



Z A L O T A Y

ELEMÉR ZALOTAY  
dipl. Engr. / dipl. Arch.

CH 3054 Schüpfen, Ziegelried 366  
zalotay@freemail.hu

more info.:  
www.biennale04.hu

most important publications:

interbuild, january 1962  
új írás, new writing 1965  
the architectural review august 1986  
grüne architektur\_tashen 2000

régi-új magyar építőművészet - new  
hungarian architecture 2003[2]

### HUNGARY

INTERBUILD, JANUARY 1962

#### Corb Plus

At present being registered as an international patient, a new Hungarian concept of town construction is claimed by some of its supporters as the logical extension of

Le Corbusier's Unité d'Habitation. Basically it involves taking a whole city neighbourhood and concentrating the buildings in one block. This system - called 'strip building' by the Hungarian - envisages the building as about two miles long and 30 to 50 storeys high. It has been worked out by architect Elemér Zalotay who who was commissioned by the Hungarian Ministry of Building. His brief was to create the conditions in which the present drawbacks of city life could be avoided while retaining the advantages on community living.

**REVISION** The theory behind this radical revision is that the attraction on city life - crowds, bustle, stimulus of shops, theatres and people - has been choked by growth so that there are no longer crowds but mobs, no longer bustle but confusion, no longer stimulus but ugliness. If this process continues, some Hungarian architect think that the end result will be an urban civilisation without genuine cities. There will be nothing left but a landscape in which smaller or larger centres and separated by parks and connecting roads.

The yearning for the one-family home - though its attractions are admitted - is described as irresponsible. It is wasteful of ground as an individual building and in total, forms the sprawl which could result in a landscape without countryside. Modern town planning - according to protagonists of the Hungarian strip building - is working with obsolete forms. The present method of neighbourhood units and residential districts sited round city centres and sub-centre with the network of roads joining them is irrational in that as distances increase and towns grow larger the advantages of town living - with its traffic congestion and rush of people - diminish.

By building what is in effect a vertical town two miles long and 50 storeys high the compact neighbourliness of earlier urban communities could be restored. There would obviously be no traffic within the community itself and the land saved would enable the vertical town to look out over countryside and sports grounds.

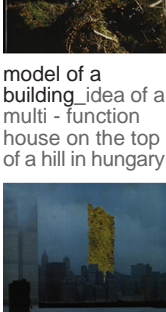
**FIRST SITE** The initial design for this type of building in Hungary has as its theoretical site a piece of land north of Budapest about half a mile from the right bank of the Danube and the building is sited so that the Danube can be seen from one side and the Buda hills from the other. Accommodation to be provided within the immense building would include flats, civic and shopping centres, schools, hospitals, and other amenities, and the emphasis would be on rational and speedy service facilities - domestic as well as coming for example .....

his food from a communal kitchen, have his clothes washed in a communal laundry, order his food from shops only 20 storeys below. By centralising and simplifying the chores of living, it is hoped that the energy-consuming rush of commuting shopping and entertaining as it takes place at present in the inner suburbs of a city will be replaced. This has the double advantage of providing more leisure and - by virtue of the building's concentration - of providing lots of open space in which to enjoy it.

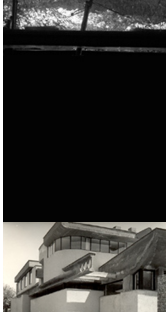
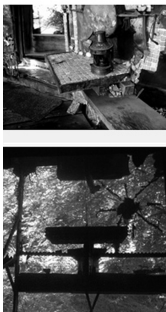
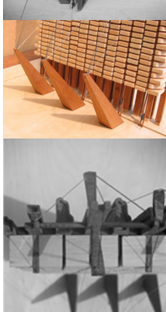
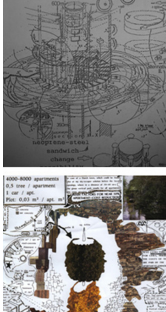
Precise details are not available but the strip building which has been designed for erection near Budapest has residential accommodation which stretches the depth of the building with central corridors leading from staircases. The dwellings are maisonettes with living room and kitchen on the lower level and bedrooms, bathroom and dressing room on the upper level. There are different types of maisonettes are staggered (see diagram) so that the central corridor is only needed on every second floor. The building under design is said to promise an 'incredible economy' of materials in comparison with traditional reinforced concrete or steel framed buildings and the design is said to contain some ingenious structural innovations.

