LANDSCAPE AS URBANISM

Charles Waldheim

Landscape as Urbanism

Landscape as Urbanism

A General Theory

Charles Waldheim

Princeton University Press

Princeton and Oxford

Published by Princeton University Press, 41 William Street, Princeton, New Jersey 08540
In the United Kingdom: Princeton University Press, 6 Oxford Street, Woodstock, Oxfordshire OX20 1TW
press.princeton.edu

Cover illustration: Ludwig Hilberseimer, planner, with Alfred Caldwell, delineator, the city in the landscape, aerial view, 1942. Canadian Centre for Architecture, Montreal, gift of Alfred Caldwell.

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data
Names: Waldheim, Charles, author.
Title: Landscape as urbanism : a general theory / Charles Waldheim.
Description: Princeton, New Jersey : Princeton University Press, 2016. |
Includes bibliographical references and index.
Identifiers: LCCN 2015022445 | ISBN 9780691167909 (hardback)
Subjects: LCSH: Urban landscape architecture. | City planning. | BISAC:
ARCHITECTURE / Landscape. | ARCHITECTURE / Urban & Land Use Planning. |
ARCHITECTURE / General.
Classification: LCC SB472.7 .W33 2016 | DDC 712/.5—dc23 LC record available at
http://lccn.loc.gov/2015022445

British Library Cataloging-in-Publication Data is available

Design: Thumb/Luke Bulman with Camille Sacha Salvador

This book has been composed in Executive

Printed on acid-free paper. ∞

Printed in China

10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1

Contents

vii Preface

viii Acknowledgments

2 Introduction: From Figure to Field

13 One: Claiming Landscape as Urbanism

32 Two: Autonomy, Indeterminacy, Self-Organization

50 Three: Planning, Ecology, and the Emergence of Landscape

69 Four: Post-Fordist Economies and Logistics Landscape

88 Five: Urban Crisis and the Origins of Landscape

107 Six: Urban Order and Structural Change

124 Seven: Agrarian Urbanism and the Aerial Subject

140 Eight: Aerial Representation and Airport Landscape

160 Nine: Claiming Landscape as Architecture

177 Conclusion: From Landscape to Ecology

185 Notes

197 Index

204 Credits

Seven: Agrarian Urbanism and the Aerial Subject

Industry will decentralize itself. If the city were to decline, no one would rebuild it according to its present plan.
—Henry Ford, 1922, as quoted by Ludwig Hilberseimer, 1949

Hilberseimer's decentralized planning proposals for an organic American urbanism centered on a radical reconceptualization of the urban in relationship to landscape. Central to Hilberseimer's concept of "structural change" in the American city was the role of the region as an economic and ecological order. Hilberseimer's concept of a new "regional pattern" for urbanization was conceived in reference to a range of precedents including the English garden city movement and the French *desurbanist* tradition. It also referenced Frank Lloyd Wright's Broadacre City project and Petr Kropotkin's conflation of the fields and factories.[1] In so doing, Hilberseimer proposed the commingling of the agrarian and the urban.

The agrarian and the urban are two categories of thought that have more often than not been opposed to each other. Across many disciplines, and for many centuries, the city and the country have been called upon to define each other through a binary opposition. Contemporary design culture and discourse on cities are, by contrast, awash in claims of the potential for urban agriculture. This chapter revisits the history of urban form conceived through the spatial, ecological, and infrastructural implications of agricultural production. In the projects that form this tentative counterhistory, agricultural production is conceived as a formative element of the city's structure, rather than being considered adjunct to, outside of, or inserted within traditional urban forms. This alternative history of the city seeks to construct a useful past from three urban projects organized explicitly around agricultural production as inherent to the economic, ecological, and spatial order of the city.

.....

