived, nursed and live happily among us. In the Internet now circulates a clear denial of this myth, but we have no reason to lose our faith.

Cryogenics admittedly is a metaphor, but a quite eloquent one. Science has an answer even when it actually hasn’t. Judging from the number of entries in the Internet, cryogenics is a fast-developing new field with multiple applications in modern industry. Of course, I have no idea what would be the space requirements for an ambitious cryogenics program dealing with architectural records and possibly, with recorders as well. Who wouldn’t resist being transported into a future time, when all those dreams would be realized, into a world resembling a universal vault, which would contain all the past wisdom from time immemorial? This is a most tempting thought. I personally feel compelled to imagine such a utopian situation, whereby earth becomes a repository of history and silently sails into the void before it is finally consumed by the eventual explosion of the sun. As you have guessed I am a fan of science fiction.

Aspects of the Greek Case

In the final part of my paper I will discuss some aspects inherent in the study of Modern Greek architecture. The Neo-hellenic Architectural Archives housed in the Benaki Museum in Athens is a relatively young institution with phenomenal growth. Once established in 1995 it was soon endowed with a number of archives, large and small, which corresponded to a period of time that roughly coincided with the inter-war era and the first post-war decade. In a way it was natural that the first entries were related to that period. Also, it is evident that pre-war material, from the ’30s or even earlier, could easily be accommodated right from the start. On one hand, there had been sizable destruction and loss of evidence (both in built form and in drawings) during those turbulent years; on the other, there were much fewer architects around, no more than a couple of hundreds, than today and much fewer projects to be commissioned or built.

If this is the case with pre-war Greek architecture, I have no reason to doubt that the same holds true for other countries as well. Since I was among the first to try around the middle of the ’70s to reconstruct the architectural background of the ’30s, I have a vivid memory of the sometimes-insurmountable difficulties one ran into if he tried to collect data on that still obscure time period.

The first entries to the Benaki Museum Architecture Archives, established more than two decades later, were similarly rather slim and few in between. A large part of this initial collection concerned architects of the ’30s, as we said, those rare specimens of architects with poor means of preserving evidence; moreover they were designers of a form, a style of architecture still largely unappreciated, not to say despised, by the Greek society at large. As a result, the glorious ’30s has become an ideal period for collectors.

Another cause for this delay was that the Archives were still a new, unfamiliar institution, so very few had heard about it or were willing to contribute. Once the Archives became known

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8 The following information about cryogenics is derived from the Internet. The subject itself is fascinating; especially if one were to consider the diverse concepts hidden behind the term in its alternative spelling: cryogenics / kryogenics.
and gained prestige, things started getting rougher for its personnel and nowadays almost all living architects close to retirement, say, in their 70s, consider it a matter of great prestige to donate their drawings to the Museum. In the old days, life expectancy even of architects was rather low and according to a familiar custom, once one passed away, his close relatives would automatically get rid of all those useless piles of papers found in the deceased person’s house or office. If they didn’t, most of it was lost by accident in flooded basements or eaten by mice.

But all this lies in the past now. Even if we were to brush aside such timing coincidences, there is no guarantee that the Neo-Hellenic Architecture Archives (or any other similar institution elsewhere) would not collapse under the load of the relentless drive to collect material evidence in architecture. First, there is a phenomenal flood of material considered worth preserving and second, there is a general willingness among donors to get rid of such, maybe valuable but extremely burdensome, loads of evidence of their past activity, now practically useless to them. The architects on their part gain some sort of immortality by having preserved their work (this is easier than fighting to protect their buildings from neglect, affront or demolition), the society in general on the other hand is pleased to demonstrate its gratitude towards this body of aging creators.

There is an additional difference compared to what happened in the past. Close relatives or heirs simply donated an archive in the past after an architect had passed away. Nowadays things work faster: an architect can start putting the material of his past projects in order in his late 60s, therefore he is still there to offer advice and supervise – that is, control the fate of his heirloom, and by that dictate the rules. This puts an extra burden to the personnel working in the Archives, because they are often asked to organize exhibitions as a condition preceding a donation.

