

(designed by Jean-Marie Duthilleul). The land available for development had been owned by the French military and had been a *zone non-aedificandi* – not available for development. The relevant legislation needed to be changed and had already been during the premiership of Mauroy. Progress on the implementation of the Koolhaas proposal was, however, hampered by the real estate crisis of Europe that also affected La Défense and Canary Wharf. A number of key investors abandoned the project leading to the dropping of some elements of the scheme (e.g. the four-star hotel). Phase Two (1995–2000) saw some amendments to the master plan but brought the project to semi-completion. The key buildings were an office tower for Crédit Lyonnais (designed by Christian de Portzamparc and known locally as ‘the boot’; see Figure 8.21b), the World Trade Centre (Claude Vasconi, Architect), a shopping and office centre (by Jean Nouvel), and Congress Centre and Rock Concert Hall designed by Rem Koolhaas himself. Seventy per cent of the building rights for the town centre had been sold by 2002 and Euralille2, a more suburban type mixed-use development is on the drawing boards.

The urban design is very much a personal statement of Rem Koolhaas. It has been attacked and defended largely on those grounds – as a work of art – in which the individual buildings are objects to be admired as signature statements. The objective has been to attain a high level of prestige for the development. It has been an extraordinarily expensive endeavour that demonstrates the interconnections amongst politics, ambitions for one’s own city, urban design and architectural ideologies. It is Pierre Mauroy’s dream and it was his arm-twisting that enabled Euralille to go ahead. The scheme also shows the importance of grand architectural ideas as a catalyst for business development. Le Corbusier would have been proud of the audacity of the project.

Major references

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CASE STUDY

Lujiazui, Pudong, Shanghai, People’s Republic of China: a global business precinct (1990+)

The Lujiazui (also sometimes spelt Lu Jia Zui) Finance and Trade Zone in Pudong, Shanghai is not only a good example of an all-of-a-piece urban design with highly *laissez-faire* overtones, but also a good example

of the urban design and architectural values being displayed in China and many other Asian countries today. (In China similar efforts can be seen the Fu-tian new district in Shenzhen and the River North area of