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Genealogy of Theories of the City: Spatial Components as an Index of Socioeconomic Capitalism

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Genealogy of Theories of the City: Spatial Components as an Index of Socioeconomic Capitalism

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Introduction; The City as an Index of Capitalism

Introduction; The City as an Index of Capitalism

Capitalism: an economic system characterized by private or corporate ownership of capital goods, by investments that are determined by private decision, and by prices, production, and the distribution of goods that are determined mainly by competition in a free market (Merriam-Webster). While this definition provides an explanation of the economic conditions of capitalism there are also significant social implications relevant to the discussion of cities. In the city produced under the industrial revolution there are three essential components to the capitalist model: housing, industry, and buildings of commerce. In a diagrammatic sense workers of the factories need housing and the factories need an outlet for their products so that they might generate capital and sustain the system. The bourgeoisie, who own the the means of production, are dependent on the labor of the working class to produce their products and the ability to sell their products in a market where price is abstracted from material value. The perceived value of the product plus the price of labor determines its price on the market

and the difference between the perceived value and the material value is profit. The accumulation of Capital is the end goal in this system and the bourgeoisie have a clear incentive to minimize the cost of production. This results in minimizing the pay of the working class and by extension diminishing their position in society. The historically meager political influence of the working class has limited their ability to shape the city both physically and politically. Often, they were bound to poor living conditions close to the polluting industries in which they worked. City planners, starting with the Garden City Movement, have held an idealist role in society advocating for the dignity of the working class proposing new city patterns to elevate the living conditions of the average man. Not only do ideological projects relating to the city seek to elevate the qualitative living condition of the working class, but in many projects also anticipate the new political subject as a result of spatial component rearrangement. In the industrial era these spatial components might be identified as housing, production, and consumption forming the baseline for comparisons between projects. Beginning in the Modern era education becomes a more regular spatial component and eventually the factory as a spatial component of material production is replaced by a more diffuse production of information. By tracing the rearrangement of spatial components through a lineage of projects the ideological role of the planner and the spatial models proposed can be analyzed by developing an urban genealogy beginning with the Garden City.

The intention of this study is to create a morphology of the city and analyze a series of projects along a lineage in order to understand the spatial implications of ideas relative to capitalism. Architecture and by extension the city can serve as an index to problems that would otherwise be illegible in purely spatial terms. In this study, the morphology of city projects and their associated theories will constitute the index that might speak to the condition of the city as both a lineage and an anticipatory trajectory. To trace ideas along a lineage implies authors of these projects were expanding the work of their predecessors which privileges the evolution and reinterpretation of ideas rather than the

genius of an individual.

Genealogy is gray, meticulous, and patiently documentary. It operates on a field of entangled and confused parchments, on documents that have been scratched over and recopied many times (Foucault).

Foucault's notion of genealogy as an instrument to understand history allows us to read the various city projects in a genealogy as a synthesis of their social and economic context as well as the rewriting of the same underlying idea. While city proposals, typologies, and critiques might come with the accompanying name of an individual designer or theoretician it seems overly reductive and flawed to cite the individual as the sole generator of any idea, much less an idea as complex as reforming the city. In actuality these individuals were often members of larger communities of thinkers and always drawing on or reacting to previous projects of the same motivation. Under the premise of a lineage, these projects were executed using common spatial components of the city that can be identified and observed as their relationships evolve in response to social and economic influences. Changes in the relationships between common spatial components might provide an index for the expansion of economic liberalism in the city. However, to fully understand a project it is necessary to consider the social, economic, and political climate at the time of its inception in addition to its relation to its predecessors.

To establish a specific lineage and have a broader understanding of theories relative to the city I developed genealogy diagrams to broadly define the progression of these theories since beginning of the Modern era. These diagrams acknowledge the influence of CIAM (Congrès International d'Architecture Moderne) as the foundation for our understanding of the modernist city.

The polemics put forth by the members of CIAM advocated a new city pattern based on functionalism and industrial production. The motivation of the modernist city was

figure 1. urban genealogy - people and ideas diagram with selected lineage highlighted

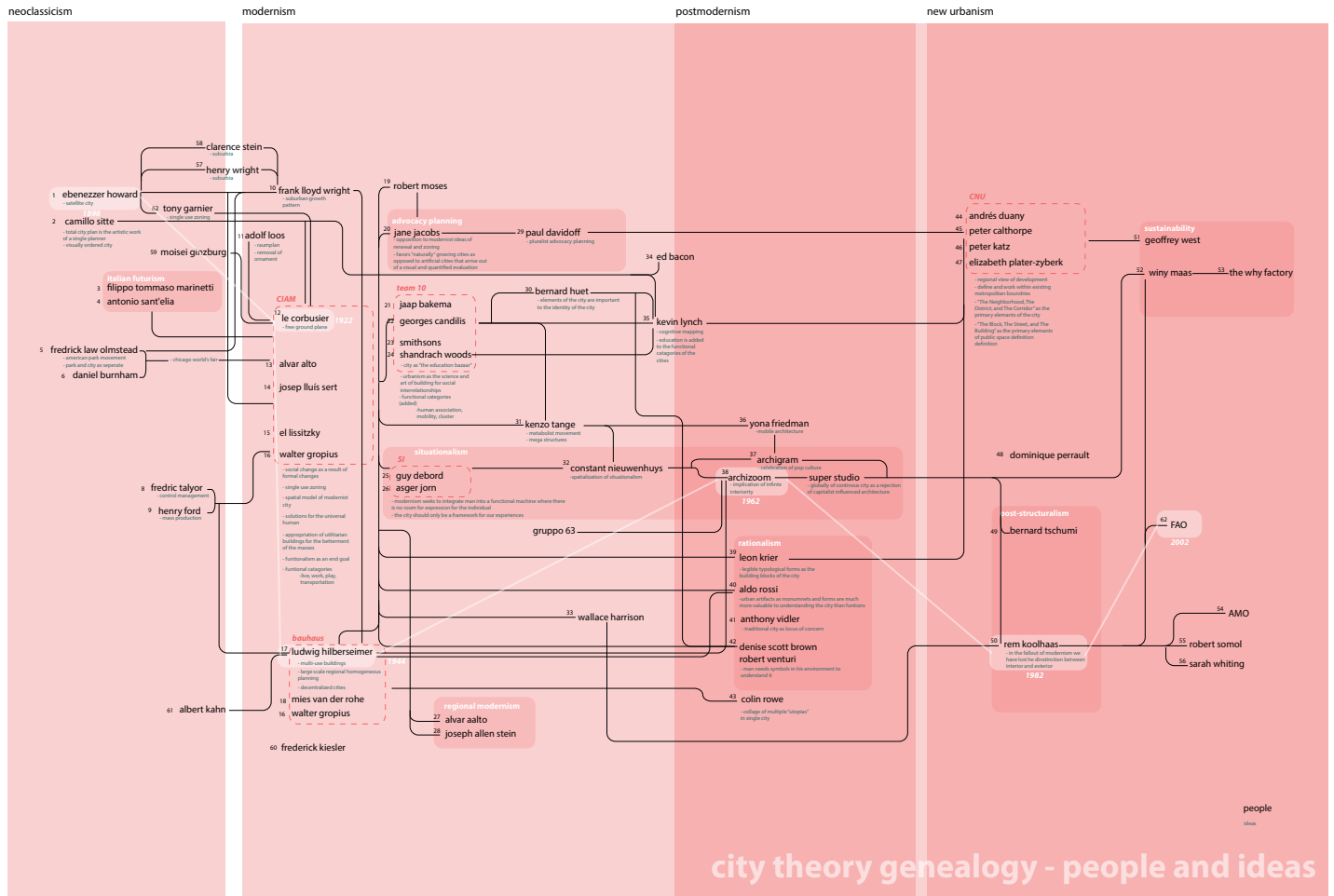
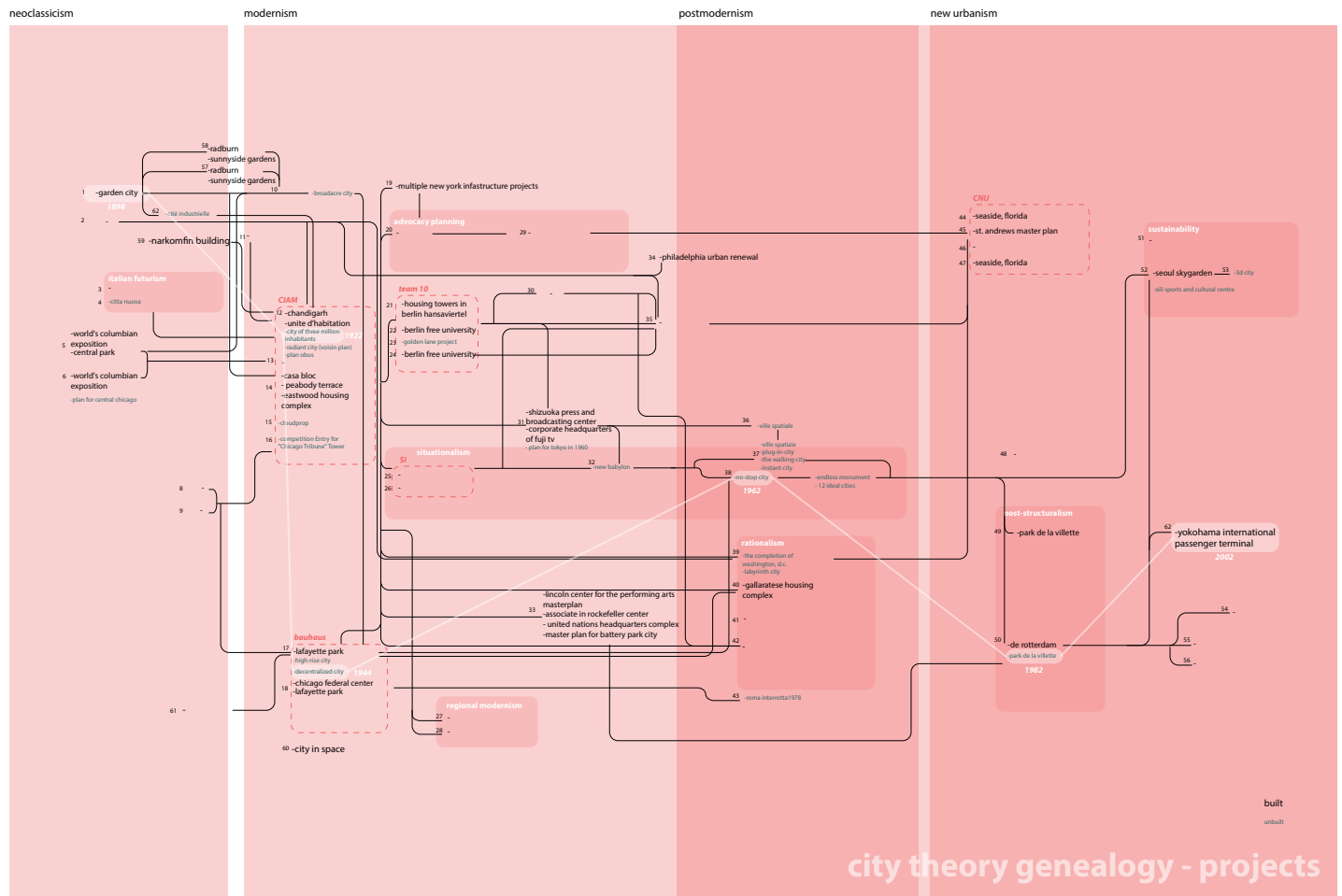
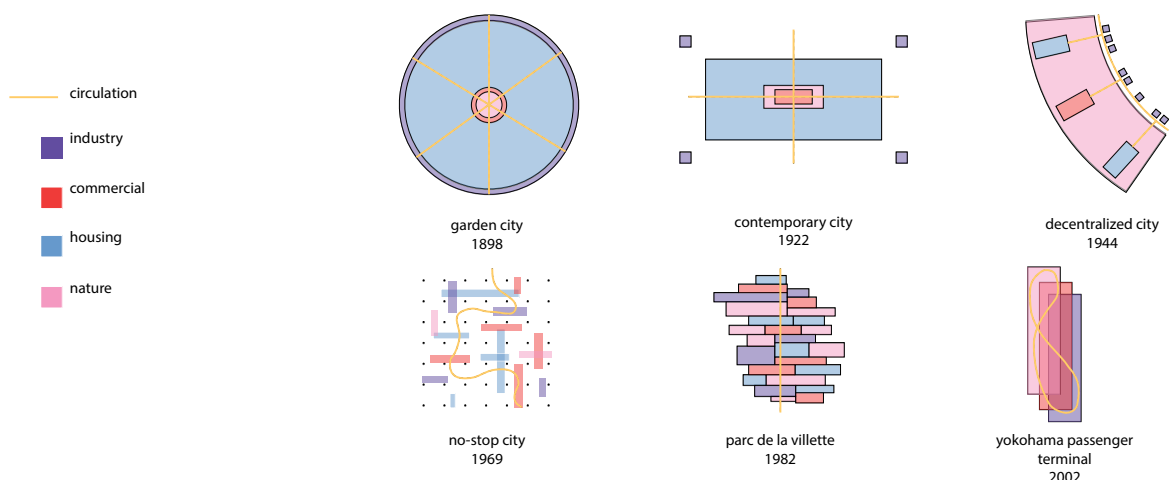