The situation has its strange sides too. A couple of months ago I was asked by a noted Greek architect, now in his early 70s, to advise him as to what should be retained from his past work. The numerous little sketches he had routinely thrown into his drawers in the process of working on his projects particularly puzzled him. Should all this mess be given over to the Benaki Museum and how the people over there would be able to acknowledge their possible value? I confess I was equally perplexed; I admitted my lack of knowledge but at the same moment I strongly recommended that absolutely everything should be turned over to the Museum without any intervention. Maybe I felt a little sadistic then, but now that I remember that event, I think that no other answer could have sounded logical under the circumstances.

Collecting, to sum up my argument, is of poor value if we don’t have a very firm idea about the ultimate aim of our activity. To put things in order one must have a pretty well defined image in his mind. Collecting may be a gratifying passion and may easily become an end in itself. Haphazard collecting is dangerous because it can distort reality.

There is also a point I didn’t want to raise up to now because its discussion would lead us too far away: are we sure we are searching at the right place? John Boardman, a much-honored classical archeologist from Oxford, gave an interview in Greece back in 1998, in which he admonished archeologists to reduce excavations (“since every excavation is a destruction”) and instead dig into the basements of museums where immense amounts of finds are routinely stored and forgotten, to be covered by new layers of finds again and again. In his words: “That’s where knowledge lies.” ⁹ Perhaps one would remind me that he was talking to archeologists about archeology and not to architects about architecture. Is it really that different? I doubt it: we are dealing with archeology as well, even if we do not use picks and shovels. It’s definitely archeology and nothing else.

... In that Empire, the craft of Cartography attained such Perfection that the Map of a Single province covered the space of an entire City, and the Map of the Empire itself an entire Province. In the course of Time, these Extensive maps were found somehow wanting, and so the College of Cartographers evolved a Map of the Empire that was of the same Scale as the Empire and that coincided with it point for point. Less attentive to the Study of Cartography, succeeding Generations came to judge a map of such Magnitude cumbersome, and, not without Irreverence, they abandoned it to the Rigours of sun and Rain. In the western Deserts, tattered Fragments of the Map are still to be found, Sheltering an occasional Beast or beggar; in the whole Nation, no other relic is left of the Discipline of Geography.

From *Travels of Praiseworthy Men* (1658)
by J. A. Suárez Miranda
Δεν υπάρχει σωτηρία για την προστασία του περιβάλλοντος από την ηλεκτρονική απορρύπανση.

Μεγάλο έργο νοσοκομειακής ανακατασκευής νόσος. Αυτός ο κατασκευαστής συνέπεσε από τον νόσο - ηλεκτρονική απορρύπανση - και επέλεξε να κατασκευάσει ένα νέο νοσοκομείο που θα αποτελούσε ένα νέο μοναδικό εργοστάσιο της εποχής.

Αισθήσεις στους νοσηλευτές:

- Οι νοσηλευτές αισθάνονταν πολύ συγκινημένοι και αγγελοντικοί. Συγκεντρώθηκαν γύρω στο νέο νοσοκομείο και απολαύσανε την πρόοδο της τεχνολογίας.

Εικόνες μελέτης:

- Το καθένα νοσοκομείο έχει τις δικές τους εικόνες μελέτης. Οι 250 εικόνες των 30 περιστατικών στοιχείων είναι εναλλάξοντα εικόνες, οι καθηκόντων πιστώνουν ότι αυτό είναι παθητικό, αλλά κεντρικό για το γεγονός ότι υπάρχει ένα τέτοιο πεδίο μελέτης.
Δεν μπορούμε να τα έχουμε όλα.
Κι έπειτα,
ΠΟΥ θα τα βάζαμε;

CLAUDE CHABROL

ΕΚΔΟΣΕΙΣ ΑΓΡΑ
others, as he approved or disapproved of them. It would take a long time to repeat all that Thamus said to Theuth in praise or blame of the various arts. But when they came to letters, This, said Theuth, will make the Egyptians wiser and give them better memories; it is a specific both for the memory and for the wit. Thamus replied: O most ingenious Theuth, the parent or inventor of an art is not always the best judge of the utility or inutility of his own inventions to the users of them. And in this instance, you who are the father of letters, from a paternal love of your own children have been led to attribute to them a quality which they cannot have; for this discovery of yours will create forgetfulness in the learners' souls, because they will not use their memories; they will trust to the external written characters and not remember of themselves. The specific which you have discovered is an aid not to memory, but to reminiscence, and you give your disciples not truth, but only the semblance of truth; they will be hearers of many things and will have learned nothing; they will appear to be omniscient and will generally know nothing; they will be tiresome company, having the show of wisdom without the reality.

