

Summary

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Summary

Roland Rainer, Vienna

Austrian architecture from 1900 to 1930 (Pages 335-338)

In view of the relatively slight attention paid to Austrian architecture over the last few decades, the contribution of Austria during the opening decades of this century appear to be all the more significant. And this is so not only for Austria but also for the total development of modern architecture during this decisive period. This has been shown not only by the last great Jugendstil exhibitions in Germany and, above all, in the USA with their rediscovery of Gustav Klimt, Otto Wagner, Joseph Olbricht, Joseph Hoffmann, Kolo Moser, etc. but also by more recent publications, such as that by Benvolo on European architecture in the 19th and 20th centuries.

First of all, we come up against the exceptional personality of Otto Wagner whose work ranges from town-planning to the design of furniture, along with activity as a theorist and teacher, at the school in Vienna which he founded himself, and he also functions as an editor on the review "Modern Architecture", which appeared for the first time in 1895.

His designs are distinguished both by an overflowing phantasy in the choice of new materials (steel, glass, aluminium, etc.), using prefabrication, (as in certain public transport facilities) and by a unity of style embracing architecture and plastic or pictorial decorations (post offices and savings banks, Am Steinhof church).

This same quest for unity of style, creating a complete work of art, is shown clearly in the case of Joseph Olbricht (Viennese Secession, exhibition pavilions in Darmstadt, artists' city at Mathildenhöhe), in the case of Wagner's pupil Joseph Hoffmann (Austrian pavilions at the exhibitions of Rome 1911, Cologne 1914, Venice 1930 and the Stoclet Palace in Brussels), where there has been a particularly successful integration of the arts. Influenced by the thought of Morris and the achievements of Makintosh, Hoffmann and Moser founded the "Wiener Werkstätte", which was supposed to be a kind of cooperative of the applied arts, where it was sought to establish close contact between architecture, the decorative arts and interior decoration (guiding ideal of the Werkbund, which was founded later and whose influence has been international). Besides his work in the field of the decorative arts, which are replete with imagination, Hoffmann constructed very severely designed buildings (Purkersdorf sanatorium, plan for the exhibition palace at Karlsplatz) and designed simple household objects which are equivalent to those of Adolf Loos (Lobmeyr conical glasses, laminated wood chairs, etc.).

Architecture is, for Hoffmann, a complete creative act, and his work is made up of numerous formal conceptions and inventions, stemming from his overflowing imagination, while, for Loos, architecture is part of a general cultural conscience which is even the expression of a style of life.

This attitude is expressed most vigorously in his first book of commentaries written "in the void"; where he speaks more frequently of all sorts of things (the Preface is an article on writing), table manners, printing, vehicles, handicraft production, than of architecture.

This very open-minded man (a friend of Peter Altenberg, Karl Kraus, with a penchant for modern music and

poetry) functions on an international plane, at the same time preserving a traditional feeling for Vienna, which is expressed in his studies when he rejects interior decoration in order to choose the autonomy and the high quality of the handicraft trades, continuing an independent tradition and following time-tested prototypes.

His interiors do not involve really formal problems; they attempt to translate a certain style of life, a modern way of life, which is thus international and at the same time specifically Viennese. His architectural designs, which are difficult to convey in photographs, are highly differentiated (countersunk areas for easy-chairs grouped about a fireplace, work-table, twin-level halls, stairs with mezzanine levels, the creation of spatial subdivisions, etc.), and the details of the lighting fixtures and other appliances show a high degree of finish.

During his activity as an authority in the housing field, he propagated the idea of row-houses (Heuberg), garden-cities, flat roofs, but, even better than his plans, his single-family homes in Vienna, Prague, Paris and Geneva, his offices and shops remain valid creations and wholly "modern". However, the Viennese Jugendstil movement came to an abrupt end with the almost simultaneous deaths of Wagner, Klimt, Olbrecht, Schiele and Moser, as well as with the end of the monarchy.

Despite the antagonism between Loos and Hoffmann, it is these two figures who put their stamp on the architecture of the closing years of the Austrian monarchy by attempting to effect a synthesis between the influences of Byzantine architecture and popular Eastern art and the culture of Western Europe.

After the First World War, building projects were concentrated mainly on the housing sector, and in Vienna in particular on low-rent communal housing, which was regarded as an architectural problem and not as a political or financial one.

Nevertheless, the following generation, under the influence either of Loos or of Hoffmann, was able to express avant-garde architectural ideas in its department stores, exhibition pavilions and some villas. The Viennese architects grouped around Josef Frank in the Austrian Werkbund worked out a conception of communal housing that was typically Viennese, applying to the problem revolutionary architectural ideas.