figure 2. urban genealogy - people and ideas diagram with selected lineage highlighted



social change through formal means. Spatial organizations were developed for the universal subject in the three distinct programmatic zones of dwelling, working, and playing. Technology was appropriated by architecture and planning in an effort to change the functional nature of the city and by extension create a higher quality of life for more people. While this work cites CIAM as the progenitor of the modern city, it should also be stated CIAM drew on the work of their predecessors as well as ideas pioneered by industry. The diagrams also illustrate ideas derived from the influential works of the pre-modern planners as well as leaders in industrial thought. From the work of CIAM, we can begin to trace identifiable spatial and their changes in response to the social influence of capitalism. The factory, the dwelling, and the market are three components of the city that see intense reorganization in the era of modernization. Although a few years after the high point of CIAM, Ludwig Hilberseimer explains the development of the modern city.

figure 3. selected lineage diagram



“The New forms of production, based on the machine and its specialized division of labor, divided the process of production to an extent hitherto undreamed of. At the same time, it concentrated producers at the place of production. This concentration of labor implied the development of a labor market to meet the demands of industry. It inevitably led to the formation of the large settlements which we think of as the modern city.” (45 Hilberseimer New)

I chose one lineage or line of descent in the genealogy to establish a taxonomy describing the changing relationships between the components of the city as influenced by economic liberalism. The lineage is as follows: Ebenezer Howard and the Garden City, Le Corbusier and the Contemporary City, Ludwig Hilberseimer and the Decentralized City, Archizoom and the No-Stop City, OMA and the Parc de La Villette, and FAO and the Yokohama International Passenger Terminal. Starting with the Garden City, this lineage begins with a socially motivated response to the capitalist model of production and consumption, setting socioeconomic capitalism as the primary concern of the city.

It should be noted that while some of these projects clearly define a city in the traditional sense, most however, clearly do not. In fact only the Garden City and the Contemporary City define their projects by traditional use of paths, edges, and nodes to provide rationality and hierarchy to the built fabric. In contrast, the Decentralized City, No-Stop City, Parc de La Villette, and the Yokohama terminal only provide the syntax of a city. These projects anticipate a city, but in isolation, do not constitute a city. What provides the basis for comparison in this study is the ability of each of these projects to reorganize and re-present an ordering of spatial components of the city and in doing so, provide an index of capitalism's growth.

Each project in this series addresses the role of the subject in the larger economic and social context of the city. The projects seek to create a more socially conscious subject through a reorganization of the city in response to the social climate of the time, drawing on the organization of components of their predecessors. The Garden City for example, sought to create a more healthful, community oriented citizen by an inward

focused small town that shared a common garden. There was no intention to break from the capitalist economic model of the industrial revolution as these new cities would be funded by private investment independent of the state, but only the intention to create a more healthful autonomous “anarchist cooperation” in the countryside (28 Hall). However, the ideology of the Garden City would not benefit the unskilled laborers, as the housing available within the cities would be financially unattainable. In contrast, the Contemporary City sought to create a more egalitarian, although still capitalist, society with housing provisions for both bourgeoisie and proletariat within the city. Both the Garden City and the Contemporary city share a similar radiating fabric that provides a centrally located social green space, however the Contemporary City explicitly reinforces the class stratification of capitalism by separating the bourgeoisie and the working class housing, and the housing of the bourgeoisie sits closer to the center of the city and the forms of the buildings are more independent of the fabric than their working class counterparts. The working class housing consists of perimeter block buildings that are pushed toward the exterior of the city. The Decentralized City adopts the programmatic model of the Contemporary City and reorganizes it into an infinitely repeatable pattern for regional growth where man would live closer to nature and the means of production. To elevate working class living conditions housing would be isolated from the polluted, congested cities into smaller, more community oriented settlements. Where decentralization was a strategy to get the subject closer to the health benefits of nature and provide a rational model for regional growth, No-Stop City saw decentralization as the beginnings of the infinite and homogeneous city. This global city was meant to represent the apex of capitalist expansion before the working class took control of the means of development and became a socialist society in a first step toward communism. No-Stop city was meant to take the ideas of decentralization and consumer capitalism to their logical ends as a platform for the proletariat to establish a class based, autonomous political power. Following No-Stop City, Parc de La Villette dissolves the barriers between interior and

exterior, implying capitalism's expansion has continued uninhibited. In this increase in economic liberalism and the collapse between architecture and capital, traditional barriers between interior and exterior dissolve as all space becomes conditional and public. Parc de La Villette privileges ideas of programmatic instability positing architecture has no obligations to formally accommodate the constantly changing program of the metropolis. In the Yokohama International Passenger Terminal, similar to No-Stop City, the infrastructure of the city and the form of the city are indistinguishable. Although some might see this proposal as nothing more than a building, buildings have the ability to prefigure and suggest a new city pattern as a microcosm of that new condition. The circulation, form, and function of the terminal suggest the city would no longer become comprised of component parts, rather a self-contained fluid condition that facilitates experiences and free movement in all directions.

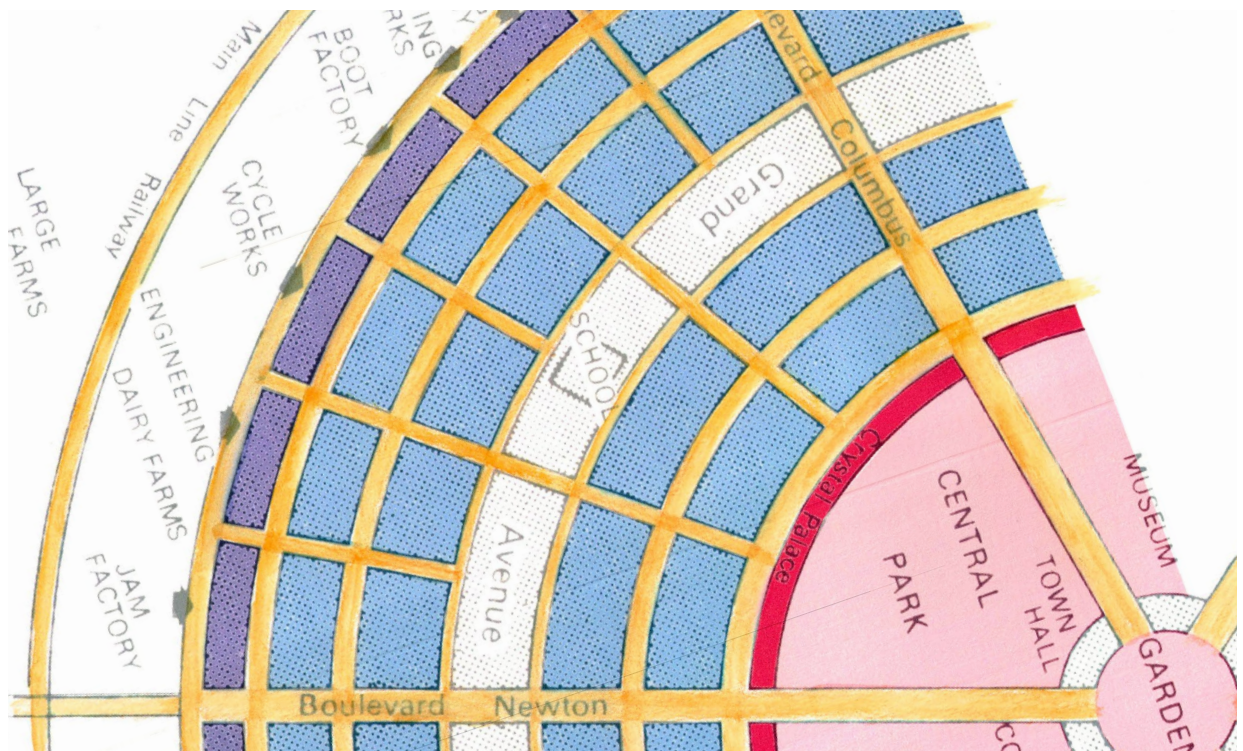
For clarity and comparison, the primary focus of this work will be concerned with Ludwig Hilberseimer and the Decentralized City, Archizoom and the No-Stop City, and OMA and the Parc de La Villette, however the other projects will be mentioned in support of the idea of lineage. All of the six projects will also be analyzed by a drawn and constructed diagramming in an attempt to relate the theoretical positions of the city to their spatial conditions. The diagramming overlays will highlight common component within each scheme for comparison. Some of the components include: circulation, massing, nature, housing, industry, and commercial space.

