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THE INFLUENCE OF BRITISH CULTURE ON THE ADVANCE OF MODERN ARCHITECTURE IN THE UNITED KINGDOM

A Thesis or Project

Submitted

in Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Designation

University Honors with Distinction

Shannon K. Holt

University of Northern Iowa

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This Study by: Shannon Holt

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Dr. Melba Widmer, Honors Thesis/Project Advisor

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Jessica Moon, Director, University Honors Program

Table of Contents

Aesthetics and Taste	3
Modern versus Traditional Architecture	3
Central Questions and Method	4
British Design History	6
The Destruction of World War II	7
Government Initiatives and Urban Planning	8
Le Corbusier and the Introduction of a New Style	11
Expected Change in Style	13
Backlash	14
Changing View of the Architect	18
The Conservation Movement	20
Architecture and Thatcherism	22
The Prince of Wales on Architecture	23
Critique of the Prince's Views	27
The Prince's Effect	29
British Culture and the Advance of Modern Architecture	31
Recent History	36
Present Examples	40
The Future of British Architecture	44
Works Cited	47
Appendix: Building Photographs, Figures 1-26	50

The Influence of British Culture on the Advance of Modern Architecture in the United Kingdom

Aesthetics and Taste

Wars of taste are constant and usually ironic, filled with double standards, oversimplifications, and opinions lacking in justification. For example, the Chinese American architect I. M. Pei fought against architect Michael Graves' addition to the Whitney Museum in New York City even after he had just come out of a similar fight, with people objecting to his glass pyramids in the courtyard of the traditional Louvre building in Paris. The debate ranges on many stages and in many fields, but in architecture particularly because of its constant, unavoidable presence in our lives. Architecture is the most public of the arts, and as such is one of the most debated.

In his book *The Prince, The Architects and New Wave Monarchy,* Charles Jencks asserts that architecture is prone to fostering aesthetic discrimination because its interpretation is so interrelated with social issues and ethnic considerations, and because architecture is a field in which one style of practice tends to dominate over all the others. This simplification of style may also explain why the taste debate becomes simplified to two sides: "good taste" and "bad taste".

Modern versus Traditional Architecture

There are, in general, two main camps serving as opposing sides in the great debate on architecture: the traditionalists and the modernists. The former believes in the historical, classical styles of building; the latter believes in the new, experimental, avant-

garde styles of building. Traditional building styles include the types of architecture that Great Britain is known for, the types of buildings that come to mind when one imagines England: Buckingham Palace or Tower Bridge (see Figures 1, 2). Modern buildings are known for their unusual forms and for making use of high-tech or unusual materials; steel and glass make frequent appearances. This building style is not typically associated with the United Kingdom, though there are many examples: the Lloyd's building or London's City Hall (see Figures 3, 4). There is also a smaller group of Post Modernists that would aim to combine the two styles in harmony. For the two main sides, however, the styles should not mix without careful consideration, if even then.

Central Questions and Method

In the summer of 2004, I stood in London inside the Tower of London, began in 1066, and looked across the Thames to London's City Hall, completed in 2002. One a structure of ancient stone, traditional and a landmark of Great Britain, the other a structure of steel and glass, which I did not know the name of without inquiring. Such contrasts are nearly nonexistent in the United States, as so much new architecture is encouraged, and older architecture is replaced or never existed in the first place. Research into the relationship between modern and traditional in the United Kingdom uncovered a debate that has been alive and thriving here for several decades. Other European countries, such as France, have managed to incorporate Modern architecture into their ancient cities with panache, creating landmarks that become symbols of their cities and stand as some of the best examples of modern architecture. This is not the case

in Great Britain; no modern landmarks have risen to notoriety, no great examples of architecture jump forth. Rowan Moore put it well:

> It is a common lament that London has no grand projects: no Louvre pyramid, no Bastille Opera House, no Parc de la Villette. Not only Paris puts London in the shade: provincial European cities such as Marseilles, Nîmes, and Bilbao seem able and willing to put up confident public buildings by the world's best architects. All London has to show for its late building boom—the biggest ever—is a collection of fast-dating, fast-ageing, oversized office blocks.
>
> This is not for any lack of native talent. It is recognized everywhere but here that many of the world's most imaginative and innovative architects are British, and for the first time in history Britain has become a prolific exporter of architectural stars. (Moore 27)

Why is it that Britain is not home to more remarkable Modern buildings, and why has the debate between the two architectural paradigms of modern and traditional been so intense in the United Kingdom? What is the effect of the British culture on the advance of Modern architecture in the U.K.?

Through exploring literature, conducting on-site observations and living in London, I have examined these questions with respect to the history of Modern architecture and Britain's respective role in it, the history of Britain and of their urban planning and architectural needs, the introduction of the Modern style and the subsequent backlash, the influence of the Prince of Wales, and the direct influence of the culture itself. I have attempted to analyze both the history, the present, and to speculate on the future of the Modern movement in the United Kingdom.

British Design History

In the history of design, the British have played a significant role, and the history of Modern architecture is no exception. Some have traced the history of Modern architecture back nearly 200 years; the British played a rather significant role in its development throughout. John Ruskin (1819-1900) brought a voice for the working class and a sense of morality to architecture, encouraging the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood and their messages of truth, reality, and closeness to nature. William Morris (1834-1896), with his stance against mass production, placed Ruskin's messages into furnishings. Joseph Paxton (1801-1865) designed the Crystal Palace in 1851, the massive glass structure constructed under the patronage of Queen Victoria's consort Prince Albert, which was a first glimpse into the structural possibilities of modern materials, and a venue for the Great Exhibition that introduced the public to a world beyond England's borders (see Figure 5). London's King's Cross Station, was designed by Lewis Cubitt (1799-1883), and demonstrated that modern functioning such as transportation did not need to be hidden, but could be effectively integrated into the design. William Lethaby (1857-1931), in 1893, called on his fellow architects to come up with a symbolism that could be interpreted by all. Charles Rennie Mackintosh (1868-1928), whose buildings dominate Glasgow to this day, turned Lethaby's ideas into built form (see Figure 6). Ebenezer Howard (1850-1928) invented the "Garden City", a new take on urban planning designed to enhance the quality of life. An adopted Briton, Nikolaus Pevsner (1902-1983), defined the importance of the English contribution to the Modern canon, and Peter and Alison Smithson modified that canon to create an urban format for the postwar welfare state of Britain in the form of Brutalist architecture.

Design activity tends to produce design controversy, and Britain periodically erupts in design debate. The 1980s was one such time, as the debate between modern and traditional architecture came to the forefront. The roots of that debate, however, had their roots many years earlier, with the destruction of World War II.

The Destruction of World War II

The destruction of World War II came home to Britain with the start of the Blitz, the shortened form of blitzkrieg applied to the bombings of Britain by Germany. Beginning on September 7, 1940 with heavy raids on London, the attack intensified quickly. In the first 24 nights, the German Air Force used 5,300 tons of explosives to bomb London. Raids were often carried out at night to increase fear, as a major initiative of the bombing was to break Britain's spirit. Accordingly, the Germans bombed London as well as major coastal ports and production and supply centers.

Many took residence in shelters provided by the government as the raids became a nearly continuous phenomenon, which served to increase the spirit and sense of community in the country. In London, many opted to sleep in the Underground stations for safety. While sporadic raids continued throughout the war, the Blitz was ended in May 1941, when Germany turned their attentions to Russia. ("The Blitz: Sorting the Myth from the Reality")

In the aftermath of the Blitz, holes were left in London where buildings once stood. Nearly one in six Londoners, or 1.4 million people, were left homeless by the Blitz (WW2 People's War Team). As a result, new homes were desperately needed for both bombing victims and for returning soldiers and their new families.

