

Within himself every man is an architect. His first step towards architecture is his walk through nature. He cuts his path, like a writing on the surface of earth. The crushing of grass and brushwood that gives way before his strength is an interference with nature, a simple definition of man's culture. His path is a sign to follow. Through his initial movement he requires the movement of others. This is the most elementary form of composition.

The room in its perfection is determined by a point. The direction of the path and its contingencies are the floor plan. Its dimension is that of a man's footstep imprinting a plan on the desert sand. The direction and the movement of his body are so precise that no tools of abstraction are necessary. The order of movement is directed by a person's temperament. The moment of creation is the moment of movement.

In the days when the world was believed to be flat, people felt secure upon the earth as a defined space. From every church spire man conceived his entire existence.

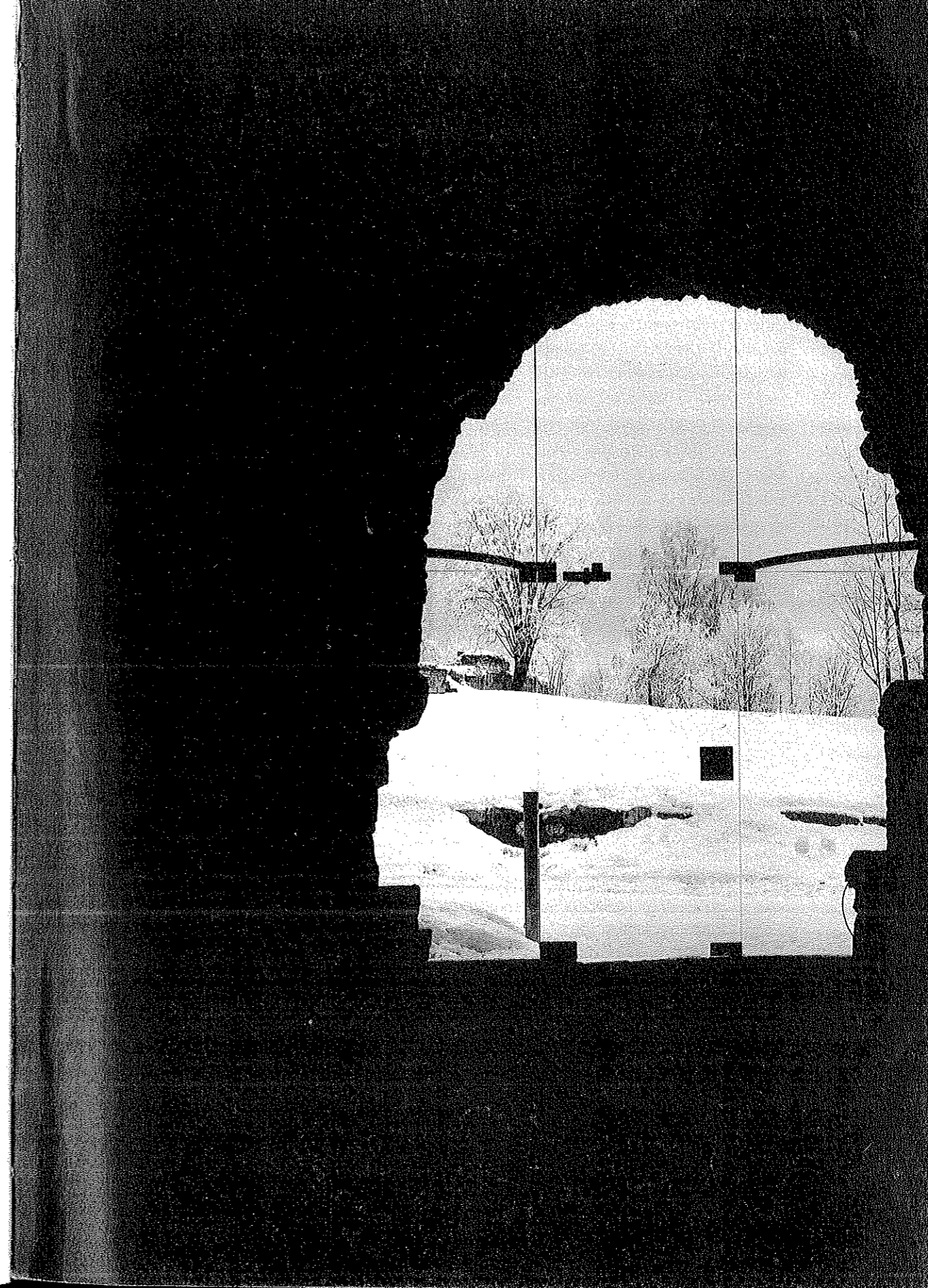
With sustenance and the surrounding landscape intertwined, trust was implicit in the view from the spire. Each man's dimension started from the scale of the earth conceived as a large "room". The earth was a common place, for the ground belonged to everyone, just as the elements, the sun, wind, rain and cold demanded the house to be a place of protection. Nature was translated into a simile of elements. The earth provided "room" within the "room". The house and the bed were secure places affording protection day and night, evoking an internal existence. To build became a discovery of scale within a given scale. The earth was flat and beyond the horizon there was nothing to see.

The conception of nature was total. Man selected a place as an intrinsic part of his search for rest and survival, as a human part of this totality. The house was geographically dependent. Its location was defined by gifts from land and sea. The harbor, the village, the mill, were all places where houses participated in this order. The house was part of an activity. It had a purpose, an impor-

tance. The "room" of the outside and the "room" of the house engaged in a dialogue. The house was native to the earth. Its location was the result of constructive thought. This thought was integral with nature.