Many projects of twentieth-century urban planning explicitly aspired to construct an agrarian urbanism. Often these agrarian aspirations were an attempt to reconcile the seemingly contradictory impulses of the industrial metropolis with the social and cultural conditions of agrarian settlement. In many of these projects, agrarianism came to stand as an alternative to the dense metropolitan form of industrial arrangement that grew from the great migrations from farm village to industrial city in the nineteenth- and early twentieth-century cities of western Europe and North America. The agrarian aspirations of many modernist urban planning proposals lie in the first instance in the relatively decentralized model of industrial order Henry Ford and other industrialists favored

< Figure 7.1 Ludwig Hilberseimer, the city in the landscape, aerial view, ca. 1945.

as early as the 1910s and '20s.[2] Following Ford's organizational preference for spatial decentralization, industrial organizations tended to spread horizontally and abandon the traditional industrial city. In part as a response to the social conditions of the Depression era, agrarianism came to be seen as a form of continuity between formerly agrarian populations based on subsistence farming and the relatively vulnerable industrial workforce of the modern metropolis. By mixing industry with agriculture, many modernist urban planners imagined a rotational labor system in which workers alternated between factory jobs and collective farms. Most often these new territorial spatial orders were understood as vast regional landscapes. Equally often, these projects conflated aerial views and maps and implicated the ascendancy of an aerial viewing subject.

The emergence of these tendencies in the twentieth century might be read through a range of projects advocating a decentralized agrarian urbanism: Frank Lloyd Wright's "Broadacre City" (1934–35); Ludwig Hilberseimer's "New Regional Pattern" (1945–49); and Andrea Branzi's "Agronica" (1993–94).[3] Three very different architects produced these projects three decades apart, yet taken collectively they illustrate the implications for urban form of agricultural production as inherent to the structure of the city. These projects also form as a coherent genealogy of thought on the subject of agricultural urbanism, as Branzi explicitly references Hilberseimer's urban proposals, and Hilberseimer's work was informed by familiarity with Wright's urban project. Each of the projects presented their audiences with a profound reconceptualization of the city, proposing radical decentralization and dissolution of the urban figure into a productive landscape. This dissolution of figure into field had the effect of rendering the classical distinction between city and countryside irrelevant in favor of a conflated condition of suburbanized regionalism. From the perspective of contemporary interests in urban agriculture, both projects offer equally compelling alternatives to the canonical history of urban form.

Implicit in the work of these three urbanists was the assumption of an ongoing process of urban decentralization led by industrial economy. For Wright, Hilberseimer, and Branzi, the decreased density urbanism produced through the new industrial logic of decentralization came to depend upon landscape as the primary medium of urban form. These suburban landscapes were embodied and fleshed out with agricultural lands, farms, and fields. These projects proposed large territorial or regional networks of urban infrastructure bringing existing natural environments into relationship with new agricultural and industrial landscapes.

Each of the projects presented its audiences with a profound reconceptualization of the city, proposing radical decentralization and dissolution of the urban figure into the landscape. This dissolution of figure into field had the effect of rendering the classical distinction between city and countryside irrelevant in favor of a conflated condition of agrarian industrial economy. From the perspective of contemporary interests in landscape urbanism, both projects offer equally compelling alternatives to the canonical history of urban landscape, from progressive garden city models to the tradition of urban parks as exceptions to the industrial city. These projects reconceptualize the fundamental distinctions between city and countryside, village and farmland, and

urbanism and landscape are dissolved in favor of a third term, a proto-ecological landscape urbanism for industrialized North American modernity. This brief review of historical precedents from midcentury is recommended by contemporary interest in landscape as urbanism. In this formulation, landscape supplants architecture's traditional role as the dominant medium for contemporary urban form. This is particularly relevant as the emergence of an aerial subject in midcentury modernist planning discourse parallels the enhanced role of landscape as the primary medium of decentralized urban form.

.....

In the depths of the Depression, lacking reasonable prospects for a recovery of his once towering stature as the dean of American architects, Frank Lloyd Wright persuaded his lone remaining patron to fund a traveling exhibition of Wright's conception of an organic American urbanism. Broadacre City, as it was referred to, consisted of a large model and supporting materials produced by student apprentices at Taliesin in the winter of 1934/35. While the premises underpinning the project were evident in Wright's lectures as early as the 1920s and fully informed Wright's 1932 publication of *The Disappearing City*, the Broadacre model and drawings were first debuted in a 1935 New York City exhibition (figures 7.2, 7.3, 7.4, 7.5). Subsequently, the traveling exhibition toured extensively, and the remarkably durable project was further disseminated in subsequent publications, including *When Democracy Builds* (1945) and *The Living City* (1958).[4]

Broadacre City offered American audiences the clearest crystallization of Wright's damning critique of the modern industrial city, positing Broadacre as an autochthonous organic model for North American settlement across an

Figure 7.2 Frank Lloyd Wright, Broadacre City, plan, 1934–35.