"The residence is there primarily to serve the residents", "We must not attempt to make architecture with furnishings": these are the mottos of Frank, who created volumes that are necessarily small, but simple, with white walls, built-in cupboards, and "mobile" light-weight furniture, all easy to handle, often of laminated and moulded wood. Frank is against decoration and rejects everything that tends toward showy "architecture"; thus, his buildings possess simple exterior designs. This conception of a house without external pretentiousness, which is deliberately opposed to the prestige function of public buildings, can be of interest to our age, in which there is again a concern with the symbolism of architecture, with public constructions designed for the whole community, which is necessarily different from the private sphere.

A. Loos: "Let the house present blank walls to the outside world and then deploy all its possibilities internally". Despite the enormous economic difficulties of the 30's, the architectural quality of the apartment houses erected then is undeniable: they are buildings possessing the extreme simplicity of Ernst Lichtblau, a pupil of Wagner's, the furniture and fittings of Frank, Wlach, Sobotka, etc.; the terrace houses of Walter Loos, Ernst Plischke's office and Lake Atter house are other examples. Moreover, the highly personal projects of the theatre designer Oskar Strand, those of Peter Behrens of the Academy of Fine Arts in Vienna (tobacco factory in Linz) and those of Lois Welzenbacher (factories in Austria and in Germany) exercised a great influence of their period.

At the time of his emigration to Sweden, Frank (with his furniture) inspired the development that then occurred in Scandinavian furniture design (laminated wood).

Thus, Austrian architecture preserved its own individual character and

maintained an international level of performance as late as 1930. (Exhibition pavilion at Paris International Exhibition by Härdtl, associate of Hoffmann). This period came to an end with the emigration, starting in 1933, of many members of the Werkbund, and Austria has not yet succeeded in regaining the position occupied up to that time, for the majority of the architects did not return after the war.

Now then, the current development of architecture in Austria is rendered difficult by the emigration of young talent to Western Europe in order to escape the bureaucratic and commercialized tendency in Austrian architecture, which is depriving it of all distinctive quality, especially in Vienna.

Friedrich Achleitner, Vienna

Development and status of austrian architecture since 1945

(Pages 339-343)

The situation in 1945 seemed hopeless: Vienna, which had been up to that time a point of intersection, became a dead-end owing to the elimination of all contact with Prague, Brunn, Cracow, Budapest, Agram and Laibach, which are all closer to Vienna than are Salzburg or Munich. Vienna was also deprived of a whole generation of architects, builders, business men, critics, men of letters and journalists, who had often come from these cities and who provided the cultural climate of Vienna. Aside from the architects who had emigrated or who had died, those who remained received no orders. Thus, the few noteworthy projects of the post-war period are hangovers from a vanished age (Café Greif in Innsbruck by Welzenbacher, Gänsehäufel swimmingpool in Vienna by Max Fellerer and Eugen Wörle, exhibition pavilion at Felten-Guilleaume by Oswald Haerdtl, high-rise hotels in Vienna by Welzenbacher). Indirectly, through the influence of Clemens Holzmeister, who had returned from Turkey, there appears the new trend in Austrian post-war architecture.

However, it is Roland Rainer who contributes most to a new theoretical conception ("the problem of habitat", "municipal prose", "ground-level living") and he relies on the plans of the Werkbund of 1930 (Hoffmann, Loos: garden city), for there were already resemblances between English and Scandinavian homes and the traditional Viennese residential style.

The same social and human reflections dictate the projects of Rainer. But it is at this time that architecture becomes symbolic. Moreover, it is strongly influenced by Rainer's studies of prefabrication, anonymous architecture and the "Biedermeier" tradition, for Rainer believes in the improvement of the world on a broad basis. This same architectural conception is found in Wolfgang and Traude Windbrechtlinger (apartment houses, row-houses, Kapfenberg community centre, kindergartens, Bellevue restaurant, Hietzing shopping center). Starting from a rather graphic conception in its treatment of surfaces, it develops toward a spatial conception, thus creating a specific milieu by means of its constructed masses.

While the plastic effect of the buildings of the Windbrechtlingers always stems from a given program, Karl Schwanzers, a decorator, places the accent on the aesthetic aspects of architecture, which corresponds sufficiently to the general Viennese mentality. The crystalline and transparent volumes seem to be the result of order and organization; the precise execution, nevertheless, demonstrates a realm in which the constructed work is a pure means of realization (pavilion at the Brussels World's Fair, 20th Century Museum in Vienna). However, the aesthetic criteria are more subject to variations: the Philips House, where architecture has a publicity function, transcends the scale of Austrian architecture.

