

resuma globalmente.

En la hipótesis de control de la forma que el libro presenta, es sin embargo en gran medida el proceso el que garantiza el resultado. Es el cuidado y la seriedad, "la coherencia" de cada paso, lo que significa el valor del resultado, y sorprende que alguien tan preocupado por la forma no haya detectado la forma de los patrones profundos que rigen la forma de la ciudad, para decirlo en sus mismos términos.

De la lectura de sus conclusiones, se deduce el resultado: de la nostalgia de la ciudad antigua, se proyecta la ciudad antigua y, de la confianza en el diseño de las partes, se deriva la coherencia de una enseñanza que tiene la intención de substituir a la experiencia proyectual por la profundidad del análisis.

De la observación del experimento se puede deducir que el ímpetu de la propuesta (proceso más análisis, aderezado con la iluminación de la visión) no garantiza el resultado, como muestran su propia presentación y crítica.

Sabemos bien, como lo muestran en conjunto la teoría y la experiencia urbanísticas, que en la proyectación de la ciudad intervienen factores, más cerca de la identidad, que sintetizan la historia y las cualidades físicas del lugar. Estos emergen, sin embargo, en la pura invención de la creación artística y garantizan a su vez, si se alcanzan, un buen orden en el emplazamiento y una buena forma de las partes del espacio.

Lo singular de este último libro que nos llega de Ch. Alexander es que reconoce la presencia de esta visión sublimada de la forma en aquellos lugares que alcanzan la categoría de bellos. Lo sorprendente es que, vía la idea de proceso, se renuncie por parte de quien comprende que "la ciudad no es un árbol", a discutir o a penetrar en las cualidades compositivas del espacio, abandonando a la inmanencia del destino la transformación de la forma.

Notas.

1. Ch. Alexander. *Ensayo sobre la síntesis de la forma*. Editorial infinito. Buenos Aires, 1969.
2. S. Chermayeff y Ch. Alexander. *Comunidad y privacidad*. Ediciones Nueva Visión. Col. Ensayos. Buenos Aires, 1966.
3. Ch. Alexander, S. Ishikawa, M. Silverstein et al. *A pattern language/Un lenguaje de patrones. Ciudades. Edificios. Construcciones*. Editorial Gustavo Gili. Col. Arquitectura/Perspectivas. Barcelona, 1980.
4. Ch. Alexander. *El modo intemporal de construir*. Editorial Gustavo Gili. Col. Arquitectura/Perspectivas. Barcelona, 1981.
5. Ch. Alexander. *La estructura del medio ambiente*. Tusquets Editor. Barcelona, 1971.

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This is a book about a preference, a deliberate and felt intention, and an ineludible need: to teach. Now, whoever reads this book, convinced of the need for analysis as a means to back up a project will find a shift in Ch.

Alexander's standpoint: from a fascination for cities, nature and things, to the recognition that invention is essential.

Ch. Alexander's point of view is born out of his confidence that serious analysis not only gives rise to, but almost conditions the answer:

If the ultimate object of design is form (it depends) of the goodness of fit... Physical clarity cannot be achieved in a form until there is first some programmatic clarity in the designer's mind and actions... (that produces)... a fitness between the form in question and its context. (Ch. Alexander. *Notes on the Synthesis of Form*, 1966).

This idea is already formulated in *Community and Privacy*, 1963.², in *A Pattern Language*, 1977.³, and in *The Timeless Way of Building*, 1979.⁴, seeking the idea of the central quality that guarantees life (good design in this case) being objective and precise, but without a name.

Always according to Alexander: "In order to define this quality in buildings and in towns, we must begin by understanding that every place is given its character by certain patterns of events that keep on happening there... (These) patterns of events are

always interlocked with certain geometric patterns in the space. Indeed, as we shall see, each building and each town is ultimately made out of these patterns in the space, and out of nothing else: they are the atoms and the molecules from which a building or a town is made. (Ch. Alexander, *The Timeless Way of Building*, 1979).

Now, in this last book, the guarantee of a good design also lies in something beyond analysis, on a level of global coherence, of wholeness.

