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Mobility and Station: Place and Movement in a Culture of Nostalgia and Commodities

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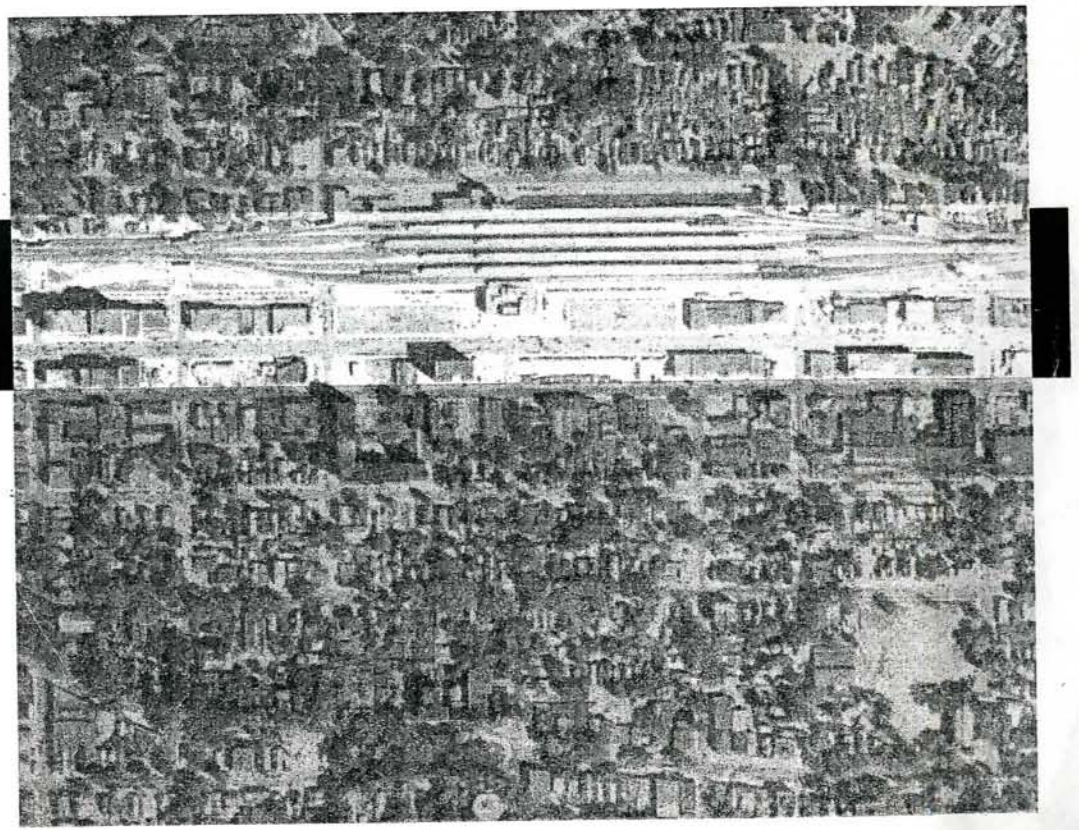
Mobility and Station:
Place and Movement in a Culture of Nostalgia and Commodities



Jonathan Hicks

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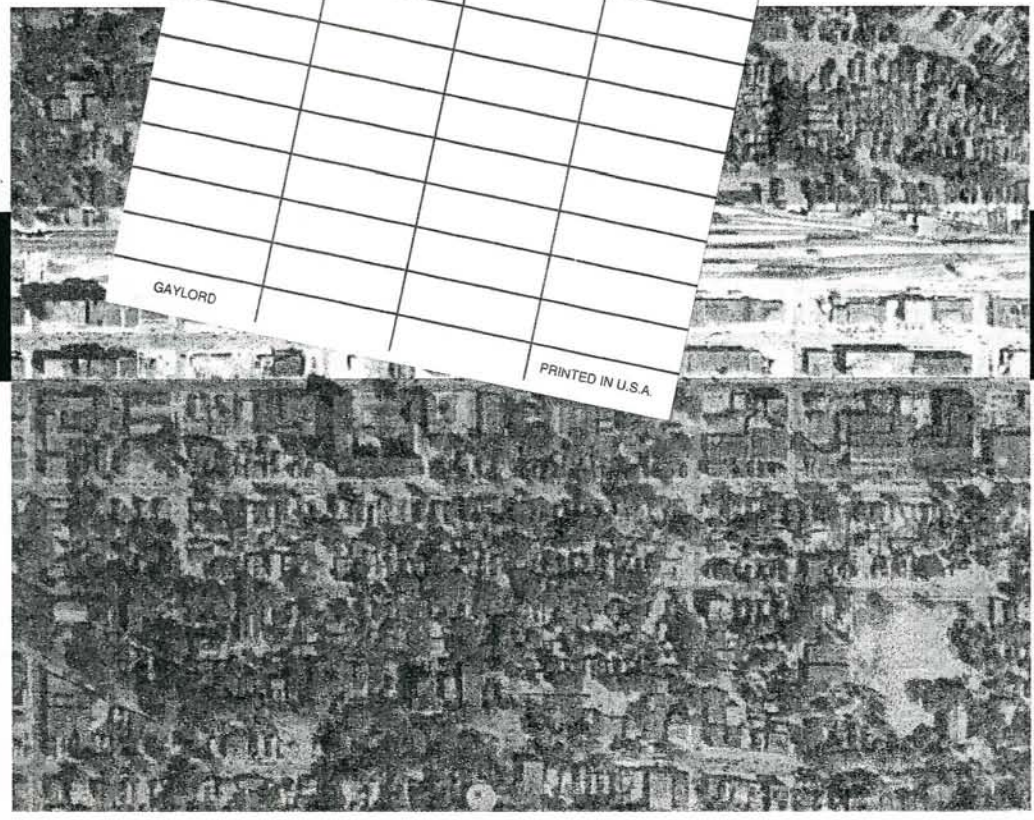

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Mobility

Mobility, the ability to move, more specifically implies the ability for a thing to occupy different physical locations at different points in time. One immediate architectural concern brought by this definition pertains to conceptions of context. Architectural projects may be conceived to be formally or culturally contextual at a specific point in time, however the formal and cultural environments in which they are constantly in flux.

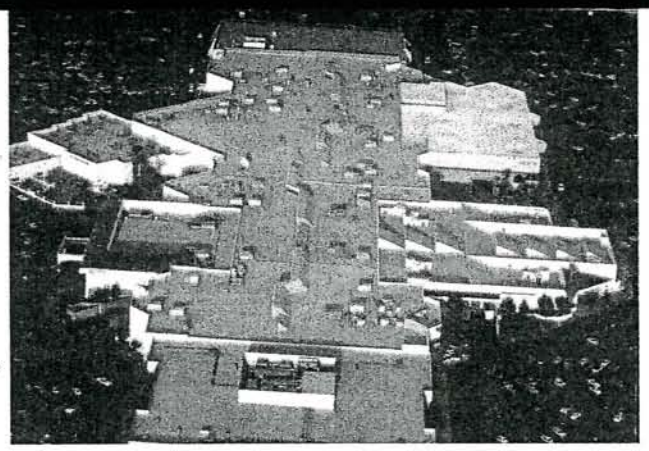
On another level, mobility can be investigated according to the same principles as it is defined here, those of spatial and temporal change.

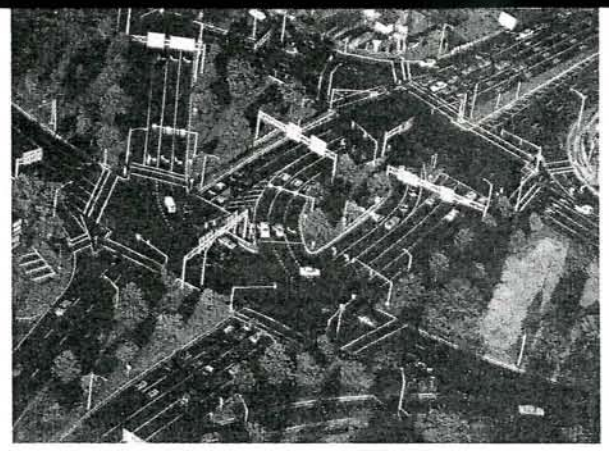
Context and Connection

Formal and cultural contextuality, as referenced here, consists of a level of connection to surrounding conditions. To be contextual, a project must be an active participant in local networks of both formal composition and cultural events. The loss of connection to these kinds of local networks consists of a loss of association with a place.

Once the connection between architecture and specific location is lost, the relationship between building and its environment may be considered temporary. Architecture, infrastructure, urban planning and all components of the built environment are constructed in specific context. Since the physical nature of buildings is one of relative permanence, or at least most architectural buildings are not physically mobile, these elements serve as markers for programmatic change. It is at this point that the relationship between program and the build artifact becomes central. Rather than being a relatively static temporal marker, program inherently represents only current interests and cultural foci in an area. It is, then, only the relationship of building to program that can keep a building contextual over time. In this sense that built architecture is always historical. *This project intends to demonstrate the potential to accumulate and overlap programs to accentuate the static cultural qualities of a place while stimulating and even exaggerating the (representational or physical) mobility of those programs.*

4 Introduction





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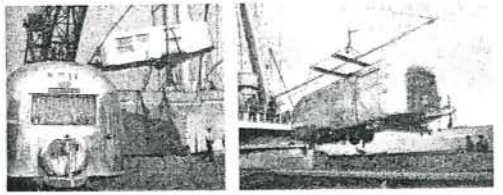
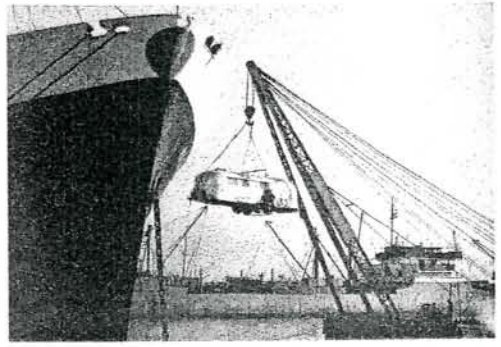
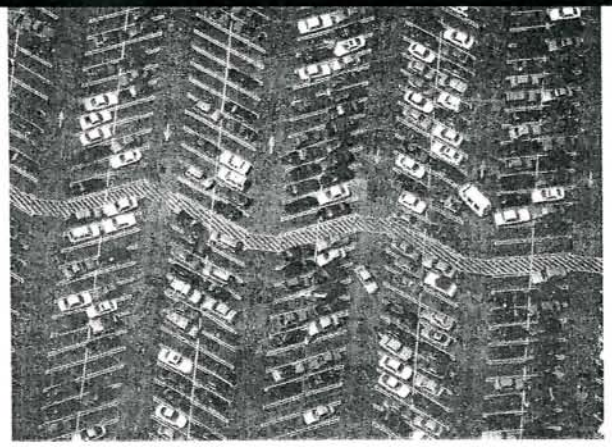
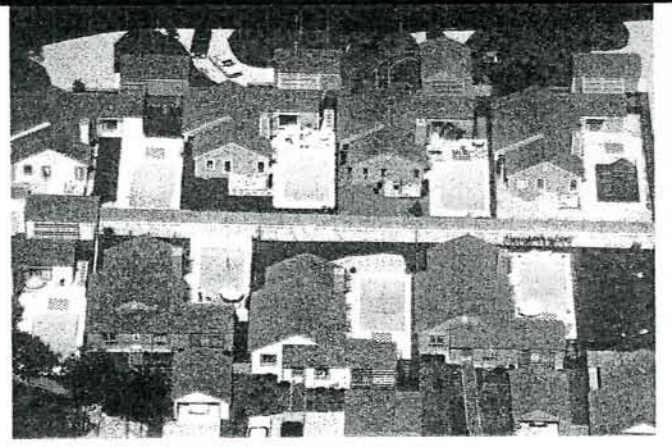




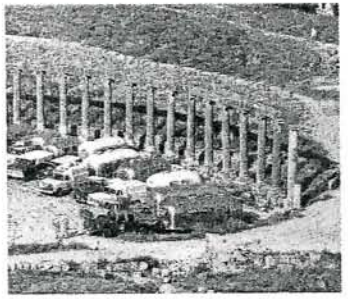


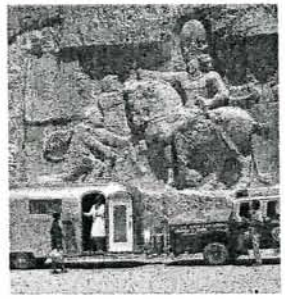


Program

Conceptions of "program" can include square footages or simple designations of space meant to be occupied by certain activities or groups (architectural programs), a list of events comprising a single composition (athletic or performance programs), autonomous groups of events with a single theme (television programs), or organizations of thematic objectives or motives with varying activities (academic programs).

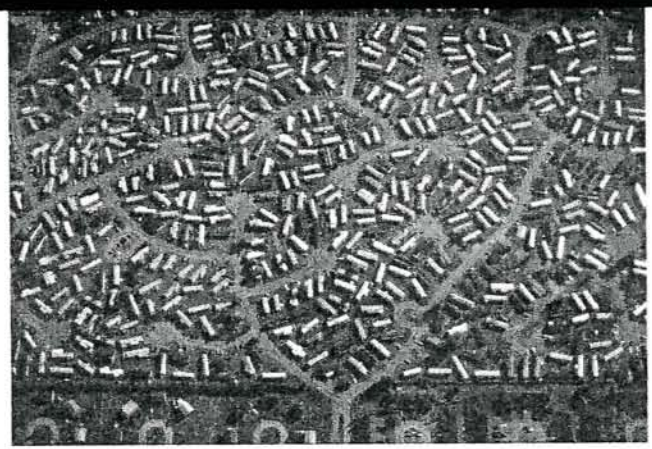
All forms of program are structured in order to accomplish something specific, all have motives or agendas that generate them and guide their development. Agenda is meant to be seen here as a congruent extension of spatial program and designation. Nearly every spatial program has an agenda, and nearly every realized agenda has spatial manifestations. The two are partially independent; the use of a space can remain generally the same over time while the agenda changes, or the use can change while the agenda stays generally the same. However, "program" is used here as a compound term denoting both spaces designated for organizations and/or the agendas of such parties.

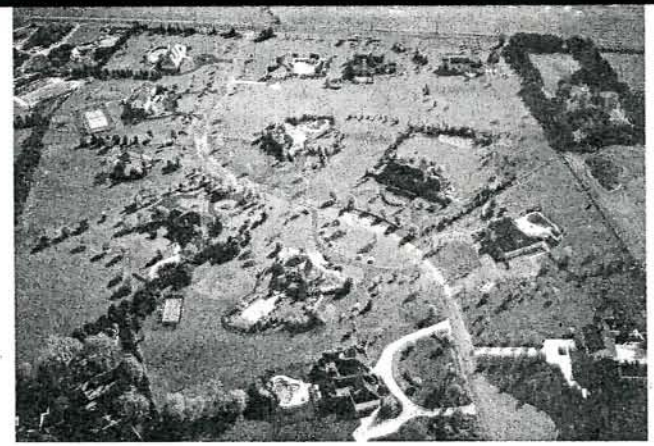


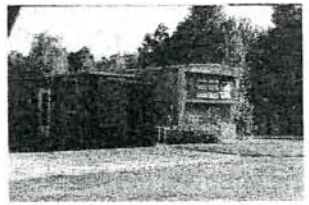


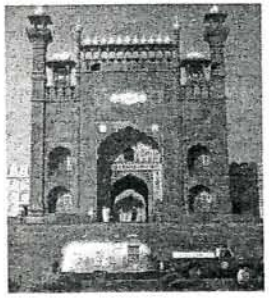
Series of Wally Byam Airstream caravan photos from *Airstream: The History of the Land Yacht*, byBryan Burkhart and David Hunt

Introduction



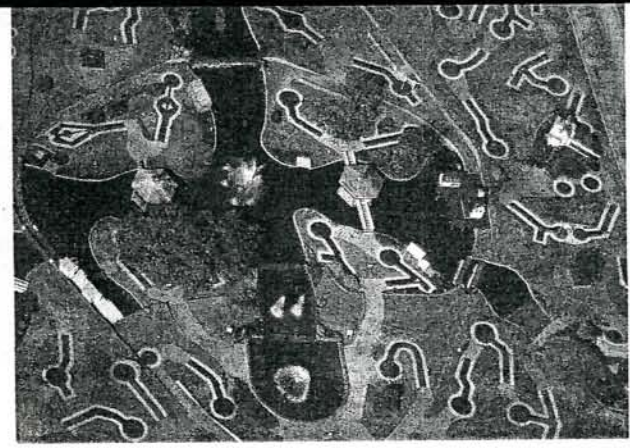


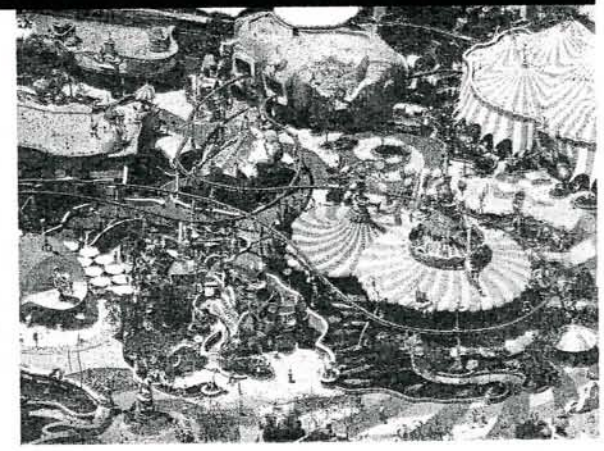




In the late 1950s and early 60s, Wally Byam, owner of the Airstream trailer company, organized several world caravan trips. He sought to promote his product as well as his unique view s on living, mobility, and place. The trailers maintained a relationship with all of the different environments, being completely physically autonomous and mobile, and having a neutral, foreign form that was manufactured to be general. Manufactured housing, already mostly culturally neutral, adopted this example of detachment from place, although they are fixed objects.