As a whole, post-war architecture is dominated at first by a spirit of historicity, followed later by the modernist inflation.

However, the architects who are making modern Austria are those who did not begin their studies until the 50's. At that time there was to be encountered in Austria the same lack of contact with the West as in Eastern Europe, in an atmosphere of "anarchism and innovations", Konrad Wachsmann,

owing to his personality, his Socratic monologues, his method of work, mark a turning-point in architecture, especially by the fact that he finally got to the core of the problem.

His incontestable influence touches a large number of young people who took part in his seminars, who believe in the equivalence of all the problems concerning a building, in the drawing up of a systematic study and, finally, in the experience of the programmed phantasy.

The growth of the architecture of those who joined Wachsmann (Group 4: Kurent and Spalt, Garstenaue, Gross, Gsteu, Hollein, Uhl, etc.) can be seen in the accentuation of the structural relationships (Parsch church).

However, the study of traditional Austrian architecture since 1900, which has produced theoretical accounts and exhibitions, whose influence is still ascertainable today, can lead to the recognition of a conception like that of Otto Wagner as having validity (Aigen College).

The personal and integral attitude of Group 4 means that there can be no plagiarists, but it does mean that there are disciples. Gsteu with his constructive and geometric conceptions (Baumgarten church centre), Lackner with his spatial qualities and the careful use of materials (Neu-Arzt church, recreation centre) and Uhl with his churches can be considered avant-gardists, propagating as they do the ideas of Wachsmann. The same thing applies to Puchhammer and Wawrick, whose plans are dictated by structural conditions (prefabrication, flexibility, etc.). The common tendency of the young architects trained in Graz is expressed in their quest for extreme differentiation in interior spaces, at the same time respecting a formal exterior unity (Catholic Teachers Training College by Domenig and Huth).

Instead of singling out each building which is distinguished by architectural or structural qualities, we have chosen to emphasize the principal ideological tendencies with their differences without handling the different fields, such as the apartment house, which represents a considerable constructed volume; for plastic qualities are here lacking. It should be sufficient to point out the large complex by Kagran near Vienna on account of its technical finish (execution according to Camus). Now then, the effective architectural situation in Austria is determined by a number of very young people, even if the big jobs are carried out in commercial agencies. Despite the changes that have occurred over the last few years, everything is as yet only in a state of alert. After a long struggle against an extremely desperate economic situation and against prejudices in the realm of taste, Austrian architecture has revived.

At this juncture, we can only speak of trends due to the assimilation of diverse influences, whose rediscovery, involving the finding of a local tradition again, is a pronounced feature of the current situation. Now then, Austria has never been the crucible of inventions; its genius resides, rather, in the refinement and the adaptation of ideas coming from outside. There exists an entirely positive sceptical attitude in the face of the "new" and the foreign and in the face of the exclusive or the totalitarian. The person creating the work is personally identified. Criticism is made of the individual, employing psychological arguments, or even moral ones, the criticism being based on a professional ethic which leads at times to a certain ignorance of existing facts as compensation for the exaggerated tolerance in the face of the past.

Due allowance being made for a certain Viennese reticence in the face of theories, the new generation is neither dogmatic nor belligerent.

It seems that the architectural climate is on the way to improving rapidly. It would be too early to make forecasts, above all in this highly variable special field. However, there can be envisaged a synthesis which could unite the divergent tendencies, due respect being had for all the opposing points of view, instead of subscribing entirely to a dogmatic theory or of forming cliques. The current situation offers a chance for an unfolding of the qualities peculiar to the Viennese. Will these qualities, the habit of fragmentary thinking, the relativistic

outlook, the spontaneous approach, scepticism and self-irony, be sufficient to enable the Viennese to seize this opportunity? It is precisely in Vienna, where many things happen contrary to all logical expectations, that it is difficult to pose this question.

The illustrations can stress the development that is taking place and point out certain nascent tendencies. The choice made here is intended to translate in visual terms the characteristic features. It is by no means complete, and it does not seek to be an inventory, for certain average projects illustrate better what is attempted here in this account than large-scale projects which are less typical.