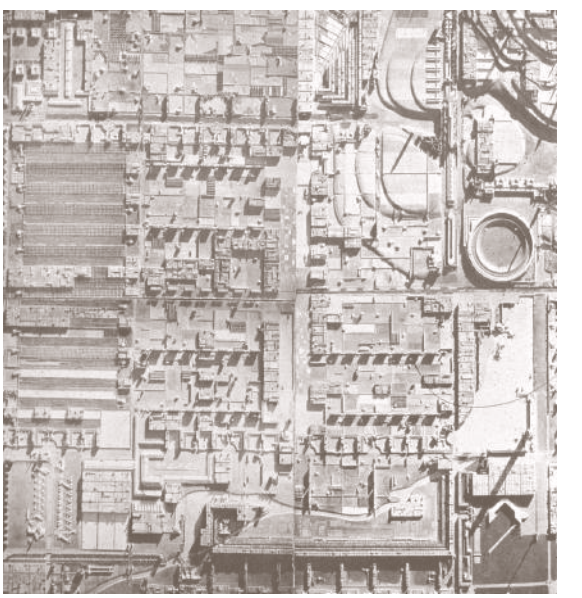

Figure 7.3 Frank Lloyd Wright, Broadacre City, model, 1934–35.

essentially boundless carpet of cultivated landscape. Eschewing traditional European distinctions between city and countryside, Broadacre proposed a network of transportation and communication infrastructures using the Jeffersonian grid as its principal ordering system. Within this nearly undifferentiated field, the county government (headed by the county architect) replaced other levels of government administering a population of landowning citizen-farmers. Wright was clearly conversant with and sympathetic to Henry Ford's notion of a decentralized settlement pattern for North America, and the closest built parallel for Wright's work on Broadacre can be found in Ford's instigation of what would become the Tennessee Valley Authority (TVA). The TVA was charged with the construction of hydroelectric dams and highways along the Tennessee River in the electrification of an entire region as a seeding process for future urbanization.[5]

Enjoying ownership of one acre of land per person as a birthright, residents of Broadacre (or Usonia, as Wright would come to refer to it) were to enjoy modern houses set in relation to ample subsistence gardens and small-scale farms. This basic pattern of variously scaled housing and landscape types was interspersed with light industry, small commercial centers and markets, civic buildings, and of course the ubiquitous highway. In spite of the project's extremely low density, most of the ground was cleared and cultivated. Occasionally this constructed and maintained landscape relented in favor of extant waterways, topographic features, or other preexisting ecologies. Presumably the extrapolation of Broadacre City from its chiefly middle-western origins to the margins of the continent would have been accomplished with varying degrees of accommodation to local climate, geography, and geology, if not cultural or material history. The status of previously urbanized areas existing outside of Wright's Broadacre remained an open question; presumably, these would be abandoned in place, again following Ford's lead in this regard.

Wright's critique of private ownership, conspicuous consumption, and accumulation of wealth associated with cities was no small part of the explicit social critique Broadacre offered, as the worst of the Depression forced bankrupt family farmers to flee their mortgaged farms in the Midwest for protest in the east or California in the west.[6] Ironically, given his anxiety over the corrosive

Figure 7.4 Frank Lloyd Wright, Broadacre City, aerial view, 1934–35.

Figure 7.5 Frank Lloyd Wright, Broadacre City, aerial view, 1934–35.

effects of accumulated wealth and speculative capital, Wright found in Ford's notion of regional infrastructure the basis for an American pattern of organic urban development. Wright's Broadacre provided a respite from the relentless demands of profit associated with the industrial city, even as the American city was well on a course toward decentralization, itself driven by the decentralizing tendencies of Fordist production.

.....