Government Initiatives and Urban Planning

The British government had begun to look at rebuilding Britain after World War I. In the aftermath of the Great War, Prime Minister David Lloyd George had introduced a program called "Homes Fit for Heroes," a plan to construct 300,000 new residences. From then on, the government placed an emphasis on building new homes, promising voters a new, improved quality of life and the eradication of city slums. The emphasis grew with the destruction of World War II, creating an even greater thrust towards new homes and new methods of urban planning.

The British government's new look towards urban planning had its roots in the Barlow Report, formally known as the *Report of the Royal Commission on Distribution of Industrial Population*, published in 1940. The report was the result of the Barlow Commission, set up in 1937 by the Conservative Prime Minister Neville Chamberlain to examine the distribution of the population in industrial Britain, considering what the social, economic, and strategic disadvantages of concentration in industry and in population were, and to report potential remedies that would be in the best interest of the nation. The commission recommended that congested areas be developed, industries and the industrial population be decentralized, and that industrial development be diversified throughout Great Britain. It stressed the importance of garden areas, suburbs, satellite towns and strategic planning. (Landau 15-16)

The report's findings were considered when Lord Reith became the Minister of Works in Prime Minister Winston Churchill's wartime government in 1941. In 1942,

Lord Reith proposed that a plan be prepared for the Greater London area, and he gave the responsibility to Sir Patrick Abercrombie, who had served on the Barlow Commission.

The first report prepared by Abercrombie, along with J. H. Forshaw, was the County of London Plan which concluded that in order to achieve recommended standards a large population displacement was in order. The overspill was planned for in the second report prepared by Abercrombie, the Greater London Plan. This plan included more suburbs and towns, and set out plans for seven to ten new towns to be built. These plans turned theories and reports into actionable strategies, and were the first step in the process of regional reorganization that changed the face of urban planning in Great Britain.

Churchill's plans, however, were never fully realized. The plans were laid for new buildings to be constructed in the traditional, labor-intensive, material-laden style. Materials, unfortunately, were in extreme shortage after the war. While there was an excess of labor with troops returning home from the war without employment, new buildings and homes were needed quickly, and traditional building methods were too slow to satisfy the government's requirements. Plans for development continued to progress after the Labour party took over from Churchill's government, but they were modified to reflect the necessity of the time.

The first postwar planning legislation was passed by the new Labour government in 1946. The New Towns Act set in motion parameters for the development of ten new towns in England between 1945 and 1951. The towns were built on a similar template, supporting a Town Center, similar density housing estates with social centers, and industrial areas usually on the perimeter of the town. The new towns included sparse,

low density housing, which many were critical of. The new planning was in stark contrast to the traditional towns and style of planning in Great Britain, and many were disappointed, feeling the new structures did not foster social connections. Royston Landau described the New Town style in his *New Directions in British Architecture*:

> It was a consistent style, especially considering the many architects who were responsible for it, and its most standard features were pitched roofs, brick load-bearing walls (often partly rendered on the exterior), painted wood trim, and, sometimes, small balconies. The landscaping was picturesque and usually showed great respect for trees and planting. New Town style housing was Swedish inspired (Banham called it the Swedish retreat from Modern Architecture), but it was also influenced b the official Government "Housing Manuals," by the minimum conceivable cost limits, by traditional materials and methods of construction, and by a general "making-the-best-of-it" approach to design which the Architectural Review called "The New Empiricism." (23)

The Labour government approached building after the war with the same militarism with which they had approached the war. "Operation Housing", operated by Aneurin Bevan, aimed to build new homes as quickly as possible. Resources turned from supplying a war to rebuilding the country. The approach required a new style to build in. Traditional forms used materials that were not available in those rationed years, and were far too labor-intensive to satisfy the immediate need to house the nation. Likewise, the traditional town structure was something built over time; a mix of private homes and businesses that grew gradually, and was not conducive to mass production.

Le Corbusier and the Introduction of a New Style

In Europe, the Modern movement had begun in the 1920s with the German Bauhaus school. Its lack of decoration seen as a refreshing change and a fundamental approach, the style spread through the continent before the war. The style, quick to build, flexible and functional, seemed the perfect solution to Britain's housing needs. Despite a lack of the building materials required, the idea of the style grew. In particular, the ideas of the French modernist Le Corbusier caught on with the urban planners and architects of Britain.

Le Corbusier presented an ordered vision of town planning, in which mass production was key and chaos was eliminated. David Hackney quotes the architect: "Dwellings, urban and suburban, will be enormous and square-built; they will incorporate the principle of mass production and of large-scale industrialization. Our towns will be ordered instead of being chaotic (4)." Plans from Le Corbusier's La Ville Radieuse provided a model of zoning, producing towns on a grid system divided into areas for working, education, business, industry, and living. This order appealed greatly to the town councils of Britain.

Le Corbusier was also a great advocate for building towers for people to live in; this, he felt, would remove people from the noise and mess of traffic, noise, and smells. This idea appealed to the planners given the limited space with which they had to work. The Alton West estate in Roehampton (see Figure 7), completed in 1958, was built on that model; architects from London City Council tore down Victorian town houses on the edge of Richmond Park to build the towers, leaving the landscape and trees intact between so the new towers were set into already thriving greenery.

Both Le Corbusier and the architects of the Bauhaus were proponents of mass production schemes for building. With the British government promising to build half a million homes per year, these mass production methods appeared as the only way to satisfy that promise. Traditional building methods were no longer adequate.

In 1954, building licenses were lifted, spurning a boom of building, particularly in London. Not surprisingly, the new Modern style enjoyed a concurrent boom. The skyline of London was altered with the construction several new towers. In 1962, the 351-foot high Shell Centre was constructed near Waterloo Station, becoming London's tallest building. The Vickers Tower (now Millbank Tower), standing 287 feet high opposite the Thames at Millbank (see Figure 8), soon joined, as did the 328-foot tall Park Lane Hilton Hotel in central London. In 1964, a major development occurred in the City of London when 13 acres of Georgian and Victorian homes were demolished in favor of the Barbican, a development of privately-owned tower blocks alongside London Wall (see Figure 9). The next year, Centre Point on Oxford Street was constructed (see Figure 10). The tower of concrete became a symbol of the post-war property boom, as its value continued to increase despite its remaining empty for fifteen years.

Modern building was increasing outside of London as well, with buildings of note including Frederick Gibberd's Liverpool Cathedral (see Figure 11) and Basil Spence's Coventry Cathedral (see Figure 12). The Engineering Building at Leicester University, built in 1964 by James Stirling and James Gowan (see Figure 13), was considered a success.

Some of the harsher post-war buildings were created by Alison and Peter Smithson. Their form of architecture was known as Brutalism. Heavily influenced by Le Corbusier's Le Corbusier's Unité d'Habitation at Marseilles, the style used concrete in chunky, solid forms. The style was very angular, and was meant to create a sense of spatial tension that would reflect the confusion and harshness of modern life ("New Brutalism Architecture"). The Smithsons were known for their urban housing and office blocks in England, such as the Economist Building in London, built between 1962 and 1964. Other noted Brutalist buildings are housed on London's South Bank, including Denys Lasdun's Royal National Theatre, opened in 1976 (see Figure 14), Hubert Bennett and Jack Whittle's Hayward Gallery of 1968 (see Figure 15), both near to one of London's first Modern buildings, the Royal Festival Hall of 1951.

Expected Change in Style

The new style of building and town planning was meant to increase the quality of citizens' lives. The new tower blocks would provide them with light, space, properly working utilities, and a quiet place away from industry. How they were seen by the inhabitants, however, was quite different. The new style of planning required a change from the lifestyle that people were accustomed to. Formerly, houses had been integrated among shops, pubs, and other places of work. There were areas for community gatherings and the lifestyle encouraged was one of socialization. The new homes, being separated from the rest of the town, did not encourage this form of life. It made walking a more impractical mode of transport. Big changes in lifestyle as well as architectural

style were required. To add to the difficulty in adjustment, structural problems began to emerge.