In order to guarantee the presence of this wholeness-coherence-globality in the character of each urban development operation, whether large or small, responding and conditioning the identity of the whole, Alexander, always prepared to undertake an orderly analysis, proposes a rule: *Every new act of construction has just one basic obligation: It must create a continuous structure of wholes around itself.*

The seven rules the book links up, and the sub-rules enumerated for each one of them, intend being the sum of the different intermediate goals needed to reach this coherence defined as wholeness.

Some of 4. Positive urban space, 5. Layout of large buildings, and 6. Construction, refer to what has been structured as pattern language.

Others: 1. Piecemeal growth, 2. The growth of larger wholes, point at a confidence in the value of the process followed to "reach the natural" which he finds in the large physical structures making up the landscapes he appreciates.

Finally, others: 3. Visions, and 7. Formation of centres, point to what are defined as structures, connected to an abstract quality sublimated in vision, and to a concrete spatial quality, respectively. Here is, therefore, an attempt to link to a good design of parts of a town, or of an urban fabric, the idea that it is also necessary to mass this space according to an idea that will summarise it globally.

In the hypothesis of control over form offered by the book it is nevertheless largely the process that guarantees the result. It is care and seriousness, the coherence of each step taken, that provide the merit of the result, and it is surprising that someone so concerned with form should not have detected the form of the deep patterns ruling over the form of towns, to use his own terms.

From the reading of his conclusions we can deduce the results: it is from a nostalgia for the old city that the new city is designed, and from a confidence in the design of parts that the coherence of a teaching is derived, intending to replace the experience of design with the depth of analysis.

From an observation of the experiment, we can deduce that the impetus of the proposal (Process plus analysis, topped with the enlightenment of vision) does not guarantee the result, as his very presentation and criticism prove.

We are well aware, as is shown by urbanistic theory and experience as a whole, that in the design of a city there are intervening factors, closer to the identity, that synthesise the history and physical qualities of the place. These, however, emerge out of the pure invention of artistic creation and guarantee in their turn, if they are reached, a good massing order and a good form of the spatial parts.

What is so outstanding in Ch. Alexander's latest book is that he recognises the presence of this sublimated vision of form in places reaching the category of beautiful. What is so surprising is that, via the idea of process, someone who understands that a city is not a tree should renounce to discuss or enter the qualities of space, leaving to the immanence of fate the transformation of form.

NOTES.

1. Ch. Alexander. *Notes on the Synthesis of Form*. Harvard University Press, 1966.
2. S. Chermayeff and Ch. Alexander. *Community and Privacy*. Doubleday & Co. Inc., 1963.
3. Ch. Alexander, S. Ishikawa, M. Silverstein et al. *A Pattern Language. Towns. Buildings. Construction*. Oxford University Press, Inc., New York, 1977.
4. Ch. Alexander. *The Timeless Way of Building*. Oxford University Press, Inc., New York, 1979.
5. A City is not a Tree, article published in "The Architectural Forum", May-April, 1965.

A New Theory of Urban Design



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TONY DÍAZ ENTRE LAS 20 IDEAS PARA BUENOS AIRES

Este trabajo fue premiado en la "Convocatoria 20 Ideas Urbano-Arquitectónicas para la Ciudad de Buenos Aires" que fue organizada por la Municipalidad de la Ciudad de Buenos Aires y por la Comunidad Autónoma de Madrid, en Diciembre de 1986. El equipo del proyecto estuvo integrado por: Tony Díaz, Luis Ibarlucía, Roberto Gil, Daniel Siberfaden y Manuel Fernández de Luco, con la colaboración de Carlos Rabinovich y Fernando Yaben.

"Yo no creo que los problemas de la Ciudad (por lo menos de la Ciudad de Buenos Aires) se puedan resolver sobre la base de propuestas sueltas para distintos lugares, por más significativos que éstos sean. Por eso la elección de las áreas en que decidimos participar en la Convocatoria no fue hecha al azar. Se trata de dos partes de la Ciudad a partir de las cuales no sólo es posible estructurar una estrategia global para Buenos Aires, sino que, por el contrario, es muy difícil poder decir algo razonable sobre esas áreas sin tener presente una idea general de la Ciudad que se quiere lograr.