Below, previous pages: Alex Mac Lean's *America* photo series, as found in *Mutations* by Rem Koolhaas, et al.



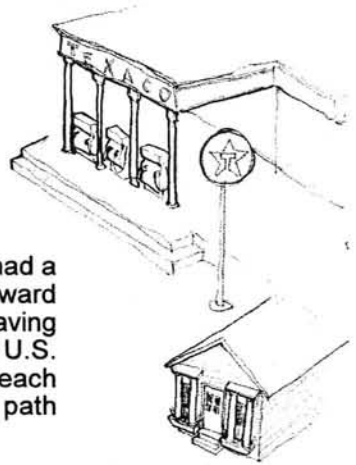


1. Representational Mobility- The Rift Between Ideal and Image

America and a Culture of Advancement

As conceived for the purposes of this project, advancement is defined as a kind of exclusively developmental force, an unending cycle of production and progress. Paul Ricoeur[1] discusses advancement and progress in contemporary society, and its effect on unique cultural heritage in "Universal civilization and National Cultures." On progress:

> The problem is this: mankind as a whole is on the brink of a single world civilization representing at once a gigantic progress for everyone and an overwhelming task of survival and adapting out cultural heritage to this new setting.
>
> Primarily, this is what unifies mankind at a very abstract and purely rational level, and which, on that basis, endows civilization with its universal character.



The importance of progress, nationally and globally, and in technology, economics, and wide-ranging fields of sciences, has had a central role in the development of the U.S. since its inception[2]. As a post-colonial nation, it has historically aimed its goals toward outperforming its European forebears as well as the rest of the world in these fields. If nothing else[3], Americans can be seen as having a common interest in economics, as much of society is saturated with capitalism. With the separation of church and state, the U.S. implies that none of its constituent cultures has power over its collective actions. Economy is then a mode of democracy, as each person is meant to be granted the right to the pursuit of financial success as part of the "pursuit of happiness." This objective path toward abstract goals starts to avert cultural controversy by avoiding subjectivity.

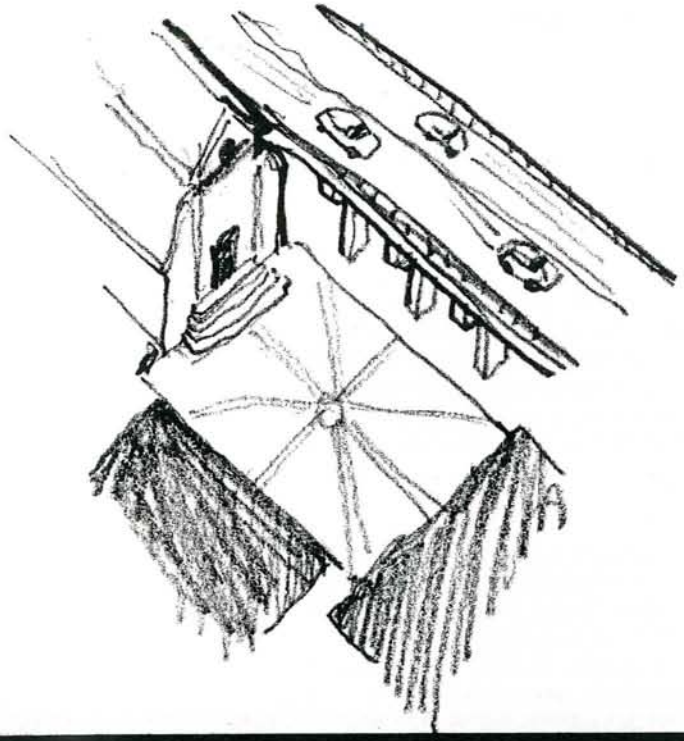
Ricoeur describes culture as being created in isolation from global forces:

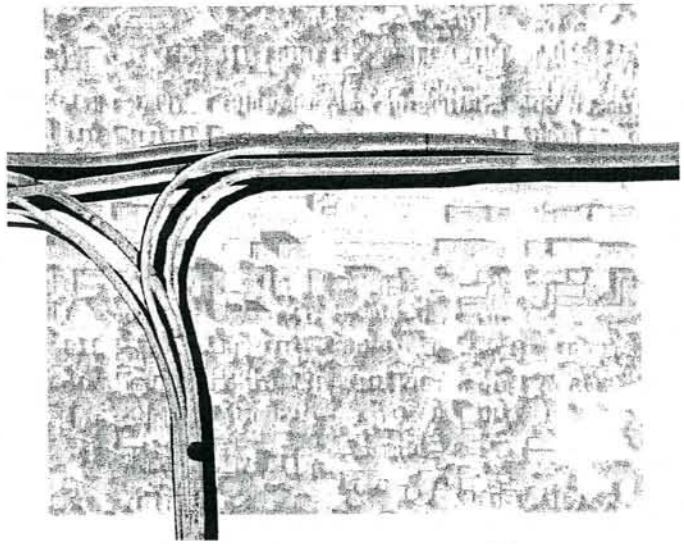
> On the other hand, we have to admit that this same development presents a contrary character. The phenomenon of universalization, while being an advancement of mankind, at that same timeconstitutes a sort of subtle destruction, not only of traditional cultures, which might not be an irreparable wrong, but also of what I shall call for the time being the creative nucleus of great civilizations and great cultures, that nucleus on the basis of which we interpret life, what I shall call in advance the ethical and mythical nucleus of mankind.

> . . . in order to take part in modern civilization, it is necessary at the same time to take part in scientific, technical, and political rationality, something which very often requires the pure and simple abandon of a whole cultural past.[5]

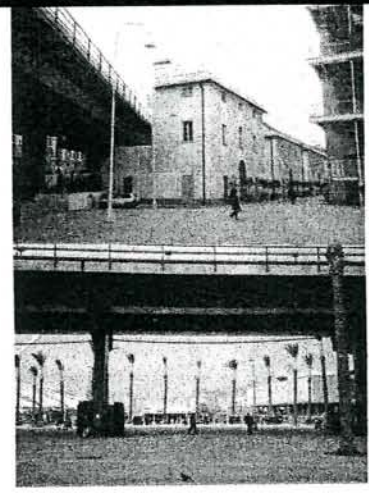
Ignasi de Sola-Morales extends the relationship of culture to advancement in "Weak Architecture," which indirectly responds to some of Ricoeur's claims. He describes the role of art in the resultant role of art in contemporary society as relating to reality:

> (We might recall here, parenthetically, the fortunes of the artistic in contemporary mass society. The proliferation of museums, the magnification of the figure of the artist, the existence of a massive consumption of printed and televised artistic images, the widespread appetite for information about the arts, all reflect, of course, an increasingly leisured society, but also relate precisely to the scientific illusion, of work and production, the world of art appears as a kind of last preserve of reality, where human beings can still find sustenance. Art is understood as being a space in which the fatigue of the contemporary subject an be salved away.)[6]





The relationship of the imposed highway and the city is in some ways equivalent to the relationship between advancement and culture. The highway system seeks an abstract goal of connection and convenience, while the city culture underneath has a much more complex set of goals, motives, and activities.



The artistic and cultural artifact, as an aesthetic expression that is linked to a reality through a unique viewpoint, that in essence links the perceiver to a reality[7], is adopted as a symbol of authenticity[8]. This is exemplified in the increasing demand for (and consumption of) artistic images. Authenticity as a method of cultural grounding is a commodity, and can be used to create and direct the relationship of architecture to local cultural networks.

Culture and advancement rarely operate as poles in contemporary society[9], but often as overlapping general ideologies that sustain each other and the balance of societal values. Although artwork may be a perceived aversion of scientific progressive mentality through discourse with a more comprehensible reality, the use and distribution of artwork is often governed by these laws of work and production and is reinterpreted in a hybrid way. Because authenticity is valued is often measured by extensive history, usage, and endorsement, all of these traits can be employed in making products more marketable to the consumer public. As these tactics become standard, commercial competition ensues with respect to which product has more history, longer history, more diverse uses. As was the case with the perception of the automobile and now with the computer: more is better.

Importance of the Visual

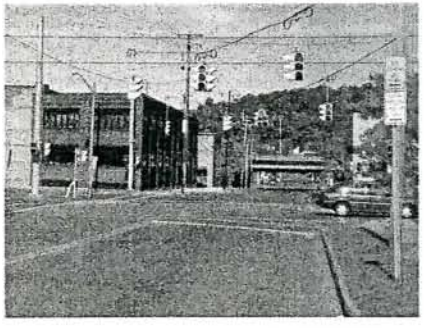
The quantitative may take precedence over the qualitative in American advertising for the simple reason that it is more easily communicated *visually* than the other, and the visible image is the most readily absorbed stimuli for the consumer. As an economic and social tool, a powerful image capable of conveying a notion to its audience clearly has taken on great importance. Essentially this concept is also applicable in architecture, as form is ideally thought to communicate some definite notion to the viewer. The inherent problem with the adoption of an image, however, comes in the limited number of associations one can make, and the increasingly unlikely uniqueness that Ricoeur claimed to be at the center of culture[10]. In American culture, however, the practice of borrowing cultural artifacts and practices is familiar, as many cultural institutions are directly transferred as latent influence from diverse constituent cultures[11].

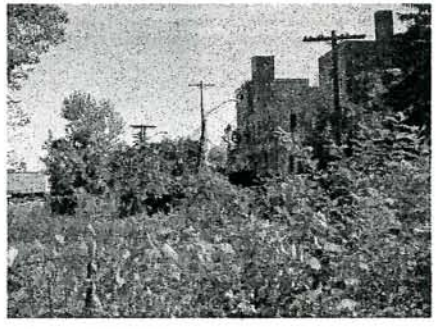
The visible is an important issue regarding site-generated or representative architecture, as the common user is only exposed to the visual manifestations of history, and may be unaware of the latent influences present on a given site[12]. Therefore there is a focus on what is visible and physically left on the site, contrasted with what could be uncovered or constructed there. Indeed, the architectural expression present can allude to the latent and specific historical conditions of a site, but this phenomenon is incapable of conducting a specific historical narrative, unless consciously reconstructed in a kind of artificial, "educational" fashion. Rather, architectural allusion leads to a vague and fractured conception of history and authenticity: a set of recyclable, marketable associations.

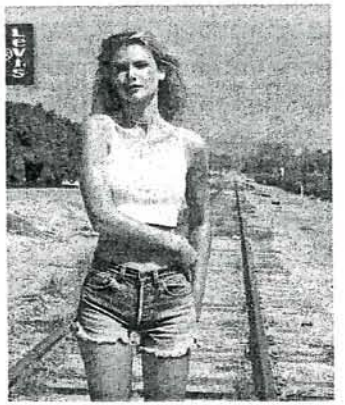
[10] Representational Mobility

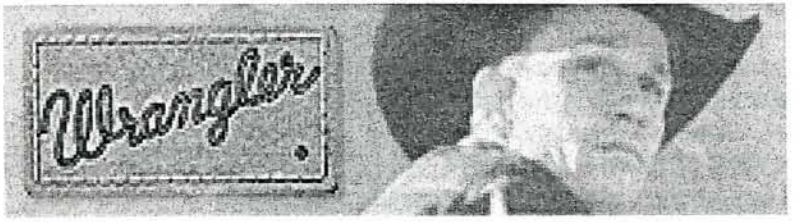
Views from East Washington St toward I-690 (left), and east (right), showing locations of Erie Canal, the elevated rail system of the NY Central System (left), and a factory previously next to a railway on Washington St. (right).

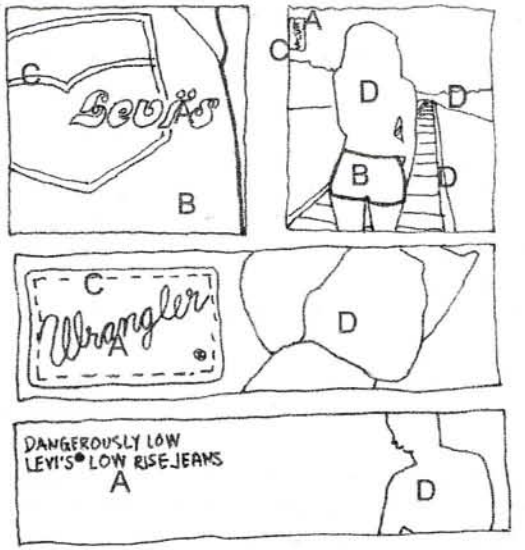
Views of buildings on East Genesee St that have been overlapped with new building form or program to form a hybrid whole. Historic narative is incomplete, but makes allusions to its former use.





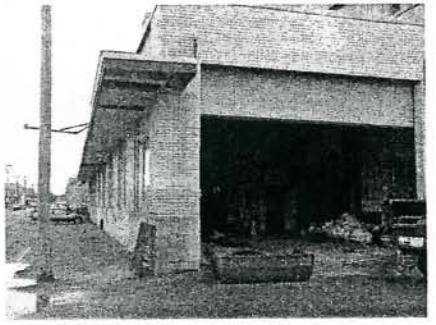


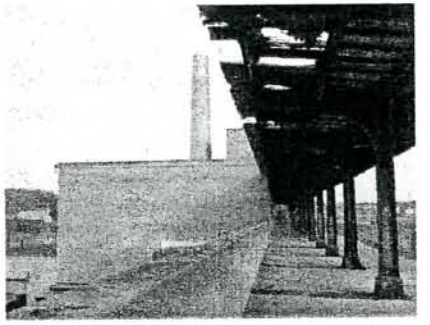




These jeans ads demonstrate the multiple symbols used to promote a single product. The elements in the ads are labeled according to their relevance to the product: A= direct textual reference to product or brand name, B= photo of the product, C= visual symbol representing the product, D= indirectly related symbol: the image that the advertisement is actively trying to associate with the product. Direct link from image to product is becoming less essential.

Below: Images of the existing buildings on the north side of the NY Central station complex. Details indicate the past programs of railway station and car center: sign, old carwash, rail platform.





Site History

The site of the intervention is both a cultural and "progressive" center. The lot is situated between the past location of the Erie Canal and the current interstate highway I-690, in the midst of an infrastructural, temporal, and spatial hub that was largely responsible for the formation of local culture as well as development and progress for the entire history of Syracuse.