While the new Modern style and buildings were being hailed by some, cracks in the utopia-like ultimate Modern existence were beginning to appear. The flat roof style so adored by Modern architects was functionally inadequate given Britain's rainy climate. However, the pitched roof was seen as too traditional. Rod Hackney recalls being trained in the Modern style in architecture school, where the problems that may have arose with the style were explained away: "We were even told that it was good for flat roofs to collect rain because the water would act as insulation! (17)". As flat roofs began to leak, concrete began to stain, and walls made of plastic and glass became expensive to heat. Many of the quick-build modern buildings were beginning to crumble, and with them the reputation of modern design in Britain.

Rod Hackney points out one issue involved with tower block living in his assessment of the modern Alton West estate:

> Alton West was considered to be a huge success—the national newspapers and trade magazines ran stories proclaiming that the smart apartments offered everything required for modern lifestyles. They were light, hygienic, streamlined and set in the most beautiful surroundings. But Alton West was also the beginning of the blight. Architects and planners failed to recognize that good landscaping, meticulously maintained, is a necessary concomitant to tower block living. But if no landlord cares enough to keep the surroundings clean and tidy, even the most houseproud tenant gives up in disgust. Litter and vandalism breed more of the same. (13-14)

Backlash

After spending time in Denmark admiring the modern architecture community there, architect Rod Hackney returned in 1971 to his native Britain, suddenly changed by Modern architecture:

> It was a changed Britain to which I returned: in just four years many towns and cities had been transformed. The guts had been torn out of them, and new building had been carried out at an alarming rate. . . Whole areas were unrecognizable . . . In the city centers, where I remembered rows of individual, small old shops, there were now concrete slab precincts. All sense of scale and perspective had been lost.
>
> It was not only the look of these places that had changed. People's attitudes had, too. They had begun to protest against their new homes and environments. In Denmark I had grown used to informed dialogue between the public, architects and the state. In Britain there were two simultaneous monologues—the public in opposition to official policy. Faith in the state machine and the better way offered by Modernist architecture had been badly shaken. (37)

Modern buildings came to be seen as lacking in entertainment and facilities, history and community. They were viewed as ugly, badly designed and constructed, poorly integrated into their environments, and were blamed for social problems including increasing crime rates and loss of community.

An element of fear was added to the discontent of the public living in the modern towers on May 16, 1968. A gas explosion occurred at the Ronan Point tower in Newham, in the East End of London (see Figure 16). The twenty-three-storey tower was constructed with the Larsen-Neilsen system of construction, in which the building has no skeletal structure and is comprised of slabs 'hinged' together. The lack of a central structure meant that the loss of one slab would cause the building to collapse. When the gas explosion at Ronan Point blew out one of the building's concrete slabs, an entire corner of the building collapsed. Five people died and eighty were injured, and the story was broadcast widely around the country. The builders, Taylor Woodrow-Anglian, had built forty towers in London the same way, and more than six hundred around the country, not to mention the work of other builders around the country.

While the architects and engineers claimed the building system had helped prevent more damage than a traditional building would have sustained, formal inquiries soon uncovered the poor construction of the building. National investigations showed the system was susceptible to wind, fire, or any small explosion. All over the country, developers were forced to invest money to strengthen their quick-built blocks. As a result, the speed building of councils slowed drastically. While in 1953 councils in England and Wales had constructed 7000 towers, by 1968 the figure had increased to 30,500. After the Ronan Point disaster, in 1971 the figure had decreased to only 8000 (Hackney 39).

Another effect of the Ronan Point collapse was the opening of a forum for residents to voice their complaints over the standards of living in these council blocks. The occupants spoke about feeling that the blocks were impersonal, brutal, and often

violent. Cases of extreme situations came to the forefront. In Manchester, the chief public health officer of the City Council, Alf Young, followed the housing laws that stated that any building built prior to 1919 was a slum and had to be demolished, ruining many historical buildings. Also in Manchester was the site of the Hulme development. Hulme had, when built, been praised as a model of urban renewal. The reality turned out quite different, as Rod Hackney describes:

> The outside areas were unkempt, frightening, windswept places strewn with litter, glass and broken furniture, and fouled by the dogs that people kept in their flats to ward off intruders. Inside there was a prison atmosphere. The concrete had become stained and unsightly, some flats had been burned out as a protest against the council, and the lifts, stinking of urine, frequently didn't work. The long corridors and dark corners were terrifying at night. The only people giving awards and plaudits to architects now were the muggers and burglars. They appreciated how the Modernist designs afforded them ample hideaways, alleys, and dingy hangouts. (41-42)

Residents had also been harboring another seed of resentment against the Modern structures: the way in which they had been constructed and the land acquired. The government had taken communities living in older homes and had effectively forced them out in order to demolish the old developments and build new tower blocks. Government needed to acquire land at the lowest possible cost, which entailed several methods that could be seen as underhanded. They deliberately deflated prices by declaring homes unfit to live in. After a significant percentage of the community's residents had been forced out through these tactics, the community balance was upset,

leaving a majority of minority groups that would demand the council's services disproportionately. In the end, a dependent state was created, and the tenants were forced into silence which erupted into violence, including riots in 1981 and 1985.

Changing View of the Architect

The architects of the Modern style meant well. Le Corbusier's motto, "A house is a machine for living in", exemplifies the intention of the architects. They desired to create new spaces for people that would function better and would provide an improved quality of life. Despite the initial intentions of the architects, during the introduction of the Modern style in Britain, there were several events and influences that altered the general perception of architects, and may have contributed to the negative assessments of Modern architecture.

In the ideal scenario, the architect is both an artist aiming to create a valuable addition to the scenery and art of a city and a liaison between a client's desires and a client's needs in order to create a truly functional space. However, the environment architects were working under during the introduction of the modern style in Britain contained several elements that were not conducive to that ideal situation.

Whereas in the past clients had been individuals, frequently from the fine arts world, the new client became the government, and pleasing the planning councils became the primary goal. Both the councils and the developers in charge of the budgets demanded work to be done quickly, as time cost everyone money, and there was no room for overspending in the budget. Pressure built to build more with less, leaving less time to think about the function and design of the space, and little if any time to customize the

project to the end user's needs. The architects lost authority as the developers and the budget took over the power in the design. Time spent pleasing the bureaucracy detracted from time that would have been spent on the integrity of the design. There was also pressure on the designs coming from those unappreciative of design quality; often, the council members placed in authority to approve designs had no architecture background and lacked appreciation for the designs, and the developers in charge of the budget knew well that simple concrete was less expensive than innovation and complexity.

The degrading view of the architect was not assisted by Le Corbusier, the inspiration for so much of Britain's modern development. Le Corbusier was well-known for his thoughts on clients; he felt that they were more of an enemy, a hindrance to the project's progress, rather than the catalyst for the project's design. At a time when architecture students in Britain were being taught to emulate Le Corbusier, these views helped to create an image of architects as thoughtless and against clients, creating designs for their own taste without taking anything else (save, perhaps, the budget) into consideration. This was also occurring during a time when architecture schools were moving away from educating architects to be renaissance people, knowledgeable in many specialties, towards the architect relying on other specialists, engineers and so on, without questioning their expertise.

Examples began to appear to underline this stereotype of the thoughtless, harsh architect. In particular, Britain dealt with a scandal involving architect John Poulson. In the course of a long-running bankruptcy hearing, Poulson's insalubrious tactics were exposed. Poulson had utilized contacts in the government, public bodies, clubs, and with local authorities to seal building deals. He had also bribed and paid off when necessary

to develop his practice into one of the largest in Europe. The general opinion was that Poulson was not a talented designer; rather, he was simply a man that knew how to work the system, and had exploited whenever necessary. The scandal's backlash included the fall of a cabinet minister, the fall of the Labour party in the North East of Britain, and the imprisonment of a Labour leader of the Newcastle City Council. The image of architects as people that do not consider the client and care only about their own agendas became the common stereotype.

