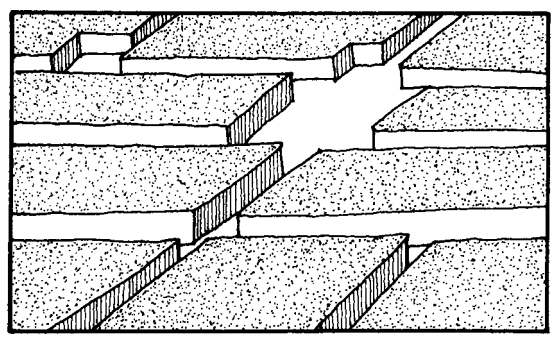
use in the inner city—have, then, together created the dilemma of modern urban space. Most striking has been the unwillingness or inability of public institutions to control the appearance and physical structure of the city. This has resulted in the erosion of a collective framework and visual illiteracy among the public. The government must institute strong policies for spatial design, the public must take part in shaping its surroundings, and designers must understand the principles underlying successful urban space.

In order to address the lost-space question, designers should create site plans that become generators of context and buildings that define exterior space rather than displace it. In a successful city, well-defined outdoor spaces are as necessary as good buildings, and the landscape architect, in concert with architects and planners, should contribute to their creation.

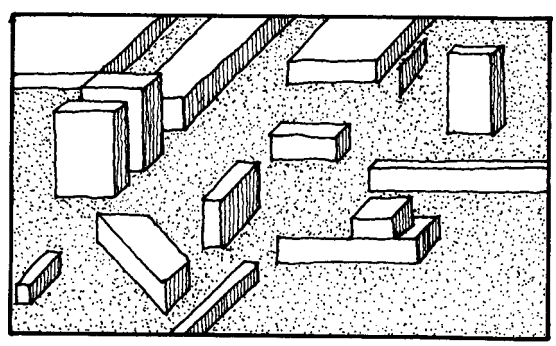
The history of city design shows that exterior urban space, if conceived of as figural volume rather than structureless void, can reverse the unworkable 'figure-ground' relationships between buildings and open spaces of the modern city. A lesson we can learn from traditional, preindustrial, cities is that exterior space should be the force that gives definition to the architecture at its borders, establishing the walls of the outdoor room. People's image of and reaction to a space is largely determined by the way it is enclosed. People like rooms. They relate to them daily in their homes and at work. This probably explains why tourists and residents enjoy the structured urban rooms of Europe in cities such as Rome, Venice, and Paris or the garden rooms of Villa Lante, Vaux-le-Vicomte, and Versailles.

In urban design the emphasis should be on the groups and sequences of outdoor rooms of the district as a whole, rather than on the individual space as an isolated entity. Special attention should be given to the residual spaces between districts and the wasteland at their edges. We need to reclaim these lost spaces by transforming them into opportunities for development; infill and recycling can incorporate such residual areas into the historic fabric of the city. Existing public plazas, streets, and parking lots that are presently dysfunctional and incompatible with their contexts can be transformed into viable open spaces. These design and development strategies can also provide the impetus to attract people back to the center. By identifying lost spaces in the city as opportunities for creative infill, local governments can allocate funding to stimulate private investment through 'enterprise zones' and other community-development programs.

One of the major requirements therefore is to design environments in which individual buildings are integrated with exterior public space so that the physical form of the city does not fall victim to separation caused either by zoning or by a dictatorial circulation system. How can we do this—how can we give structure to our urban spaces so that they provide a unifying framework for groups of buildings of disparate architectural form and style? In order to find the answer, we should look closely at the traditional city, particularly at the principle of enclosure that gives open space its definition and connection, creating workable links between spaces (fig. 7.4). We need to return to the theories and models of urban space that worked in the past and to develop a design vocabulary based on these successful precedents for today's cities. Maybe we 'finally have to understand that history and environment



Traditional City Form



Modern City Form

FIGURE 7.4
Traditional and modern urban form. These drawings illustrate the spatial structure of traditional cities *(above)* and the fragmentary form of the modern city *(below)*. In the traditional city, urban blocks direct movement and establish orientation; in the modern city, the fragmentary and confused structure creates disorientation. (Drawing based on diagrams by Rob Krier)