As culture evolved, man divided time from nature. With leisure, nature became subject to choice and judgment. The house became dissociated from the earth's activities for the restlessness of man made the house geographically independent. The house became a foreign element set on the land without a practical purpose. Its life no longer tied to survival and support for the community; instead it was a way to escape boredom in the pursuit of privacy. At the same time nature became part of culture and separate from the agrarian way of life. Nature was reduced to property; an investment to be bought or sold. When the house, the lot and the natural environment broke free from a desired aim, only an aesthetic sense could continue to support their existence. The security of the earth as a common "room" together with the "room" of the house itself was no longer felt. From

the building is a reflection of time through material



this moment on the totality had to be present within the house alone. As soon as one went outside there was a sense of loss, as if there was nothing there. The desire to go outside began to disappear for an emptiness began to infiltrate activity. Even children were not allowed to play on the grass outside the door. Nature was reduced to visual beauty; to an aesthetic which could be seen from a window.

The house became a symbol of activities pertaining to well-being. Its image of generosity concealed a falsehood; it exuded a sense of false security for it was no longer coherent with the fundamentals of existence.

When the earth was envisioned as round, the horizon ceased to be the end of the world. In acknowledging the spherical form of the earth, man lost his sense of the outside as a domain surrounding him. He could no longer obtain any sense of scale from his surroundings. His place had no center.

In order to reestablish this lost sense of security man employed the device of perspective; an instrument with which to re-create the

security of the outside "room" and to distinguish scientifically between inside and outside. The architect's image could be finished at the drawing table, and the room drafted in a perfect form. While it was a picture that represented the security of both land and house, it could be judged only in visual terms. The drawing became a symbol for construction; a tool of communication. The explosiveness of a builder's construction became a matter of life and death; the moment of ecstasy when a structure strives for an identity of its own was now abstracted. The architect was not a builder but a man of symbols. The loss of the outside "room" prompted a desire to re-create it.

After the art of building was tamed, other signs of silence followed. With the birth of communication, gesture, laughter, tears, the cast of the eyes or the timbre of the voice, all came to be transcribed onto paper for they no longer belonged to the instant or the occasion but rather to an order of communication that could travel beyond the visible horizon. When the storyteller was recorded, sound was sep-

arated from the voice. The miracle and the moment of passion were frozen into a repository ready to be shipped.

Man always returns to the sea. He has long been a prisoner of its power; captured within a dream, constantly in search of an ending. In order to see beyond the horizon, he had to conquer the sea. The immensity of the sea inspired boat-building. The Viking ship symbolized this thought of construction. Its intrinsic spirit was that of the sea. The craftsmen studied the movement of the sea and listened to the vibration of the boards before deciding how to make the keel. The sea had one form and the current another. The ship's shape was determined by the pressure of the waves. The sea as a material could be clearly understood, but the fundamental challenge resided in determining the impact of a soft mass on a defined form.

The tree is the material essence of the boat, for while a stone has a set form, wood always gives way. The tree contains every dimension. It starts from zero underground, and as its roots approach the surface

they become larger only to reach their maximum dimension as they burst through the ground and into the light. This is the horizon. The dimension of the tree from zero to zero carries within itself the point of horizon. The mast as the symbol of the tree was the reminder of the land just as the sail was the sign of man's position; his distance from land. The enormous material interaction between the flat surface and the column determined the construction of the boat. The mast was the singular construction that maintained a sense of "room" on the earth.

A construction cannot live without a constructive thought. When thought turns towards great construction it always tends towards the irrational. The belief in life after death has always encouraged people to create places which justify such a conception. This idea cannot be calculated, but has to start from a dream expressing an internal wish. In this constructive aspiration lies man's clearest formation of the unmeasurable. The spirit of man is inherent in its making. The creation of a boat is a challenge to the sea,

but the dream of an everlasting existence is an act taken against all the elements.

The stave church has a structure similar to that of a boat. Its details are identifiable in terms of nautical handicrafts. The mast is its column and the boom its beam, while the common apertures have a similar order of precision. History was embodied in its construction, while the idea of the church flowed to all places. The message was geographically independent. The voyage became a mental one, a personal conversation between man and God. The symbol it represented could reach beyond horizon — the borderline of the unknown. It developed into the sign of the undiscovered. Every force in man strove to overcome this insecurity and it was the fear of the unknown that prompted the act of construction.

The secret of the boat was to fight the horizon. The mast moved the horizon while those on land gazed at its line and the horizon until they became one. The concrete and the abstract melted together as these inseparable elements united. With

this moment of union the horizon was ruined. Nature with her enormous scale was no longer the uncharted, since the unknown had been usurped by man.

On land the horizon was the embodiment of nature and the tower was a means to conquer it. Out of fear a tall building could never be erected before acquaintance with the surroundings. Man never built higher than he could see, yet the destruction of the horizon made its symbol recognizable and understandable. The hill was no longer an enigma, but something to possess. To build higher than the hill became a means of overcoming the longstanding sense of enclosure. The buildings grew taller and taller as fear diminished and the necessity for such constructions finally ceased. Once the horizon had been envisioned as a line on paper, the mystery was over. The rational had conquered the irrational. The horizon could be moved, for symbols had brought it within man's possession. By losing the unknown, man was restored to a vacuum, and with this, the very idea of "room" was reduced to zero.