The Conservation Movement

As a response to both the architectural losses of World War II and the destruction caused by the eradication of the slums involved with the introduction of the Modern style, a conservation movement began to gain speed in the 1970s. Conservation had been a general concern for much longer. In Great Britain, there are two organizations that exist to protect historic and unusual buildings in the country. The National Trust is a charity, created in 1895 to protect and preserve the countryside's areas of natural beauty as well as historic structures. English Heritage is an agency of the government created to assist and advise the government in matters concerning conservation. Both gained momentum with the new thrust towards conservation, beginning with the 1969 Housing Act. The Act was meant to encourage renovation of existing buildings due to the era's economic downfall, which was making new builds harder to fund.

There were several other events during that time that prompted the growth in the conservation movement. In 1974, the Victoria and Albert Museum in London put on an exhibition entitled "The Destruction of the English Country House." The exhibition

highlighted the country houses lost during the twentieth century. Some of the houses had been lost due to destruction from war or development, and others had been lost due to neglect or through sale. The houses once owned by the aristocracy were now frequently being left to fall apart or were being sold due to the immense cost of owning and fixing one up. Losses constituted not only homes in deteriorated states, but also homes sold to "undesirable" people, such as non-English people and those that would convert the property into something commercial. The losses shocked the public, despite a highly successful post-war rescue scheme run by the National Trust.

After the exhibition, the contents of Mentmore Towers in Buckinghamshire (see Figure 17), an Elizabethan house built in 1855, went on sale. The sale consisted of Lord Rosebery's extensive and valuable collection of furniture and art. The sale prompted an outcry for the state to step in and save the treasures from being split up and from leaving England, but no action was taken. The lot was sold for £6 million and the empty house was sold to the Maharishi Mahesh Yogi, and today houses the University of Natural Law and the grounds now include a golf course.

After the loss of Mentmore, the National Heritage Memorial Fund was constructed as a "last resort fund" to stop works of art from leaving the country or being dispersed. Due to the fund, no important English country house has been "lost" for thirty years.

Another victory for the conservation proponents came in the mid-1970s when London's Covent Garden (see Figure 18) was cited as a historical site. The citing broke with the tradition of demolishing and rebuilding, and moved the prevailing attitude towards conservation.

Architecture and Thatcherism

In 1979, the Conservative Party, headed by Margaret Thatcher, took over the government. They proceeded to further cut public spending, which continued the recession the construction industry had been facing throughout the 1970s. The lack of public commissions turned the 1980s into a decade of individualism, in which architectural commissions came mostly from private clients.

Another trait of the 1980s that effected architecture was the advance of technology. Technology had now moved forward so quickly that buildings built only twenty years prior were out of date, unable to keep up with the new requirements of housing technology. To add to the need for buildings to accommodate technology, the London Stock Exchange closed in 1986, making computer connections necessary to trade stocks. In order to fulfill the demand, American architects such as John Burgee, Philip Johnson and Cesar Pelli were called in because they were experienced in constructing high-tech buildings quickly. They used "fast-track" techniques such as using large, steel-framed structures with materials such as glass, steel aluminum and chrome, with the fastening devices exposed. Buildings such as Arup Associates' 1 Finsbury Avenue were built around atriums to light the offices, an emphasis was placed on lighting, modern sculpture, and indoor landscaping. Building was occurring rapidly: between 1985 and 1993, the number of offices in the City doubled (Christopher 191).

Whole areas of Britain began to be rapidly redeveloped. One such area was the Docklands, a two square mile area in the eastern part of London, on the River Thames. Formerly a port for London, between 1967 and 1980, the area had declined as the modern port of Tilbury grew in size and importance. Lady Thatcher's government offered

financial incentives to build in the area, and many companies began to relocate to less expensive, new buildings in the area. Fleet Street, the district housing London's press, moved almost entirely to the Docklands to save money. The buildings were built in the new, high-tech Modern style.

As David Christopher noted, "In the past, some of the most visually impressive, futuristic and innovative buildings were built as religious monuments. In the last century they often expressed civic grandeur. In the 1960s and 1970s they were built as tributes to the arts. But in the 1980s it was the commercial spirit which was embodied in futuristic, high-tech cathedrals to capitalism (191-192)." Critics called the new developments arrogant and extravagant, and charged them with symbolizing the excess of the 1980s. But the development in the Docklands was the most ambitious ever to be undertaken in Britain, and it exerted an influence around the country. Many other businesses followed the Docklands example and moved from old buildings with high maintenance costs to business parks and designated industrial areas on the edges of cities.

An economy growing in strength produced a strong and increasingly hard to please consumer culture. As establishments began to compete on design and décor, architects saw increased commissions for commercial and retail spaces. There was also an increase in the building of sports centers, art galleries, and museums.

The Prince of Wales on Architecture

His Royal Highness Charles, The Prince of Wales is known in the United Kingdom for having a fervent interest in many different causes, of which one particular interest is architecture. In this, the most public of the arts, Prince Charles became in short

order its most visible critic, disagreeing with much of the trend in modern architecture. The Prince supported Community Architects, Classicists, and Conservationists while opposing Modernists and Late Modernists mostly. While he disagrees aesthetically with the Modern style as a whole, there are several other reasons why he feels it is the wrong direction for Great Britain. He began to voice his interest in the subject loudly in the mid-1980s. In 1984, at the 150th anniversary of the Royal Institute of British Architects, the Prince of Wales launched an attack on Modern architecture, stating that "For far too long, it seems to me, some planners and architects have consistently ignored the feelings and wishes of the mass of ordinary people in this country . . . Consequently a large number of us have developed a feeling that architects tend to design houses for the approval of fellow architects and critics, not for the tenants ("The Prince's Work: Architecture")." His speech and interest in the topic led to a BBC documentary and a companion book entitled *A Vision of Britain: A Personal View of Architecture.* In his book, the Prince explained his interest as a valid concern, rather than a frivolous interest:

> I would just like to emphasize that my particular interest in architecture and the environment is not a result of my trying to find something to fill my day and then settling on this subject. For a long time I have felt strongly about the wanton destruction which has taken place in this country in the name of progress; about the sheer, unadulterated ugliness and mediocrity of public and commercial buildings, and of housing estates, not to mention the dreariness and heartlessness of so much urban planning. (7)

The Prince states that the modern architectural styles popularized in the 1950s and 1960s were merely fads that have resulted in problematic buildings lacking in character

that Britain must endure now. He aimed his criticism at the field of architecture in particular because he believes that the field took hold of the cultural agenda in the 1950s and 1960s and essentially forced a new architecture for rebuilding post-war Britain. Architects, he states, hold so much power over what is built and are out of touch with, or do not care, what the citizens want. A component of this he cites is the hold of the architectural establishment over schools of architecture, not allowing traditional practices to be taught and discouraging students that want to utilize traditional forms. He holds that architects believe that they should build from what is the trend in the current age, without respect for the past. According to the prince, severing this connection to the past deprives buildings, and thus culture, of a soul.

Following with the Prince's beliefs, the current state of architecture is modern as a derivation of the technological wave sweeping today's societies. A tie to the past through the comfort of traditional architecture is a way the Prince feels society can maintain its soul. In order for this to occur, he holds that architects must be more open to public opinion, and must allow traditional design to be taught in architecture schools.