Four years after Wright's Broadacre exhibition opened to the public, the 1939 New York World's Fair featured an exhibition of the "World of Tomorrow" sponsored by General Motors. The centerpiece of GM's Highway and Horizons pavilion, the "Futurama" exhibition illustrated a decentralized American urbanism as the result of a rationally planned and technologically optimized highway system. The Futurama, designed by American industrial and theatrical designer Norman Bel Geddes, was by far the most popular attraction at the fair, drawing more than twenty-five million visitors over two seasons.[7] The Futurama offered audiences in 1939–40 an aerial view of a decentralized midwestern metropolis circa 1960. Bel Geddes's aerial audience viewed an enormous scale model of the midsection of North America from moving cars suspended aloft, effectively simulating the aerial approach to what most closely resembled a future Saint Louis. Bel Geddes's strategy of viewing the model from above made effective use of the designer's extensive research into aerial photography of the North American landscape and simultaneously offered the most promising image of a decentralized urbanity based on the promise of individual automobility. For Futurama visitors still living out the effects of the Great Depression, this simulation of mass air travel was itself a utopian image of access to a mode of travel still understood by many as elitist and excessive. This particular mode of spectatorship made technological progress and individual freedom tangible through the roving supervisory gaze of the aerial viewer. Millions of visitors to Futurama were rendered complicit in a decentralized territorial urbanization that they at once apprehended from above, and ultimately opted for below. Both forms of subjectivity, the aerial and the terrestrial, promised greater individual freedom through technology and progress, all sponsored by GM's corporate benevolence.[8]

The aerial image of urbanity Bel Geddes offered was of a decentralized system of automobile transportation made possible through a national system of high-speed multilane highways. These highways bypassed city centers in favor of the coming suburban peripheries, enhanced safety with well-engineered systems of on-ramps and off-ramps, and separated lanes of traffic by speed and direction. In short, Futurama offered a prescient image of what would become much of the US interstate highway system constructed as a civil defense and military infrastructure following World War II. The following year, Bel Geddes published his vision in *Magic Motorways* (1940), documenting the Futurama exhibition for mass audiences and advocating the construction of a national highway system.[9] This publication explicitly linked technological progress (through efficiency, safety, and freedom of mobility) to an ultimately decentralized North American settlement pattern. As in Wright's Broadacre, Bel Geddes's Futurama is significant not simply for its advocacy of future decentralization,

but equally for offering a mode of aerial subjectivity through which to apprehend and popularize its proposals. Both Broadacre and Futurama portend the coming age of easy and economical passenger air travel. In both exhibitions, Depression-era audiences were invited to inhabit an exotic aerial subjectivity. In so doing, both projects linked the aerial view to technological progress and democratic values, rendering audiences complicit in imagining a decentralized future that they subsequently enacted on the ground.[10]

.....

While the long-standing tradition of regionally informed planning practice from Patrick Geddes through Ian McHarg certainly points to this potential, Hilberseimer's *New Regional Pattern* diverges from that lineage in affording priority to a complex cultural conflation of civil engineering and ecological artifact. Hilberseimer's organic conception of urban order rendered basic distinctions between city and countryside irrelevant, critiquing the industrial city and its attendant social ills. Hilberseimer's Pattern drew heavily on the garden city tradition as well as the progressive tradition of regional planning in advocating for the reordering of the metropolitan region (figures 7.6, 7.7, 7.8).[11]

As we have seen, Hilberseimer's *New Regional Pattern* was constructed out of and depended upon the smaller scale Settlement Unit, a semiautonomous collective comprising housing, farming, light industry, and commerce. The Settlement Unit formed the basic module of development, constituting a virtually self-sufficient pedestrian social unit in the form of a cooperative live/work settlement. This scalar grain of the horizontal field embedded the pedestrian-scaled Settlement Unit within larger automobile-based infrastructures, which were in turn organized by the larger environmental systems in which they were situated. This scale shift between pedestrian walking distances and the larger dimensions covered by the automobile differs markedly from Wright's essentially

Figure 7.6 Ludwig Hilberseimer, planner, with Alfred Caldwell, delineator, the city in the landscape, aerial view, 1942.