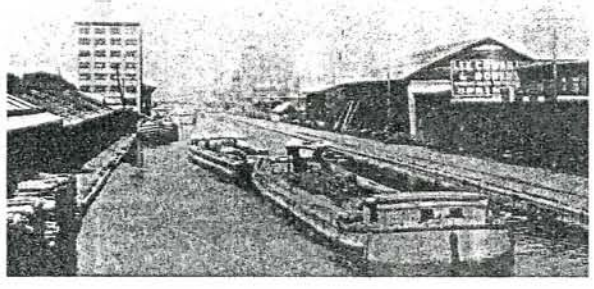
The area of the present-day city was discovered by settlers as a flat area surrounding Onondaga creek, a fairly vast expanse of marshlands and salt flats at the south end of Lake Onondaga. Before 1800, the small village of Salina had started to form at the edge of these salt flats near the lake. The first imposed transportation throughways located near the site consisted of the Genesee and the Chenango and Salina turnpikes, running east-west and north-south, respectively, with their intersection at current Salina and Genesee streets. The Genesee turnpike developed as a passageway through the access channel to the east, which would become an important national route to the West.

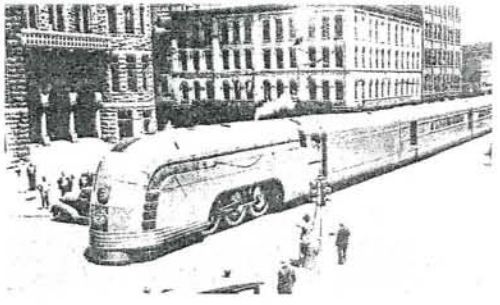
In the early 1800s the village of Lodi developed on the present-day site, at the end of Yellow Brook, a tributary of Onondaga Creek, and the edge of the salt flats. The system of streets was orthagonal to the Genesee turnpike and focused around the intersection of Genesee and Salina.

In 1825 the Erie Canal was completed, forming a route to the "interior" from the Hudson and Mohawk rivers to the east and utilizing the Great Lakes system. The canal cut through the "cross channel entrance" from the east, a natural low-elevation gap in the rough Adirondack terrain, joined with the street grid growing in that area, and surpassed Onondaga lake to continue west. Syracuse was established as it is today solely because of this connection, but its specific historical importance is almost invisible in the current physical environment. The canal and its resultant economy transformed the existing village into a city with thriving industries, afforded by both the developing metropolitan area and by the actual canal waters themselves. Factories emerged along the canal just as they would along a river, and residential and civic developments followed behind them.

The first railroads to connect to Syracuse crossed the city through the same channel system as the canal, but slightly further up in elevation. A passenger rail, on the New York Central line, developed on Washington Street to the south of the canal, and two freight lines developed to the north, one on Canal Street and one between Canal and Burnet Avenue. The railroad traffic further bolstered the population of the booming city

[12] Representational Mobility



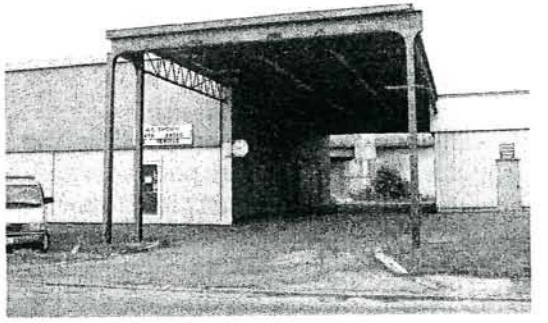


in the late 1800s, and soon the canal would be abandoned as obsolete. The train rout was more direct, much faster and more continuous, and could accommodate large amounts of freight.

In the 1930s, the automobile was starting to take precedence over rail in metropolitan American life, as automotive technology was becoming accessible to more people. Grade-level railroad crossings were starting to be considered dangerous, and the 9 railroad lines that connected to Syracuse were starting to be seen as a general nuisance. In 1933 a track elevation project was started, which would alleviate the train problem by separating the city through-routes from grade level. Some freight lines, meanwhile, were moved to the outskirts of the city. The center of this elevation project was the new New York Central station complex, the passenger station connecting pedestrians to the elevated rail platforms via a large, iconographic structure situated in the middle of what had been Canal Street.

In the 1960s, long after railroads had been surpassed in efficiency by automobile traffic, the elevated track system that carved its way east-west through Syracuse, was converted to an interstate highway, and expanded to form a route south as well. The passenger station, created as a symbol of technology, liberation, and progress 30 earlier, was converted into the Midtown Car Center, conceived as an "all-inclusive" automotive mecca. The complex was adapted to showrooms, dealership offices, retail stores, repair centers, car wash, gas station and restaurant, all with a theme of contemporary automotive technology. The large parks that had flanked the station were converted to parking lots and repair shops for automobiles, after being physically encroached upon by the highway itself. The complex remained fully intact for only 5 years, but was eventually adapted into a bus terminal for Greyhound, private automotive repair, and warehouse space.

The site, defined by the historical means of formation for the city, the same means that made advancement possible, is also culturally marked. It shows architectural and typological changes over time, as well as a shift in societal values.[13]

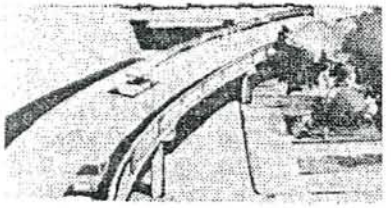


Photos showing remaining artifacts from historic physical and programmatic phases of the site and complex. The line of garage doors (bottom right) was once equivalent to the canopies (below). One canopy (above right) survives today. Rail tracks from the Canal St rail line can still be seen through the current asphalt (above right).

The Rift between Image and Ideal

Diverse Proliferation and the Formation of the Independent Symbol

As marketable objects acquire more images and applied histories that claim higher levels of authenticity, they begin to overlap. The representation of the object becomes not a single image and association, but a collapsed and concentrated collection of images and memories. The same multiple application occurs for each image or symbol used to convey or represent a program, and as the image accumulates more diverse associations and meanings, it can begin to stand on its own as a historical artifact, having only vague associations left behind from past use. As such, it gains a plural, temporal quality as it is used differently over time, associations collecting and building up, and therefor becomes richer in its perceived *meaning*. As an advertising tool, such an object is independent of any single economic motive, because it is used to simultaneously represent and legitimate complex and changing programs. This independence: the relatively free use of image without permanent attachment, is what can allow the image to be recycled, not consumed and exhausted. For instance, different types of modernism such as Italian fascist and Russian constructivist models have been associated closely with specific social and political contexts, the formal aspects of architecture supposedly embodying specific cultural trends and perceptions. The same forms, when applied in different contexts, take on new cultural meanings that may completely oppose those of previous uses. *With vague allusions to authenticity and relative quality, the image itself can never be proven wrong, as the product that is promoting can, is always objective and subjective at once, and is free from refutation or rejection.*



Midtown Car Cent

Marketing Architecture

Although buildings often operate as local symbols, signifying a particular programmatic motive through expressive forms or typologies, they often break from these programs and can be reused for other purposes. Just as the images appropriated for multiple uses in advertising can readily shift programs, needing only to lend recognition and legitimacy to a product, architecture can be used to contain shifting programs, lending authenticity with its implied history and site-specific importance. As a building is used for more diverse and mobile programs, its perceived value as a historic artifact can increase. With accumulated meanings and associations intact, it gains cultural importance, and can become a powerful cultural symbol while having no permanent or explicit use.

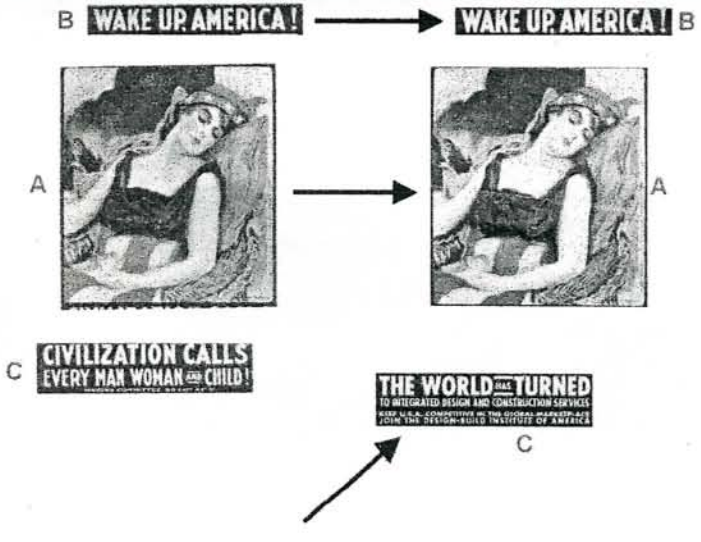
The posters shown here are meant to illustrate mobility of image and program, as each is meant to trigger a latent cultural or historical association. The components of the ads are separated and labeled according to their relationships. As is visible with the first image and its counterpart (left), image is of adopted, with new program substituted to suit the agenda of the advertiser.

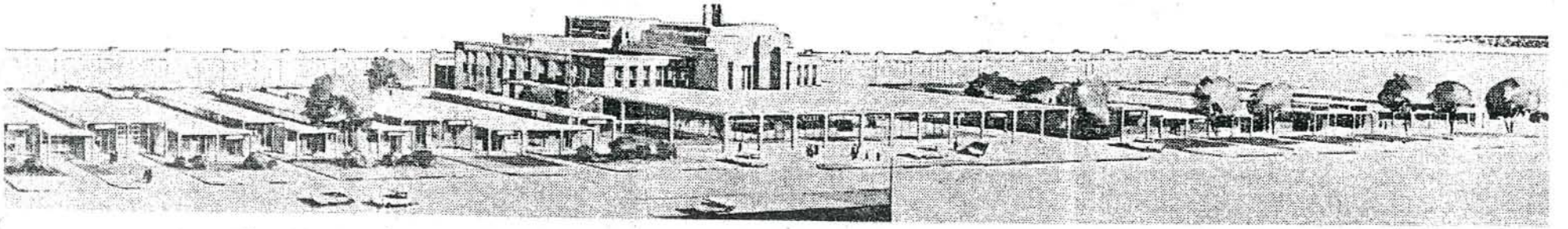
14 *Representational Mobility*

A= image

B= slogan

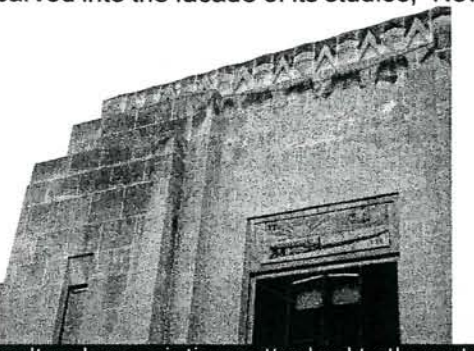
C= program

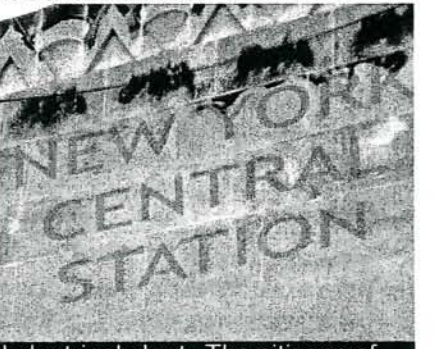




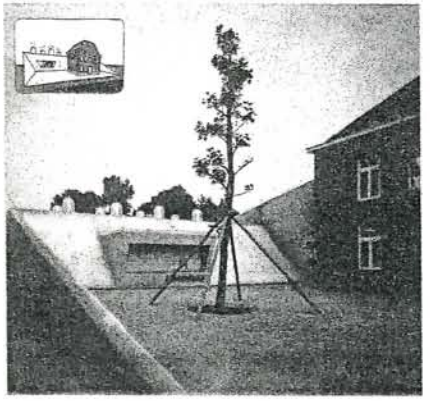
it to serve the motoring public, will utilize the present New York Central terminal site on Erie boulevard. Air view below shows how it will fit into present complex

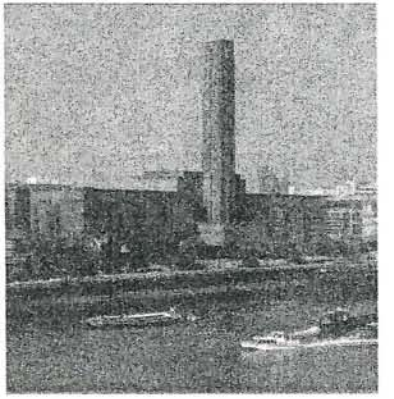
The history of the site can also be read through the ideal conceptions of it. The two past idyllic programs, those of the NY Central station and the Midtown Car Center, have left both physical remnants and a history of renewal and ambitious, plural programs. The Car Center recycled the sleek forms of the NYC passenger station, and Time Warner intends to focus even more on the building itself as its public image. After purchasing the building, the company wanted to call the new station "New York Central News," in order to reuse the words carved into the facade of its studios, "New York Central Station."

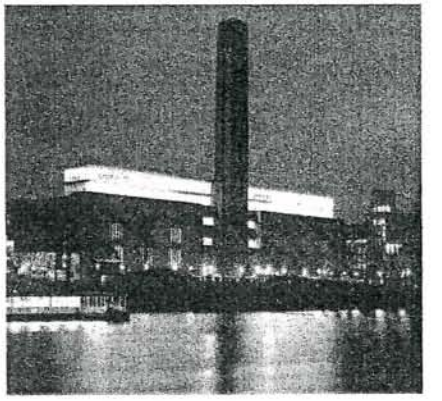




The artwork in Tate Modern absorbs an additional abstract meaning through the cultural associations attached to the outdated electrical plant. The citizens of London have long-standing concepts and opinions of this building. which contrast with its new use. The highly symbolic tower may become in time an icon symbolizing modern art in London. The post office takes on a new historical and emotional quality simply by occupying a historic house. The architectural intervention makes a symbol out of the house by literally framing it within a subservient background.





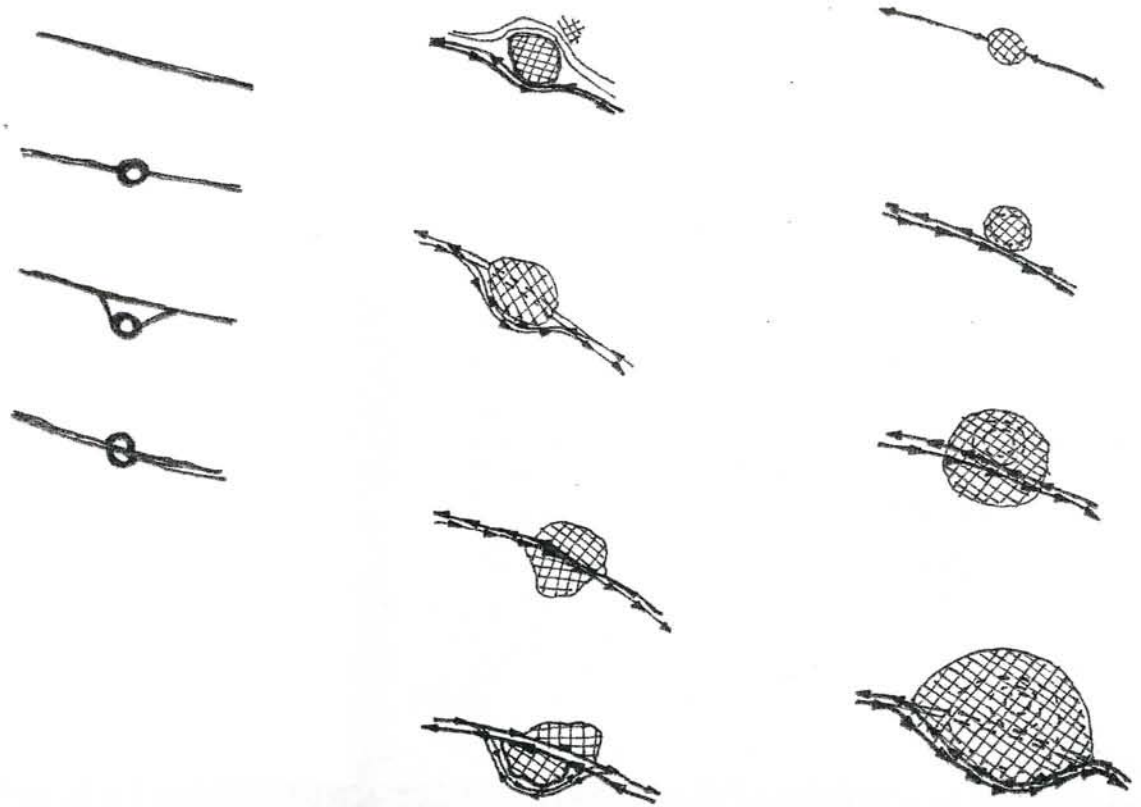


2. Physical Mobility, Time, and Space

Physical mobility, the prospect of occupying different spatial locations at different points in time, complicates the relationship of artifacts and place. Static objects and buildings may have important relationships with the structure of their place, simply through permanent spatial proximity to whatever static physical and cultural conditions exist there. Mobile objects have only a temporary relationship of proximity with existing conditions, and may not conform to them. They also operate in two modes, stationary and transitory. While in transit, physically moving, an object has no relationship to a site, only a situation based on its last site and next.