Y ésta estrategia general no es sólo física; pasa también por establecer, por ejemplo, qué significa construir una ciudad democrática. Para nosotros esto consistiría en tratar de articular una ciudad que diera iguales oportunidades a todos sus habitantes. Y esto implica, sin duda, elaborar una estrategia urbana que facilite las oportunidades que aquellos que más problemas tienen para desarrollar y concretar esas oportunidades.

En este sentido el Ensanche del Área Central y el Parque Almirante Brown tienen particular significación, por distintas razones: por el tamaño, por ser tierras libres sin destino y, sobre todo, por su ubicación. La accesibilidad es un factor decisivo en el desarrollo de oportunidades en una ciudad, y éstas dos áreas ocupan lugares estratégicos en la estructura urbana, que facilitan el acceso y uso de las mismas: el Parque Almirante Brown, por encontrarse casi en el centro del conurbano y cercano a las zonas de la ciudad que tienen más carencias; el Ensanche por la posibilidad de conectarse a través de la Red de Autopistas.

En este plano las Autopistas (no hay mal que por bien no venga) podrían constituirse (si se las utilizara con un sistema de transporte público especial) en las piezas fundamentales de acceso a éstos dos lugares que, como señalamos anteriormente, pueden ser decisivos para definir una nueva estructura para Buenos Aires ya que cada una de ellas tiene una extensión aproximada de 400 y 700 Has. de tierras sin utilizar o mal utilizadas.

Además, proponemos defender éstos lugares como áreas verdes. Y creo que éste aspecto de la cuestión señala una situación que no puede ser resuelta superficialmente y sólo por una cuestión de factibilidad temporal: no hay razón (ni económica ni política) que avale seguir enajenando zonas de este tipo en detrimento de la calidad de vida de la ciudad. Y no se trata de defender una actitud "ecologista" en abstracto. De lo que se trata es de hacer un esfuerzo por conciliar (finalmente) los usos y actividades de la gente con las mejores condiciones ambientales y naturales. No se debe caer en un "ecologismo" elitista que privilegie "lo natural" por arriba de las necesidades de la gente pero, tampoco, suponer que sólo hay que tener en cuenta aquellos proyectos económicamente factibles o los que puedan llenar de actividades (deportivas) esas zonas. Nuestras propuestas tienden a crear un equilibrio: proteger lo natural (en beneficio de todos) pero sin excluir su uso por la mayoría

de la gente; poder hacer deportes pero, también, pasear libremente; proteger la fauna y la flora pero sin impedir el uso del río. Lo fundamental para una política urbana de largo aliento, es poder desarrollar una estrategia que represente los valores y las necesidades de la mayoría de la población que, además, sea compatible con las posibilidades económicas y no al revés. Porque tampoco se trata de utilizar, en estos proyectos, un gran presupuesto. *Ambos lugares, con política simple de parquización y de mínima organización, podría convertirse en sitios excepcionales para la recreación a escala de todo el conurbano, con gastos mínimos de proyectos y mantenimiento.* a Camillo Sitte o había señalado el siglo pasado: el proyecto de los espacios verdes de la Ciudad "es un arte grande y popular".

Para el Ensanche hacemos una propuesta que permite mantener el área de reserva ecológica sin que esto impida la posible llegada de la gente al Río. Nos oponemos tanto a cercar el lugar (para hacerlo solamente reserva ecológica) como a darle un uso público de tal envergadura que termine definitivamente con el carácter que tiene en el presente. Lo que proponemos es un Parque Público y un área de Reserva Ecológica con uso controlado; la separación se concretaría por apenas un canal con terraplén. Para el futuro, planteamos recuperar la Costanera construyendo una nueva, más allá del Ensanche. No planteamos ninguna ocupación especial ni ningún trazado de calles o avenidas. Simplemente un espigón con un sistema especial de transporte que deje al auto y a la contaminación fuera de esta zona.