These projects take a position on the economy, capitalism specifically, and speculate on the physical implications for the city as a result of their position. Through the evolving spatial propositions the projects' attitude toward capitalism and their socially motivated responses unite them as a lineage of socioeconomic indexing through the city. In all these projects, I argue, there is a desire to create a new, more conscious political subject through a reorganization of the components of the city and the subject's relationship to them. The role of the political subject in the city changes throughout the projects as

some prescribe the new ideological role of the subject while others intend to facilitate the transition to a new, unprescribed ideology.

In discussing the spatial aspects of each, it seems the syntax of the spatial components exists as both an augmentation of previous spatial component arrangements as well as an ideological response relative to the citizen's relationship to the economy. For instance, the Contemporary City facilitates the market by spatial allocations for the specific transportation of material goods, the sites of production for those goods, and the locations for the sale of those goods, but in separating traffic and elevating buildings on pilotis, suggests the scheme is driven by a functional efficiency as well as the preservation of the ground plane as a social space accessible to all. Additionally, the central location of the commercial and business towers suggest their heightened importance in the city, but by placing them in a large open "park" there is a seemingly contradictory desire to preserve the public space at the center of the scheme as a space of equality as well as to create edifices to capitalism. At the center of the fabric, around

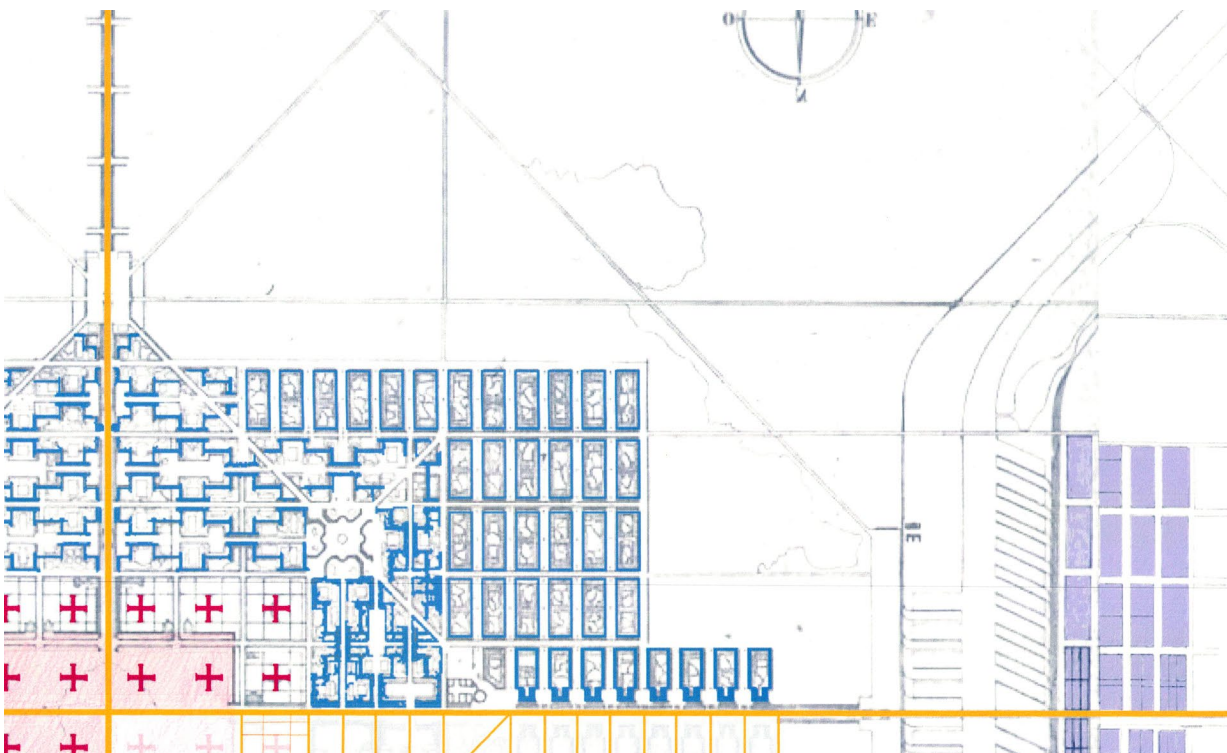
figure 4. garden city quadrant



the central business park, would exist at a high density to provide the greatest number of people with the easy access to commercial areas. The relatively dense center, “where the business affairs are carried on,” not only provides a large portion of the population with easy access to commercial activities, but also provides industry with an outlet for produced goods (162 Corbusier). These centrally located business towers mark a crucial shift in the use of the center, where it no longer only references the city, but begins to reflect the economics of the city as well. The Contemporary City attempted to balance its capitalist mentality of efficiency, with socialist gestures like preserving the ground plane.

As stated before, the Garden City model put forth by Ebenezer Howard exists as a predecessor to the Contemporary City. Essentially, both share the same radiating hierarchical diagram where the center holds what seems to be the social focus as well as the economic focus, spatially defined through an arrangement of components such as housing, industrial spaces, and commercial spaces. In center of the Garden City’s radial scheme, “there would be public gardens five acres in size [that] would be

figure 5. contemporary city quadrant



surrounded by a ring of impressive public buildings” that would then be surrounded by commercial buildings and housing and an outer ring of industrial buildings (21 Hall). Similarly, the center of the Contemporary City has a central green space marked by twenty-four business and commercial towers surrounded by commercial buildings and housing and industrial buildings just outside the central city. Where the Garden City provided its inhabitants with an alternative to the crowded, dirty city centers of the industrial revolution, the Contemporary City provides a place of business, consumption, and outlet for industry as well as a public green space open to all. The primary concern of the Garden City model was the creation of an economically self-sufficient network of seven settlements that provided a healthy alternative to the polluted cities of the industrial revolution. The concern of the Contemporary City was a large central city feeding off of and sustaining a capitalist model of production and consumption, while attempting to promote socialist values in shared and equal amenities. Additionally, the scheme distinguishes the two separate housing types for what are essentially the bourgeoisie in the more centrally located luxury units, and the proletariat in the more modest garden models on the outer ring of the city. While the spatial patterns of the Contemporary City are clearly relatable to the patterns found in the Garden City, it has a fundamentally different and more complex set of responses to the social, economic, and political climate of its post war era. This comparison between the spatial and social responses of the Garden City and the Contemporary City illustrates the idea of lineage in spatial arrangement patterns as a response to new social influences. Additionally, these two proposals set up a preface for the discussion of the Decentralized City, No-Stop City, and Parc de La Villette.

figure 6. garden city drawn analysis

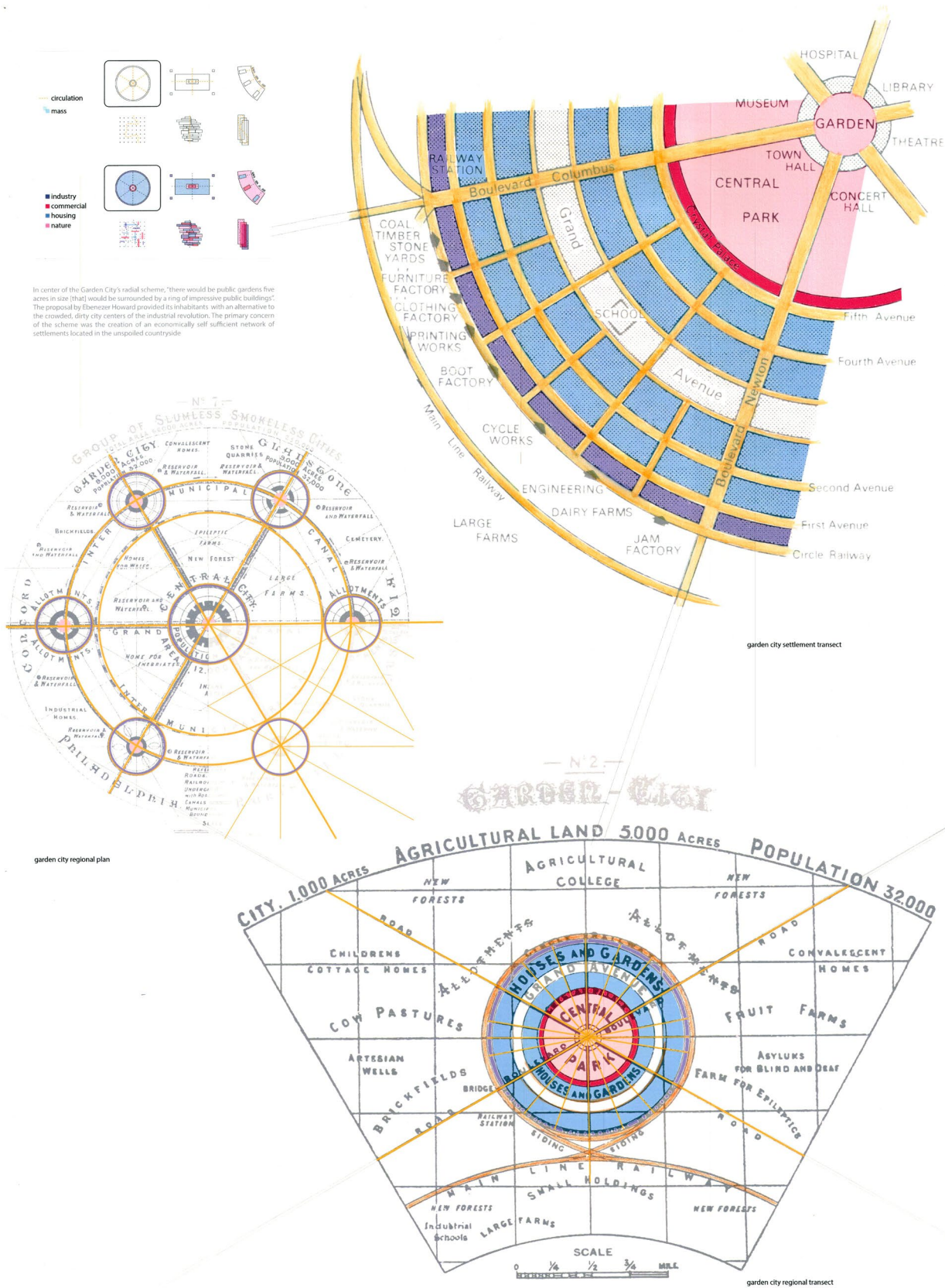
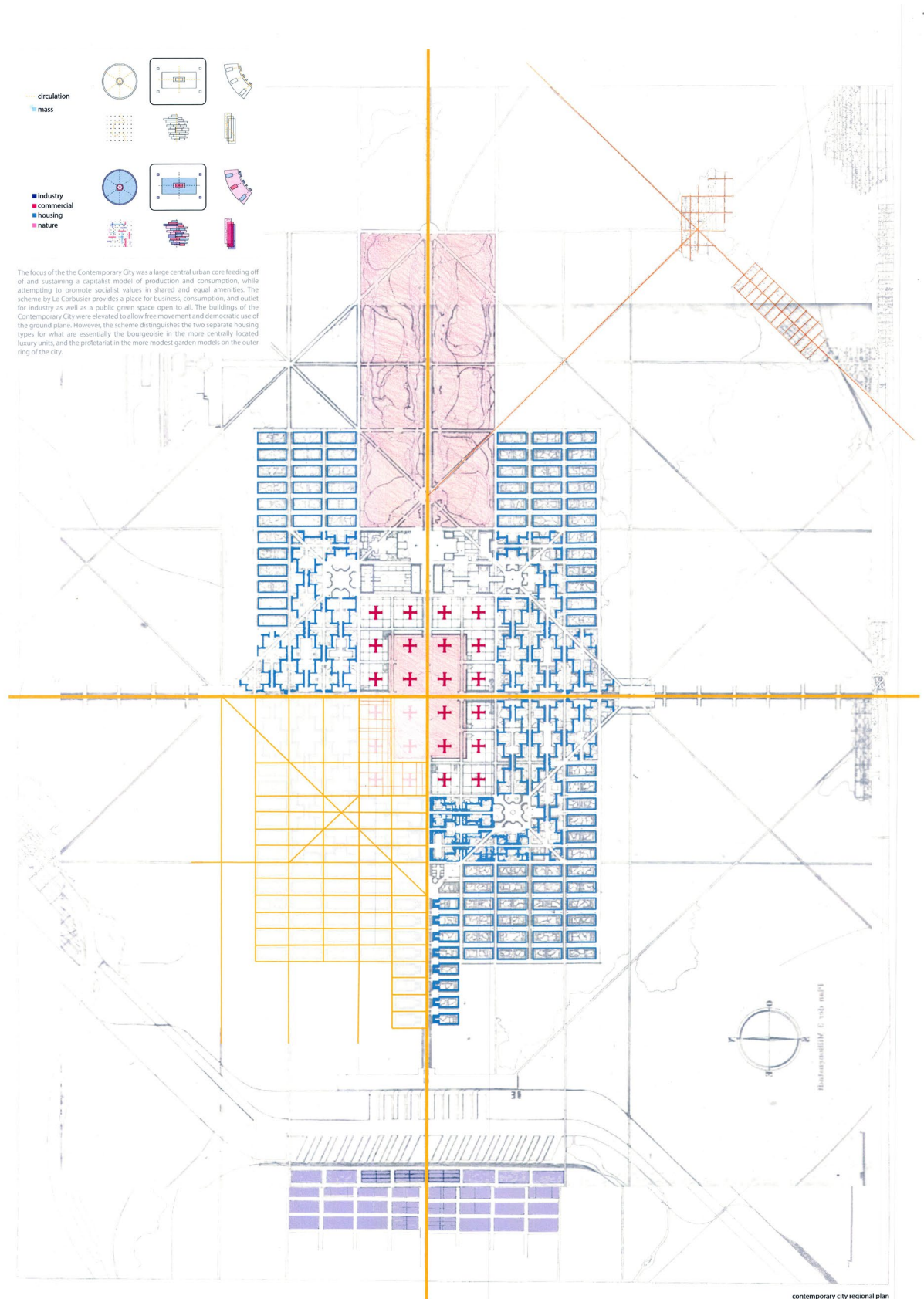