In his book, the Prince outlines ten principles of architecture, which he proposes can be used as a code for building, and can be used to reconstruct urban areas to create something more along the lines of an "urban village". The Prince's ten principles are as follows:

1. The Place. New buildings should be designed to adhere to the natural, existing contour of the land and to the scale of the land. Buildings should not be intrusions onto the landscape visually or ecologically.

2. Hierarchy. Buildings should be built in hierarchies with respect to their relative public importance. There is also a hierarchy to be dealt with in terms of the relative significance of the elements that comprise the building; for example, the front door should stand out over the back door and so on. Through hierarchy, buildings act as dialogue and guide people as well as serve as symbols of society and culture and values held by that society.

3. Scale. Buildings should relate in scale first and foremost to human proportions, and second should relate to the scale of surrounding buildings. Those great buildings that defy this scale, such as a large cathedral, are reflections of the aspirations of the culture.

4. Harmony. Buildings should fit in with their surroundings, and should not differentiate themselves from their neighbors. According to the Prince in *A Vision of Great Britain*, while this might be acceptable in other countries, it is not in Great Britain, "because of the scale of our country it is more necessary to respect our indigenous roots than to imitate transient international architectural fashions. Our older towns cannot easily absorb the more extreme examples of outlandish modern design (83)."

5. Enclosure. On a scale large or small, buildings should strive to create a sense of cohesion, continuity, community, and enclosure. Examples include squares and courtyards; the Prince states that this is best achieved through having few entrances to the space.

6. Materials. Using local materials is key to maintaining the sense of local loyalty and pride that has existed for centuries throughout Britain.

7. Decoration. "We need to reinstate architecture as the mistress of the arts and the crafts (Prince of Wales 91)." Decoration adds a universal sense of meaning through symbolism, and should be reinstated (it is missing from modern architecture, according to the Prince) to inject meaning into architecture again.

8. Art. Art is distinguished from decoration here by defining decoration as being concerned with pattern and repetition and art being singular and unique. According to the Prince, modern architecture is lacking in the contribution of artists which was prevalent in classic architecture (for example, Rubens' ceiling in London's Banqueting House in Whitehall). The lack of art in modern architecture makes new buildings appear dull, and artists should be asked once again to contribute to architecture in order to add interest to new buildings.

9. Signs & Lights. The Prince states that streets have been marred by advertising for businesses and street lights for cars. He goes so far in his critique of advertising to accuse companies of demoralizing towns by placing signage without respect to the town's atmosphere. While he recognizes that signs and lights can not be eradicated (he stops short of saying they are a necessity), he proposes that wires be buried wherever possible and requests that it be remembered that the standard solution to the problem (i.e., a plastic store sign) is never enough.

10. Community. Those that will reside in the building or community should be involved in its creation from the start through to the finish, because the right surroundings can create and maintain a community spirit and pride.

Critique of the Prince's Views

The outspoken opinions of the Prince of Wales have not gone without notice among the architecture community. His views that the community should be allowed to dictate what is built have been of particular concern to the professional community; Charles Jencks raises the question of whether the majority should be allowed to reign over the minority to set a style for the professional community to execute. Could this not turn into a chaotic mess? For example, the Prince proposes that the alterations to the neighborhood around St. Paul's Cathedral in London be voted on by the community; the question Jencks poses in response is, which community? Those that live or work near that cathedral or all of London, all of England, even all of the United Kingdom? After all, St. Paul's is a national monument. The question of where to draw the line in such situations becomes blurred and complicated. And there is the ever-present question of progress; if the styles are dictated by a public resistant to change, how will progress occur?

Jencks also raises the question of whether the majority truly does speak through the Prince. Some have criticized him instead for speaking for the overpriviliged and underprivileged, rather than the mainstream; it has been said that his views are best representative of the poor and of the aesthetic tastes of the extremely rich. Those on the side of Modernism also frequently claim to represent the interests of the general public; they cite facts such as the number of visitors to Paris' modern Pompidou Center exceeding the number of visitors to the Eiffel Tower and the Louvre combined, which seems to imply a preference of the general public for the Modern style. This sheds doubt

on whether the Prince of Wales is actually representing the court of public opinion accurately.

Some have blatantly called the Prince ill informed, discrediting his opinions on the whole. There are certain ironies to his principles; for example, he places a distinct emphasis on the importance of scale and proportion in architecture, and claims that this is lacking in the modern style. However, Le Corbusier, as one example, made extensive use of proportion and the mathematical calculations of the Golden Mean in his architecture.

Many of those under attack by the Prince also took offense to his remarks and his position. Peter Ahrends, the architect responsible for the proposed National Gallery extension termed a "monstrous carbuncle" by the Prince, reacted to his 1984 speech as quoted by Charles Jencks: "The Prince's remarks were offensive, reactionary and ill-considered. He seems to have a rather nostalgic view of buildings, as if they grow out of the Earth, a view of life no longer with us. He seems to be looking backwards rather than forwards (18)."

The Prince's Effect

Judged by unofficial opinion polls and the responses to the Prince's speeches and documentary, he appears to be right in his assessment of architecture styles. The people of the United Kingdom appear to agree with his views. Millions saw the Prince's BBC documentary. In *A Vision of Britain*, he stated that, after the film was shown, around 5,000 people wrote letters to him on the topic, 99% of which were in support of his views, and a further 0.5% supported his views with qualifications (9). His critics, however, have raised objections and questions to his assertion that he speaks for the

whole of the British public on this matter. Indeed, considering the privileged and sheltered life that he lives, how "in touch" can he be?

For the public as a whole, the Prince's comments spurned a great design debate. The RIBA had officially opened the "Great Debate" in 1982, but it was not until the Prince's involvement that there was any great public interest. Charles Jencks states in *The Prince, The Architects and New Wave Monarchy* that even the Prince's critics must thank him for his involvement in some regard, because he had made architecture once again the public art it is supposed to be by opening up popular forums of debate with at least some media interest. Indeed, his speeches and opinions are tailor made for press coverage. He peppers his comments with vivid metaphors, one of his most famous being his likening a proposed addition to the National Gallery to a "monstrous carbuncle on the face of a much-loved and elegant friend ("The Prince's Work: Architecture")." He made reference himself to his reputation for stirring up the court of public opinion in a 1987 speech to the RIBA: "I would not have missed this award presentation for anything . . . It's after all one of my rare opportunities to stir things up, to throw a proverbial royal brick through the inviting plate glass of pompous professional pride and to jump feet first into the kind of Spaghetti Bolognese of red tape which clogs this country from one end to the other ("The Prince's Work: Architecture")." No longer is there a silent majority of people that are 'suffering' at the hands of architects; the debate is far livelier now. Perhaps this was the result of several decades of unhappiness with the trend towards modern architecture, rather than the Prince turning people against the modern style.

His comments and actions did have a tangible effect on the architecture profession. The Prince's intervention led to the demolition of some Modernist office

blocks around St. Paul's Cathedral to improve the view of the structure. The Ahrends design for the National Gallery extension did not survive the "monstrous carbuncle" speech; shortly thereafter, the design was rejected and a new one commissioned a Post-Modern design that won the Prince's approval (see Figure 19). The firms of Ahrends Burton and Koralek saw their work become sparse for a year and a half afterwards (Jencks 18). Richard Rogers, as one of the foremost architects pioneering the High-Tech style of Modern architecture, responded to a dangerous mood he felt was created by the Prince's actions, as quoted by Charles Jencks: "Modern architecture is in danger of being obliterated by an indiscriminate wave of nostalgia . . . A better understanding of history is essential, but uninformed criticism and the romanticizing of the past are not the ways to build a better environment today (19)."