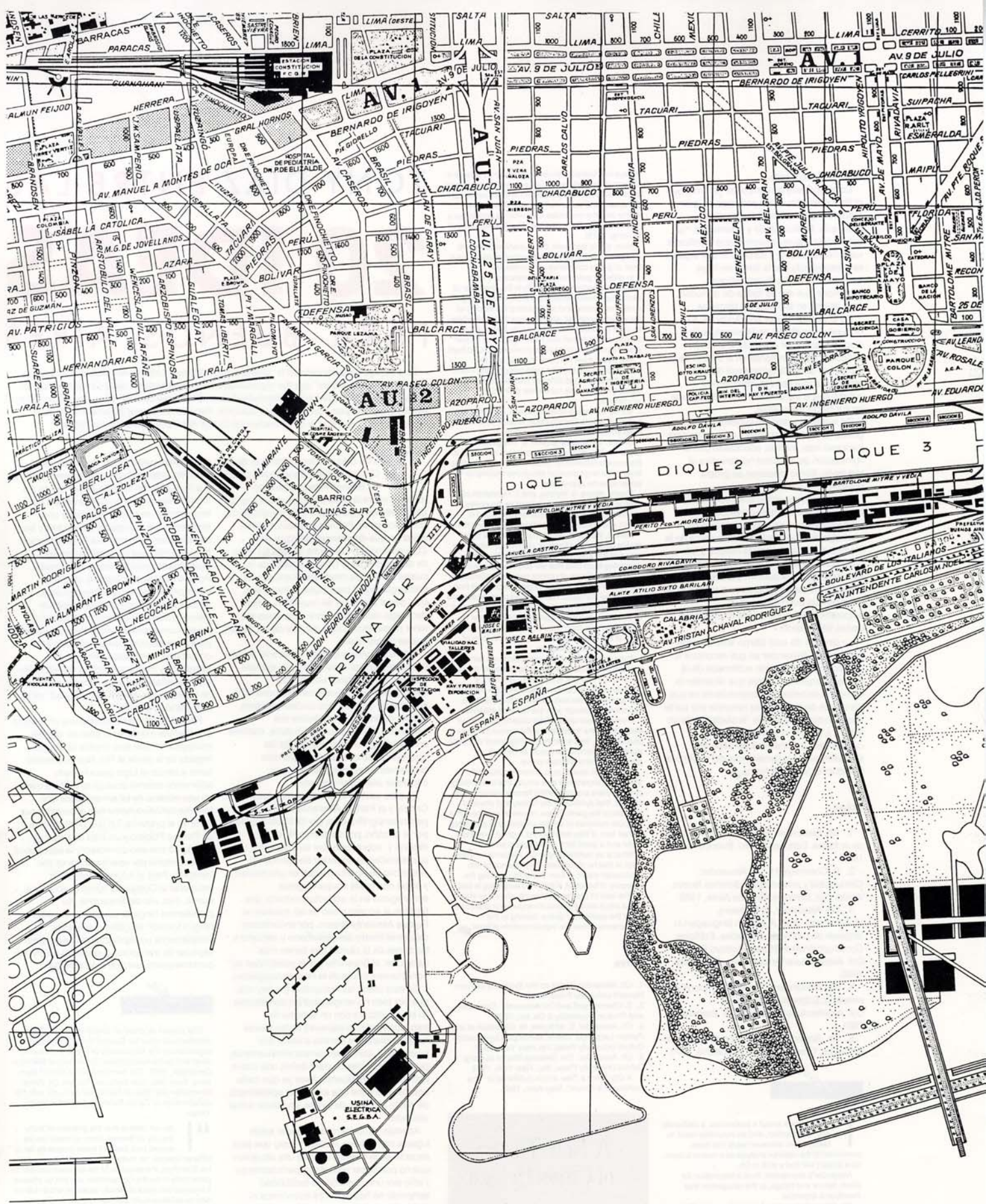
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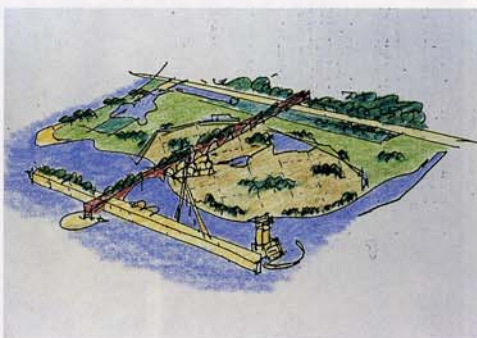
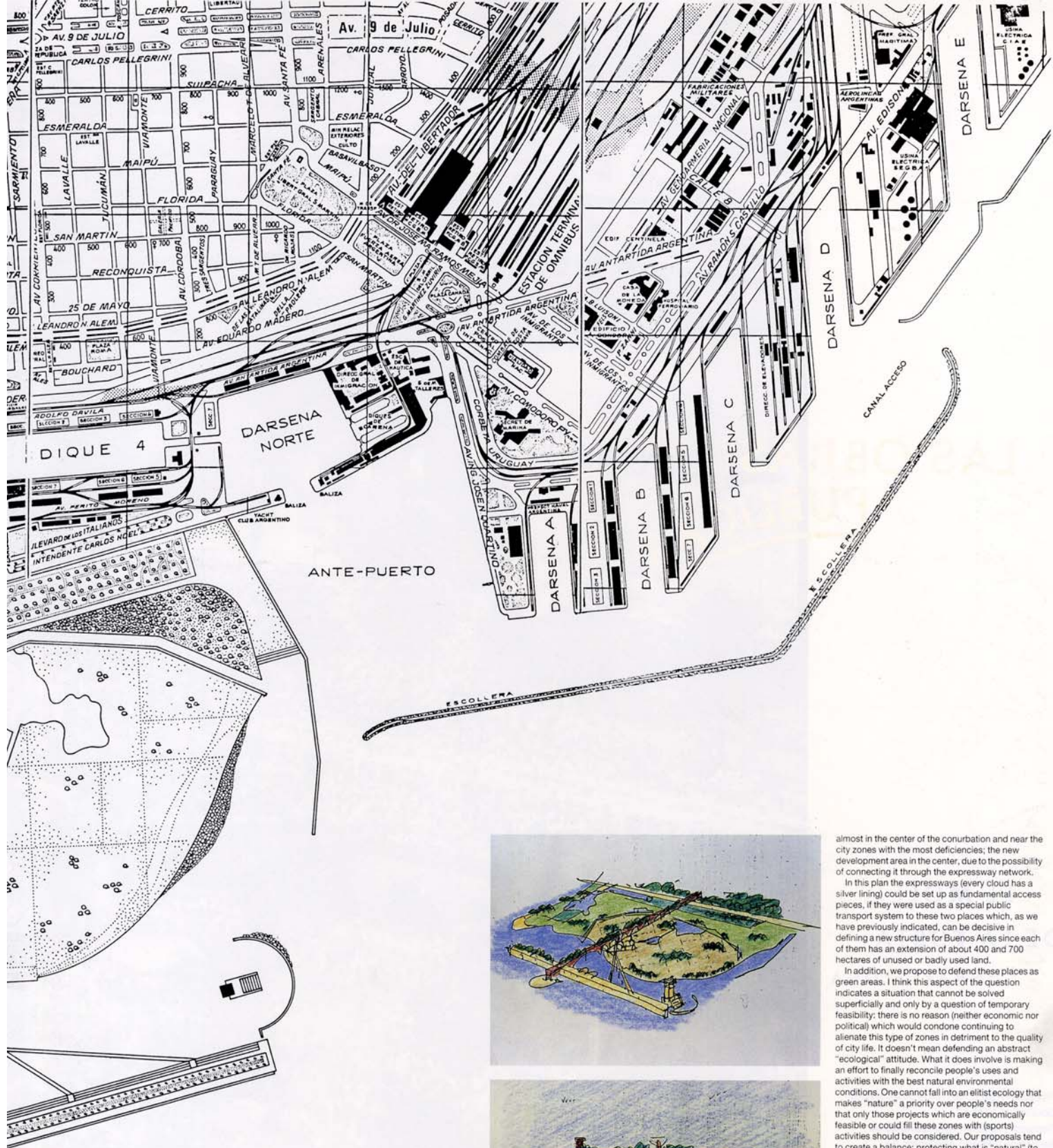
This project received an award at the "20 Urban Architectural Ideas for Buenos Aires Convocation" organized by the Municipality of the City of Buenos Aires and by the Autonomous Community of Madrid in December, 1986. The members of the project team were: Tony Díaz, Luis Ibarlucía, Roberto Gil, Daniel Siberfaden and Manuel Fernández de Luco, with the collaboration of Carlos Rabinovich and Fernando Yaben.