figure 7. contemporary city drawn analysis



Decentralized City; The City as a Process of Production

By the time the Decentralized City (1944) was proposed, decentralization was standard practice in the United States. Built on both military strategy and theories of mass production put forth by Henry Ford, decentralization allowed for larger buildings and new typologies, slowed the increasing density of urban centers, and took advantage of the new extensive highway system in the United States. In the closing years of WWII the “period of National Defense Migration was pivotal in the transition from the older rail-based American society dominated by the industrial cities to the auto based American metropolitan and regional patterns still evident today” (32 National). Decentralization was a military strategy that drew destruction away from major cities, as major military production facilities were often the targets of bombing campaigns, but it was also the intention to remove industrial production from the city centers. Similar to the motivations of the Garden City, industry would be removed from the city as a response to congestion and pollution. Among planners, architects, and the Defense Department there was a common held belief “the second age [of industry] should be directed towards decentralization and diversification of production, both agricultural and industrial, creating a closer relation between city and country (181 Velazquez). The Decentralized City proposed by Ludwig Hilberseimer seeks to create a closer physical relationship between the city and the natural landscape while also considering the

strategic impact of removing “settlements” from the urban environment. At this time, the urban centers were congested with traffic, polluted, and suffered from insufficient natural light. In the same line of thinking as the Garden City the Decentralized City established guidelines for smaller supposedly closer-knit communities in the undeveloped country taking advantage of the unspoiled air and implementing a new rational model of growth that would better facilitate access to sunlight and the passage of traffic. In terms of programmed city components, the settlements of the Decentralized City replicate the components of the Contemporary City closely: housing, factories, stores, administration buildings, parks, and schools. Hilberseimer cites multiple city projects as influences, and this study is primarily concerned with the Contemporary City as a predecessor in terms of programmed spatial components. However, it should be noted Broadacre City by Frank Lloyd Wright, was also influential on the thinking of Hilberseimer as a model of decentralization, and might have influenced his thinking on schools as a crucial component of the city. However unlike the Contemporary City, the Decentralized City has no hierarchical center, instead using the existing city centers like Chicago as the regional center.

Where the centers of the Decentralized City’s predecessors are clearly evident through large structures to house commerce and green space, there are no definite answers in terms of future growth within those models. Hilberseimer appropriates the programmatic components of the Contemporary City in terms of commercial buildings supported by housing and supplied by industrial buildings and organizes it in what Christopher Alexander calls a “semilattice” or “tree” structure. As opposed to previous schemes, the semilattice would not exist as a centrally focused city, but as a network of settlements that would branch from a regional highway system almost in a fractal like pattern. Within the programmatic model of the modernist, the scale of planning shifted from a centralized urban city scheme to a decentralized suburban network. This new network pattern of development allowed for the seemingly infinite growth of the urban

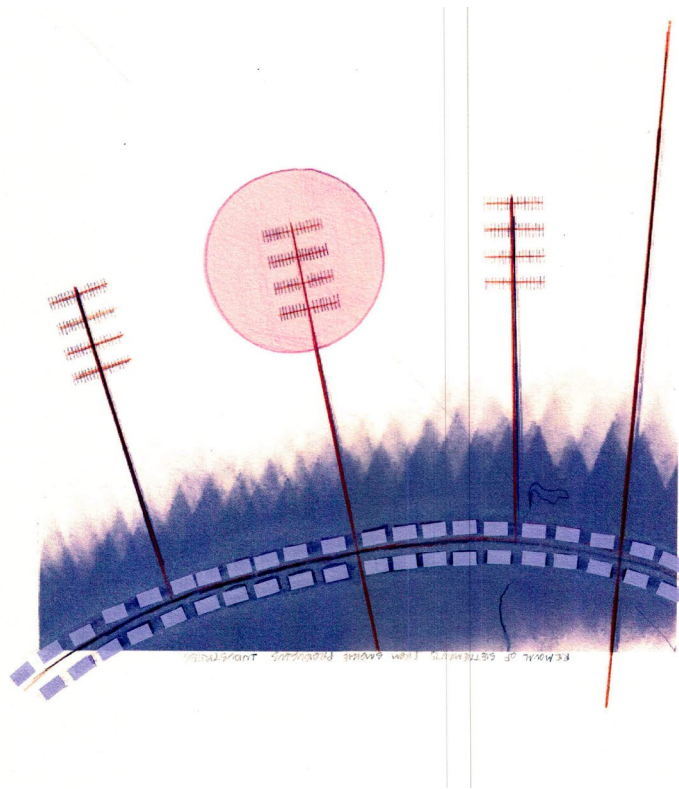


figure 8. decentralized city "semilattice" pattern

condition. Hilberseimer believed that these settlements in the landscape would continue to grow and multiple citing both military barracks of his time and the military barrack of the roman era for their rigorous efficiency and ability to develop into cities, such as Florence. While strongly influenced by the rigor and discipline of the military barracks as a spatial precedent, the scheme also seeks a closer relationship with nature and is organized as a set of seemingly independent elements. In this way the project of the Decentralized City was not a "city" per se, but a pattern for regional growth anticipating a dispersing of the city into the countryside.

The Decentralized City's development pattern, comprised of its component parts, the highways, the buildings, and the natural landscape was meant to exist as a collection of discrete, autonomous parts that would develop through their own logic and connect tangentially. The scheme did make considerations for the adverse effect of polluting industry on human health however, and in that way, the internal logic of the "building component" placed housing upwind of factories. Hilberseimer develops a strategy for minimizing the adverse health effects of smoke producing industry, which was an

essential part of his growth strategy. Drawings produced for the Decentralized City that depict a regional approach not only consider the individual settlement's position relative to the pollution, but also considers the next downwind settlement relative the expected smoke paths. In *The New City; Principles of City Planning*, Hilberseimer goes as far as to say "to pour poison into a man's lungs as it is to pour poison into his coffee"(115). In this lineage of planning, the consideration of the impact of polluting industry on the health of the working class acknowledges the symbiotic relationship between the workers and the places of production. By extension, these are the first considerations of the environmental impact of a capitalist model that depends on industrial production. The smoke maps were a crucial component of Hilberseimer's proposal because unlike his predecessors, he did not romanticize the city or seek to implement his own ideologies, rather he unsentimentally planned the city as a site of production.