British Culture and the Advance of Modern Architecture

A significant factor in the creation of any building is the client, and the client's relationship with the architect. One cannot help but question, then, the role of the British culture as a client in the creation of their modern architecture. While some charge the architect with creating the issues plaguing modern architecture in the post-war era, others point to the characteristics of British culture for allowing the problems to begin. An opinion piece published in *The Economist* elaborated on the role of the British society:

> Societies get the buildings they deserve both morally and in the literal sense that they commission architects and eventually pay for what is built. For some considerable time, British clients (even when spending public money) have lacked the qualities that would allow them to discharge their parts in their implicit

> compacts with their architects. A sense of good aesthetic taste, valuable though that may be because it is so often wanting, may be less important than their lack of clarity on the question of how they wish to live and work. How else does it come about that the most common complaint against British architects is that they are forever 'playing God' with other people's lives? Clients with an inkling of what they wanted would hardly let that happen to them on such an important matter. ("No grandeur, please")

Perhaps the British did know what they were after, or perhaps the nature of the culture prevented them from expressing it. Throughout this paper I have referred in general to Great Britain and the United Kingdom, encompassing England, Scotland, Wales, and Northern Ireland. Here, however, I must make a division between the English and the rest of the United Kingdom, as many of the cultural characteristics discussed in this section refer to the English specifically as opposed to the Scots, Welsh, or Irish. The English are stereotypically known for being a very reserved culture, for being shy and withdrawn and having a 'get on with it' attitude towards life. They do not even have a national symbol or public declaration, such as America's Pledge of Allegiance, to make a statement with. Expression is not an inherent instinct. Jeremy Paxman describes how the English liked to see themselves as "stoical, homely, quiet, disciplined, self-denying, kindly, honorable, and dignified people who would infinitely rather be tending their gardens than defending the world against a fascist tyranny (3)". This is not a culture prone to sweeping grand gestures in any format, let alone architecture. In the United States, for example, where outspoken gestures are commonplace and desired, clients do not have issues expressing their needs and wants, and Modern architecture has flourished.

The lack of enthusiasm for bold statements can also be tied into the self-esteem of the culture, as described in *The Economist* opinion piece: "Grand architecture is a measure of national self-esteem. Versailles records Louis XIV's triumphalism, Manhattan's skyline expresses America's boldness. Britain, by that measure, is at a low ebb ("No grandeur please")". Some have even likened the English demeanor to a sort of self-hatred: "Englishness can only be understood by including in it a self-criticism which frequently amounts to self-hatred" (Powers 59). This lack of cultural esteem again prohibits bold statements; perhaps a fear of failure prevents businesses from commissioning large, landmark structures.

The English can also be said to be rather prone to a melancholy state, in which failure is prevalent and expected. There is a sense of nobility in sacrificing one's happiness for the greater good. Paxman explains the mood of the English as such:

> But it is typical of the English to ignore the silver lining and to grasp at the cloud. The belief that something has rotted in England is widely held: a people cannot spend decades being told their civilization is in decline and not be affected by it. One political party after another has made promises to restore the integrity and standing of the country, which have turned out to be outrageous lies. . . The English put their faith in institutions, and of these, the British Empire has evaporated, the Church of England has withered away and Parliament is increasingly irrelevant. (17)

He later goes on to suggest that the English even enjoy feeling persecuted and aggressed against. The famous image of the tower of St. Paul's Cathedral rising above the smoke of the Blitz bombings is one of the most popular and well-known images in the country; it

conveys a sense of triumph, of rising above adversity as a people. With an attitude towards failure, it is no wonder the media spends so much time in Britain highlighting the failures of modern buildings.

Another characteristic of English culture that has affected their architecture is a sense of philistinism, described by Margaret Drabble: "Some of it [the mess in London] springs from a sort of stubborn English philistinism about architecture and city life, encouraged by the wilder utterances of the Prince of Wales. Not for us the pride of Paris in its pyramid, in its brave and soaring arch; not for us the multicolored panache of Stirling's Staatsgalerie in Stuttgart. We are timid and mean (18)". It is not a culture known for their taste, one needs look no farther than the national cuisine to see that. This type of stubborn opposition to the fine and high arts can be seen in the reluctance of the public to embrace the new, avant-garde styles of architecture they were being introduced to. Mixed within that philistine attitude is a profound dislike for change on the whole. Jeremy Paxman writes of a postcard sent to him by famous English playwright in response to a request for an interview, at the end of which the man had written that he had seen Paxman's village thirty years ago and hoped that it had not changed since then, a comment which was "essentially English, the prayer of a people marching backwards into the future, for whom change always means change for the worse" (18).

Many would interpret Prince Charles and his band of Community Architects has having a likewise view, that the past is the only way forward, and his comments have only increased this resistance to change. To create a large, Modernist building is to risk the wrath of Prince Charles's public comments. The desire to win his approval, and possibly positive publicity stemming from it, is an incentive to build traditionally.

Recalling the English and their fear of being outspoken, of being ridiculed, the fear of being rebuked by a monarch-in-waiting merely adds to the desire to build classically:

> Modern Britain does not like architecture that takes risks. The taste police, led by Prince Charles, have decreed that post-modernist nostalgia should rule; too many new buildings in Britain, accordingly, consist of an ordinary structure with some coy decorative reference to the past attached. The nostalgics say they want to avoid the mistakes of the 1960s and 1970s. Sure, much was done then that was awful. But the real ugliness in Britain's cities is the result not of adventurousness but of utilitarian dullness: the blocks of undistinguished rain-streaked concrete that blot every high street. It is the mediocrities, not the visionaries, that Britain needs to get rid of; at the same time, it could foster a little grandeur. ("No grandeur please: architecture")

While grandeur goes against the traits of low self-esteem and melancholy spoken of previously, there is another issue connected that causes problems: money. Grandeur is expensive, and "British clients are also scandalously money-conscious ("Not by appointment" 190)". They may want impressive structures, but they want them on a budget, which means quality must suffer. Part of the difference between France's introduction of Modernism and the United Kingdom's is that the buildings were properly funded in France, while in the U.K. the budgets were kept so tight the structures were doomed for failure.

An attitude of failure has developed towards Modern architecture, and it has not been accepted as English yet. As such, a fictional divide has been created: Modern architecture is seen as 'not an English thing'. Powers described this gap:

> What is significant is the long-running assumption that Englishness and Modernism are completely and perennially irreconcilable and that the definition of Modernism is necessarily controlled by a centralized elite, which, by implication, is always excluding itself from Englishness. The danger of this system . . . is that it can justify every kind of architectural shortcoming committed in the name of Modernism, because the English are ignorant and have no taste. Sadly, this is largely true, but the whole system acts to perpetuate the assumption. (Powers 59)

Great Britain is a country with a growing interest in 'heritage' culture, with popular artifacts and representations of British history growing in popularity. The Modern image, therefore, seems out of place, and has not become a part of the culture.

Recent History

While commercial buildings were growing more modern in the 1980s, residential structures were growing more traditional. At the beginning of the decade, financial restrictions were relaxed on mortgages, causing property prices to rise rapidly. One of the most popular styles of homes was the so-called mock-Georgian, new buildings built in the traditional Georgian style. Architect Quinlan Terry built many homes in the style, sharing the same desire as the Neo-Classicists of the past, to make new buildings look old. For centuries, the opposite had been the case; people strove to make their old buildings look new, producing Tudor mansions with Classical facades, Georgian mansions with Victorian details, and other combinations.

The residential preference for older homes continued into the 1990s. Surveys have shown that older homes are preferred to new ones. The older homes are seen to have more character, and are more unique as they are less uniform. They are also seen by many to be of a higher construction quality, despite the fact that they are frequently not efficiently heated, insulated or plumbed, are harder to clean and maintain, and are not equipped with adequate security features. In 1996, Britain had the oldest housing stock in Europe, with some 25% of homes having been built before 1914. Nonetheless, these older homes sold more easily than new ones (British Culture 198).

