Oz

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Prologue

It seems to me sometimes that we're all sitting in a huge valley with people shouting contradictory things at each other. It's an ancient valley, which was once full of the monuments of civilization; reassuring but constricting. A huge glacier has swept down the valley, scraping it clean, scraping it back to clear rock, and the people are left standing on the rocks, shouting at each other. Free to speak, free to disagree. It's contemporary life, and it sounds like cacophony, because everyone shouts at the same time. Gradually, as each successive argument has been discredited, the floor of the valley has become cluttered with superceded ideas, so it feels sometimes, that we're up to our necks in rubbish. We cleared the ground of ancient privilege and filled it back up with rubbish.
—Paul Shepheard

One even addresses oneself to certain problems in one building and others in the next. All problems can never be solved. Indeed it is characteristic of the twentieth century that architects are highly selective in determining which problems they want to solve. Mies, for instance, makes wonderful buildings only because he ignores many aspects of a building. If he solved more problems his buildings would be far less potent. This paradox is heightened by the various commitments to functionalism.
—Paul Rudolph

Historically, architecture has operated on a homogeneous logic which was influenced by homogeneous society. The fracturing of our society emphasizes the individuality of ourselves and our cultures. However, the expansion of heterogeneous tendencies will ultimately lead to an anarchistic fragmentation of architecture. At this point, everything will be judged only unto itself, dissolving any sense of critical determination.

Architectural design by its nature is discriminatory. The design process requires selection, editing, and refinement. Each decision is exclusive to its situation. But this is contradictory to this heterogereous tendency. Thus we present the paradox—how are we to design within this heterogeneous situation?