By considering the health of the working class by wind rose analysis, the Decentralized City makes a social consideration that might be likened to the free ground plane of the Contemporary City where a necessary component of the city, carefully considered, becomes beneficial to the average citizen. This strategy speaks to Hilberseimer underlying faith in planning to elevate the condition for the working class. While this scheme was meant to create a closer relation between the working class, the means of production, and the health benefits of nature, the very act of decentralization inhibits the working class's ability to unite and have any significant political role. Perhaps Hilberseimer believed decentralization would also inhibit dominance of the bourgeoisie. One tweak to the modernist city, previously unimportant in the definition of the city, is the addition of schools as a program to be accounted for. In the Decentralized City, schools are places exterior to the "settlement," sitting in the allotted agricultural park area, providing a safe area for children to play where they wouldn't have to cross roads. Child safety in crossing streets was an idea explored in Radburn, New Jersey, and most likely influenced the placement of the schools and parks in the Decentralized City

settlement. Perhaps Hilberseimer saw, as many in his time did education, as a vehicle to social advancement and a vehicle through which the working class could assert a more influential role in society. This line of thinking on education in the city is continued through the work of Jaap Bakema and Kevin Lynch. While the role of education in the Decentralized City is still open for speculation, Hilberseimer was seemingly ambivalent toward the political role of the working class. After this scheme in the lineage however, such optimism in the power of planning to provide a high quality of life begins to evaporate as capitalism continues to expand.

figure 9. decentralized city settlement pattern

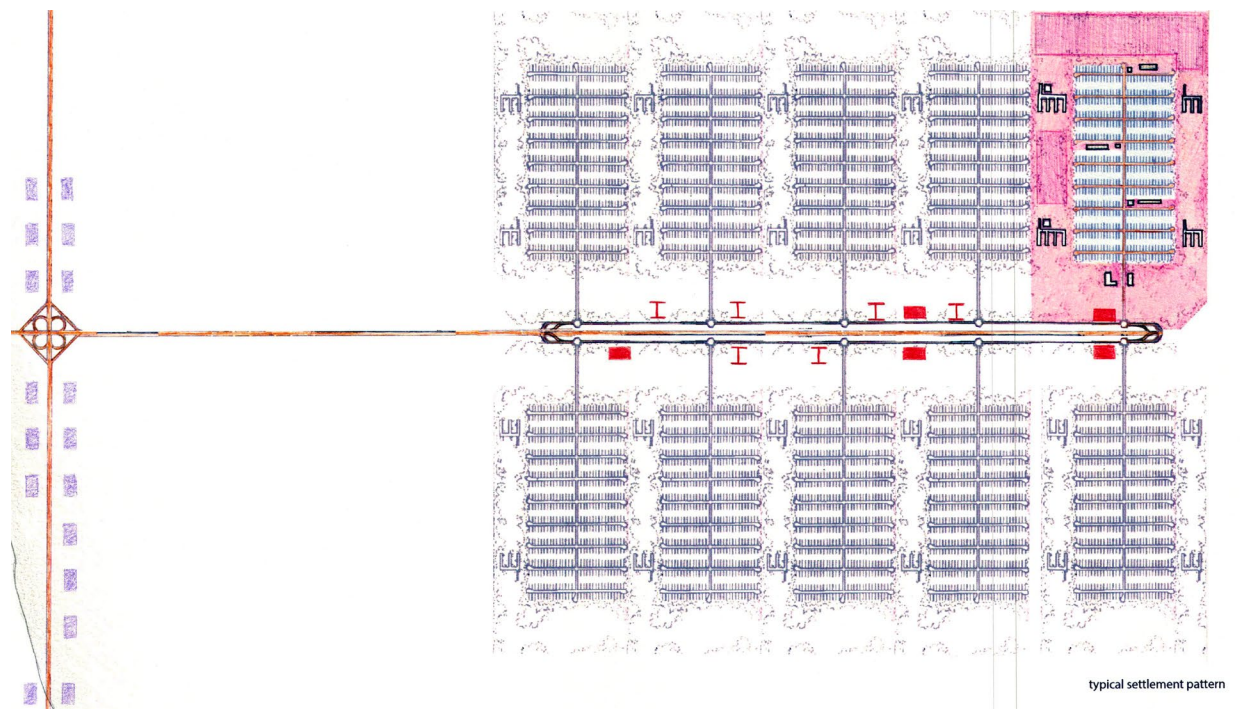
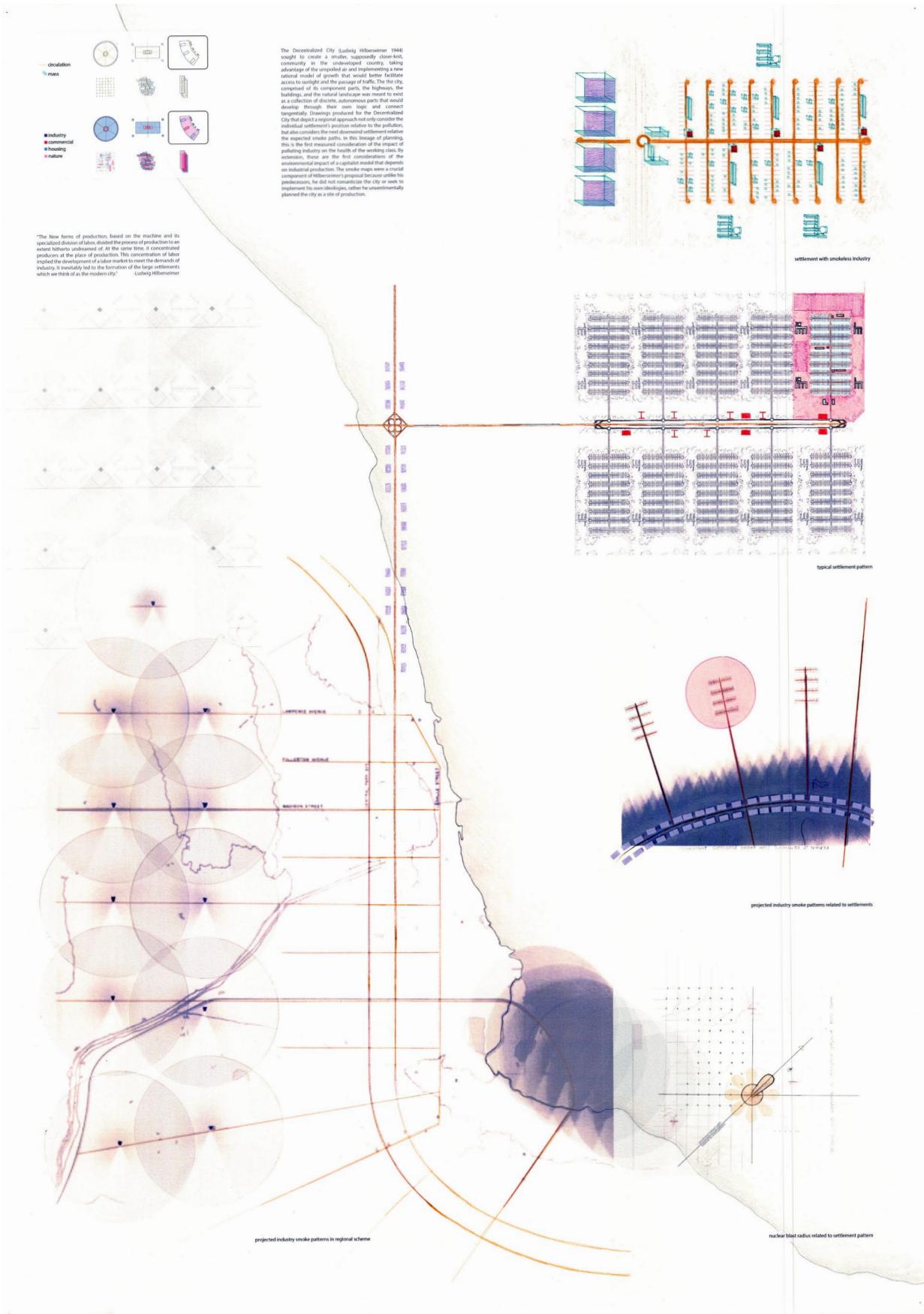


figure 10. decentralized city drawn analysis



No-Stop City; Parking Lot, Shopping Mall, and Factory

At this point in the timeline, the concept of city changes radically for those who question neoliberalism as a socially progressive ideology. Where capitalism was certainly a driver for the responses made in the Garden City, the Contemporary City, and the Decentralized City, the proposed city generally attempted to maintain autonomy from the economic system it represented by existing only as a reflection of the capitalist system. While placing commercial buildings in prominent locations within the city, their program remained distinct and physically separate from other functions of the city. No-Stop City by Archizoom published in 1968 presents a city pattern that no longer represents the capitalist system, “but becomes the system itself, programed and isotropic” (Branzi). The scheme implies the various programs that constitute the capitalist city would exist in a homogeneous environment and these programs would co-inhabit the same space “without contradiction” (Branzi). If the Contemporary City seeks to elevate the condition of the working class through a capitalist driven material construction, No-Stop City questions the ability of a utopian vision built within a capitalist model to do anything other than propagate the systems of inequality.

In Manfredo Tafuri's, *Architecture and Utopia* the fundamental organization and structure of the governing body must be called into question as it has the greatest power to react to capital's reorganization. New planning techniques might provide a dynamic

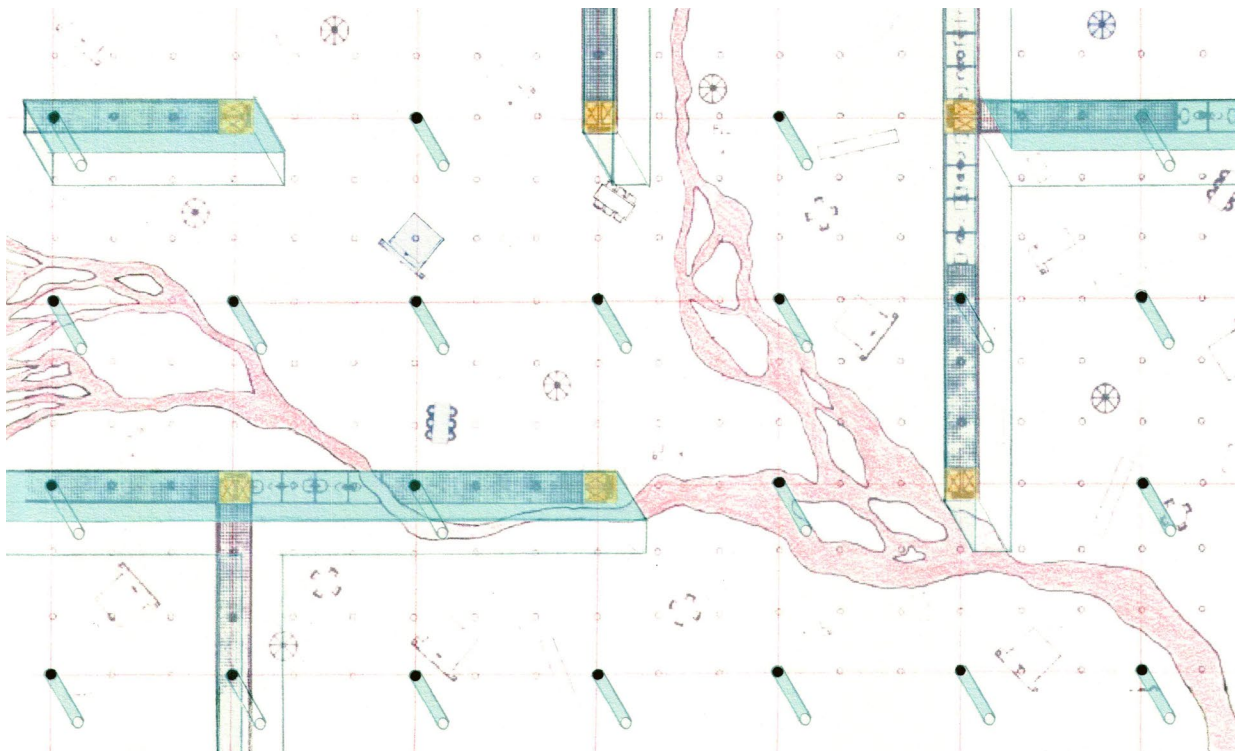
and reactive alternative to the “plan” as a frozen document, “reflecting a ‘moment’ of development” where “the plan now takes on the form of a new political institution” (Tafuri 174). For Tafuri, it seems contradictory to propose an architectural solution to social problems that are driven by those same forces that limit the role of architecture. Essentially, he doubts the autonomy and ability of architecture and urban design to assert its aspirational ideological role because it has become an instrument of capitalism and subservient to planning. Tafuri points to the commercialization of art and architecture as undermining its “ideological function” and claims it is only appropriate to consider the role of the designer once “we have done away with the disciplinary ideology” and begin to work “within the new forms of capitalist development” (Tafuri 182). In Tafuri’s argument, architects are aware of their diminished role as ideologist, and suffer great anxiety in this climate of continuous capitalist reorganization. Tafuri not only objected to the assumed influence of the modern architecture’s ideological role but also believed the “operative history” of architecture distorted any evidence that did not support its ideological role in society and exaggerated any evidence that did. In a rereading of architecture’s history “he demonstrated how such historical perspective systematically masked the very cause of such progress and obscured the cultural crisis provoked by the development of modern culture.” (Deamer 137). Unsurprisingly, Tafuri was dismissive of projects that maintained ideological overtones as self-defeating. Tafuri did admire the work of Ludwig Hilberseimer and the Decentralized City for its understanding of the city as a process of production and consumption, leaving any explicit ideology absent.

