

megastructure. Its success was also immeasurably aided by the defection of many architects from the field, a desertion that continues to mark a political split in the profession, reinforced by the inexorable drift to the right of the CNU and its fellow travelers.

Indeed, the social and political priorities of a large cadre of baby boomer architectural graduates led, for quite a few, to a suspicion of architecture itself, which—seen as an inevitable coalescence of power and established regimes of authority—became an impossible instrument. The focus on “alternative” architectures, on small-scale, self-help solutions, and on repair rather than reconstruction, all foregrounded notions of service and consent, disdaining grand visions of any sort as incapable of embodying the shifting, diverse, and plural character of a democratic polity. Such arguments were only reinforced as the decade wore on by the easy connection between DDT and urban renewal at home with Agent Orange and carpet bombing in Vietnam. The consequences were both inspiring and crippling, discouraging a large cohort of fresh-minted architects and planners from establishing themselves in mainstream practice either permanently or temporarily, turning many to communalism, self-reliance, lifestyle experiment, and various modes of righteous exile. Seeking gentler solutions and warmed by a soft, Thoreauvian glow, youth culture created a profusion of alternative communities in the form of urban communes squatting abandoned tenements, rural settlements under karmic domes, or nomadic enclaves cruising in psychedelic school buses, even if such places were more envied than engaged by the majority, who, for their part, pursued altered consciousness through other means.

Because of their antiauthoritarian foundation, these styles of settlement never received—never could receive—a formal manifesto that strategically summed them up, despite a profuse, if diffuse, literature ranging from *The Whole Earth Catalog* to *Eros and Civilization* to *Ecotopia*. Nevertheless, this collection of forms and actions was clearly a cogent urbanism, one that continues to inform contemporary debates, if only because the boomers who were their authors are now in their years of peak social authority, dragging their lingering consciences behind them. Without doubt, the environmental ethos of a light lie on the land and of self-sufficient styles of consumption, the fascinations of the nomad as an urban subject, the ideal of a democratic architecture expressively yoked to new and cooperative