

the development of his complex career, do have an obvious family resemblance between them; and they do all look different from those by (say) Daniel Libeskind or Aldo Rossi.

In practice, however, relatively few architects seem to play Roark's 'form-giver' role, though many more would probably like to: indeed the rarity of genius is a key message of *The Fountainhead* itself. In some way, a relatively small band of designers seems to mark out a fairly limited range of design paths, which are then followed quite closely by the majority of practitioners. There are so many 'followers' that the similarities between different individuals' designs, at a given historical moment, usually seem far more striking than their differences. It is only this, indeed, which enables us to talk in terms of 'architectural styles' as we do.

One explanation for these similarities puts them down to psychological differences between individual designers, seeing variations in creativity as the factors which distinguish 'leaders' from 'followers'. This may help to explain why most designers follow paths laid down by others, but by itself it cannot explain why those particular leaders are chosen as the ones to be followed along those particular paths at particular historical moments. If creativity alone were the key to architectural leadership, then (for example) the Archigram designers of the 1960s, like Ron Herron who made way-out proposals for cities which walked about, would have been assured of a massive following. In fact, their practical influence on built form was virtually nil. Creativity, it seems, is not enough. There must be other factors at work in deciding who follows whom.

The Fountainhead itself gives us clues about what these factors might be. Though poor Roark works desperately to maintain his heroic vision of his ideal creation, in the end he is driven to blow the building up because it is so botched by others' actions. This is all a matter of power. Roark has the power to destroy, but lacks the resources which he needs to turn his vision into bricks and mortar, whilst those who do have the resources which are necessary to build also have their own agendas about how these resources should be used. In some circumstances (probably rather few, as Roark found out) this agenda might be centred on a desire to support the architect in creating a work of art; but equally it might not. Anyone with any experience of the real-world development process knows very well that usually it is not. In most cases, therefore, the idea that built form flows directly from the architect's individual inspiration has to be understood as a powerful myth, rather than as a statement of fact.

Given the complex division of labour in the modern development process,³ together with the fact that power is very unequally distributed amongst the various actors involved, it is equally implausible to think that any other actor, alternative to the architect, might be a heroic form-maker either. This raises an interesting question: how could such an implausible concept as the 'heroic form-maker' ever have become so widely accepted? What do any of the actors in the form-production process have to gain from it?

For architects, trying to make a living, the benefits are obvious. If form is believed to be the result of their own creativity – 'my building' – then it is theirs to sell in the market. As Ayn Rand said of Roark 'the materials remain just so much steel, glass and concrete until he touches them. What he does with them is his individual product and his individual property.'⁴ At another level, this ideology also supports the interests of other powerful actors in the development process, for it implies that it is only architects who can be blamed for the creation of unloved places – these are *their* creations, after all. This is extremely convenient for everyone else involved, for it draws a veil over their activities, inhibits any deeper criticisms of the form-production process, and thereby enables it to continue unchanged.

In the end, then, the 'hero' problematic has helped us to develop our understanding of how the ideological level of the form-production process works, but it clearly has so many drawbacks in other areas that it can be of no further help to us. To make further progress we have to go beyond it, to explore the range of problematics which comprehend built form as generated through a process of interaction between a range of actors, each with access to different sources and levels of power.

The simplest way of conceiving these interactions is in terms of 'masters and servants', whereby those with the most power simply command the actions of those with the least. This concept is widespread, in both popular and professional cultures. In its commonest formulation, it is those with economic power – those who fund building projects – who are seen as ruling the form-production process, in a built-form version of 'whoever pays the piper calls the tune.'

At first sight, this approach seems very plausible. Buildings are extremely expensive to produce, and it seems likely that those who are able to put resources into developing them would do so for their own purposes. In the context of capitalism, these purposes are usually concerned with making profits: there is no reason, after all, to think that most major property