shakes, window frames and wagon wheels designed to appeal to the values of the new locus of spending power: Venturi's middle-middle classes.

Finally, it is worth noting that architectural design is playing an important role in the current decollectivization/recapitalization of housing in Britain and the United States. Symes (1985) cites the example of architects who were given the task, under an urban development grant, of eradicating the public-housing image of a vandalized local authority estate, so that the apartments would be more marketable when put up for sale. The result was the addition of a combination of 'private' elements (garages, entrance lobbies and driveways) and post-Modern elements (pitched, pantiled roofs, timber handrails and balconies, and landscaping) to the structurally sound concrete-and-steel 'boxes' of failed Modernism.

Architecture, legitimation and social reproduction

Because of the rich and powerful symbolism inherent in urban design, architecture is readily interpreted in terms of sociopolitical legitimation. Tafuri's critical history of the architecture of industrial capitalism (1976; 1980), for example, takes as its central theme the idea that architecture has repeatedly veiled and obscured the realities of capitalist social relations. Porphyrios, developing this theme, puts the argument as follows:

> *Architecture as a discursive practice owes its coherency and respectability to a system of social mythification. In other words, a given architectural discourse is but a form of representation that naturalizes certain meanings and eternalizes the present state of the world in the interests of a hegemonical power (Porphyrios, 1985, 16).*

Architecture, in this view, is transparent to ideology (Dickens, 1980; 1981). As ideology, the social function of architecture is to insert the agents of an aesthetic culture into activities that support or subvert (in varying degrees) the dominant relations of production. Architecture, in this sense, comprises not only elements of building knowledge and tenets of design, but also a whole process of symbolization. 'Reality', as Porphyrios puts it, 'gives to architecture a set of rules and productive techniques while, in its turn, architecture gives back to reality an imaginary coherence that makes reality appear natural and eternal' (1985, 16).

At a less abstract level, it is clear that all social acts must take place in settings; when these acts are subject to ambivalence, contradiction and conflict – as many are – settings can help to establish clarity, to suggest stability among flux and to create order amid uncertainty. In this sense, the built environment serves to legitimize existing socioeconomic distinctions in several ways. The settings created for government offices, for example, contain clear messages to the clients who come regularly to transact business in them:

> *The businessmen, lawyers and interest group representatives who negotiate contracts, arrange for government subsidies or bargain about administrative rules and the disposition of administrative proceedings do so for the most part in well-appointed, comfortable, sometimes lavish offices and conferences rooms. . . .* The settings are major contributors to the definition of such proceedings as the responsible implementation of the law by experts and professionals, *though critics may see some of these transactions as a problematic use of public funds to subsidize those who already have most of what there is to get in money, status and influence. . . .*
>
> *Another class of clients, exemplified by welfare recipients, emotionally disturbed people, and public-school students, is explicitly defined as being in need of 'help' and by comparison gets very little of it. The settings in which they deal with bureaucrats define the worth of the clients as eloquently as do the bureaucratic offices discussed above, but in the opposite way. Waiting rooms are typically crowded and often drab and uncomfortable.* The dependency of the client on the power and goodwill of the authority is reflected in the physical arrangements *(Edelman, 1978, 2–3, emphases added).*

Like these examples, much of the symbolism of the built environment has to do with power (or the lack of it), with some of the most obvious and direct examples being associated with big business and big government (Appleyard, 1979; Appleton, 1979; Hughes, 1980; Millon and Nochlin, 1978; Woodward, 1982). Nevertheless, as Eco (1980, 12) points out, 'every usage is converted into a sign of itself', so that most structures, even though their symbolism may not be intended, have a 'secondary function', individually or collectively, which is connotative of something. It follows that the symbolism of the built environment is complex and often contradictory. The 'signature of power', according to Lasswell (1979), is manifest in two ways: through a

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