scale-less framework within which the social and civic relations between neighbors are articulated in contractual relations, rather than in the physical disposition of dwellings. Bel Geddes's Futurama, by contrast, illustrated a decentralized urban field faithfully reproducing the most readily available contemporary landscape typologies and augmented with numerous high-rise ex-urban clusters. These distinctions are best understood as political distinctions between the commitments of the three author/architects. Hilberseimer's proposal advocated complex social arrangements and forms of spatial collectivity while Bel Geddes's Futurama offered a form of corporate propaganda through popular advertising and political advocacy. Wright's project envisioned the autonomous, proto-anarchic, citizen-farmer accommodated as an individual resident of a larger organic order, relatively unmediated by intervening scales of social order. The symmetry of aerial subjectivity as the most appropriate mode of democratic citizenship invoked by a decentralized North American settlement pattern is particularly striking given the diverse political and cultural commitments of Wright, Bel Geddes, and Hilberseimer. While Wright's *disurbanist* fantasy informed many of his subsequently realized residential projects, Broadacre was never executed except as a general contextual precept for subsequent residential commissions or as a representational setting for individual building projects. Likewise, Hilberseimer's proposals for an organic urbanism at the scale of the region were never fully realized, save the single case study of Lafayette Park in Detroit, where Caldwell's landscape defines the public realm.[12]

Wright's and Hilberseimer's projects for an organic American agrarian urbanism have been read by many as respectively prefiguring or collaborating with the postwar project of suburbanization. In this regard, as we saw in

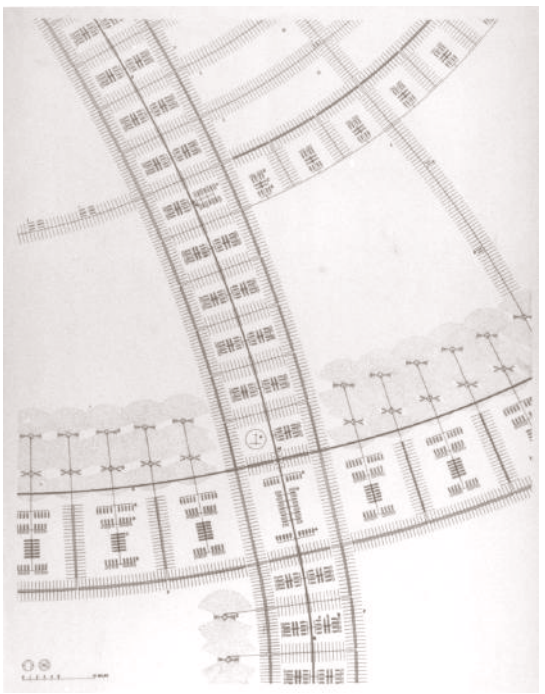

Figure 7.7 Ludwig Hilberseimer, Urban Planning System (variation), planning diagram, reprinted from *The New Regional Pattern* (Chicago: Paul Theobald, 1949), 163, Figure 107.

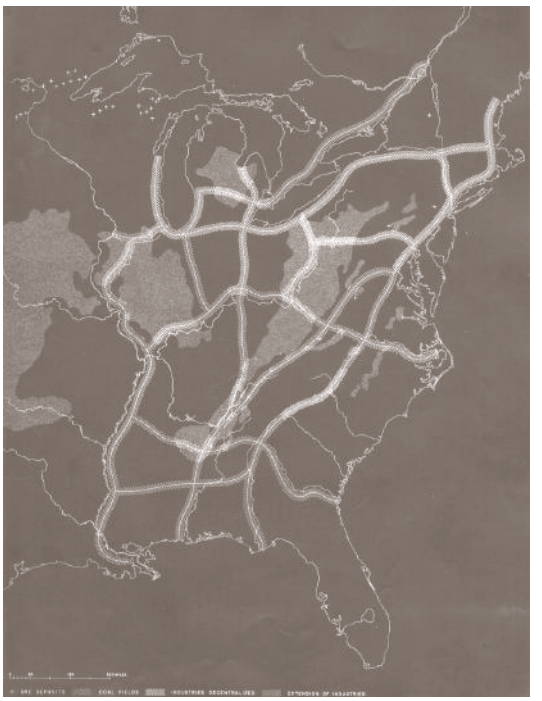

Figure 7.8 Ludwig Hilberseimer, New Regional Pattern, planning diagram, reprinted from *The New Regional Pattern* (Chicago: Paul Theobald, 1949), 142, Figure 93.

chapter 6, postmodern critics of modernist planning attacked Hilberseimer's proposals for a landscape-based urban pattern as ultimately antiurban, often labeling any landscape-based urban proposal as insufficiently committed to the reconstruction of the nineteenth-century structure of street wall and block structure. Among these critics, George Baird has been among the most articulate. Baird's *The Space of Appearance* includes a chapter on this subject titled "Organicist Yearnings and Their Consequences." For Baird, the organicist tradition evident in Hilberseimer's regional projects can be traced to the lineage of regional progressive planning from the Scottish planner Patrick Geddes to Geddes's influence on Lewis Mumford, and perhaps as late as Ian McHarg's 1969 *Design with Nature*.[13]

.....

