

ARCHITECTURE AS A GLOBAL SYSTEM

SCAVENGERS, TRIBES, WARLORDS AND MEGAFIRMS

Architecture as a Global System

This page intentionally left blank

Architecture as a Global System: Scavengers, Tribes, Warlords and Megafirms

PETER RAISBECK

Melbourne School of Design, University of Melbourne, Australia



United Kingdom - North America - Japan - India - Malaysia - China

Emerald Publishing Limited Howard House, Wagon Lane, Bingley BD16 1WA, UK

First edition 2020

Copyright © Peter Raisbeck, 2020. Published under exclusive licence.

Reprints and permissions service

Contact: permissions@emeraldinsight.com

No part of this book may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, transmitted in any form or by any means electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording or otherwise without either the prior written permission of the publisher or a licence permitting restricted copying issued in the UK by The Copyright Licensing Agency and in the USA by The Copyright Clearance Center. Any opinions expressed in the chapters are those of the authors. Whilst Emerald makes every effort to ensure the quality and accuracy of its content, Emerald makes no representation implied or otherwise, as to the chapters' suitability and application and disclaims any warranties, express or implied, to their use.

British Library Cataloguing in Publication Data

A catalogue record for this book is available from the British Library

ISBN: 978-1-83867-656-8 (Print) ISBN: 978-1-83867-655-1 (Online) ISBN: 978-1-83867-657-5 (Epub)



ISOQAR certified Management System, awarded to Emerald for adherence to Environmental standard ISO 14001:2004.

INVESTOR IN PEOPLE

Certificate Number 1985 ISO 14001 Modern architecture is surely most cogently to be interpreted as a gospel – as, quite literally, a message of good news; and hence its impact. For, when all the smoke clears away, its impact may be seen as having very little to do with either its technological innovations or its formal vocabulary. Indeed the value of these could never have been so much what they seemed to be as what they signified. Colin Rowe and Fred Koetter, *Collage City*. (1983; p.11), MIT Press

Contents

About the Author	vii
Acknowledgements	viii

Chapter 1	Architecture as a Global System: An Introduction	1
Chapter 2	Scavengers	23
Chapter 3	Tribes	39
Chapter 4	Warlords	65
Chapter 5	Megafirms	101
Chapter 6	The Global System in Crisis	129
Index		139

About the Author

Dr Peter Raisbeck is an Architect, Design Teacher, and Researcher. He teaches Architectural Practice, Design, and Design Activism at the Melbourne School of Design. He graduated from RMIT architecture in 1992 and then taught and ran his own small practice. His work explores architecture's intersection with technology, global finance, procurement, design activism and politics, and architectural history. His PhD thesis examined the Marine and Underwater Cities of the 1960s. Since 2006 he has published over 50 research outputs including work on the Australian architect Robin Boyd. In 2010, he collaborated on Mould City one of the project's exhibited at the Australian Pavilion at the Venice Architecture Biennale. He writes a blog entitled 'Surviving the Design Studio'.

Acknowledgements

This book has been an endeavour that has involved many people over time. Firstly, I would like to thank my partner Victoria Conners for her ongoing support, through many joys and a few travails, without which this book would not have been possible. I would also like to acknowledge the help of my children Rachel Raisbeck and Raphael Raisbeck. Lille Conners-Raisbeck was also helpful.

Anthony Parker was incredibly insightful in his comments on all of the chapters. He was always adept at helping to select the correct word or add a phrase in a pivotal sentence. Doug Caitling was an amazing proof-reader. Jennifer McCall at Emerald was also most encouraging. My friend, Dr Karen Burns, served as a guiding light for much of what is in this book. Her work at Parlour, and Parlour itself has been a great inspiration. Dr John Ting was also encouraging in his comments on an early manuscript. Of my colleagues, Professor Paul Walker and Kim Dovey have always served as beacons of authentic and inspirational scholarship.

As the book proceeded, I continued to teach Architectural Practice at Melbourne School of Design, and I am most thankful to Rob Polglase and Renee Miller-Yeaman in supporting me in my teaching. I must also thank the wonderful architects who also teach in this subject for many conversations: Rebecca Naughtin, Emma Templeton, Camilla Tierney, Aurelia Gachet, Rowan Brown, Christopher Hewson, Nurul Sedek, Isabelle Legge, Sonia Sarangi, Meng How Siow, and Norman Day. Towards the end of the writing, when so often motivation flags, Monia Basso helped with chapter reading, laughter, and encouragement. Gratitude to the other Producers, Noelle Jones, Tanya Spencer as well as their director, Lou Quill, all for always greeting me so warmly whenever I worked in their office. Many friends must also be acknowledged: Alicia Brown, Dean Cass, Simona Castricum, Amanda Davis, Kirsten Day, Peter Hogg, Jennifer Klempfner, Phuong Le, Lisette Malatasta, Inger Mewburn, Bon Mott, Christine Phillips, Jason Pickford, and Yvette Putra. When I recall my early career, I will always be grateful to Greg Missingham, Alex Selenitsch, Howard Raggatt, and Peter Elliott.

Too often, there are pressures nowadays on academic to avoid the longer and solitary forms of scholarship. Without the assistance of the above people, this contribution to that genre would not have been possible.