Josef Lackner, Innsbruck

Church at Neu-Arzt near Innsbruck 1958/60

(Pages 344-345)

The church on a square plan is surrounded by a glazed covered passage 2 m. wide, which is countersunk and communicating with the baptistery, the confessionals and the cloister. The upper level of the church, comprising the altar and the benches for the congregation, is surrounded by a half-height concrete wall leaving free a view outside when one stands upright but not when one sits down. Then one finds oneself in a space that is optically self-contained, this favouring concentration on the liturgy. The low walls surrounding the church are prolonged at their junction in the form of stringers taking the light construction of the upper partitions and the roof structure, which are made up of thin Torcret concrete membranes, sheltering both the church and the countersunk passageway. The roof structure, of coffer construction, guarantees spatial unity to the different tracts making up the complex. The congregation are grouped on three sides around the altar, while the choir is situated on the fourth side which is countersunk; in this way good visual contact with the pastor is assured without jeopardizing the optical unity of the church.

The principal access of the church is connected by a bridge with the outside. Thus, when one enters, one has the impression of stepping onto an island.

Roland Rainer, Vienna

Evangelical church in Simmering, Vienna

1963/64

(Pages 346-349)

This complex, made up of a church, a parish hall and a youth auditorium, is situated on a very small site (20/24 m.), which is surrounded by factories, small gardens and low rent housing. Only extremely limited means were available for construction. The different volumes, church, parish hall, youth auditorium, parish nurse's quarters, are grouped around an interior courtyard with access from the road via a covered passageway. This sheltered courtyard can also be used as a place of assembly.

The lofty volume of the church is illuminated solely by a glazed strip in the roof structure and comprises openings in the lower structure which communicate with all the other volumes and external areas of the complex.

This self-contained space therefore extends the altar towards a small interior garden; the central part communicates with the parish hall, and the access area in connected with the large interior courtyard. Interpenetrations compensate for the entirely closed part of this church centre, the design of which is the outcome of the conditions imposed by the site.

The whitewashed brick walls are in the church supported by a reinforced concrete skeleton; the roof structure, the woodwork and the interior fittings are of natural pine. The architect did not intend to create a building that was to serve prestige purposes as to materials employed nor to stress the ecclesiastical character of the building; he wished simply to make a well designed protective envelope that was also discreet and adapted to liturgical purposes.

Sokratis Dimitriou, Vienna

Free planning-The situation in austrian town-planning

(Pages 350-356)

During the last 100 years Austria has contributed several times to the development of international town-planning. The Ringstrasse in Vienna remains an unparalleled example of internal urban expansion. This ring encloses most of the official and prestige buildings of the city, while a parallel ring was intended to take up the traffic load. The remaining parts of old fortifications were replaced by residential building and office premises. This ring is at the same time the symbol of an equilibrium between the crown and the middle classes, after the violent struggles of 1848.

The second great epoch in Viennese town-planning in the period between 1900 and 1920 was also accompanied by changes in the political and social structure. It began with the lower middle classes and ended up with the acquisition of equal political rights on the part of the working class. Two other successive expansions gave Vienna its present dimensions and its political and administrative structure, where the communes, representing the people, manage most of the public transport system and pursue a land policy that involves the buying up of land for public use, for expansion projects. The general master plan is based on a population of 4 million (Vienna had nearly 2 million before the war, i.e. 500,000 more than now). The problems broached in 1900 are thus problems having to do with the equipment and the transport of "large masses". This great metropolis underwent radio-concentric growth; this is the object of the plans drawn up by Otto Wagner and Eugen Fassbender. Underlying this conception is the idea of providing all the people, the masses, with identical technical installations and comfort in all districts of the city. It ought likewise to comply with hygienic criteria and provide areas of relaxation and recreation. But it ought, above all, to preserve a certain beauty, accessible to all, based on artistic principles (Camillo Sitte). However, the examples of the high medieval period and the Renaissance, determined by squares and precise axes, do not correspond to the needs and the modern objectives of Vienna, which can be seen mainly in the plans of Otto Wagner and in his constructions (municipal transport system, Danube embankments) which symbolize the spirit of uniform expansion. They express, moreover, a feeling of the typical superiority of the middle classes of that epoch as much as the studios of Hoffmann and Olbricht reflect the opposition and the isolation of small elites in the face of the predominance of the masses.

The idea of Goldemund for a green belt with scenic drive, which concludes harmoniously the radio-concentric development of the city, was also revolutionary, for it assures the preservation of the very beautiful countryside with its forests; it also inspired the plan for Berlin.

