the introduction of examinations and registration gave legal status. Indeed, in the United Kingdom, the very title architect is legally protected to this day. The whole process of professionalisation led inevitably to the body of architects becoming a legally protected and socially respected exclusive élite. The present remoteness of architects from builders and users alike was thus assured. For this reason many architects were unhappy about the formation of the RIBA, and there are still those today who argue that the legal barriers erected between designer and builder are not conducive to good architecture. In recent years the RIBA has relaxed many of its earlier rules and now allows members to be directors of building firms, to advertise and generally behave in a more commercial manner than was originally required by the code of conduct. Professionalism, however, was in reality not concerned with design or the design process but rather with the search for status and control, and this can be seen amongst the design-based and non-design-based professions alike. Undoubtedly this control has led to increasingly higher standards of education and examination, but whether it has led to better practice is a more open question.

The division of labour between those who design and those who make has now become a keystone of our technological society. To some it may seem ironic that our very dependence on professional designers is largely based on the need to solve the problems created by the use of advanced technology. The design of a highland croft is a totally different proposition to the provision of housing in the noisy, congested city. The city centre site may bring with it social problems of privacy and community, risks to safety such as the spread of fire or disease, to say nothing of the problems of providing access or preventing pollution. The list of difficulties unknown to the builders of igloos or highland crofts is almost endless. Moreover each city centre site will present a different combination of these problems. Such variable and complex situations seem to demand the attention of experienced professional designers who are not just technically capable, but also trained in the act of design decision-making itself.

Christopher Alexander (1964) has presented one of the most concise and lucid discussions of this shift in the designer's role. Alexander argues that the unselfconscious craft-based approach to design must inevitably give way to the self-conscious professionalised process when a society is subjected to a sudden and rapid change which is culturally irreversible. Such changes may be the result of contact with more advanced societies either in the form of invasion and colonisation or, as seen more recently, in the more insidious infiltration caused by overseas aid to the underdeveloped

countries. In this country the Industrial Revolution provided such a change. The newly found mechanised means of production were to be the cultural pivot upon which society turned. The seeds of the nineteenth century respect for professions and the twentieth century faith in technology were sown. Changes in both the materials and technologies available became too rapid for the craftsman's evolutionary process to cope. Thus the design process as we have known it in recent times has come about not as the result of careful and wilful planing but rather as a response to changes in the wider social and cultural context in which design is practised. The professional specialised designer producing drawings from which others build has come to be such a stable and familiar image that we now regard this process as the traditional form of design.

The traditional design process

The questions we must ask ourselves are how well has this new traditional design process served us and will it change? It has, indeed, always been undergoing a certain amount of change, and there are signs that many designers are now searching for a new, as yet ill-defined, role in society. Why should this be?

Initially the separating of designing from making had the effect not only of isolating designers but also of making them the centre of attention. Alexander (1964) himself commented perceptively on this development:

> The artist's self-conscious recognition of his individuality has a deep effect on the process of form-making. Each form is now seen as the work of a single man, and its success is his achievement only.

This recognition of individual achievement can easily give rise to the cult of the individual. In educational terms it led to the articled pupillage system of teaching design. A young architect would be put under the care of a recognised master of the art and the hope was that as the result of an extended period of this service, the skills peculiar to this individual master would rub off. Even in the schools of architecture students would be asked to design in the manner of a particular individual. To be successful designers had to acquire a clearly identifiable image, still seen in the flamboyant portrayal of designers in books and films. The great architects of the modern movement such as Le Corbusier or Frank Lloyd Wright not only designed buildings with an identifiable style, but also behaved and