Along the same lines, the 1990s saw a growing influence from the new movement called Community Architecture, of which Prince Charles is a great proponent. Community architects propose smaller scale homes that meet the needs and desires of the end users. Advocates decree that architects should work in the communities in which they design to foster a greater understanding of the clients' needs, and should consult widely with their clients at all stages of the design process. Critics of Community Architecture have branded it "toy-town" architecture, but it has been enthusiastically received by the public.

The market for residential homes is a key area to watch, as Britain is once again in need of increased housing. It is estimated that Britain needs between 4 and 5 million new homes by 2016, due to the public's increasing life span and a growing number of single-occupancy homes (Christopher 199).

As the home building market is rising, so is construction activity in general. The early 1990s saw a recession in which building activity once again declined, but the fortunes were reversed in 1997, with the election of the Labour Party under Prime

Minister Tony Blair. The Labour Party is keen to rebuild Britain in many senses, and the architectural sense is at the forefront.

Construction efforts received a new source of funding in the National Lottery, and more public buildings resulted. As football clubs began to move from their old grounds in the cities to new grounds on the city outskirts, new stadiums started to spring up around the country. Famous Wembley Stadium is to be redeveloped into a "superstadium" in that spirit. Recreation and leisure are on the rise, with 1998 seeing more than 80 million visitors to Britain's museums (Christopher 199). As a consequence, new museums, galleries and sports facilities are once again being planned.

All of this boded well for the continued growth of Modern architecture. The style had a newly gained acceptance. Hugh Pearman, in discussing the growing acceptance of skyscrapers in the United Kingdom, cited several factors in the rising approval of the style. Firstly, two generations have passed since the atrocities of the welfare state block towers. Lifestyles and attitudes have changed. The old towers have become a common sight, people have gotten used to their presence, and they are not a problem any longer. Second, technology has vastly improved. The new technology allows skyscrapers to be built much more skillfully, with more options and a greater ability to create art from architecture. This, in turn, has created a taste to build landmarks in architects and developers. Third, the government and its advisors (since the Labour Party election in 1997) have encouraged high-density buildings instead of suburban sprawl. Towers mean more space for people and more space left over for urban landscaping. Fourth, a property boom has created a private investment bubble in "buy-to-let" apartments, which have become popular in skyscraper format: "We are taking to high-rise living: this time not as

take-it-or-leave-it council tenants, but as private buyers with the choice (Pearman 3)." Fifth, Pearman asserts that Britain is now more aesthetically confident, with a better mood after the ending of the political battles and the traditionalist backlash of the 1980s and the economic recession of the early 1990s. Sixth, the society now is more international, with people having easier access to flights and where people easily compare cities; the country is no longer parochial. (Pearman 2)

In London's City, the arrival of what has been fondly named the Gherkin also increased the profile of Modern architecture (see Figure 20). The Gherkin, technically 30 St. Mary Axe, was constructed by Norman Foster for Swiss Reinsurance in an area of the City that had to be rebuilt after IRA bombs in 1992 destroyed it. The Gherkin's design was well thought out for the space; by creating a design tapered at the top and the bottom, Foster left plenty of ground room while still creating plenty of commercial space. By making the design round, the wind was allowed to go around it, instead of being detracted and sent down to the street to bother pedestrians. The Gherkin can be seen from all over London and has quickly become a landmark. It is also widely accepted and liked. A poster in a London Underground station I walked through read, "There's no mobile reception at the top of the Gherkin. It's a London thing." The poster indicates the acceptance of this ultra-modern building into the London landscape. In addition, the construction of such a unique and quite Modern building raised the question for many architects, if that was possible, what else might be? Companies began to sign architects up to create prestige commercial towers.

In addition, planning commissions are starting to let more interesting designs pass through. Architect Renzo Piano has plans for a steel and glass skyscraper in London that

will exceed 1000 feet in height. Piano has described the tower, called the London Bridge Tower, as a shard of glass, and the name stuck, with the project now called the Shard. The Shard's construction will interrupt some of the views of St. Paul's Cathedral from around the city. Planning commissions used to reject any application that would block the views of St. Paul's, so towers were confined to a small cluster in the City and a cluster in Canary Wharf, but the commission has allowed the Shard to go through.

Famous British architects have begun to find work at home. Both Norman Foster and Richard Rogers have been knighted by Queen Elizabeth, as have several other British architectural notables. Rowan Moore remarked of the state of commissions for British architectural heroes: "There is not even much work for the local heroes, at least until their talent has been so heavily underlined by honours, exhibitions, television programmes and big foreign commissions that risk and inventiveness have been squeezed out of the act of patronage. Not, that is, until they become establishment figures. This is now happening to Foster, Rogers, and Stirling (27)". Becoming closer to the government, these architects have won acceptance and greater access to be able to pass their plans through the councils much quicker and with greater ease.

Present Examples

While Rogers, Foster, and other British architects are gaining more U.K. commissions, there is still a lack of major commissions. The projects they do get are on the side streets, not in the main city central. New buildings for Channel 4 and ITN television stations (see Figures 21, 22) are remarkable modern structures, but are on Horseferry Road and Gray's Inn Road, respectively. Planning commissions are still not

easy to deal with. Working for a London architecture firm, I witnessed daily problems with incompetent planning officials and issues with council bureaucracies, including applications being deliberately delayed and switching planning officials so many times that no one planning official ever would learn the full history of the project.

Newer additions to Britain's Modern architecture inventory have been plagued with problems that have received wide coverage in the media. These incidents of failure have been so covered in the media; one must wonder what part the media is currently playing in the public's interpretation of Modern architecture. The media certainly chooses to publicize the downfalls more frequently than they choose to publicize the high points; a crisis makes a better story. The media plays a large role in the British culture, most Britons do read a paper during the day; so Modern architecture may end up appearing as though it has many more failures than it does in reality.

Parts of the major construction projects sponsored by Tony Blair's Labour government were to commemorate the Millennium in 2000, to mark a new path for Britain in the new millennium. One such building was the now-infamous Millennium Dome, by Lord Rogers (see Figure 23). The Dome was constructed in an attempt by the government to showcase important aspects of Britain. The structure cost more than £1 billion of taxpayer money to construct. It took on a tent-like format, prompting Prince Charles to remark that "it would remind me of a greenhouse – except that would be an insult to fertilizer ("Charles in Dome Storm")." A strange mix of elements was chosen to exhibit inside the Dome, in various 'zones'. The project is universally considered a flop: 12 million visitors were expected to come, and only 4.5 million actually did. The government tried to encourage people to visit, but in so doing they seemed to be forcing

it down the country's throat. The Dome closed after the Millennium celebrations, and even in its closed state, cost taxpayers £189,000 to maintain. The government has now succeeded in selling the Dome.

Another Millennium project was constructed by another of Britain's famous architects, Lord Foster. The Millennium Bridge (see Figure 24) was constructed as a pedestrian footpath over the Thames to link London's South Bank, from the Tate Modern, to the central city more easily. Foster envisioned the bridge as a blade cutting over the Thames, delicate and slender. It was a feat of engineering from the start: no pedestrian bridge had ever spanned such a distance as the Thames. The Modern structure opened for the Millennium and then closed immediately after: the first pedestrians to cross claimed that they felt the bridge shaking and swaying underneath them. Indeed, the bridge did have structural issues. Due to the fact that the bridge contained new engineering techniques never before used because of the bridge's remarkable length, there were complications that the engineers had not foreseen. What they discovered was that the combined weight shifting caused by so the step patterns of a great number of people at once created a sway that the bridge was unprepared to handle. The bridge was closed for a time while it was reengineered, and was reopened for tourists to walk across and try to feel a sway. The project was billed as a flop in the media, and Lord Foster was blamed, despite the fact that any architect would have experienced the same issues, given the new technology.