With the end of the monarchy, the growth of Vienna came to an end. Now then, the provisions made for an extension on an entirely different scale still remain valid at the present time. Since the Second World War—except for the fascist period—the socialists, as before, have always been the majority political force. As the City of Vienna is an autonomous state in the federal republic, its public sphere of competence is very broad, and its building program, based on a new form of communal housing, can positively ameliorate the social conditions prevailing in Vienna. The tendency of communal housing, on a high-rise and high density basis, with centralized administration, won the day over the garden-city plans. These "fortresses of red Vienna" are set up following the vicissitudes of politics, and depending on acquisitions of cheap land or depending on the most urgent needs. No more than the garden-cities do these communal projects allow for integration in an over-all urban plan, and they seem to be dispersed arbitrarily across the city. Until after the war, housing was put up without coordinating it with a master plan, for the primary objective of the enterprise was political in nature.

After the First World War, Vienna suddenly found itself associated with provincial Austrian towns. Now then, despite the economic crisis, Vienna continued to put up its communal housing projects, something the provincial towns could not do for political reasons; profiting by the provincial majority resulting from this atmosphere of rivalry, the government imposed on Vienna the execution of old plans: the scenic belt was created, and the Nazis deprived it of its status of capital city. Between 1938 and 1945, large-scale construction was concentrated on express highways, urban extension, official chicaneries and niggling regulations. Vienna became surrounded with a suburban belt; Linz became an industrial city; Salzburg remained a cultural centre. The damage done by the Hitler regime has left traces, because those who knew how to plan on a grand scale became unemployed. Planning was suspected not so much on account of its associations with the period of Nazi control as because it suggested the planned-economies of the East bloc, which had banished free enterprise. States which were not occupied by the Russians, such as Salzburg and Carinthia, gave the government little planning authority. Thus Austria of the post-war period was deprived of large-scale planning conceptions. The government authorities had no basis for viable reconstruction, which was carried out according to old plans, and rent controls favoured leaving old buildings standing and discouraged new building by private enterprise. The sole reasons for the existence of reorganization plans in Austria are increases in traffic, economic policy or population growth in certain regions. Now then, it is mainly the profession of town-planning which entails commitments to investments in a future that is not secure.

Despite the handicaps blocking an over-all planning system, the present situation can not be identified with that obtaining before the last war, for the cities in the southwest especially have had population increases and have grown economically, and this has entailed higher cultural requirements. Since urban population has grown at the expense of rural population, the social structure of the provinces has become more balanced, and Vienna no longer has a monopoly of social and cultural progress. The problems of town-planning are similar for the big towns and the medium-sized centres. Most of them have kept medieval cores of great historic and artistic value. Expansion has proceeded freely and in disorganized fashion, and traffic problems are getting increasingly out of hand.

Linz has profited by its industrialization. The old town has been protected by restorations and by the construction of traffic by-passes; the centre of the city has expanded towards the Danube, and a university city is under construction; Salzburg, on the contrary, has not yet succeeded in disciplining its growth. The festival city has grown to accommodate an area designed for festivals, but the university has not yet found a new home. Innsbruck was transformed into a winter sports centre on the occasion of the Olympics. Graz is undecided between industrial expansion and the possibility of becoming a university city. The small-scale industrial towns in Vorarlberg will probably form an economic regional unit based on an over-all expansion plan. Thus, it can be said that federalist tendencies are growing with the "specialization" of the towns. However, despite the growth of the provincial cities, the decisive ideological debates are held in Vienna, which exerts its influence over the whole country.

Town-planning was ignored in Vienna before the wars, and after the second war, planning was considered a pseudo-activity, a profession formythomaniacs which give full rein to their dreams, while "serious men" concern themselves with building. Thus, the over-all plans were condemned to the drawers of the authorities, while the depths of buildings, the divisions of glass fronts, etc. became axioms. Now then, the polemics having to do with town-planning became intensified, for the politicians refused to believe in town-planning, and the planners got involved in specialist quarrels reproaching one another with scientism or with excess of intuition.

In Vienna post-war town-planning began with a general survey of the reconstruction problem with all the specialists taking part, but the programs comprising 14 points were not distributed.

Competitions were organized for the destroyed districts around the Stephansplatz, along the Danube Canal and around Karlsplatz. The results prove that the Wagner school has declined owing to inactivity or the bad influences of the fascist period. Only one plan, rewarded by a purchase, by Lois Welzenbacher is worthy of interest. However, instead of building a vital business centre, the Viennese were content to instal parking sites and to admit buildings without any master plan, thus squandering the chance of being able to reorganize the two most important squares in Vienna.