Manfredo Tafuri was working in an era of rapid industrialization in Italy which consequently called the social organization of the city into question. A militant marxist collective called “Operaismo” grew in response to the capitalist economy that shifted from a capitalism of accumulation to one focused on wage-labor politics. Opposing the Leftist political ideologies that had been heavily critical of the capitalist system and shifting toward ideas of reform within the system, Operaismo advocated for the working

class and argued “that workers should not only demand the social reform of the modes of production but also claim political power over them” (Deamer 135). In this way, they rejected ideas of reform that deferred to the expanding capitalist system. Similarly, Tafuri, Archizoom, and Superstudio took a marxist position relative to any architectural utopian visions as incompatible with a capitalist economy where the working masses were exploited by those who owned the means of production.

As a spatial proposition, No-Stop City draws on both the factory and the shopping center as the foundational infrastructural precedent. This infrastructure of capitalism has expanded to encompass the rest of the city and its natural landscape. The city no longer exists as a singular event, but a global condition. Similar to the Decentralized City, the project of No-Stop City organizes the pattern for future growth. In this case the idea of city seems even more distant as all of the spatial components that once constituted the city are now contained in a single architecture. One might imagine a reality where these two types have expanded so extensively they are no longer programed spaces

figure 11. no-stop city projected plan

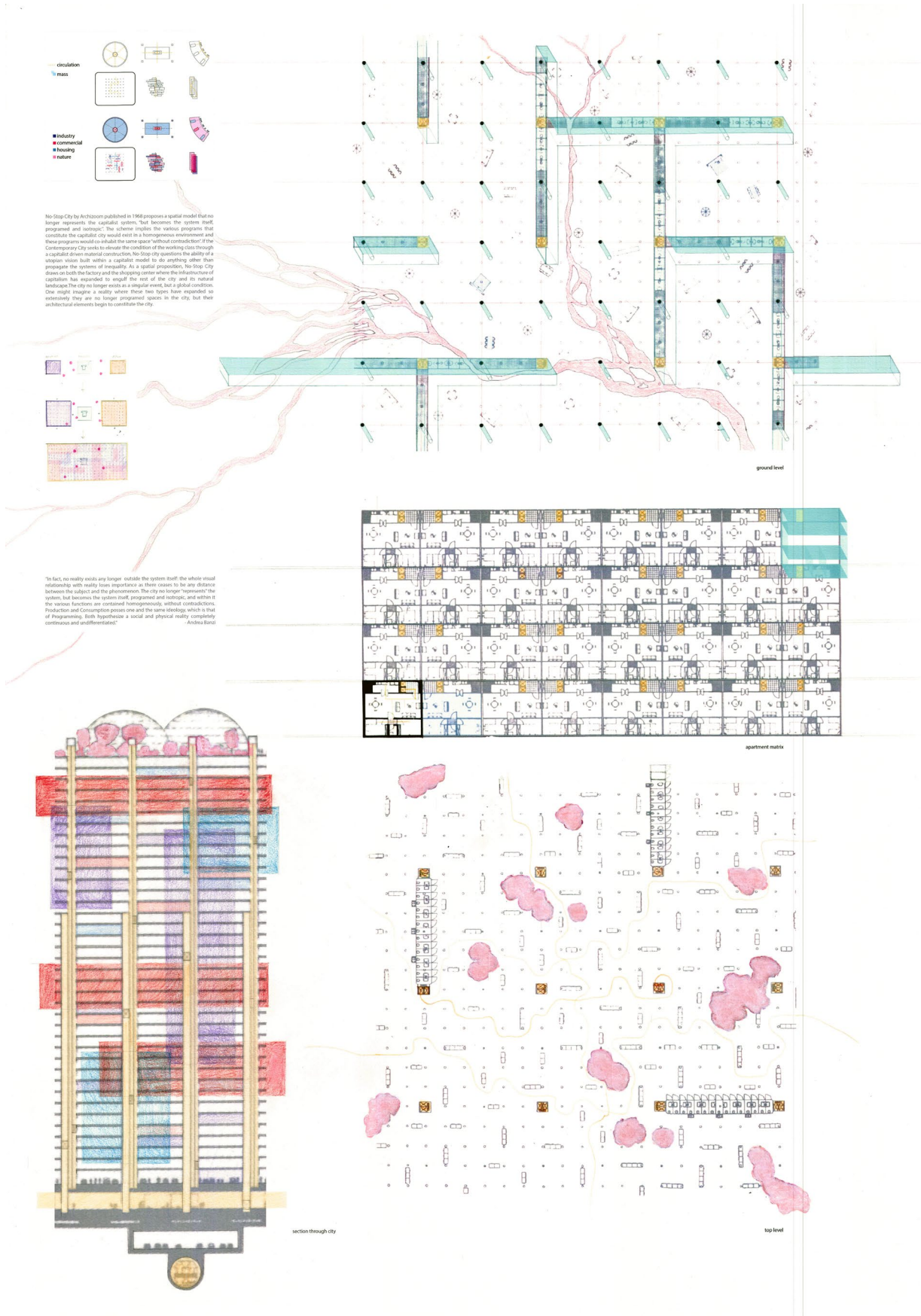


in the city, but their architectural elements begin to constitute the city. No-Stop City is less of a literal proposal to be built, but rather attempts to critique what its creators see as the direction of urban condition as influenced by neoliberalism. Capitalist driven designs, as seen in the work of architects like Albert Kahn, were the precedents for the all-encompassing superstructure of the No-Stop City. The elements of industry, such as columns and elevators, serve as the primary articulations of this city without architecture. "Architecture" has been reduced to an endless matrix of production and consumption. The infrastructure and products of industry, in this case furniture, are scattered in this artificial environment, become the only differentiating articulations of the homogeneous space in which "the whole visual relationship with reality loses importance as there ceases to be any distance between the subject and the phenomenon" (Branzi). In *The Project of Autonomy*, Pier Vittorio Aureli links the work of Hilberseimer to the work of Archizoom as a mutual interest in the organization of functional relationships rather than the collection of building-objects that create the city. For Archizoom and Tafuri, the organization of functions in the city to their logical extreme "was the only way to achieve an autonomous role not for architects, but for urban and architectural theory" (Aureli 77). If we compare No-Stop City to the Decentralized City, we see that both are primarily concerned with establishing the rules by which the city will develop. Both are generic, in the sense that they have no specific site but create the governing rules of development that will define future development. Both schemes project a seemingly endless urban environment, but if the Decentralized city is optimistic about the role of the subject in the capitalist city No-Stop City is cynical. Hilberseimer believes the capitalist city, through careful considerations in planning, can provide the subject with a reasonably healthful, productive life. Archizoom believes the expansion of capitalism has undermined the desirable qualities of the city and the socio-economic model must be reconsidered before the practitioner can make a meaningful and impactful proposal. If the Decentralized city sought to create intimate socialist settlements, with access to

nature and a close relationship between farming and industry, No-Stop City sought to embolden the new political subjects by defining the spatial condition that might facilitate the working class' new autonomous relationship with capital.

This proposal was meant to be more of a provocation and satirical prophecy than a solution to the social inequality of late capitalism. As stated before, Archizoom saw no use in proposing any solutions that existed within the capitalist socio-economic model. Instead, they projected a city that would exist at the apotheoses of the capitalist driven city. The Operaists believed the changing the role of the workers from tradesmen to one who works to acquire capital, bound the working class to a production-consumption cycle. To liberate the workers, their wages must be separated and independent from the profits of the factory owner. In separating their wages from the capitalist's profits, the workers would then develop a distance between themselves and capital. By creating this distance, the workers would develop autonomy within the system and gain political power. No-Stop City adopted these positions of the Operaists and sought to create a city to facilitate the accession of the autonomous working class. This city was not meant to solve the problems inherent in the capitalist model, but provide the platform for the working class to take control of the means of production and assert their political power. Ultimately the working class would triumphantly repossess the city from the abusive bourgeoisies and make the prophesized transition from capitalism to marxism.

figure 12. no-stop city drawn analysis



Parc de La Villette; Exploitation

The post war era saw the city develop as a site of production and in the continued expansion of capitalism the city has lost autonomy from its social and economic context. Instead of trying to reverse the position of the Decentralized City or No-Stop City, Parc de La Villette (1982) by OMA continues this line of thinking, arguing for the exploitation of capitalism to expedite the creation of the new city and positioning experience as the primary concern of the new city. Here, it might prove useful to define experience as acquiring knowledge through participation and observation. If the new role of experience or knowledge in the economic context of the late twentieth century can be understood as having value similar to the way material goods were valued in the early twentieth century, the more general transition from an economy of products to an economy of ideas and information can be understood. The transition from an economy of industry to an economy of information, would allow the city to shed the pervasive industrial infrastructure seen in the previous projects.

