

Innovation also suggests a certain degree of optimism; that not all the answers are already in existence, that in fact new and perhaps more relevant answers can be found. Such optimism is a necessary part of the life blood of any society and includes the manifestations of architectural optimism, for architecture is not just the passive mirror of society but also the moulder of culture. The shift in architectural thinking and expression which occurred in the 1920s and 1930s was consciously intended to bring about a freer, more equitable society. Although the modern movement has many villas for the rich or nearly rich among its creations, it was mass housing which it believed it should revolutionise; it was there that a new and better world would emerge. Though entirely different in form, Le Corbusier's *Ville Radieuse* and Frank Lloyd Wright's *Broadacre City* have the same underlying intention.

We also look to innovation to keep our expectant eye alert and for it not to become lethargic; to keep our vision fresh and to prevent the boredom of repetition. We in a sense cease to see what is too familiar. Some of the public and professional success of the Bilbao Guggenheim is surely due to the newness and vigour of Gehry's vision.

If, as it would seem, both continuity and innovation are involved in some way in the design process, then is there a description of design which gives weight to both and in reasonable measure? It has been suggested in an earlier section that typology favours continuity and that determinism implies constant innovation because of the alleged uniqueness of each problem. The *Pattern Language* also puts great emphasis on past experience rather than novel solutions while the idea of undifferentiated space and the Khanian division into served and servant spaces are more concerned with design solutions than process. It is the sequence P_1 to P_2 with the intermediate stages of tentative solution and error elimination which embodies within it both continuity and innovation; continuity through the fact that P_1 arises from an understanding of the past and

the present, and innovation through the need for a new and tentative solution to P_1 .

The error elimination stage is especially vital in maintaining a balance. What appear as departures from the accepted answers may be labelled errors. That does not mean that they always require alteration for this might again stifle innovation. It is necessary to criticise the arguments that demand the correction of errors for otherwise we succumb to the slightest whim. Innovative design needs courage, as well as vision.

The definition of what is an error is particularly difficult in matters of taste. Although we associate the word 'taste' with the 18th century, there are always visual expressions which fit within a spectrum of general acceptability and those that are considered outside it. Innovation frequently falls into the unacceptable category, particularly at its initiation, before it in turn becomes the ruling orthodoxy.

The role of the individual in this process must never be underestimated. However much we may pursue the same P_1 to P_2 sequence – consciously or not – we bring highly individual qualities to that process, a personal creative enthusiasm. Kahn and Scarpa were contemporaries and admired each other's work. The difference in their solutions does not stem solely from geography or programme but from their individual upbringing and personal outlook. Scarpa was a Venetian architect through and through with a continuous emphasis on craftsmanship and detail. When Louis Kahn was asked to design the Palazzo dei Congressi in Venice (1968–74) – a great meeting place first sited in the Giardini Pubblici and then in the Arsenale – he however drew something quite unlike the work of Scarpa. In fact, something quite unlike the architecture of Venice even though he claimed that the domes were to be covered in lead like those of St Mark's.

Kahn and Scarpa have exerted a considerable influence on architectural thinking just as they accepted a legacy from the