Since the war, Vienna has rebuilt its monumental edifices, which were in ruins, as well as housing that was similar in style, and this has given the city its old appearance. For the new districts, an attempt is being made to conciliate the two tendencies—communal housing blocks or garden-cities—to develop neighbourhood units, which, beyond a certain size ought to enjoy a certain autonomy (technical installations, schools, shopping centers, etc.), which corresponds likewise to the political idea of the time (1945) of forming independent social groupings, even if the places of work are not situated close to places of residence. Schuster, consulting architect of the city during this period, sought to convert the revolutionary attitude of the inter-war years into a moderate social and political climate, but the city abandoned the establishment of an over-all plan at the expense of reconstruction of successive ruined sites, which requires few social consequences to be considered and which proved to be politically favourable.

Thus, the master plans of Schimka and of Brunner were only episodes; the traffic studies made by international specialists remained without issue, but the mounting difficulties finally meant that people had to appeal to a specialist who knew Vienna well, in order to set up a legally ratified general town-planning scheme, with a view to avoiding total chaos. Now then, they hit upon the choice of Roland Rainer, well known for his published works and his town-planning projects, as official planner for the City of Vienna, where between 1958 and 1961 he worked out a master plan based on the following principles:

- aeration of excessively dense districts, densification of excessively scattered districts,
- reorganization of mixed districts into purely residential districts,
- development of urban centres,
- basic provision for space requirements of business,
- basic provision for mass traffic,
- basic provision for individual traffic,
- skyline protection and preservation,
- land protection with consideration of agricultural interests,
- provision of green belts,
- cooperation with the other instances responsible for financing of Vienna, Lower Austria and other communities.

However, this plan was not worked out in detail, because Rainer had been replaced by a town-planning agency, directed by Georg Condit.

In his book, published in 1957 with J. Göderitz and H. Hoffmann, who had influenced many town-planning schemes, Rainer sought, rather, to achieve reforms and not to formulate principles on a new basis. He denounced the self-destruction of European cities by their exaggerated expansion. ("The healthy particularity of England as it used to be is buried in London", "Paris is the ulcer of France", "A city ought to be restricted to a healthy scale corresponding to its appropriate functions, but its functioning is, above all, assured by the reorganization of its internal structure, proceeding from the smallest unit, the home to the structuration of the entire urban area and its regional integration".)

The urban conception of Rainer is thus the antithesis of a great city with very high density, where residence and work are mingled. It is not opposed to smart quarters or to industrial zones which are already isolated, but it seeks a new solution for existing mixed zones or those to be built. However, for such a structuration, which permits a reduction in density, the population

has to remain constant or it has to decline—which is the case with Vienna. According to the principles of CIAM, there is proposed the separation of functions so as to form independent spatial units. The type of residence corresponding to this type of city is the row-house on one or two levels, with garden. But this kind of planning (like that of Schuster) necessitates first a new juridical regulation of land acquisition policy, in order for the social conditions to be more acceptable to the great masses of the population.

This new type of city as designed by Rainer is conceived for a population of 10,000, comprising units of around 300 inhabitants, and the whole complex is adapted to the pedestrian scale, the pedestrian ways being separated from motor traffic. There is a community centre on the outside in a natural setting. One of these model cities is planned for a site to the south of Vienna, integrated in a series of historic towns, which would be tied together linearly. However, such a "future" city has not been actually realized by Rainer, but its conception had an influence on a garden-city to the south of Vienna designed by the architects Hubatsch, Kiener and Peich, which is the only single large town-planning complex realized in post-war Austria. Rainer has also influenced the plan of a large complex near Bilbao, for which the second prize was awarded to the architects K. Büsel, J. Klinger, H. Schrey, G. Unterberger, G. Widmann and P. Pontiller, pupils of Rainer at the Academy of Vienna.

Aside from a few small housing complexes, only the Maurerberg district can illustrate how Rainer conceives of a neighbourhood unit with low silhouette and flat roofs. Even two competition for the Per Albin Hansson district has not made possible the inauguration of a definite new housing style for Vienna. On the contrary, Rainer is forced to draw up plans for low-rent housing blocks. No. 12, for example, shows the lay-out of a complex on various levels around a field, where the pedestrian ways are located inside the buildings, which are situated on the edges of the site. This system is finally prevailing over the others, because it assures optimum illumination and a marked plastic effect, but it does away with any kind of urban continuity.

