> rejected the whims of paper architecture – while continuing to draw prodigiously. There are all sorts of curious reminders as to the subliminal acceptance, beneath the level of words, or its singular priority within the art of architecture, if art it be, such as in architectural portraits, where, as a rule but with few exceptions . . . architects are portrayed with their drawings, as are sculptors with their sculptures and painters with their canvases, estranged, for posterity, from the results of their labour, the clients more usually retaining the privilege of being portrayed with the building.'
> (Evans, 1986, p.7)

Some architects have modified or perhaps even ignored the conventions in an attempt to convey impressions rather than a likeness. Significantly, Zaha Hadid calls her architectural drawings 'paintings' perhaps in an attempt to distance them from conventional images. Nevertheless they still inevitably remain analogues.

Of all the conventions used by architects it is the plan which is the most curious and unreal; a horizontal cut which reveals all the spaces on one level at the same time and from a point of view which never exists for the ordinary user; only low walled ruins reveal their plan form clearly. Yet it is fundamental to architecture even if somewhat mysterious to laymen since it presumably requires a difficult mental conversion which translates two-dimensional outlines into three-dimensional volumes understood by an observer looking parallel to the plane of the plan.

The importance of the plan in architecture stems, one suspects, from the constructional necessity to set out walls on the ground. This primary need then also becomes the first step in the design process. It is precisely this drawing of the plan as the first abstraction and analogue of the building which makes Le Corbusier's statement 'the plan is the generator' so correct

and so in line with everyday design experience. Kahn makes a very similar statement: 'The plan expresses the limits of Form.' Form, then, as a harmony of systems, is the generator of the chosen design. The plan is the revelation of the Form. Yet Le Corbusier goes on in *Vers une architecture* to say: 'A plan is not a pretty thing to be drawn, like a Madonna face; it is an austere abstraction, it is nothing more than an algebrization and dry-looking thing.' As is the case of many other architects, verbal statements do not always correspond with design practice. The similarities between the forms in many of Le Corbusier's paintings and the shapes on his plans are too obvious to be accidental. They have been the subject of frequent and convincing analysis.

It is highly probable that Le Corbusier's dismissal of the visual values of the plan stems, on the one hand, from a glorification of the apparent rationality of engineering and, on the other, from a need to disagree with the teaching of the Ecole des Beaux-Arts where the aesthetics of the plan played an important role. There existed an implicit and perhaps even more explicit assumption that there was a direct connection between a beautiful plan and a beautiful building.

We owe the notion of such a link to Alberti, yet making that connection has its dangers as well as possible – but uncertain – benefits. For instance, it can hardly be questioned that Kahn created a powerful and readily understood visual order in almost every plan he drew during the last twenty years of his life. What is more debatable is whether that plan order was always equally legible to an ordinary observer moving about his buildings. The open pavilions of the Bath House making a cruciform are readily understood because of their small size and the ability to comprehend the entire building from its centre. At Bryn Mawr, however, what one sees from the outside is a building with two re-entrant right angles, a slate-clad wall which through its faceted nature simply breaks down the mass of the building. At the Exeter Library the magnificent central space reveals its