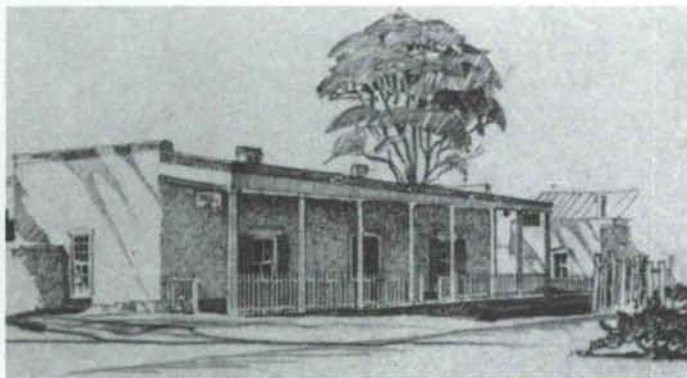


John Conron is one of the best things that has happened to architecture in New Mexico. Intelligent, articulate, witty and amusing. He has a keen, incisive mind, intolerant equally of mediocrity and hypocrisy. His criticism is always constructive, often telling, but never unkind or vindictive. His happy 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).

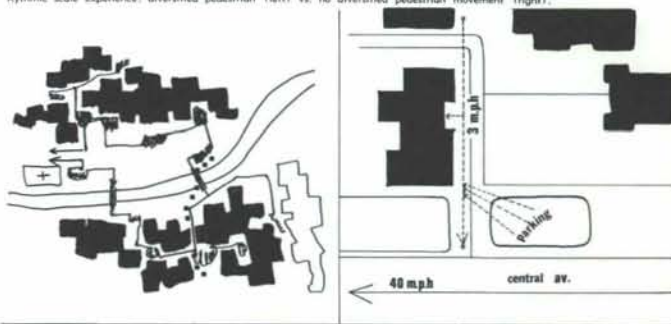


Figure 2 U. N. M. CAMPUS DETAIL

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

construction, scarcity of new-tech labor, and absence of new materials.

"Regionalism" is, of course, fashionable in today's movement of "New Reality" (Europe-Delft/Holland and New York/Frampton) and the subject of "ill vs. well conceived regionalism" would take us beyond the purpose of this note. Yet, before I close, I would like to suggest that the world architecture is absolutely poorer today, because in spite of the persistent efforts of some of us, the architecture of the "region" of New Mexico, this great, native, original, meaningful, essential and visually Beautiful architecture, has stayed in its magnanimity an Unknown architecture for the rest of the world. I believe the time is ripe and some younger architect-critics should make the effort. Because I strongly believe that although it is very good for the people and students of New Mexico to love their environment, it would have been far more helpful for the world at large if the secrets of the architecture of the area were to become widely known.

I never understood, for instance, all that fury of American architects and schools of Architecture, for Rome and Greece (trips to Greece have been unfortunately suppressed recently) while the roots of American architecture are in America, in New Mexico. We need, of course, the whole but we must start from within; and I have done my best.

In gratitude to New Mexico, I never quit to be a "New Mexico Architect" and to belong to the "Albuquerque chapter of the AIA."

To the many unknown friends who try hard there, and in the hope that some of today's students will eventually place the "juices" of the architecture of the region in the attention of the world, (it would be easy perhaps to find a way, through a series of publications and some hard working individuals within the auspices of New Mexico Architecture, that might become the initial material for some "Rizzoli"— or other distribution outlet—books) I offer these words in Gratitude.

— Anthony C. Antoniadis, AIA, AICP

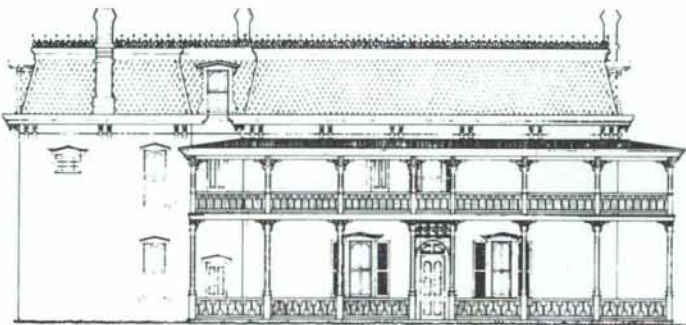
I was introduced to New Mexico Architecture as soon as I arrived in Albuquerque in 1973. The house I had purchased was included in an article on modern architecture written by Anthony Antoniadis. In the next issue, Mildred Brittle wrote a letter to contribute the information that my house had been designed by William E. Burk, Jr.. This led to my first interview with Mr. Burk, who gave me the original construction drawings and later gently conferred with me, an architecture student, when I designed an addition.

When Mildred Brittle's husband, William Miles Brittle, Sr., wrote the first president's column in 1959, he described the purpose of the new publication: to create a medium of communication between architects and "everyone interested in architecture," and among architects. It certainly served me well as a means of communication 14 years later. I wrote my first article about my addition to my house and learning from my mistakes and reading articles and discussing them with others. I have learned a lot about general writing from NMA.

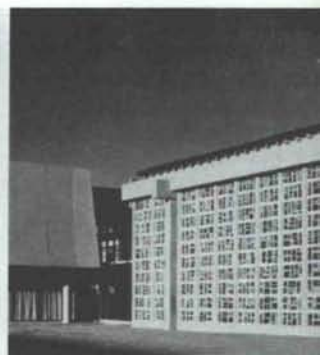
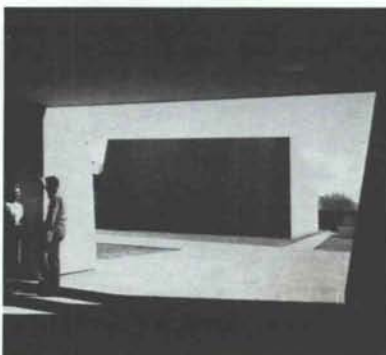
In late 1959 David Gebhard, who went on to become one of the best-known architectural historians in the United States, took on the editorship of the magazine and initiated some coverage of New Mexico's architectural history. The earliest issues included profiles of architects, drawings and information on buildings in progress, and reports from the School of Architecture. Occasionally during the sixties, an architect would write an article of opinion, such as Philippe Register's "What Regional Architecture Means to Me," and articles by Don P. Schlegel on space as an element in design and on trends in modern architecture.

In later years there have been more articles about completed

building projects, and coverage of the state society's design awards has become consistent and thorough. Trends in American architectural thinking become visible over the years. In 1959, the magazine reported that New Mexico would get federal funds for "slum clearance"—which became known as "urban renewal," and led to the wiping out of most of the center of the city of Albuquerque. Later on, the controversies surrounding the demolition of the Franciscan and the Alvarado Hotels and the Ilfeld Building were covered in more detail.



Above: the Mills House, Springer, New Mexico, Page 7, May-June, 1971. Upper, right: San Pedro Branch Library, John Reed, Architect, from Page 11, May-June, 1968 awards issue. Below: "College of Education, University of New Mexico, Flatow, Moore, Bryan and Fairburn, Architects," by Bainbridge Bunting, Pages 18 & 19, May-June, 1963.



All photographs by Dick Kent.