The structural scheme of the town-planning conception of an open-plan city is being applied in Vienna. The complement, a kind of negative, as it were, is constituted by the planning of green belts which fill out and complete the plans of Goldemund. The future Vienna will extend beyond its green belt to the north-east and the south; it will no longer develop in a radio-concentric fashion, but axially. However, "Vienna remains Vienna" according to the newspaper slogans; it does not have any architectural revolutions to offer, but it is striving to impose upon itself a certain order. Since the dynamic drive of Vienna does not stem from population increase but from the increase of traffic and industrial expansion, there is being created a network of express highways, and the industrial zones are being concentrated, and, what is more, trade is being facilitated by the establishment of shopping centers (Hietzing).

The town-planning conception for Vienna by Rainer has not yet been completely elaborated. Thus, the connections between mass and individual traffic are not fixed, because the direction of the second belt as well as the creation of a second traffic level on rails have not been decided on. The politicians recoil at the thought of long-term decisions which may tie them down too much. In the meantime, the town-planning office is busy assembling the statistics necessary to the study of the development of the city, either beyond the Danube or linearly to the south. Likewise, there is little cooperation with the neighbouring towns and the railways, which again involves the risk of non-coordinated development in over-all plans.

Now then, the conception of a city of medium density (Rainer) has called forth a few reactions: Group 4 (Kurrent and Spalt) demonstrated a generously conceived plan at the "Vienna of the Future" Exhibition, in which the city extends beyond the Danube, with residence "hills" comprising 300 units each (1000 residents), and in which

the urban centre is defined optically (high-rise buildings). The Windbrechtingers proposed a dense plan with different superimposed levels, siting the residence area near the centre. Other proposals show that the housing shortage is forcing the creation of a new kind of city, a city that is more compact and that permits a richer and more varied constellation of relationships on the human level.

Wilhelm Holzbauer, Friedrich Kurrent, Johannes Spalt (group 4)

Associate: Johann Georg Gsteu
Static computations:
Prof. Friedrich Baravalle
Execution, first stage: 1958/61

Church Centre in Steyr-Ennsleiten (Pages 357-360)

This complex constitutes the church centre of a working-class district in Steyr; it is made up of a church, the parish house, an auditorium and a kindergarten.

The architectural design is based on the idea of having the whole construction carried out on the basis of uniform skeleton elements, this procedure guaranteeing a very high degree of flexibility in the later utilization of the various tracts.

The structural unit consists of 6 cruciform supports and a grid of supporting and reinforcing stringers. It is one storey in height, 12.50 m. wide and 25.00 m. long. $\times 2$ supports take the load of the stringers on the periphery (vertical load) and 2×1 supports take the reinforcing stringer (transverse load). The dimensions of the stringers correspond to the moments due to the loads.

The church is composed of three juxtaposed units and in the centre of four interlocked units; the auditorium is made up of two superposed units without intermediate deck; and the parish house consists of two normally superposed units. The disposition of the structural units is symmetrical, but the interior arrangement is flexible.

The buildings border an interior courtyard, with access via a porch formed by the belfry, which is crossed on entering the church.

This economically viable construction (prefab supporting elements) guarantees a high degree of flexibility with its non-supporting walls. The first stage, comprising the parish house and the auditorium, is finished, but the church and the kindergarten are still to be carried out.

Wolfgang Windbrechtinger and Traute Windbrechtinger-Ketterer, Vienna

Commercial Centre, Hietzing, Vienna 1960-64

(Pages 361-364)

The conception of the Hietzing district dates from the period when Roland Rainer was entrusted with the plan for the city of Vienna. According to the pertinent analyses, drawn up at the research institute for land planning, this centre serves a district of 19,000 residents with a radius of 1 km. (immediate supply); it also provides part of the regional supply facilities for Hietzing and Mauer, involving 90,000 residents. This region is more directly accessible via public transport than other centres on the same scale. Now then, this centre has a secondary scale and is not envisaged for a zone of 170,000 inhabitants, which would constitute the following stage, corresponding to the given town-planning situation.

The complex is deliberately kept on a small scale; it is made up of small spaces, which corresponds to the character of this district. For reasons of terrain only the core has been realized until now, but it comprises, nevertheless, the essential equipment. Around a central square, with the fountain created by Maria Bilger, there are grouped shops on two levels, a restaurant, an automatic market and a cinema. Deliveries are effected at basement level, where the garages are also located.