Unlike its predecessor, No-Stop City, Parc de La Villette has broken free from its gridded container no longer physically representing the inseparability of the city and the programmatic components supporting capitalism. There is no longer any need for the physical expression of industry and commerce as their presence is no longer localized to the production of an object but diffused through the city in production of information.

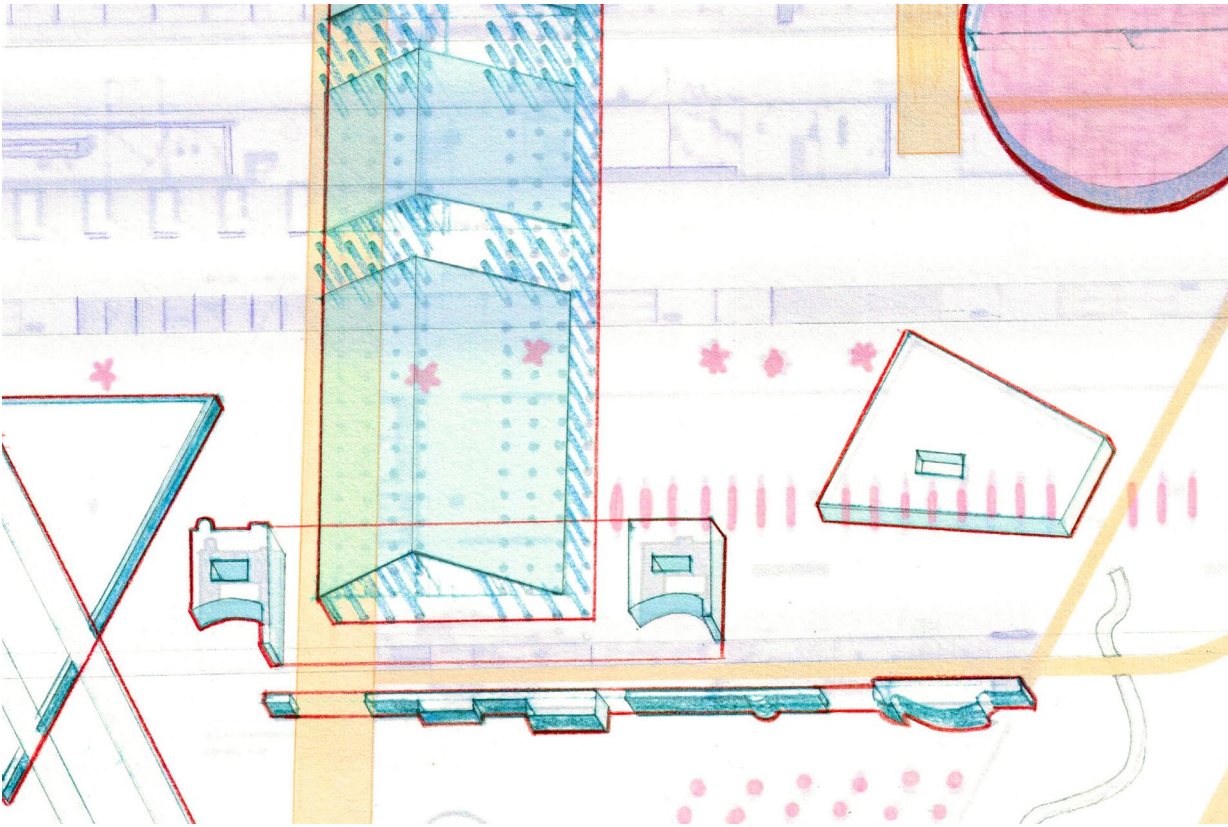


figure 13. parc de la villette - visages of architecture

In dissolving the physical infrastructure of capitalism, while acknowledging continued growth of the economic model, equilibrium and ambiguity exist between interior and exterior. Architecture, once the object that delineated interior and exterior, has been reduced to “the status of plaything, tolerated as décor for the illusions of history and memory” (Parc). The fragmented architectonic language of Parc de La Villette provided the syntax of a city that no longer distinguishes between natural and built elements nor the boundaries that separate programmatic spatial components.

Superstudio like their associates Archizoom were involved in envisioning the city as a global condition. To expand upon their ideas in the Continuous Monument, Superstudio developed a project called “Histograms of Architecture”. The Histograms were presented as a collection of volumetric studies based on the extrusion of the grid that sought to end design explorations in industrially produced objects. In the creation of a generic solution to every design challenge, “Superstudio proposed a deliberate suicide of architecture in the face of its complete absorption by capital” (Deamer 142). Rem Koolhaas saw the Histograms as the end of original design, imply a finite library of forms to draw from.

In this line of thinking we can see the “design” for Parc de La Villette as a collection of visages of architecture as a reflection of the city after its loss of autonomy from capital.

The proposal for Parc de La Villette by OMA does not seek to create a park in the traditional sense but rather seeks to create a framework that will over time result in a park. Although this framework was meant to generate a park, we might see this “park” as a microcosm as neoliberalism continues to expand in the city. In this way it might be conceived as a continuation of Tafuri’s line of thinking relative to the need to reconsider the forces that govern the architect’s work and role in the urban environment, but instead of diminishing the role of capitalism in shaping the city Koolhaas imagines its exploitation. Any notion of the designer as an ideological force of resistance has evaporated. Instead, the designer is only capable of reproducing and accelerating the growth of capital oriented development. The traditionally critical, top down theory no longer has any place in the development of the city. Instead, architecture and city theory’s autonomy and authority is replaced by engagement with those who are benefiting from capitalism’s growth. The role of ideologist in the new city is more likely to be a developer, while the designer’s role is more closely aligned with that of the experimental researcher.

The failure of the critiques of capitalism to exact any change in direction of global development by groups like Archizoom facilitated an eventual and perhaps inevitable acceptance and embrace of the global market by the late twentieth century avant-garde. Instead of resisting the development of global capitalism, projects like Parc de La Villette seek to exploit and mutate the city produced under it. Instead of futile attempts to establish autonomy for architecture and urban theory an almost anti-critical or postcritical position has been taken under the assumption the new and expanding influence of free market capitalism will carry architecture and urban design back to a place of authority. As for social change, this new postcritical position does not seek a prescribed social change but rather seeks to create the climate for social change in cross programmed spaces in its “embrace of the power of capitalism to drive change” (Deamer 155).

The project privileges a series of operational steps as the generators of the space. The resulting scheme has the appearance of a park, but speaks to the condition of the city if considered relative to No-Stop City. Parc de La Villette exists as a reflection of the city in its current state, offering episodic appearances of architecture in an environment of entropy. Designed by OMA, the guiding framework to generate the park was influenced by the writings of Rem Koolhaas in *Delirious New York*.

“If the essence of *Delirious New York* was the section of the Downtown Athletic Club – a turbulent stacking of metropolitan life in ever-changing configurations; a machine that offered redemption through a surfeit of hedonism; a conventional, even boring, skyscraper; a program as daring as ever imagined in this century – La Villette could be more radical by suppressing the three-dimensional aspect almost completely and proposing pure program instead, unfettered by any containment” (Parc).

In proposing an urban condition more radical than the Downtown Athletic Club by dissolving the physical barriers between the multiple coexisting and competing programs, Parc de La Villette ensures the corruption of blurring of programmed components in an attempt to create hybrid programs that might facilitate the evolution of a new political subject. The singular architecture that once contained singular program has been outpaced and found unsuitable for the constantly changing metropolis. While deemphasizing the role of architecture as an autonomous element in the city Parc de La Villette pays “particular attention to ramps, spaces of movement, and sculpted voids as indeterminate, unprogrammed sites for transient events” as the vital infrastructure of the always-new metropolis (Deamer 153). Far from the prescribed utopian visions of the sixties and seventies, this crossprogramed, infrastructure-heavy city was meant to embrace the influence of the free market and the passive participation of the subject in reshaping the environment. Deregulation would expedite the recreation of the city. Ultimately, the park represents “the pure exploitation of the metropolitan condition:

density without architecture, a culture of ‘invisible’ congestion” (Parc). This programmatic density of Parc de La Villette suggests a constantly changing and cross-pollinating field of program where the architectural elements have no obligation to facilitate any functions and only exist as a vestige of the previous city.

In this scheme the role of the new subject is unprescribed beyond the baseline of “consumer”. Perhaps the acceptance of capitalism’s inequality by the Italian Left foreshadowed the more general acceptance of slow reform and faith in the market as an agent of change because there is no longer an attempt to awaken the dormant working class in hopes of a social revolution. The citizen of the city is primarily a consumer and producer of experience and in the Parc de La Villette, experience has been commodified as the primary product of the city. The homogeneous space of production and consumption presented in No-Stop City has failed to awaken the working class and the city has evolved from a place of material production and consumption to a space where experience is constantly produced and consumed by the subject. As stated before this scheme suggests the capitalist socioeconomic system has changed its concern from the selling of products to the selling of ideas and information. While the physical product might still exist, its importance does not reside in its material or functional qualities, but only in the abstract social values it represents and the experience it can deliver. In this context experience should be equated to knowledge and information.

If the city does exist as a physical reflection of social values, than Parc de La Villette prefigures a city where the experience of the subject has become the “sold” commodity to continue the logic of production, consumption, and housing. This altering of the production and consumption model of capitalism stands in contrast to the modernist cities, like the Contemporary City, where the sold commodity was a physical thing, produced by industry, and purchased by the consumer. As a result, the physical city no longer reflects discrete elements with single uses but now reflects the universal public space of experience and knowledge. All space is public and vaguely defined

by a collection of artifacts and experienced as a field of competing programs. In this homogenization of space where the delineation between interior and exterior decays, “all architects may be working on the same building, so far separate, but with hidden receptors that will eventually make it cohere” (Koolhaas Junkspace). The cities of the world have now become the universal space of experience.