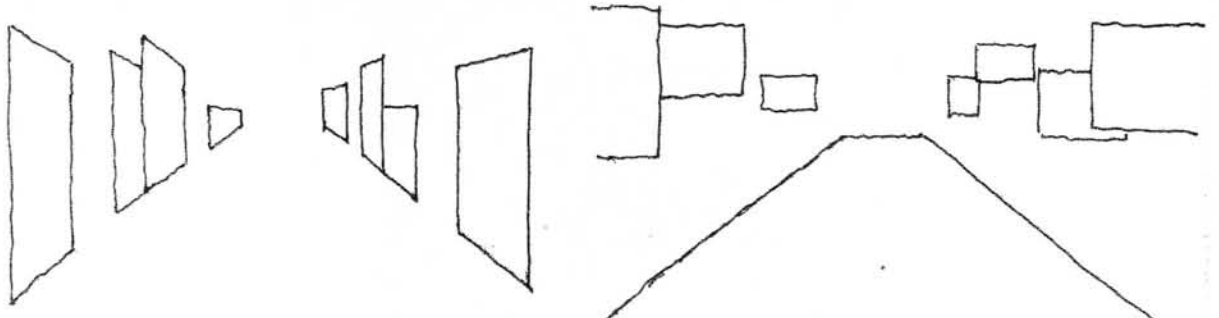
With an increasing density of transport infrastructure and connections available, programs have become increasingly more physically mobile. With respect to transport infrastructure, stationary points or nodes translate to cities and towns, while transitory points are spatially indeterminate points along the highway.

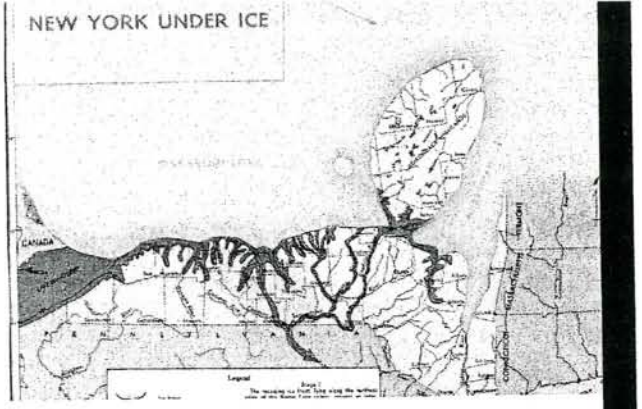
Transport infrastructure has always been necessary for settlement and survival in the development of places. However, the identities and physical characteristics of infrastructures has changed. They contain different activities, occupy different spatial zones, have different priorities and modes of operation, different motives and ownership, and are accessed by different groups of people. The interstate highway system is currently the dominant form of physical transport infrastructure, but the site of the proposed project derives from a history of different infrastructures. In a way, the interstate

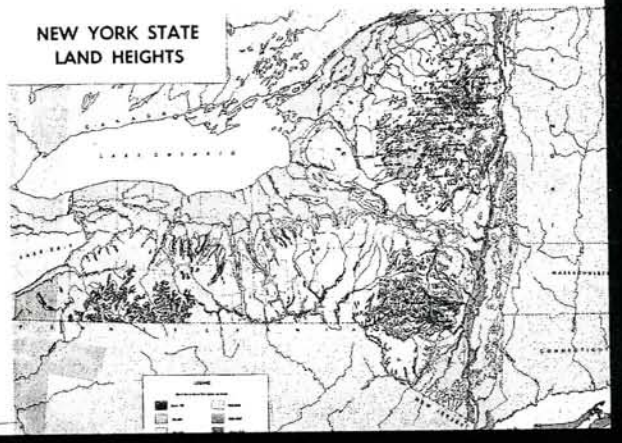


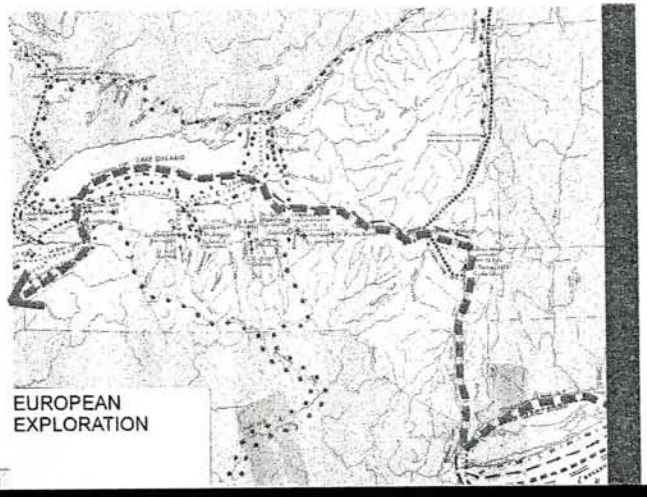
Models of nodal development incorporating transport infrastructure

Models of depth perception and image, spatial and temporal relationships.







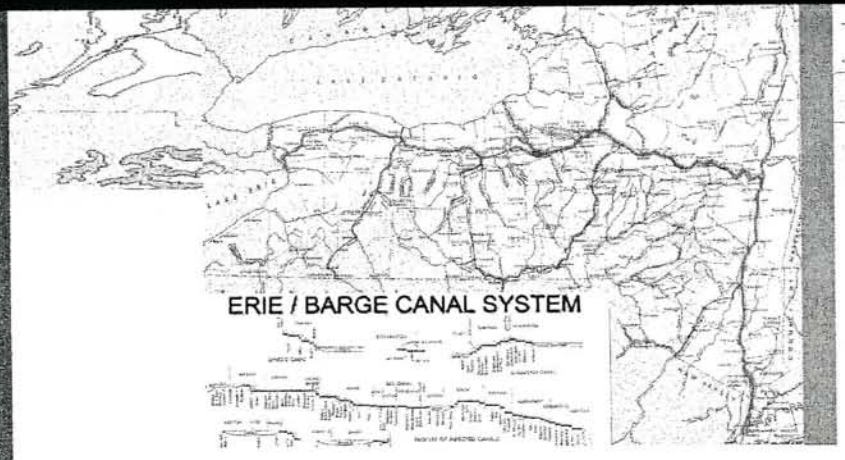


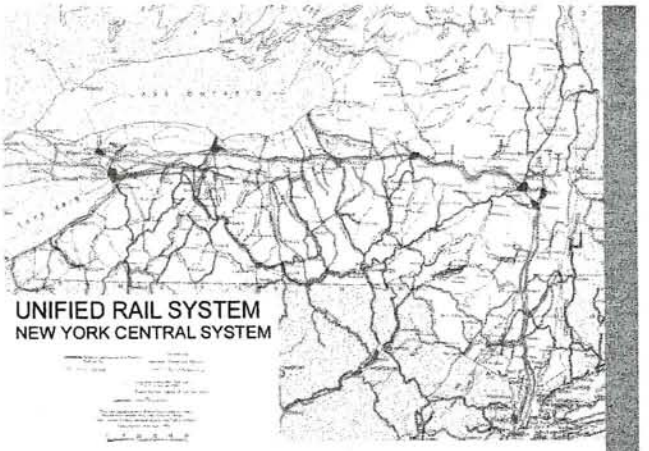
prehistory: physical conditions

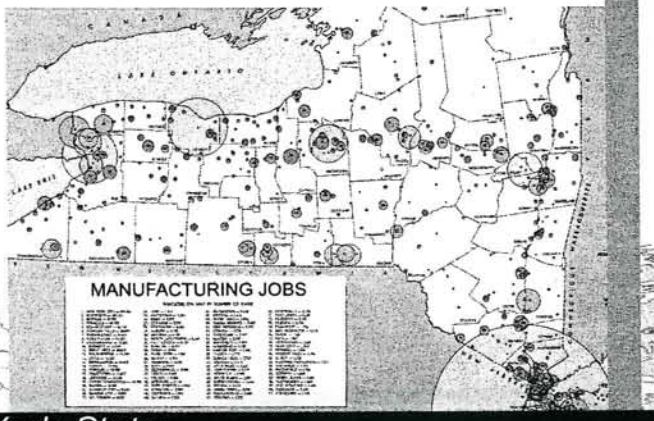
16th-19th centuries: exploration / travel

19th century: transport infrastructure - settlement

18 Physical Mobility







New York State:
route west and east-west industrial belt

defined east-west region

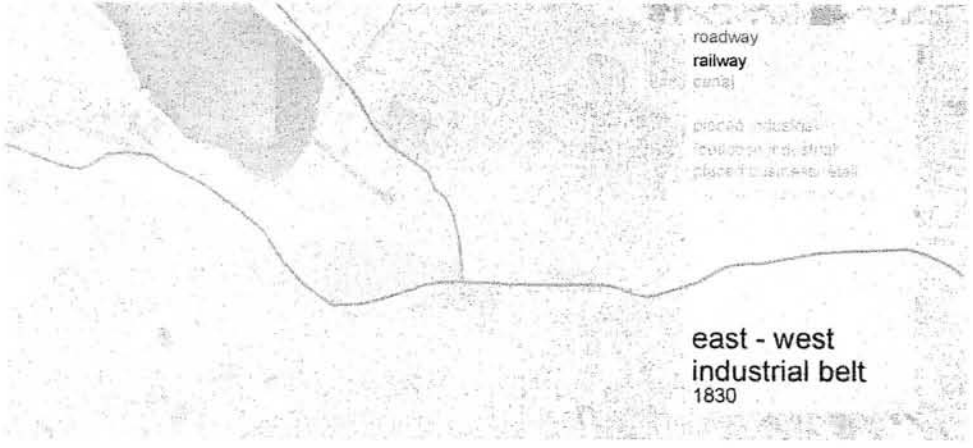
highway system in the city represents the contrast of advancement and culture. The purpose of the interstate is make physical connections more accessible and faster, and is continuously being supplemented to perform this abstract task, while the development of a city has more culturally complex and plural goals.

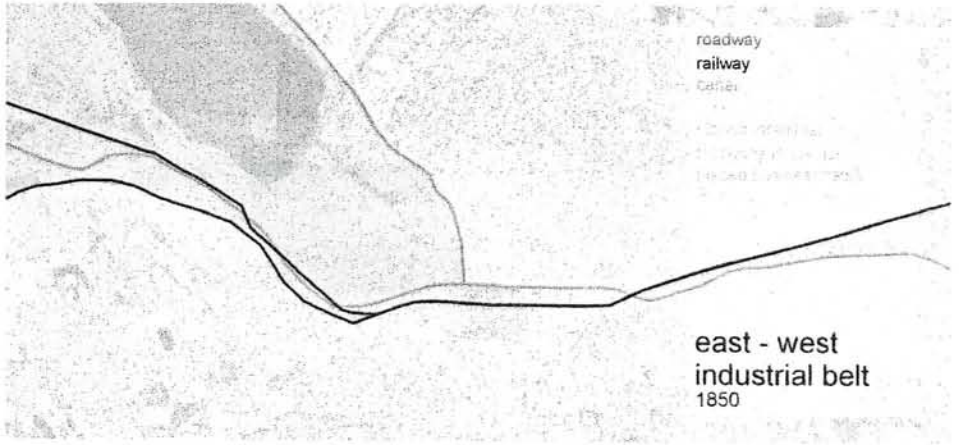
The development of city nodes in relationship to the transport infrastructure that they depend on varies, but may be described with models. The infrastructure may simply connect, may divide and separate, or may contain the form of a city. At least, the path of transport infrastructure is a border, at most an impenetrable barrier. It can divide, organize, or connect points within a city, and brings the complex nature of site and situation from the transitory space into the place of the city itself. The relationship of a city and its inhabitants to their transport infrastructure is reciprocating and complex. The infrastructure makes people independent, as it enables them to move freely, but it also makes them interdependent on other places and on the infrastructure itself. It connects people and places, but can divide them on a local spatial scale.

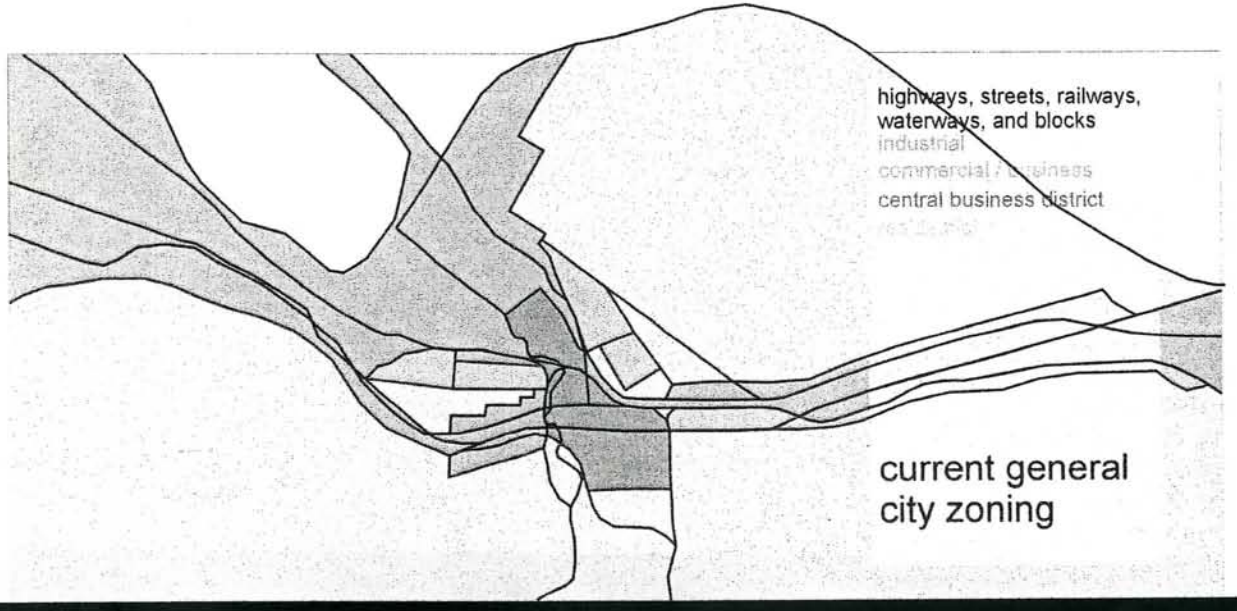
Program and Placement

Although disparate programs may be accommodated in a single historic building or type, this semi-detached relationship cannot be completely passive. Placement is rarely arbitrary; programs may be inserted into historic buildings for strategic reasons, as the associations attached to

20 Physical Mobility

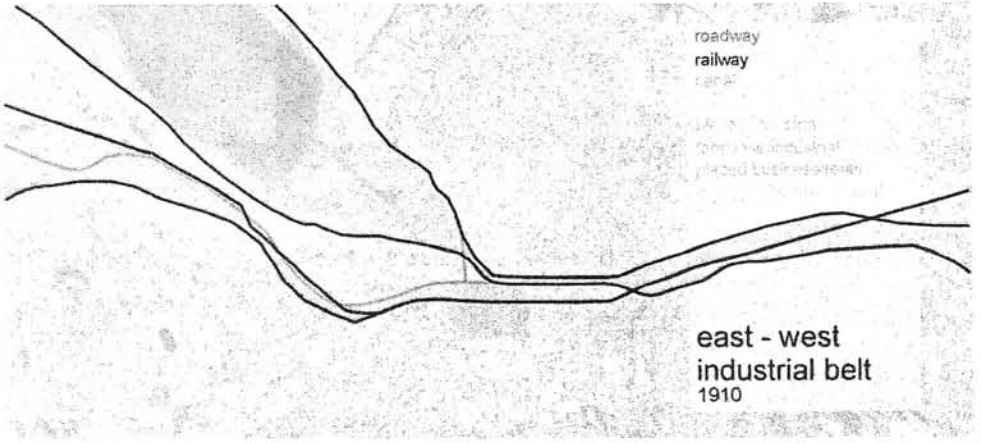


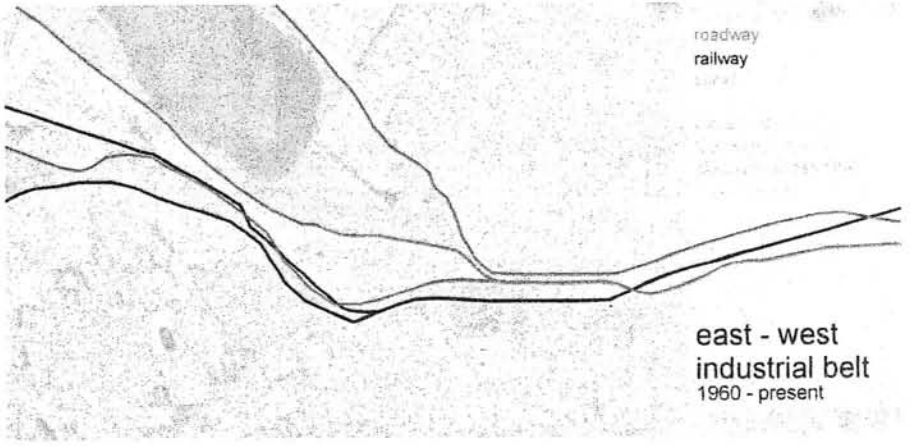




Development of the east-west industrial belt in Syracuse (below), as an illustration of the containment of space by transportation infrastructure. Above is current general zoning, which still indicates this historical development, although actual space usage has changed.