The work of the Italian architect and urbanist Andrea Branzi might be found equally relevant to an understanding of the contemporary potentials for an agrarian urbanism. Branzi's work reanimates a long tradition of using urban project as social and cultural critique. This form of urban projection deploys a project not simply as an illustration or "vision," but rather as a demystified distillation and description of our present urban predicaments. In this sense, one might read Branzi's urban projects as less a utopian future possible world, but rather a critically engaged and politically literate delineation of the power structures, forces, and flows shaping the contemporary urban condition. Over the course of the past four decades, Branzi's work has articulated a remarkably consistent critique of the social, cultural, and intellectual poverty of much laissez-faire urban development and the realpolitik assumptions of much urban design and planning. As an alternative, Branzi's projects propose urbanism in the form of an environmental, economic, and aesthetic critique of the failings of the contemporary city.[14]

Born and educated in Florence, Branzi studied architecture in a cultural milieu of the operaists and a scholarly tradition of Marxist critique as evidenced through speculative urban proposals as a form of cultural criticism. Branzi first came to international visibility as a member of the collective Archizoom (mid-1960s) based in Milan but associated with the Florentine *Architettura Radicale* movement. Archizoom's project and texts for "No-Stop City" (1968–71) illustrate an urbanism of continuous mobility, fluidity, and flux. While "No-Stop City" was received on one level as a satire of the British technophilia of Archigram, it was received on another level as an illustration of an urbanism without qualities, a representation of the "degree-zero" conditions for urbanization (figures 7.9, 7.10, 7.11, 7.12).[15]

Archizoom's use of typewriter keystrokes on A4 paper to represent a nonfigural planning study for "No-Stop City" anticipated contemporary interest in indexical and parametric representations of the city. Their work prefigured current interest in describing the relentlessly horizontal field conditions of the modern metropolis as a surface shaped by the strong forces of economic and ecological flows. Equally, these drawings and their texts anticipate current interest in infrastructure and ecology as nonfigurative drivers of urban form. As such, a generation of contemporary urbanists has drawn from Branzi's intellectual commitments. Many of the architect/urbanists influenced by Branzi's work would

come to shape the intellectual underpinnings of landscape urbanist discourse, from Stan Allen and James Corner's interest in field conditions to Alex Wall and Alejandro Zaera-Polo's interest in logistics.[16] Equally, Branzi's urban projects are available to inform contemporary interests within architectural culture and urbanism on a wide array of topics as diverse as animalia, indeterminacy, and genericity, among others.

As a form of "nonfigurative" urbanism, "No-Stop City" renewed and disrupted a minor tradition of nonfigurative urban projection as socialist critique. In this regard, Branzi's "No-Stop City" draws upon the urban planning projects and theories of Ludwig Hilberseimer, particularly Hilberseimer's New Regional Pattern, and that project's illustration of a proto-ecological urbanism.

Not coincidentally, both Branzi and Hilberseimer chose to illustrate the city as a continuous system of relational forces and flows, as opposed to a collection of objects. In this sense, the ongoing recuperation of Hilberseimer, and Branzi's renewed relevance for discussions of contemporary urbanism, render them particularly relevant to discussions of ecological urbanism. Andrea Branzi occupies a singular historical position as a hinge figure between the social and environmental aspirations of modernist planning of the postwar era and the politics of 1968 in which his work first emerged for English-language audiences. As such, his work is particularly well suited to shed light on the emergent discussion around ecological urbanism.