The theory behind the Hungarian project is not brand new but it may be that if a building of this size is put up the whole concept of community living might be changed. Technically there is scope in buildings of this size for some interesting results. Problems of insulation, goods delivery, circulation and safety - not to mention psychological adjustment - seem enormous. It is a government-commissioned project and this may mean that its fruition is not as much a pipe dream as some people might imagine. A project of this size is only possible as a massive national experiment. Even if it fails it seems worth making.

INTERBUILD, JANUARY 1962



model of a building idea of a multi - function house on the top of a hill in hungary

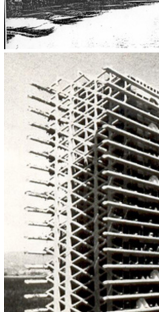


Section of a building about two miles long and thirty to fifty storeys high devised by architect Elemér Zalotay on a commission from the Hungarian Ministry of Building. Claimed as an extension of Corb's Unité, the idea is to remove the confusion from city living by concentration of its inhabitants in a man-made cliff within easy reach of every civilised service. Land saved by this 'strip' building will be left as open country or used as recreation grounds so that the leisure created by easier services can be put to good use.

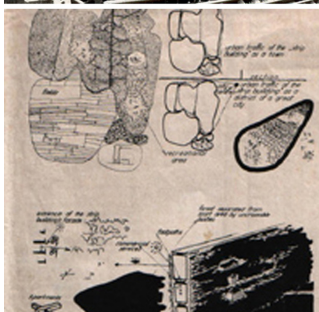
Below, sketch representation of traditional building, the sort of components considered by Zalotay to form an irresponsible and wasteful method of putting together a town. The end result of this method - if it persists - will be a landscape in which urban civilisation exists without genuine cities and there will be nothing but a countryside in which smaller or larger centres are separated by parks and connecting roads.



Seen left are sketches expanding Zalotay's idea of an immense cliff in which true city living is once more possible without the confusion and ugliness of crowds, distance and traffic. Staggered apartments are slotted together with communal kitchens, communal laundry, educational and cultural establishments. Commercial building and offices will be interspersed in the cliff so that work, pleasure and domesticity can be close neighbours. A theoretical site has been selected for the idea. This is north of Budapest, about half a mile from the right bank of the Danube. Also promised is in addition an extension to town planning theory is a revolution in construction method-made possible by the rationalisation which would be necessary to put together a building of this magnitude.



The plans of other town planning proposals shown in the same schematic way as Zalotay's proposals. Top, two sketches for the way in which Le Corbusier concentrated individual apartments into a Unité and the effect of this in plan. The buildings are more widely dispersed than sketches, according to Zalotay, show the late Frank Lloyd Wright's theories in diagrammatic form.



EXPERIMENTS



research



EXPERIMENTS

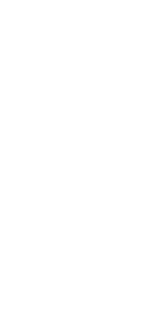
steps



ZIEGELRIED

the architectural review  
august 1986  
grüne architektur\_tashen  
2000  
régí-új magyar  
építőművészet\_old - new  
hungarian architecture  
2003[2]  
many other films and  
reports

the master's  
house in  
ziegelried,  
switzerland



buildings

office building  
in sárvár  
hungary

agricultural  
building next to  
sárvár, hungary



buildings

satellite-station  
szombathely  
hungary