Nodes and Connections / Program Placement





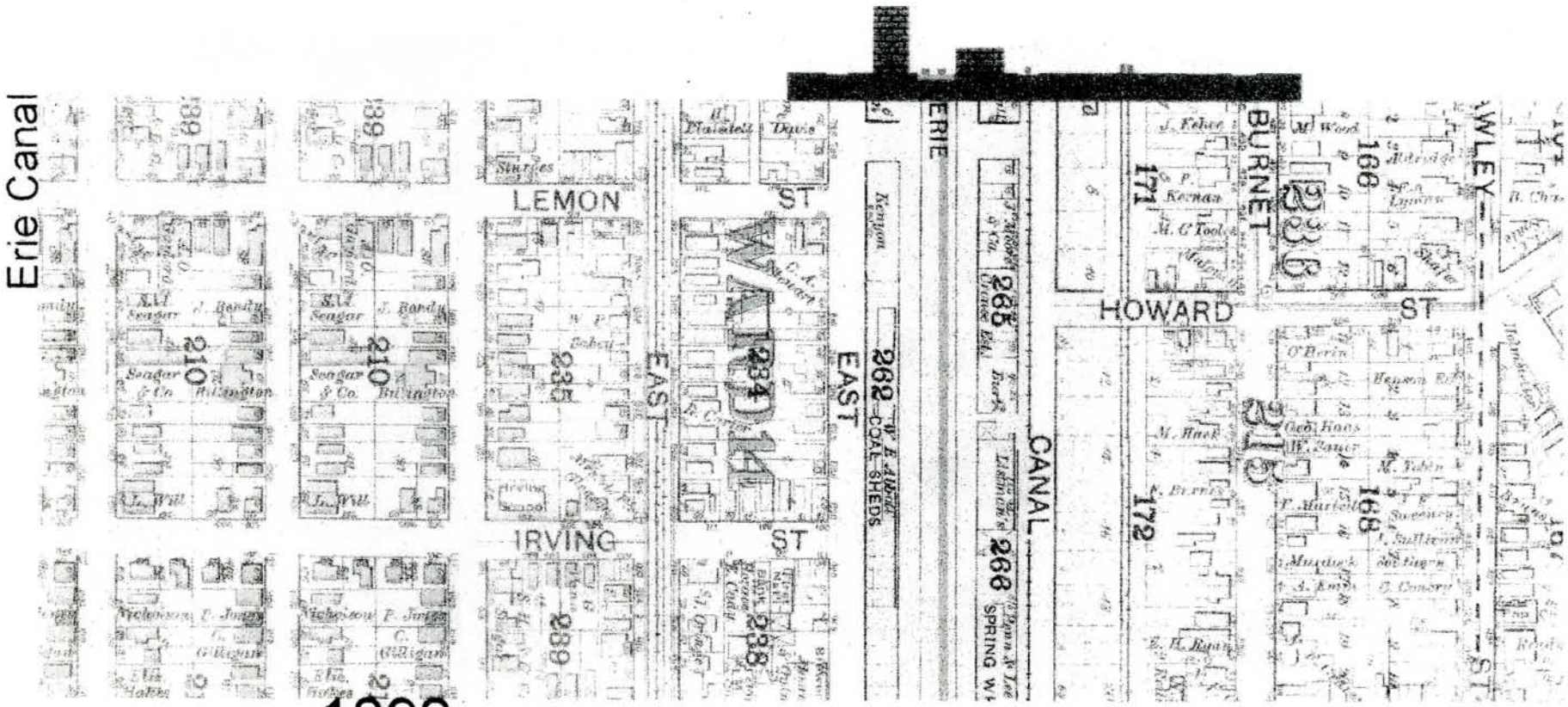
certain structures may be particularly beneficial to specific programs. Physical accommodations also may have to be made to a building for specific programs, enriching the physical historical record of the use and meaning in the building and adding to the depth of the temporal reading available. The fact that these kinds of physical changes become incomplete and unintelligible after the program is gone leads to more multiplicity and disjunction, more complexity in a visual reading. The problem of incomplete readings of a site has been addressed by many[14], but rather than being seen as something incoherent with respect to representing a specific past, it may be seen as an indication of contemporary creative culture.

The detached inserted program is further specified by: its required size and situation; its necessary, preferred, or aesthetically beneficial adjacencies; and its political, social, and above all economic agenda. The true conceptual detachment resides in relative architectural and typological indifference. Architectural-social associations and meanings may be adapted and manipulated for benefit, but *meaning becomes a shifting construct, mobile*.

The new program inserted into a structure that is reminiscent of a specific past may even eventually *appropriate* the local perception of the image of the building, and quite possibly the entire typology, for its own. The signifier is adapted, the signified replaced. The building as artifact is physically and perceptually adapted to the new program, forming a reciprocal relationship between program and form.

[22] *Physical Mobility*

Layers of space, defined and confined by infrastructural borders, change use over time. The relationship between industrial areas and transport and residential or private areas or transport is plotted here.


Erie Canal
LEMON
ST
IRVING
ST
EAST
EAST
ERIE
CANAL
HOWARD
ST
BURNET
WAWLEY
COAL SHEDS
SPRING
210
210
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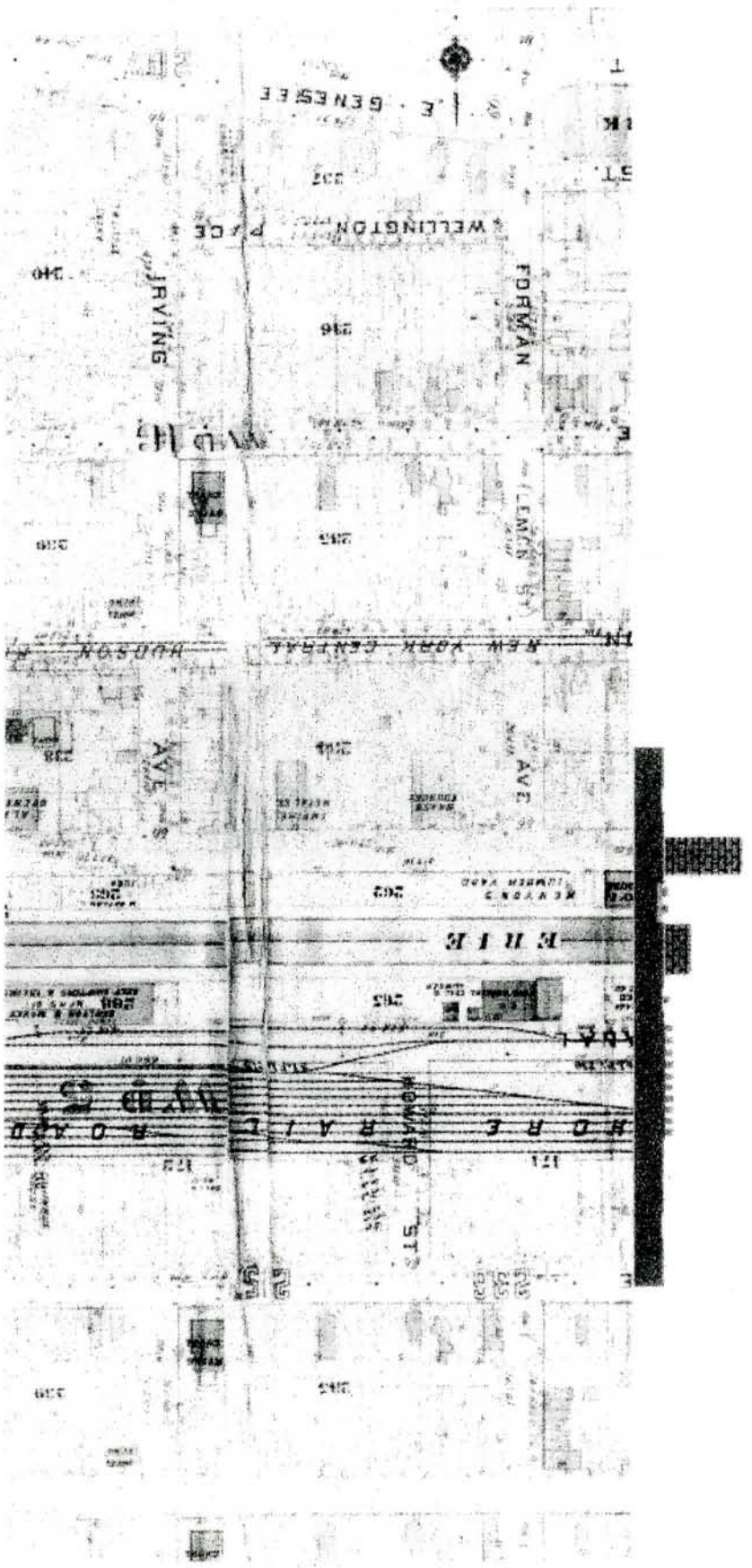
265
266
171
172
166
168
238
239
238
1892

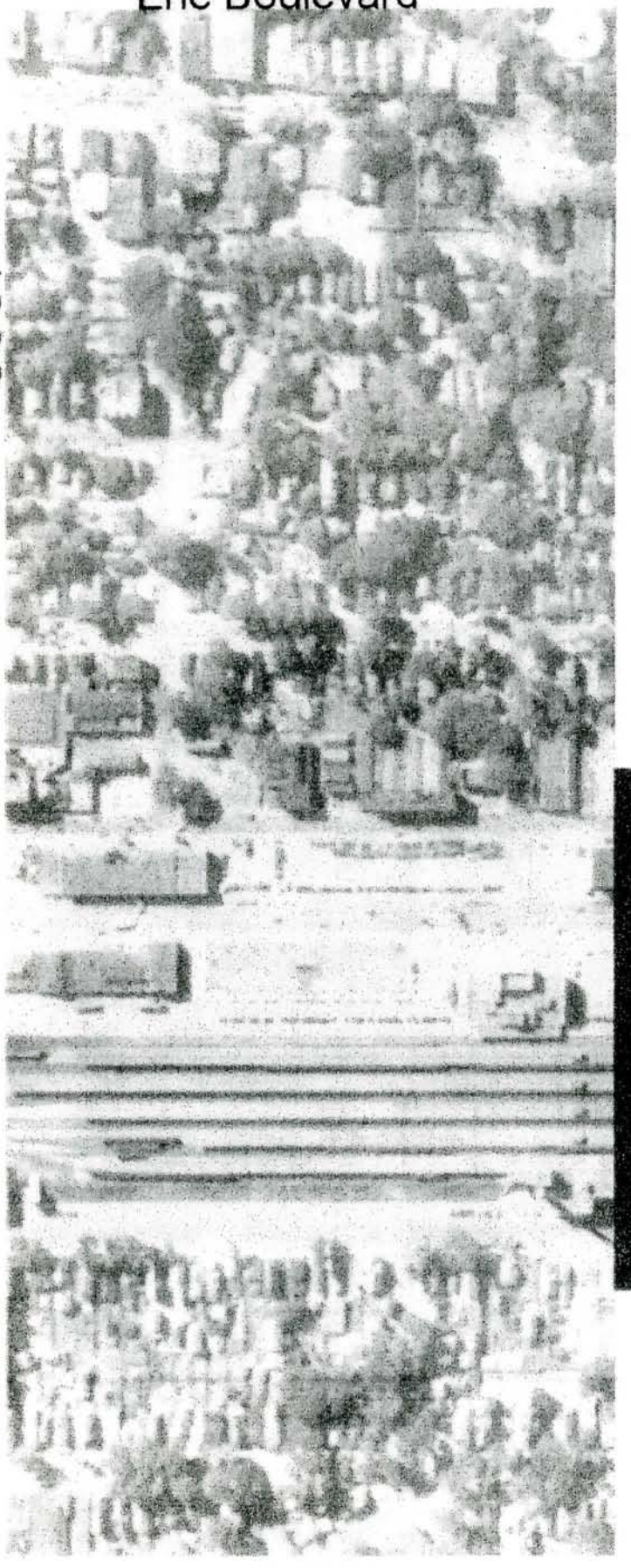
Railroad depot



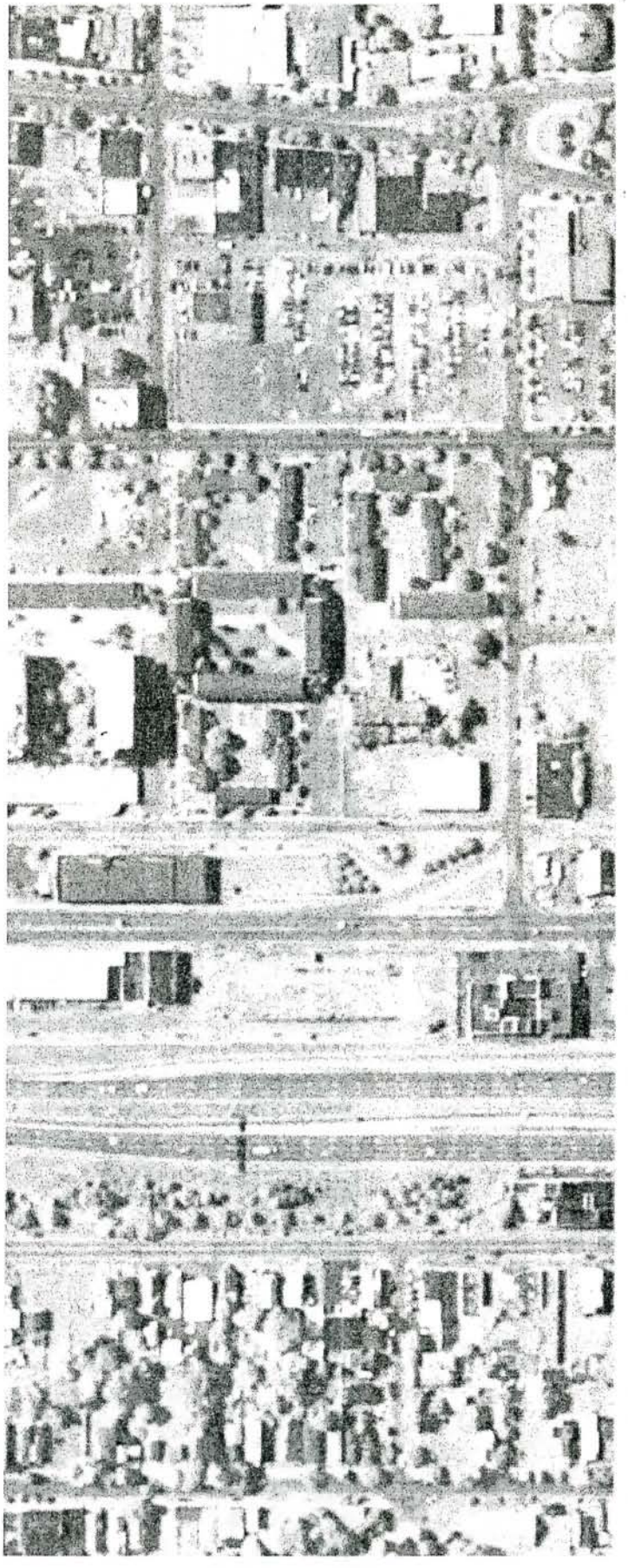
1908

New York Central station,
Erie Boulevard

1938



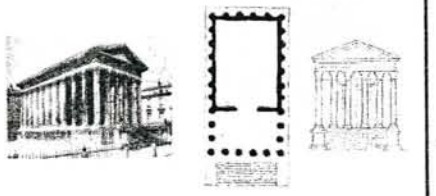
1990s



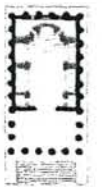
3. Case Studies

Although programs may have the ability to occupy and form relationships with different spaces at different times, they are not completely undeterminate. Furthermore, some programs may be categorized as "loose fit" or not, according to the level of physical and spatial accommodation that they require, but relationship of form to program is neutral. The line of investigation outlined here indicates a further level, of representational mobility. Building forms are rarely representationally neutral, and the relationships between forms and their programs become more complex types of adaptations and appropriations.

