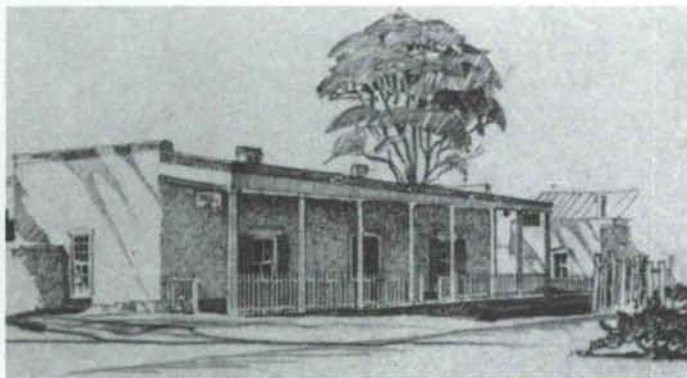


John Conron is one of the best things that has happened to architecture in New Mexico. Intelligent, articulate, witty and amusing. He has a keen, incisive mind, intolerant equally of mediocrity and hypocrisy. His criticism is always constructive, often telling, but never unkind or vindictive. His happy disposition has made him an amusing and jolly companion. I recall many long luncheons at the PALACE where we considered the proper philosophy of architecture, dissected and analyzed buildings by architects the world over, so as to become aware of current trends as they related to a continuous stream of architectural development, and the history of architecture. His mastery of our language approaches that of Oscar Wilde. Just between us—and never for repetition—he would say some incisive character sketches of mutual acquaintances which were so funny I'd almost choke on my martini!

He brought all this humor and bubbling enthusiasm to New Mexico Architecture magazine. If ever you need someone to organize a meeting, conference, convention, or a magazine, call on John. It will be informative, stimulating, never dull, and everyone will have a good time.

— John McHugh, FAIA

*"The Three Cities of Spain," a sketch by John McHugh, FAIA, Page 9, September-October, 1966.*



The Joy I experienced with my first publication was never surpassed by the many others that followed, the editions of my American textbook and the several books I have been fortunate enough to see circulating in Greece. "New Mexico Architecture" and John Conron opened up a door to a territory I had never thought would be so fulfilling for me and my relationship to the world. I recall a conversation I had with Richard Anderson in the UNM, not yet remodelled, student union building, giving me the advise to start publishing "in small regional magazines, before you hit the big ones." Then I sent my first "critical" thoughts to the magazine, fresh and "arrogant" if you want, attacking a "giant," without then knowing it. I never came to know John Gaw Meem personally, as I never made it my task to meet the architects of buildings I wrote about. I always believed that the building should speak by itself, and criticism would be worthwhile only if it were to be removed from the process of public relations and the "cliquish" interests of the practice. It would have been so nice if there were a lot more platforms to encourage such criticism, without the need for the P.R., "architectural photographer's" glossies, and the built-in steps of conflict of interest that go along with the whole "business" of architectural criticism. Without realizing it, I had found such a platform with my first "hit" in New Mexico Architecture. Bainbridge Bunting read my first essay, and although he didn't share my opinions, as he told me politely, he was so good to me and went over my "English" in patience. He didn't want me to give him credit for

that, so I give him credit in public now. God Bless this good scholar and Human Being. He was my first real editor. Years later I found that only Toshio Nakamura among the "international" editors possessed Bunting's humanity and Conron's "inclusivity."

Bunting did not agree with me, I suspect, for the same reasons I do not agree with some of the things I wrote then, now that I am eighteen years older. I guess "Regionalism," even the "literal" regionalism of John Gaw Meem (terms such as these were not part of the architect's vocabulary then), appeals to the older and more mature, while the young tries to break with everything old and invent the new, without realizing that there are always some "older" members in the community, with images from the past, theirs or of their ancestors. Longing for the past comes with age, as we start to become "past" ourselves. And if some like Le Corbusier, never age, staying "children" all the time (in the well conceived, full of energy-creative sense, not the Philip Johnson "mimicking" childishness), this does not mean that everybody stays a child in the process of their lives.

Figure 1 TAOS PUEBLO

Rhythmic scale experience: diversified pedestrian (left) vs. no diversified pedestrian movement (right).

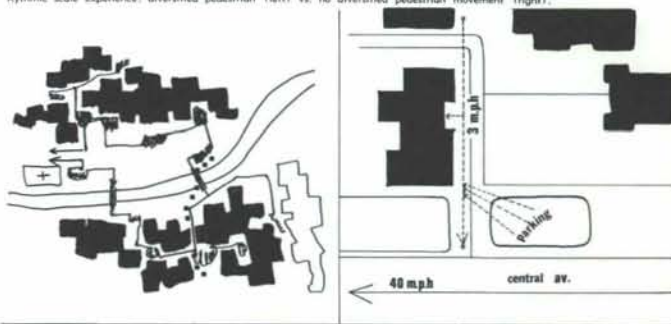


Figure 2 U. N. M. CAMPUS DETAIL

Idiograms of Taos Pueblo and contemporary New Mexico adobe looking building. The scale of Taos is an aggregate of A-1 experiences. The Neo-Traditional has different scale angle.



Figure 3 HUMAN RESOURCES . . . .

MACHINE RESOURCES

Methods of construction different yet contemporary results advocating visual resemblance to traditional.



*"Tradition Versus Contemporary Elements in Architecture," first article by Anthony Antoniadis, Page 11, November-December, 1971.*

Twenty years later I found myself doing in Hydra exactly what I had criticized John Gaw Meem for doing. No, it was not the strict Historic Zoning ordinance and the architectural morphology restrictions of the island (similar to those of Santa Fe), but it was my inner new belief that I had no right to destroy the grain, the morphology, and the harmony of this island, because my "personal artistic" arrogance told me I had to do a "modern" or a "post-modern" building. I would have been really unhappy if my house were to stand out, in an environment of age-old processes of