Another example, though non-Millennium related, is the recently opened Scottish Parliament building in Edinburgh (see Figure 25). Architects EMBT/RMJM, an Anglo-Spanish firm headed by Enric Miralles, won a design competition to build the structure,

which would stand directly opposite the traditional Palace of Holyroodhouse, the Queen's official residence in Scotland. The structure, opened in 2004, is a daring and complicated design, extremely modern in style. The downfalls of the project have been extremely well publicized. Initial budgets for the project projected its cost at a maximum of £40 million. Actual costs are closer to £430 million ("Scottish Parliament"). The project suffered two setbacks when two of the leading figures passed away during construction. A formal government report was launched to investigate the project's problems, and placed the majority of the blame on the architects and builders. The report cited an unrealistic timetable, initial uncertainty concerning the design, and an overall lack of leadership as contributing factors to the building's construction problems ("Holyrood civil servants defended").

I had the opportunity to visit the new building while in Edinburgh in June of 2005. While outside the Parliament, a tour guide was heard to remark on a passing bus, "That's the new Parliament building, and that's all I have to say about that." Reactions have been mixed, which was due to happen based on the structure's avant-garde design; however, the media's coverage of the budget issues and other problems has placed a dim tint on people's impressions of the building. Visitors are able to tour the building now, with a trained tour guide to take one around and explain the structure. Not only is it immensely complicated in form, it is immensely complicated in theory. There are references throughout of Scottish heritage, such as the quotes from famous Scots and famous Scot sayings printed on the outside walls, to graphic indications of the Scottish flag spread all through. The building was also designed to incorporate and reflect the landscape in which it sits; as many local materials as possible were used, and the

structure itself is meant to be in the shape of leaves coming off of a stem. All of these intricacies, these elements carefully construed to reflect the proud Scottish heritage, were glossed over by the media in favor of complaints over cost and taxpayers' money being wasted. I took the guided tour, and was surprised to find myself and the friend that accompanied me to be the only non-Scottish people on the tour. That indicated to me that the people at least have an interest to see what all the fuss has been about. After the tour, and having been explained all of the design intricacies, two of the Scottish ladies on the tour remarked that they could begin to understand where all the money had been spent, because so much thought had been put into the building. The experience highlighted the effect of the media on the public's response to architecture for me.

The Future of British Architecture

St. Paul's Cathedral, which Prince Charles is so fond of as a notable British building, was itself the subject of much controversy when first introduced. Lord Rogers remarked on his experience at the opening of his new, Modern Lloyd's building:

> Departure from tradition has always provoked ferocious controversy and opposition. At the opening of the new Lloyd's building by the Queen, the Dean of St. Paul's, noting that I was looking beleaguered, reminded me of the opposition that Wren has encountered in the construction of St. Paul's. Apparently, he had had to build a wall eighteen feet high around the site to prevent his critics from seeing and once more frustrating his plans. Several earlier designs had been blocked, including his 1673 design, of which the 'Great Model' can still be seen in the crypt of the Cathedral. This is a magnificent design and

> had it been built it would have been not only one of the greatest of all baroque masterpieces, but also one of the most technically advanced constructions of its time. Sadly, the design was too radical, the project was rejected, and in its place Wren designed the present less innovative cathedral, so loved by the Prince of Wales. (Hutchinson vii-viii)

Great design encounters resistance at the beginning, and then complacence, before finally reserving a place in history. Throughout my research on Modern architecture's place in the United Kingdom, I have noticed a similar trend. The style has encountered its resistance, as seen in the backlash suffered after the destruction and construction of the post-war era.

The style is now moving into complacence. As Hugh Pearman noted, the older generation of British people are giving way to a new generation, as tends to happen. The new generation is shedding the stereotypical, reserved, melancholy English attitude in favor of a more international, outspoken view. This is a generation that has grown up with Modern architecture, and so do not find new Modern buildings to be eyesores. They have begun to travel more, which has made them more accepting of a more international style of architecture, and more admiring of other countries' architectural triumphs.

This new generation has dealt with a great deal of economic ups and downs, and has found ways to deal with the difficult economic climate. The government has begun to encourage new talent and to spend more money on the life the country's cities, which have the most to offer. As a result, the British architects that once only found work outside of the United Kingdom are getting increased commissions and have become

heroes in their own country. The appeal of a Norman Foster building, as opposed to any other Modern architecture piece, now has an effect.

Partly through the increasing fame of these national architects, and partly through the gradual introduction of more ambitious Modern buildings that could take places as landmarks, the culture has begun to accept Modern architecture. Now in the stage of complacency, I believe that Modern architecture in the United Kingdom will continue on the road towards protected and revered history.

In order to do this, the British must fully ingrain Modern architecture as a part of their culture. A great boost for the Modern cause came on July 6, 2005, when London won its Olympic bid to host the 2012 Games. In the seven years between winning the games and hosting them, London will experience construction and redevelopment at a speed it has never seen before, including a total redevelopment of the East End. Plans call for the construction of nine new venues, including an 80,000 seat Olympic Stadium (see Figure 26) ("The Olympic Park"). With the new architecture to be completed in a Modern style, the Olympics will offer London, and the rest of the United Kingdom, a chance to have a structure that is truly British, a source of pride, and is noted around the world. They are on the way now, and with such well-thought-out buildings as the Scottish Parliament increasing in number, the future holds a place for the Modern alongside the traditional.

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Appendix: Building Photographs, Figures 1-26

Figure 1: Buckingham Palace, London.
Source: Mine

Figure 2: Tower Bridge, London.
Source: Mine

Figure 3: Lloyd's Building, City of London.
Source: Mine

Figure 4: London City Hall.
Source: Mine

Figure 5: Crystal Palace.
Source: http://www.victorianstation.com/palace.html

Figure 6: Glasgow School of Art, Glasgow, Scotland.
Source: http://www.greatbuildings.com/buildings/Glasgow_School_of_Art.html

Figure 7: Alton Estate, Roehampton, Surrey.
Source: http://www.open2.net/modernity/3_19.htm

Figure 8: Millbank Tower, London.
Source: Mine

Figure 9: Barbican, London.
Source: Mine

Figure 10: Centre Point, London.
Source: Julia Witty

Figure 11: Liverpool Metropolitan Cathedral, Liverpool.
Source: http://www.liverpoolmetrocathedral.org.uk/history/history.htm

Figure 12: Coventry Cathedral, Coventry.
Source: http://www.historiccoventry.co.uk/cathedrals/newcathedral.html

Figure 13: Engineering Building, Leicester University, Leicester.
Source: http://www.pritzkerprize.com/stirling/stirlingpg.htm

Figure 14: Royal National Theatre, London.
Source: Mine

Figure 15: Hayward Gallery, London.
Source: Mine

Figure 16: Ronan Point, Newham, London.
Source: http://www.open2.net/modernity/3_13.htm

Figure 17: Mentmore Towers, Buckinghamshire.
Source: http://encyclopedia.thefreedictionary.com/Mentmore%20Towers

Figure 18: Covent Garden Market, Covent Garden, London.
Source: Mine

Figure 19: Sainsbury Wing, National Gallery, London.
Source: Mine

Figure 20: 'The Gherkin', 30 St. Mary Axe, City of London.
Source: Mine

Figure 21: Channel 4 Building, Horseferry Road, London.
Source: Mine

Figure 22: ITN Building, Gray's Inn Road, London.
Source: Mine

Figure 23: Millennium Dome, Greenwich, London.
Source: http://www.scotsindependent.org/2004/041203/

Figure 24: Millennium Bridge, London.
Source: Mine

Figure 25: Scottish Parliament, Edinburgh, Scotland.
Source: Mine

Figure 26: Artist's rendering of the Olympic Stadium in East London.
Source: http://www.london2012.org/en/bid/regeneration/Anewhomeforsport.htm