Phaedr. Yes, Socrates, you can easily invent tales of Egypt, or of any other country.

Soc. There was a tradition in the temple of Dodona that oaks first gave prophetic utterances. The men of old, unlike in their simplicity to young philosophy, deemed that if they heard the truth even from "oak or rock," it was enough for them; whereas you seem to consider not whether a thing is or is not true, but who the speaker is and from what country the tale comes.

Phaedr. I acknowledge the justice of your rebuke; and I think that the Theban is right in his view about letters.

Soc. He would be a very simple person, and quite a stranger to the oracles of Thamus or Ammon, who should leave in writing or receive in writing any art under the idea that the written word would be intelligible or certain; or who deemed
κών μας εναρκτών έως και με μίαν φανομενική απόστα-
ση. Εδώ και όπου την προσπελάθεια είχε την μορφή, μα
υποκρίνομενος και ψαρνώνιος έλεγκα τους διστα-
κτικούς. Πιστεύω ότι έτσι δεν είναι καλέ για την
αρχιτεκτονική και περισσότερον ελεφόντες και συνεπός
και καλύτερος και ωραίοτερος”.

Οι ιδέες αυτές βρίσκονται στην κάλυψη τους έκρηξη
ού ένα από τα τελευταία χρόνια του αρχίτεχτονα, το συμπεριφερ
του στον διαγωνισμό για το Μετοχικό Τμήμα Πολιτικών
Υπαλλήλων του 1938, στην πλατεία Συντάγματος. Η
πρόταση αυτή δεν πρεμιστοποιήθηκε. Το πρότζ ο Βελβετό
δοθέθηκε στον Κύριο Λάωχη, η συμμετοχή του οποίου
αντιπροσώπευε στην ποδοκα της περιόδου. Εί
ναι άλλωστε γνωστή η διαμετρική του μεταξιού καθε
στών προς τους εργοστάσια μιας απόφοιτης, ιερο
τουργικής, προσαγωγής και συντονιστικής κλασσικώ
νων αρχιτεκτονικής και η συμμετοχή του μεταξιού.
Ο Μπάσκας αποφασίζει μία πρόταση επαναστατική για
την ελληνική πραγματικότητα. Το συνεχής πολυπλοκα
μα και η ελευθερία αρχιτεκτονικού του εσωτερικού, στοιχεία που
θα γενικευόμενα κατά τον πόλισμο, βρίσκουν στην πρόταση
για το Μετοχικό Τμήμα μία πρόταση εφαρμογή. Η
επεξερ
γογος τους θέματος, τόσο σε χρηματικό επίπεδο ώστε
και σε μορφολογικό με τις πολυπλοκής παρέλαβες και
χρηματικό μελέτες του καλότσεματος - δεν προβλέπ
ντε απειρία ως την προοπτική του εγχείρημα

Σχετικά με την έναστρον της τελευταίας της πρότασης, ο πε
ρίβαλλον ο αρχιτέκτονας έγραψε: “Μήπως των γενικο
κών καθεστών ή συμβολικών με την επίθεση οι συμβολικοί
Αρχαιολόγοι υπό μιας αντίθετης θεωρίας απαραίτητα και ερευνητή
κατά να εκφέρουν την αρχιτεκτονική, χωρίς να διακρίνει την παραμέτρωση αυτών των μελών, προς ένα και την κακομορφία υτού συνάντονται ακο

Metochiko Tmēma Politeikon Ypallalwv sthn plateia Synthgmatos - Prtaisia