While the Parc de La Villette proposal by OMA was never built, one might argue the Yokohama International Passenger Terminal (2002) by FOA prefigures the same global condition. The deliberate ambiguity between “natural” topography and building in the terminal anticipates a similar treatment for city components as seen in Parc de La Villette. In this iteration however, the fragmented relics of architecture and the landscape have come together to form the same cohesive infrastructure. We might imagine the terminal also serves as an intersection between the city of Yokohama and the various ferries, thought of as mobile microcosms of the universal city traveling between the various cities of Japan and uniting them. The Yokohama International Passenger Terminal represents the logical end of the city under the influence of socioeconomic capitalism; the city as a global or universal condition. No longer can the city be identified as a localized construction as the city no longer possesses the “edge conditions” one might use to describe the terminal in the context of Yokohama. The traditional boundaries between and autonomy of nature, the city and the subject are dissolved, and continue to blur.

figure 14. parc de la villette drawn analysis

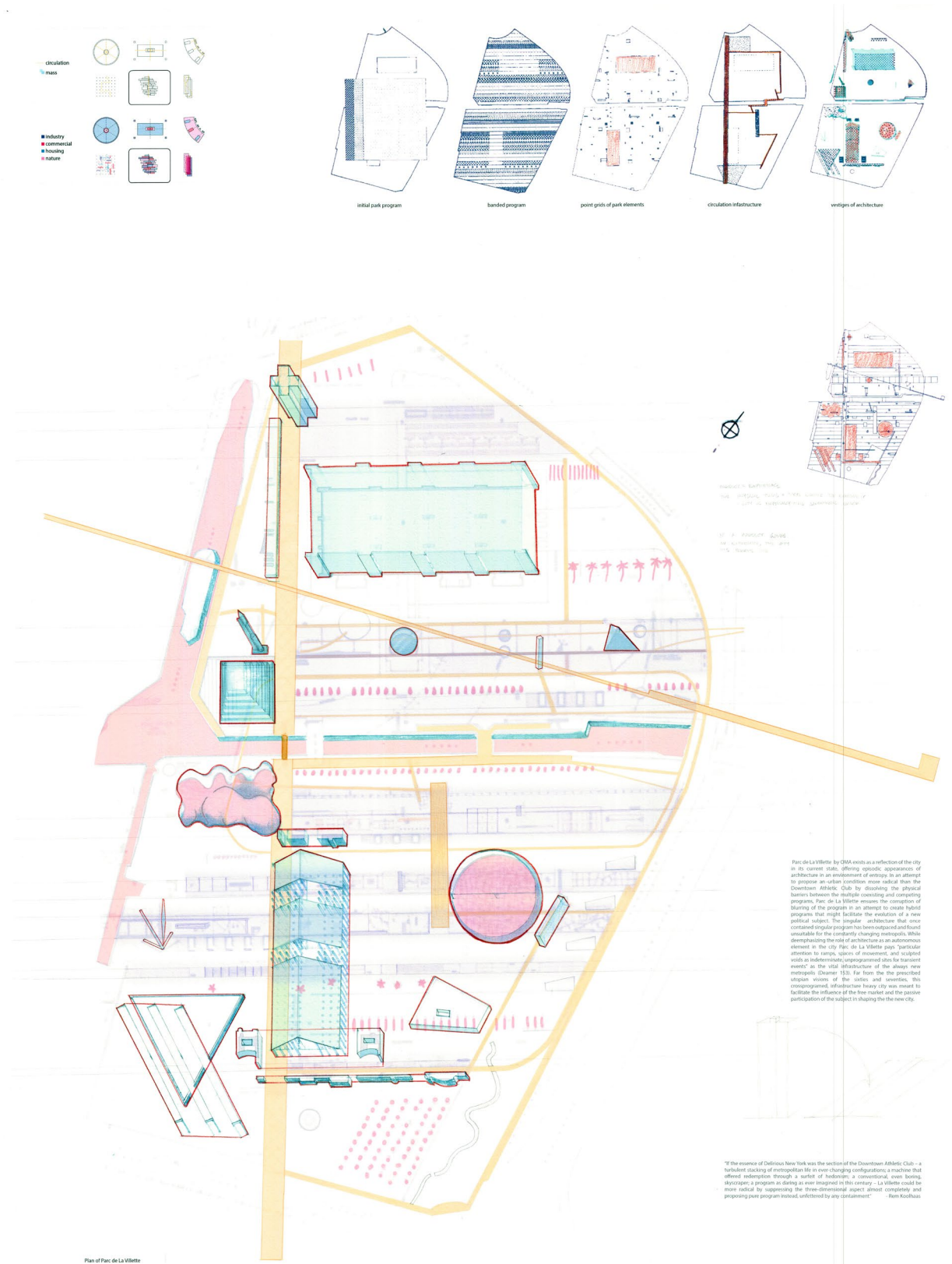
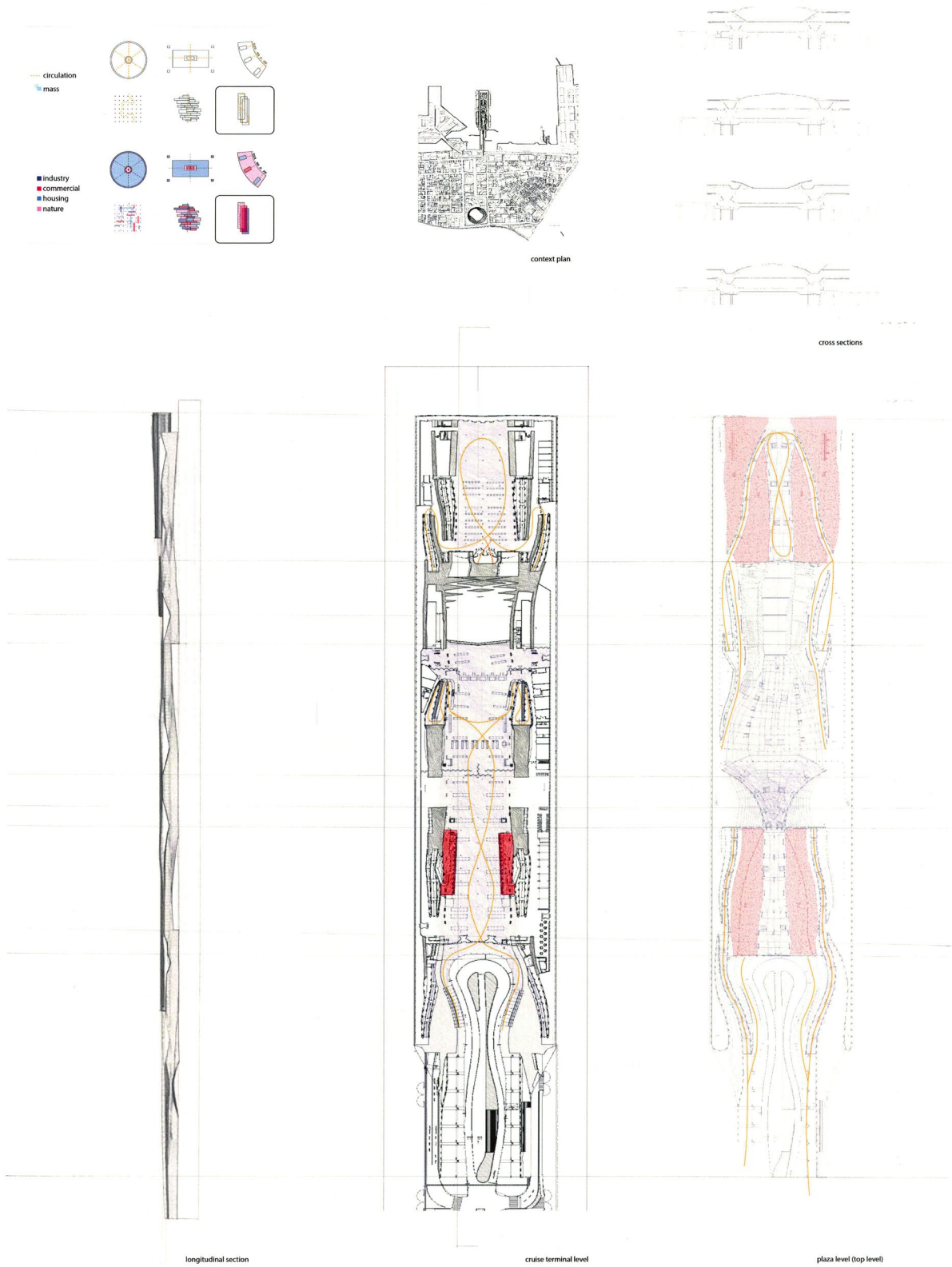


figure 15. yokohama international passenger terminal drawn analysis



Aftermath; Trajectory

For the modernist city, capital was the end goal and strictly rational planning was the functional means to that end. The city no longer hosted sites of production; it became the site of production. The Decentralized City sought to provide a rational model for the growth of the modernist model while elevating the living condition of the working class. A small community with access to education, nature, and agricultural production would provide the working class with more autonomous living condition than the cities of the Industrial revolution. The suburban pattern of growth established by the Decentralized City assumed an endless supply of land and anticipated the global city. In response to seemingly inevitable global habitation, No-Stop City took the expansion of the capital oriented city to its logical extreme questioning the ability of the socioeconomic model to do anything other than propagate inequality. At this apotheosis of capitalism, it was envisioned that the working class would reclaim political power. In the continued expansion of capitalism, Parc de La Villette advocates for the exploitation of the free global market as a means to remake the city and implies the cross breeding of all program and the dissolving of the barriers between interior and exterior.

None of these projects were so naive to suggest the inequalities of capitalism could be corrected through a purely formal solution but instead intended to provide the citizen with the platform to reclaim political power. However the projects, at least until Parc de

La Villette, assumed a collective will existed or could exist. While all of these projects sought to change the political subject via a spatial platform, their fault might reside in the assumption that a collective will is possible. In lieu of the socioeconomic revolution, ever expanding capitalism continues to influence the physical character of the city more so than any collective social will. Reinier de Graaf argues, architecture, and by extension the city have become instrumentalized to generate and minimize the expenditure of, capital. Buildings are increasingly seen as assets; a built form of capital that has the potential to generate more capital. In this cyclical multiplication of capital where wealth inequality continues to go, we must ask, as De Graff did, if the capitalism and its social values really have the merit we assumed they did.

“If the 20th century really was an anomaly, then perhaps so were its ideals: an entire period characterized by an enlightened belief in progress, social emancipation and civil rights can be retroactively discarded as a fleeting moment of self-delusion - (no more than) a footnote in the long course of history” (De Graff).

In tracing this genealogy we might abstract the lineage even farther and interpret it as a trajectory to anticipate the continued evolution of the city. Patterns that develop in the dialogue between these proposals suggest a direction for the city as a product of capital and the subject's role in the city. It seems that the role of the subject has been conceptualized as increasingly unprescribed and pluralistic in the face of expanding neoliberalism. Increasing, the city can be conceived of as a reflection of a socioeconomic system where ideas preempt objects and objects are only valued for the ideas they convey.

The physical city has transitioned from a site to host production and consumption to the site of production and consumption. Factories as the architecture of concentrated material production have been supplanted by the city as the disperse field of information production. If a product gives the consumer an experience, and experience can be

understood as gained knowledge or information, the physical city can be imagined as a product that the subject experiences; participating in the production and consumption of information.

Any reorganization and re-presentation of the spatial components of the city can be understood as a reflection of the state of the current socioeconomic system and the subject's relationship to it. The city and the subject have lost autonomy in relation to capital and if this study can be interpreted as forming an anticipatory trajectory for the city's relation to capital, it indicates they are becoming more and more inseparable as the city continues to express the components of capitalism.

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