In the case of Maison Carree in Nimes, France, both the building's images and associations as well as the physical building itself are adapted and reused for different programs. Each adaptation is made for either physical or ideological purposes, and can be categorized as such. The final image and attached association is an abstract conglomerate made of each past usage. The perception of the form in Richmond reflects that of abstract European classical form, American government usage, and recalls Jefferson's architectural career. The perception of the building in Nimes would reflect concepts attached to Roman civilization, Christian religious buildings, and the archeological and cultural past of the area.



Maison Carree, Augustan (Roman) Temple, 20 BC. Composed with heavy influence from both Etruscan and Greek temple types.

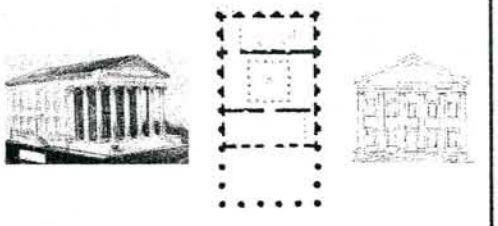


The interior is physically adapted to accommodate a Christian church with 3 bays.

The building is later inhabited by art / archeology museum, drawing from the building itself as historic artifact.

Thomas Jefferson uses the image of Maison Carree in Nimes, France to house the programs of the Virginia State Capitol in Richmond. Although many of the specific characteristics that make the original building unique were left out of Jefferson's design, the generalized image is still present, representing the association Jefferson often made between Roman architecture and American democracy. Like many Roman prototypes, the original building was a religious temple; however, the form has come to be associated with government buildings in America

Image of Maison Caree adjusted and used by Paladio for publication



Jefferson/ Clerisseau design for Virginia State Capitol, 1784-5. The image is filtered through Paladio, then physically adapted to accommodate a different program. Windows, interior walls, and stairs are added, the overall shape and size of the building are changed, the Corinthian order is changed to Ionic to simplify construction, and an exterior stair is added to access the new spaces created.

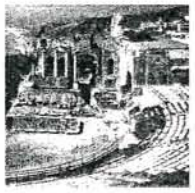
In 1790, the Capitol is still missing the front steps, making the porch inaccessible and the inherited Maison Carree image purely a decorative one, added to the facade of a functional building.

The present Capitol has been physically adapted to accommodate an expanded program, manifested in two flanking wings which further distance its current image with that of Maison Carree.

The group of buildings used for examples was selected based on a range of modes of adaptation and inhabitation. The independence of physical and representational mobility with respect to these modes highlights the importance of the distinction. Physically adapted buildings are analyzed based on physical change, while the change in nature of representation is described with the change in program.

1. The Louvre in Paris was constructed over several periods by the extremely wealthy and powerful absolutist kings of France. The spatial character of the building is very commanding, and the building itself is massive, imposing a huge, elaborate form on the inner fabric of the city. After revolution, the building was eventually reinhabited by art galleries containing many valuable works from all over Europe. The change from private, oppressive program to publicly accessible program symbolized a major shift in power in the country, and the new program borrowed from the powerful form of the historic building. This inhabitation, while constituting very little physical adaptation, represents a specific mode of representational mobility.

2. The Greek theatre in Taormina was created and used by the Greeks, and later inhabited by the Romans for the same purpose. The building was elaborated and conformed to the Roman theater model, but stayed largely the same. The theater is now used for theatrical performances for some of the same reasons that it was during its previous two programmatic lives. The new program, however, is based on inhabiting an ancient historical artifact. The new reincarnation of old program relies heavily on the history of the building for patronage, and the historical and archeological factors are as much a part of the attraction as any performance staged there.



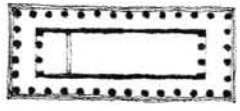
3. The Syracuse Weighlock building is a historical artifact in of itself, as it was created as a direct result of the prosperity brought to the city by the Erie Canal. The building was used to weigh and tax canal boats passing through the city, and now houses one canal boat permanently, as another historical artifact. The rest of the building houses the Erie Canal Museum, a fairly direct nostalgic translation from the original program. The building has not been changed physically to a great extent, but the program is a conscious tribute to historic physical conditions.

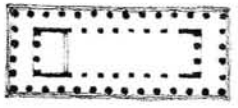
Inhabited buildings / images

Case Studies

Adapted buildings / Images

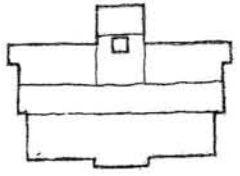
6. The Temple of Concord was constructed as a Greek religious building and later adapted to accommodate a Christian church. Many Greek temples were burned or demolished by Christians because they were pagan, but this structure survived and was reused, the new program borrowing from its scale and grandeur. However, large holes were cut in the cella walls to adapt the structure to a three-bay church plan, and thus the building was physically adapted to demonstrate the overturning of social ideals and a shift in power.

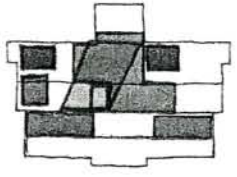




7. The design used by Jefferson for the Virginia State Capitol was a physical adaptation of the design of Maison Carree, stretched and articulated to hold a very different and more demanding program. The new building borrows a sense of heritage and democracy from the first, dependant upon its pre-existing associations.

8. In the OMA competition submission for the change of Bankside Power Station into the Tate Modern art gallery, the existing building is taken apart and used as a shell, with the program spaces floating freely inside and occasionally slipping outside of the building envelope. The artifact of the building is



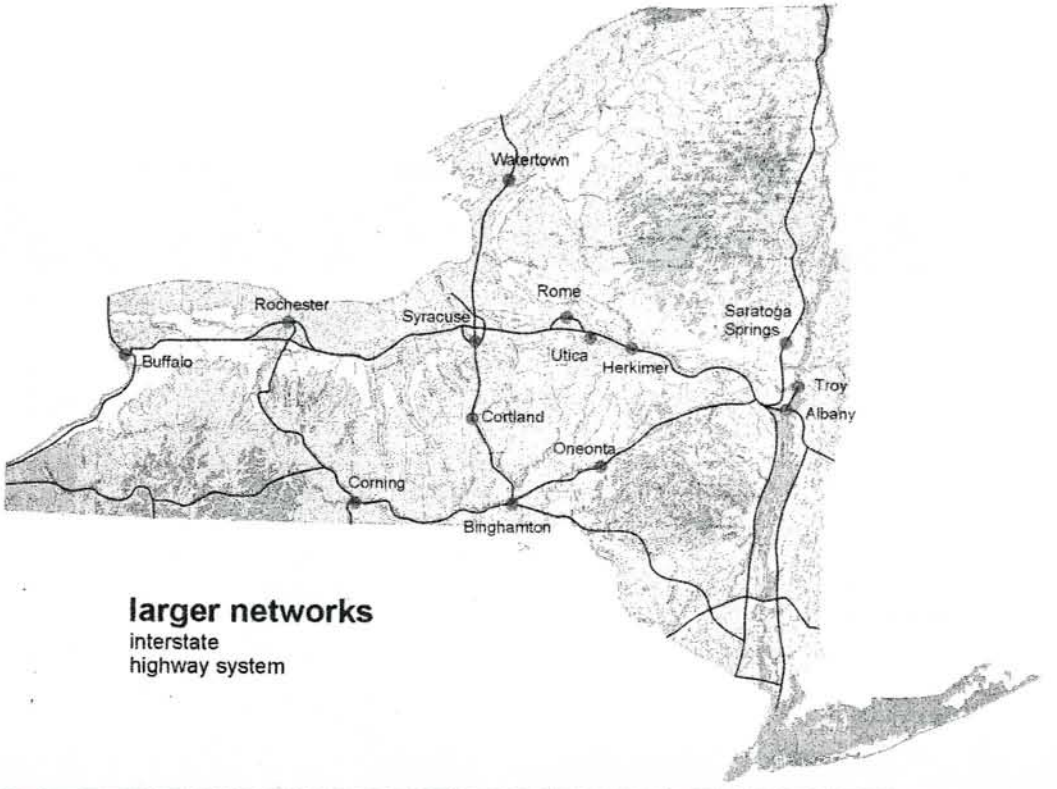


building	original program	new program	mode of use	spatially indeterminate program	representationally indeterminate program
Louvre	private palace	public art galleries	symbolic inhabitation	Yes	No
Teatro Greco	theater	amphitheater	legitimizing reinactment	N/A - same	Yes
Syracuse Weighlock Building	weigh and toll station	Canal Museum	nostalgic reinactment	N/A - same	No
Tate Modern (H and DM)	power plant	modern art gallery	critical inhabitation	Yes	Yes
First Trust and Deposit Co.	bank branch	market	"chance" inhabitation	Yes	Yes
Temple of Concord	religious temple	Christian church	symbolic adaptation	No	No
Maison Carree	religious temple	Virginia State Capitol	legitimizing adaptation	No	Yes
Tate Modern (OMA)	power plant	modern art gallery	critical adaptation	No	Yes

4. Herzog and De Meuron's design for Tate Modern is fa less erosive than OMA's, to the point where it can be considered to "inhabit," rather than physically adapt the spaces of the buildings. However, HDM articulated the spaces so that they would accommodate the sensitive new program and accentuate the industrial nature of the rooms themselves. An example is the turbine hall, which along with the building's exterior reading, clearly denotes a heavy industrial use through sheer volume, shape, and material texture. Certainly art galleries are not extremely physically indeterminate, but HDM organizes the spaces so that the historical implications and contemporary spaces harmonize.

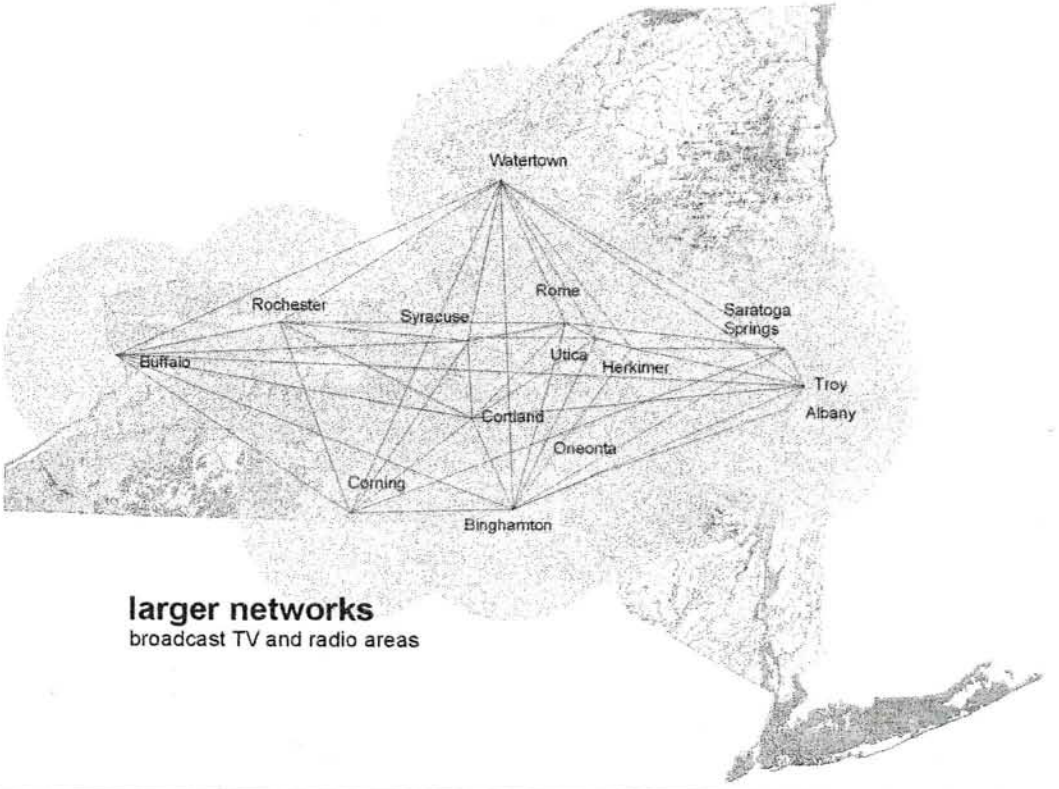
5. The bank branch was built on East Genesee street one of the most historically important streets in Syracuse when the area was much more affluent than it is currently Completely removed from its context, although no changing physically, the building is in a differen environment. Eventually the bank branch was economically forced to close, and one of the new programs moving into the area acquired the space. There is no evident reason why a small food market would inhabi an outdated, classically designed bank building with a drive-through window, the nature of inhabitation in this case was a chance encounter derived from economy.

used only as a symbol and landmark, the arrangement of the program comprising the conception of the site. The most prominent symbolic piece of the building, the huge tower, is reduced to its frame, maintaining its formal prominence while eroding and complicating its accumulated cultural meaning. The title of the project itself: "Danger: 60,000 volts," was taken from the original building in the form of a sign, reused, and alludes to the outdated previous use attached associations. The physical adaptation here is extensive here, and becomes critical of specific elements in the building.