"I do not believe that the problem of a city (the city of Buenos Aires, at least) can be solved on a basis of loose proposals for different places, no matter how significant they may be. Therefore, the selection of the areas we decided to participate in for the Competition was not by chance. It involves two parts of the city based on which it is not only possible to build a global strategy for Buenos Aires but also, on the contrary, for which it is difficult to decide on something reasonable without keeping in mind a general idea of the city that one wishes to attain.

This strategy is not only physical; for instance it also establishes what it means to build a democratic city.

For us, this consists of trying to articulate a city that would give equal opportunities to all its inhabitants. This undoubtedly implies elaborating an urban strategy that would facilitate opportunities for those who have the most problems in developing and concretizing those opportunities. In this sense, the expansion of the Central Area and Admiral Brown Park are particularly important for different reasons: because of their size, because they are vacant lots with no particular purpose in mind and especially because of their location. Accessibility is a decisive factor in the development of opportunities in a city and these two areas occupy strategic spots in the urban structure which facilitate their access and use: Admiral Brown Park, since it is located





■ Planta del área central de la ciudad de Buenos Aires. La propuesta se plantea en una zona entre el río y los muelles ferroviarios.

Ground plans of the city centre in Buenos Aires. The proposal is sited between the river and the railway platforms.

■ Bocetos del conjunto.

Sketches for the overall scheme.

almost in the center of the conurbation and near the city zones with the most deficiencies; the new development area in the center, due to the possibility of connecting it through the expressway network.

In this plan the expressways (every cloud has a silver lining) could be set up as fundamental access pieces, if they were used as a special public transport system to these two places which, as we have previously indicated, can be decisive in defining a new structure for Buenos Aires since each of them has an extension of about 400 and 700 hectares of unused or badly used land.

In addition, we propose to defend these places as green areas. I think this aspect of the question indicates a situation that cannot be solved superficially and only by a question of temporary feasibility; there is no reason (neither economic nor political) which would condone continuing to alienate this type of zones in detriment to the quality of city life. It doesn't mean defending an abstract "ecological" attitude. What it does involve is making an effort to finally reconcile people's uses and activities with the best natural environmental conditions. One cannot fall into an elitist ecology that makes "nature" a priority over people's needs nor that only those projects which are economically feasible or could fill these zones with (sports) activities should be considered. Our proposals tend to create a balance: protecting what is "natural" (to benefit everyone) but without excluding use by the majority of people; making sports activities possible but also allowing for people to stroll about; protecting fauna and flora without impeding the use of the river. What is fundamental for an encouraging urban policy is to be able to develop a strategy that represents the values and needs of the majority of the population which is also compatible economically and not the other way around. Neither do these two projects involve a large budget. With a simple park plan and minimal organization, both places could be converted into exceptional recreational sites on a conurbation scale involving minimal project and maintenance expenses. Camillo Sitte pointed this out in the nineteenth century: city green area developments are "a great popular art..."

For the new development area we have made a proposal that allows for maintaining the ecological reserve area without preventing people from getting to the river. We definitely oppose enclosing the site (in order to make it an exclusively ecological reserve) as well as giving it to public use of such importance to terminate its present state. What we propose is a public park and an ecological reserve with controlled use; the separation would be just a canal with an embankment. For the future we plan to recover the "Costanera" shore by building a new one beyond the new development area. We have planned no special activity nor street layout — simply a jetty with a special transport system to leave cars and pollution out of this zone.