Wilhelm Holzbauer, Friedrich Kurrent, Johannes Spalt (group 4)

Steel structure: Waagner-Biró, Vienna
1961/64

St. Joseph College at Aigen, Salzburg (Pages 365-370)

This college serves as residence quarters for 40 students of theology. It is situated in a very beautiful park.

The square complex on two levels is oriented towards a central chapel, surrounded by a double-height auditorium, with access from there to all the connecting tracts on the ground floor and to the students' bedrooms from the gallery on the first floor. The chapel, which constitutes the spiritual centre of this college, is always optically centred in the field of vision. The auditorium surrounds it like a kind of cloister, which serves as a place of meeting for all the occupants of the college. The lighting, exclusively overhead, for the chapel as well as for the auditorium, is conducive to meditation. The seating in the chapel is arranged in grandstand fashion, descending to the altar, which is countersunk to assert its central importance.

The steel skeleton is left raw and painted red. The panelling is of Durisol, wood and glass. The roof structure is made up of a grid of girders with regular intervals, supporting the skylights. The oblique faces of these girders form a spacial element, providing the same scale for the small tracts. The formal results of such a type of construction are architectural elements enriching this simple complex, composed of supports of two-storey height and of a roof forming a broad canopy over all faces. Only the zones housing the students' living quarters, in elevation, have intermediate decks. The roof determines the scale of the building, whose module unit resulting from the coffering determines the small tracts on the inside.

The large tracts are made up of the same unit, which is relatively large, hence very visible, and harmonizing well with the size of the whole complex, which is symmetrical. This does not correspond to a geometrical principle but to internal functional needs, thus symbolizing the actual structure of the community of the occupants.

Around the chapel and the auditorium there are grouped on the first floor 40 rooms of the students and on the ground floor the refectory, the library and the recreation room on the south side, and on both sides, the kitchen, the utility premises as well as the nuns' quarters.

The spatial possibilities offered by such a skeleton construction have been to a great extent taken advantage of: the elevations are situated either in front of or behind the structural frame, or take the shape of panelling, flush, when there are no windows.

Great care has been devoted to the question of colour scheme: the red on the steel parts, the white of the solid walls, the natural colours of the wood and stone harmonize perfectly with the black garb of the students and the white habits of the nuns. Thus, the red of the structural frame is more than just paint, it forms a part of the physiognomy of the building, of which it constitutes an active, generous and determinative element.

The black and white photos can give only an approximate idea of the true atmosphere of the complex.

Roland Rainer, Vienna

Associate: Günther Norer
Static computations: Dyckerhoff and Widmann
Contractors: Esch and Paschmann, architects

Polyvalent Hall in Ludwigshafen/Rhein 1960/65

(Pages 375-378)

This hall, whose roof structure is a hyperbolic paraboloid, was awarded a 1st Prize in a competition in 1960. This large square measuring 60×60 m., designed to accommodate 4,000 persons, is placed diagonally with reference to the low-silhouette of the annex buildings, which forms an interior courtyard around the main entrance and which is bordered by a service yard along the cloakroom tract, storerooms, etc.

The lateral partitions of reinforced concrete in the large hall are each supported by two pillars supported by the low-silhouette building, this forming a broad canopy on the side where the grandstands are and descending to foundations, which are situated in the ground on the other side and connected by a visible traction cable; thus, the static system is very apparent

from the outside. On the inside face of the coffered lateral walls there are housed the hot-air ducts, the machinery being installed in the lower tracts formed by the outer edge of the roof at spectator level, in this way exhaust air is carried away very directly, there being no necessity for extra ducts. The complex is made up essentially of prefabricated concrete elements. The supporting system of the annexes is composed of raw concrete pillars, templates and apparent superposed girders, that of the large hall of prefabricated reinforced concrete decks measuring $2 \text{ m.} \times 2 \text{ m.} \times 7 \text{ cm.}$ thick, placed without scaffolding by making use of lateral wall struts. The external insulation of this shell is assured by an aluminium-venal covering; the ventilation between the shell and the internal heat insulation is effected via vents at the tops and edges of the roof structure. The panelling between the continuously untreated reinforced concrete framework members consists, inside and out, of natural white lime sandstone elements, of glass panes in black steel frames or of reddish natural wood panels, the floors of concrete flagging, so that the character of the building in all its parts, inside and out, is determined by the grey of the concrete, the white of the bricks, the black of the steel and the red of the wood.

So as not to conceal the structural design even on the interior, the acoustic insulation is provided by glass spheres filled with absorbent material, freely suspended from the ceiling (patent pending). This system as well as the shape of the hall guarantee very good acoustics especially for low frequencies.