Interstate Highway System

 Recycling, Re-inhabitation, and Re-appropriation

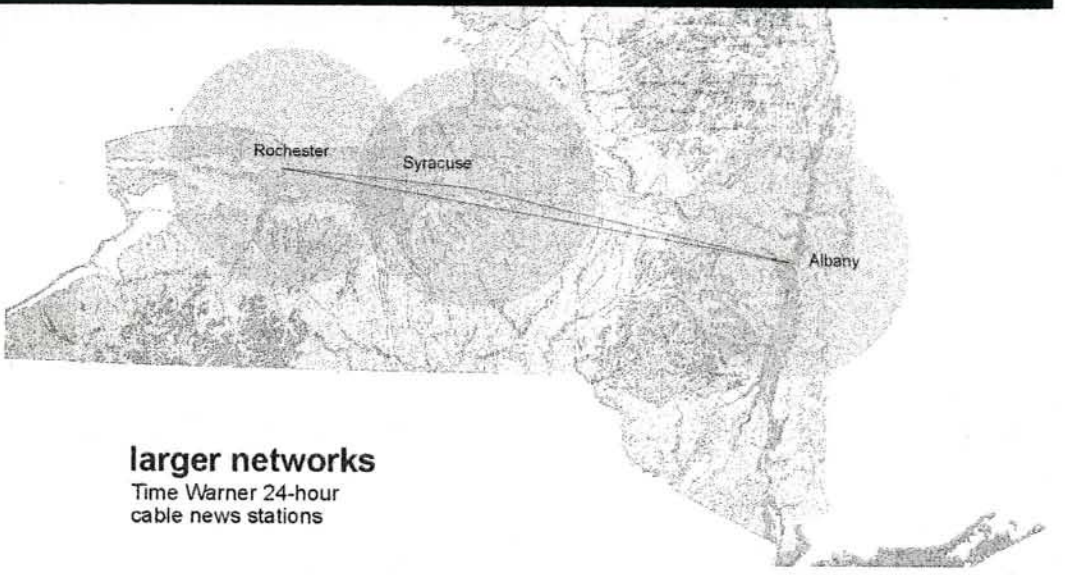


larger networks
broadcast TV and radio areas

Larger Networks

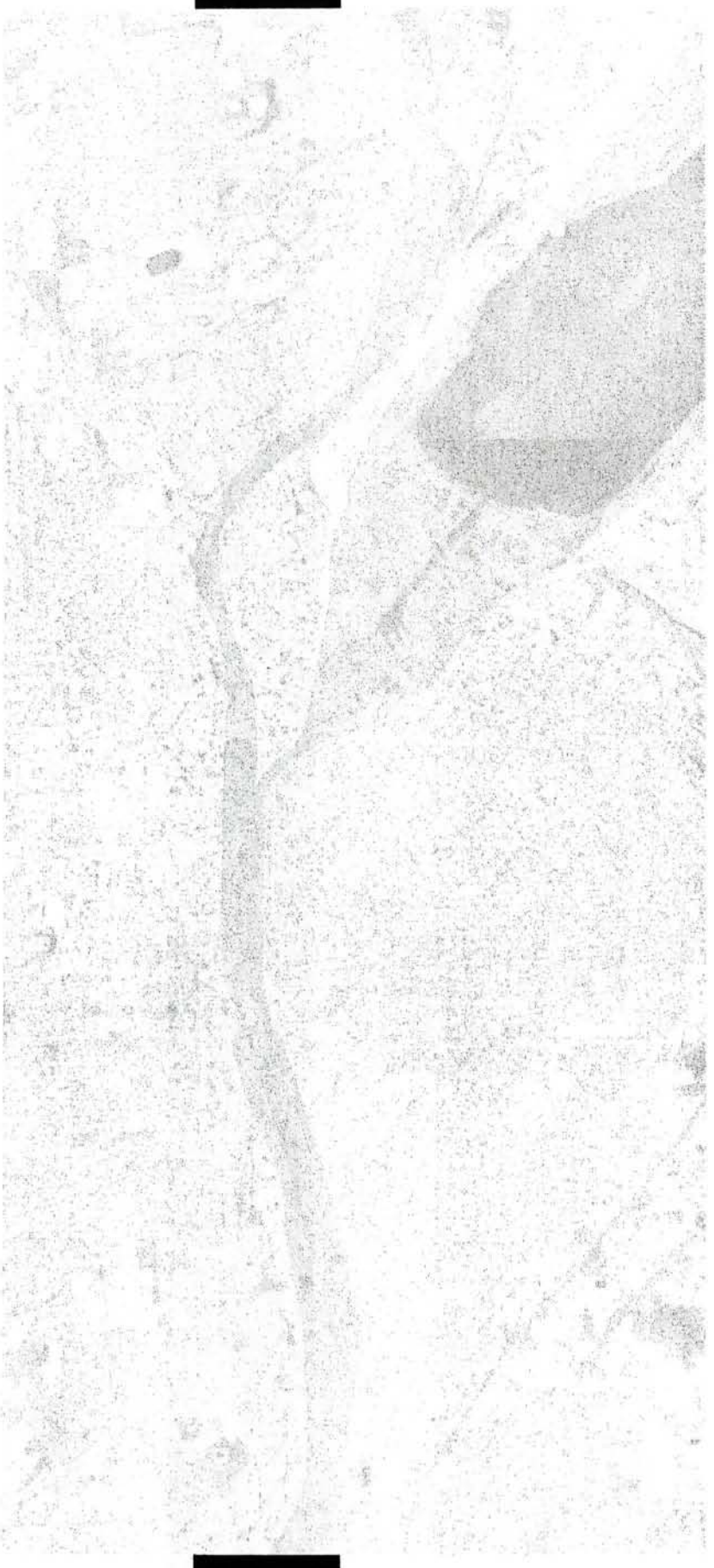
television and radio broadcasting

Time Warner Cable 24-hour cable news channels

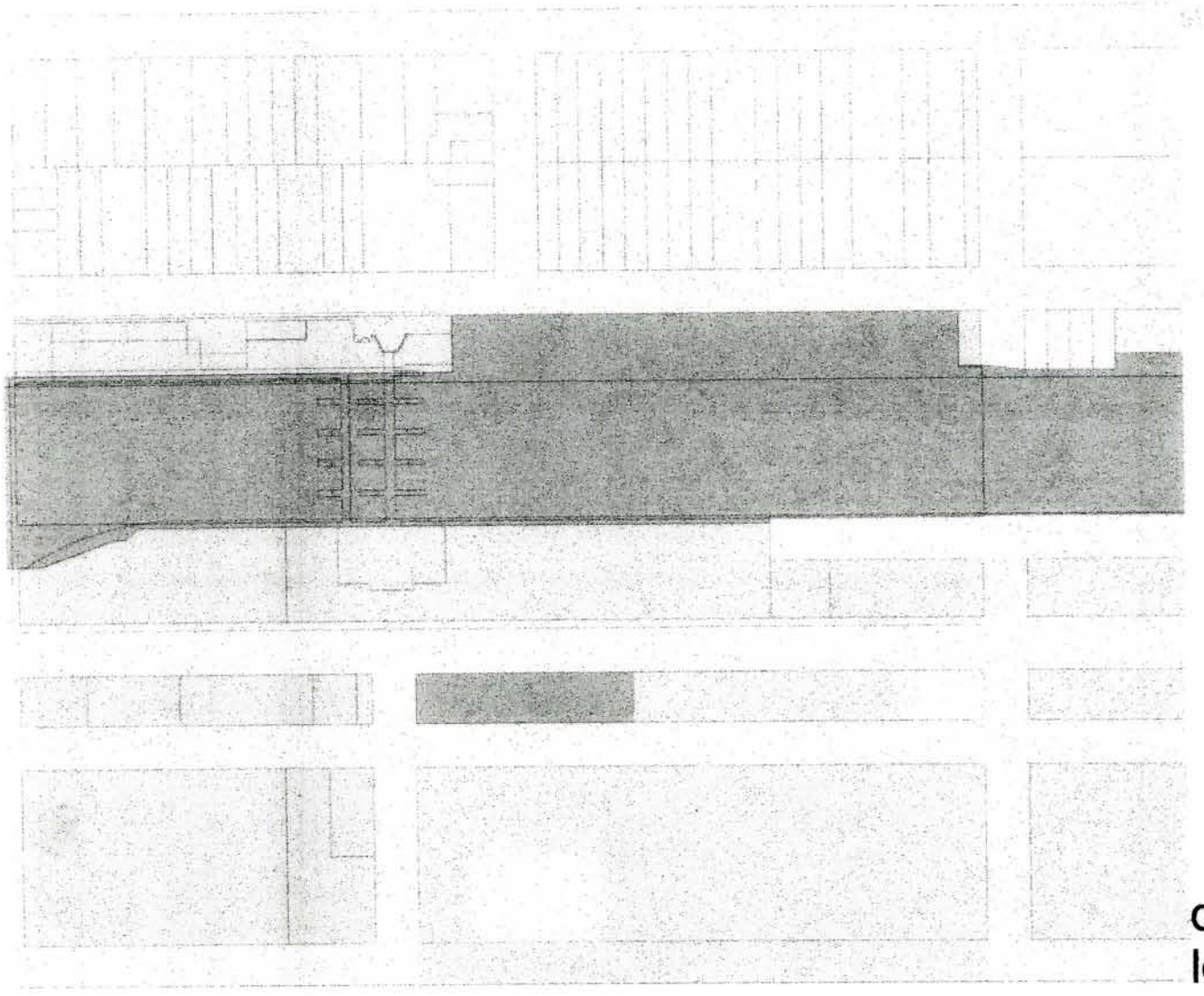


larger networks
Time Warner 24-hour
cable news stations

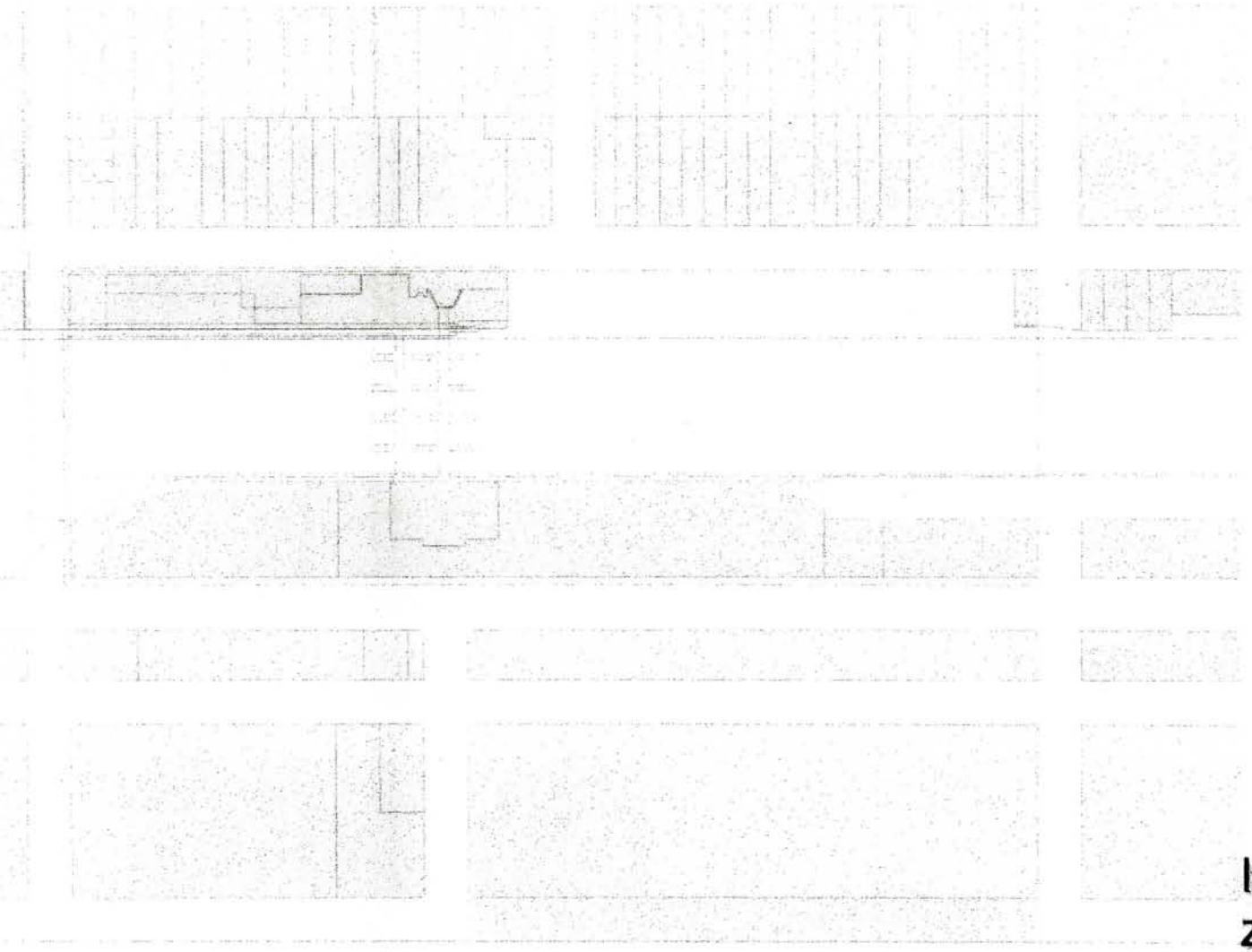
30 Recycling, Re-inhabitation, and Re-appropriation



[32] Recycling, Re-inhabitation, and Re-appropriation



ownership
lots



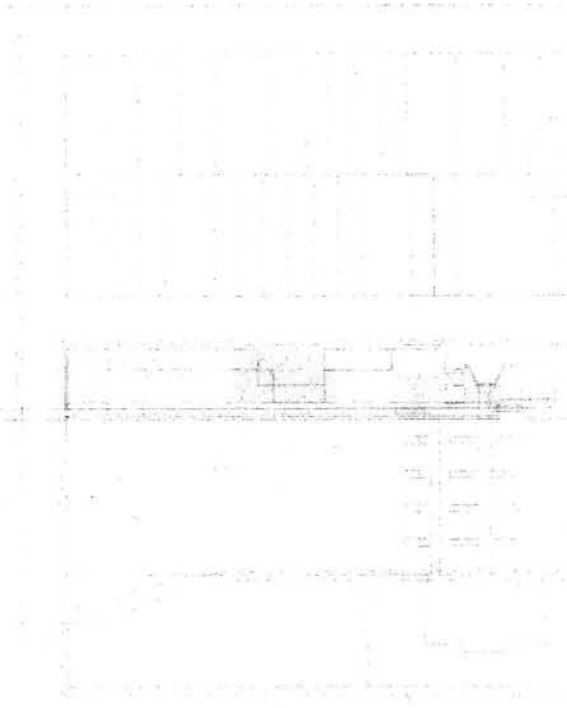
local
zoning

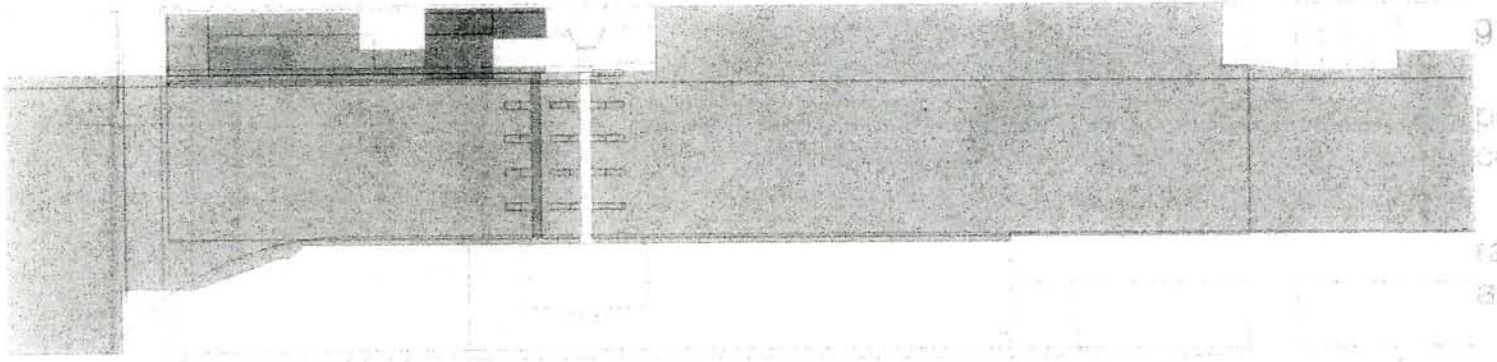
4. Recycling, Re-inhabitation, and Re-appropriation

Overhaul and Reinvention vs. Recycling and Re-inhabitation

The temporal reading of a given site usually involves recognition of distinct time periods that particularly effected it. Loosely defined, these may be: a) the prehuman period and Native American intervention, b) agriculturally dominated development, c) industrial development, and d) exurban or "highway age" development[15]; all are articulated in specific places differently and according to specific movements during those wide-ranging time periods. In order to "reactivate" a site in terms of cultural importance, one may critically revive its history and re-present it as new. It has been argued that for cultural reactivation to take place, the previous standards must be thrown out and new reactionary standards imposed[16]. However, there is no longer a single set of social or architectural beliefs to react to, no treatise to refute and replace; the discourse of architecture itself can be seen as plural, fractured, and disjointed. Reactionary overhauls may now be too declarative and general to be affective[17]. *Rather, in an age of reuse and recycling of images, the visual cues of the past, if not their attached nostalgic meanings, can be recycled because the connection between image and ideal may now be considered temporary and tentative.* Architecture can take on a certain richness in site specificity through nonspecific content, as meaning proliferated through historic importance and memory in a place.

The proposal, interchanging an already detached program, resurrecting forgotten artifacts as symbols, and inverting conceptions of organization, would be one method of connecting to local networks and contexts in order to ground the




gym
post / shipping
center
radio studios
and offices

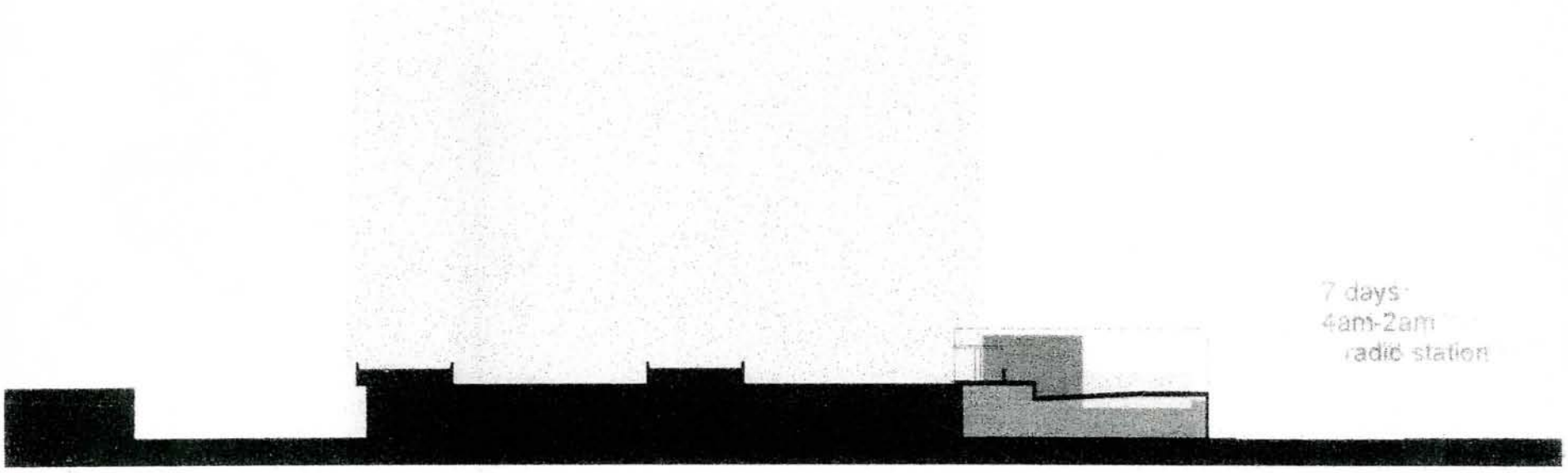
project in site and place. It is not meant to be seen as a corrective measure for any aspect of the site, only as an opportunity to utilize and reinvent its unique situation and history in a new way. It is a model for the creation of a sustainable place in a mobile society.

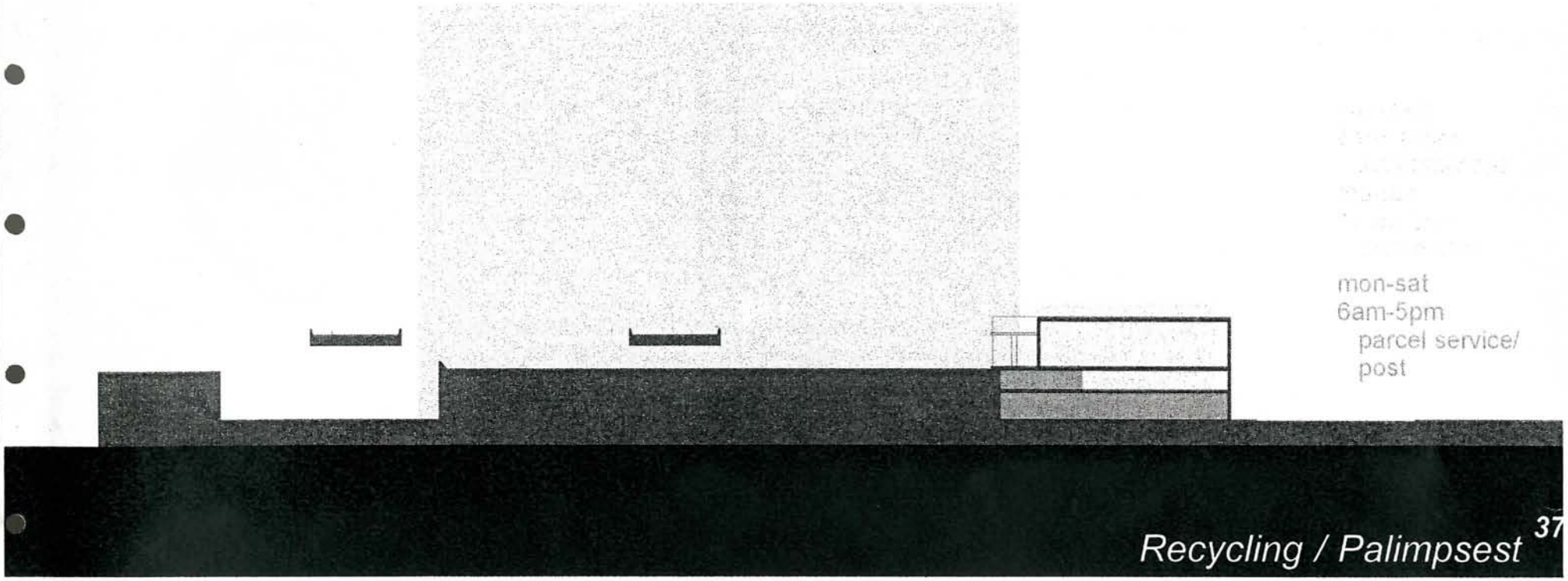
Program

The program for this project is meant to illustrate and test the proposed representational detachment from architectural form and symbol. The spaces created should then have multiple programs that form their boundaries independently from current building enclosures. Instead, boundaries will be based on current and past cultural constructs such as spatial ownership and local networks. The use of space would be very temporally weighted, as the site represents diverse periods of time overlapping. Some programs would overlap spatially, occupying space at different times of day or for different events. The programs and spaces will not be neutral, and program placement will rely upon the indications of existing form and situation. In this way the program will be able to recycle not only space, but past programmatic constructs. Individual mobility of the consumer, a factor central to the mobility of program, must also be emphasized, as a spatial connection point for pedestrians between parts of the city and also as a concentration on automobile transportation. Finally, the programs would be largely private, commercial ventures that would demonstrate the ability of diverse programmatic agendas to coexist in a spatial and temporal way.

7 days
6am-10pm
public passage

7 days
5am-11pm
small gym /
sauna


7 days
4am-2am
radio station


mon-sat
6am-5pm
parcel service/
post

Notes

1. Ricoeur, Paul. "Universal Civilization and National Cultures."

2. Zelinsky, Wilbur.
The Cultural Geography of the United States.

3. Ibid. There is a central theme with Zelinsky that involves the lack of a singular American cultural history and trajectory. Indeed there is an American history, especially as defined by the land. However, the history that is typically taught to American students is one of European colonization followed by independence, and the country is growing less European constantly. Therefor, American cultural history is often celebrated as a plural, inclusive collection of its constituent cultural parts, a conception that defines American culture as everything and nothing at once.

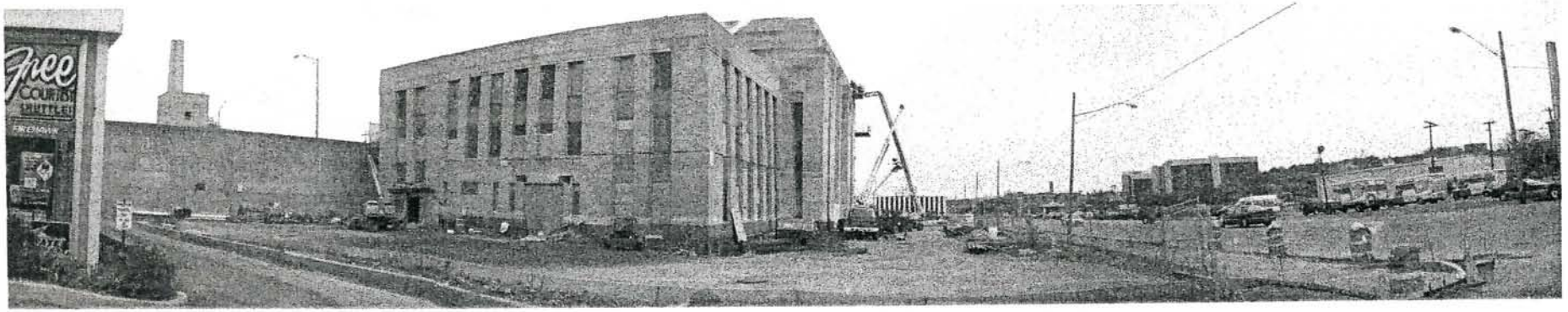
4. Ricoeur.

6. de Sola-Morales, Ignasi. "Weak Architecture." Sola-Morales discusses the relationship of science as "routine" and the subsequent shift to the peripheral to find a grounding point, a reality.

7. Ibid. Sola-Morales explains: "Experience itself . . . is felt as . . . that in which the perceiving subject and the perceived reality are powerfully fused, is the work of art."

8. I think of this authenticity as being congruent to the "meaning" Frampton describes in the opening of "Place-Form and Cultural Identity." He states that there is a feeling that history is coming to an end, that the meaning behind images and representation is loosing all grounding in culture and history.

9. The two are conceived of as complete and irreconcilable opposites in Ricoeur's writing, with interaction between the two only possible if certain cultures, like that of America, fit easily into a global, commercial model of progress.



9. Ricoeur.

10. Zelinsky.

12. Carol Burns, in "On-Site: Architectural Preoccupations" addresses this issue as a problem in current site conceptualization. A site, she contends, should not be read as what is currently there, but more temporally according to what was, and also as a product of an innumerable amount of invisible forces that shaped the specific nature of the landscape.

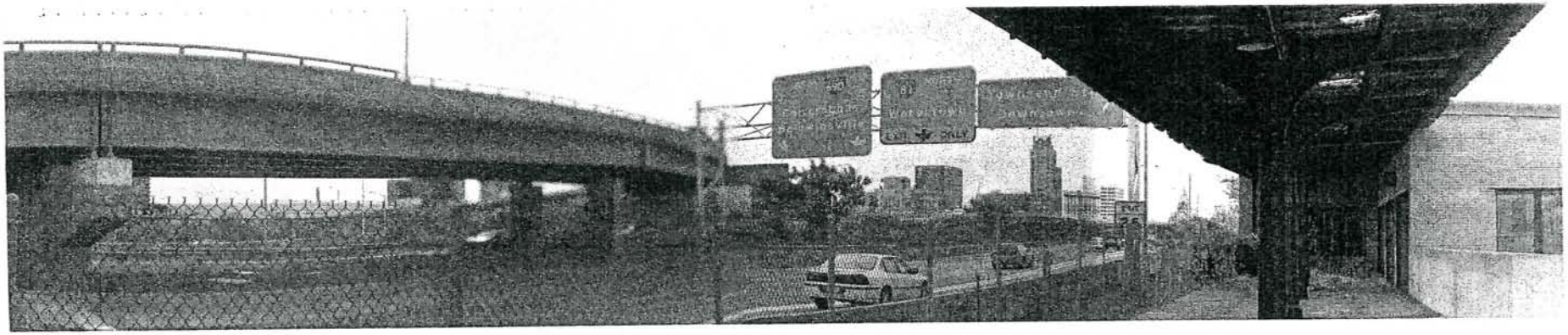
13. Site information was extracted from Schramm, Henry W. and Roseboom, William F. *Syracuse: From Salt to Satellite* and Hardin, Evamaria. *Syracuse Landmarks,* as well as interpolated from aerial photography and historic maps.

14. The disjointed reading of sites and their pasts and meanings is a subject common to the sited works of Ricoeur, Frampton, Burns and Sola-Morales, although they conceive of this problem in different ways. Largely, however, it seems that they commonly see the incomplete reading as superficial lacking a certain specific cultural or site history.

15. Burns, Carol J. "On Site: Architectural Preoccupations"

16. Ricoeur outlines this generalized structure in "Universal Civilization and National Cultures." He sets up two models contrastingly, the cultural model requiring a kind of coup or upheaval of past beliefs in order to renew itself, while the scientific model accommodates the objective past base for a more consistent, comprehensive development.

17. Sola-Morales.



Bibliography

Burns, Carol J. "On Site: Architectural Preoccupations"

Burns argues for both a deeper reading of and a deeper representation of site, through research in historical cultural, geological, and natural fields. She opposes two kinds of conceptions of site: "cleared site" and "constructed site" as two poles of denial and artificiality.

Frampton, Kenneth. "Place-Form and Cultural Identity"

Frampton takes on a reactionary stance to building in the postmodern period as being too superficial with regard to culture and history. He hypothesizes a mode of "resistance" to global homogenizing forces as appropriate for architecture, siting Ricoeur's writings as embodying this kind of resistance mentality.

Frampton, Kenneth. "Towards a Critical Regionalism: Six Points for an Architecture of Resistance," *The Anti-Aesthetic: Essays on Postmodern Culture*. Port Townsend, Wash.: Bay Press, 1983.

An earlier incarnation of Frampton's resistance hypothesis, which takes a more polemic approach to the problem.

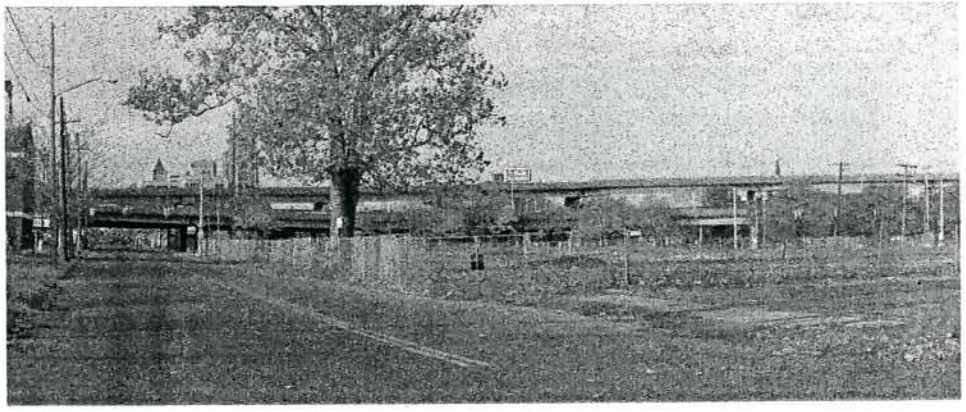
Hardin, Evamaria, and Crispin, John (photographer). *Syracuse Landmarks: An AIA Guide to Downtown and Historic Neighborhoods.* New York: Syracuse University Press, 1993.

A guide of buildings in categorized neighborhoods in Syracuse, describes their histories as well as their importance to the city's history and current condition.

Hungerford, Edward. *Men and Iron: The History of New York Central.* New York: Thomas Y. Crowell Publishers, 1938.

Ricoeur, Paul. "Universal Civilization and National Cultures," *History and Truth*. Evanston, Ill.: Northwestern University Press, 1965.

Ricoeur sets up a dramatic rift in this piece between its two subjects. The growing forces of universal society, according to him, can only cause harm to national cultures, specifically those just now being confronted by it. This description leads to a model of resistance, to retain culture for the benefit of national identity.

Ryan, Raymund. "From Redundancy to Urban Stardom," *Building Tate Modern.* London: Tate Gallery, 2000.

Schramm, Henry W. and Roseboom, William F. *Syracuse: From Salt to Satellite, A Pictorial History*. Woodland Hills, California: Windsor