Branzi's Agronica project (1993–94) illustrated the relentlessly horizontal spread of capital across thin tissues of territory, and the resultant "weak

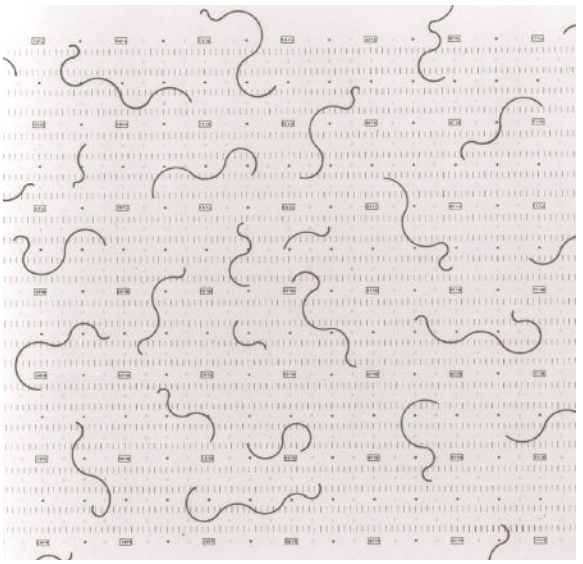

Figure 7.9 Archizoom Associati, Andrea Branzi, et al., No-Stop City, plan diagram, 1968–71.

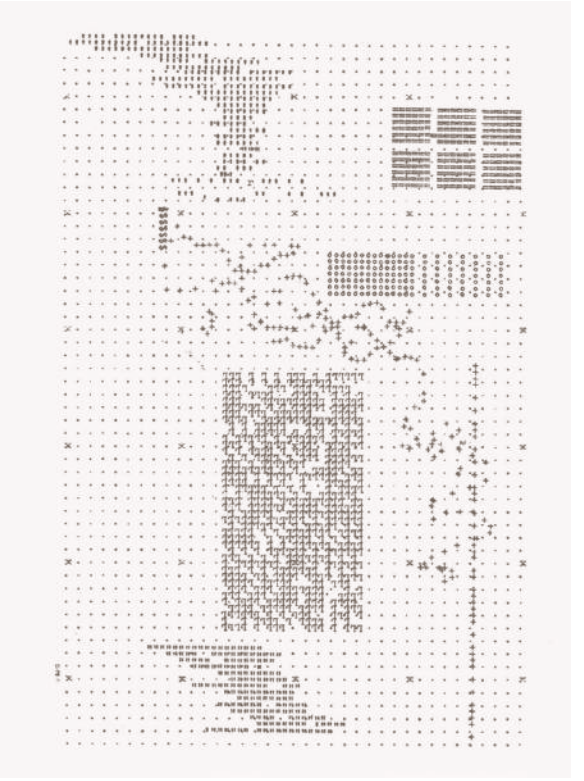

Figure 7.10 Archizoom Associati, Andrea Branzi, et al., No-Stop City, plan diagram, 1968–71.

urbanization" that the neoliberal economic paradigm affords (figure 7.13). Agronica embodies the potential parallelism between agricultural and energy production, new modalities of post-Fordist industrial economy, and the cultures of consumption that they construct.[17] Six years later in 1999, Branzi (with the Milanese postgraduate research institute Domus Academy) executed a project for the Strijp Philips district of Eindhoven. This project for the planning of the Strijp Philips portion of Eindhoven returned to the recurring themes in Branzi's oeuvre with typical wit and pith, illustrating a "territory for the new economy" in which agricultural production was a prime factor in deriving urban form (figure 7.14).[18]

Branzi's "weak work" maintains its critical and projective relevance for a new generation of urbanists interested in the economic and agricultural drivers of urban form. His call for the development of weak urban forms and nonfigural fields has already influenced the thinking of those who articulated landscape urbanism over a decade ago and promises to reanimate emergent discussions of ecological urbanism.[19] Equally, Branzi's projective and polemic urban propositions promise to shed light on the proposition of agrarian urbanism.

More recently Pier Vittorio Aureli and Martino Tattara / Dogma's project "Stop-City" directly references Branzi's use of nonfigurative urban projection as a form of social and political critique (figures 7.15, 7.16).[20] Aureli's interest in autonomy in architecture brings him to the potential of the nonfigurative and a tradition of critical thought. Like Baird, Aureli has remained committed to a position of criticality through architecture as a political project, and has remained skeptical of the claim of landscape as a medium of urbanism. In spite of this position, and his concern that landscape is too often deployed as a medium of greenwashing, Aureli too draws upon a European tradition of the project of the city as a political project. Equally he maintains an enduring interest in typology as a means of formal and morphological analysis in urban form.

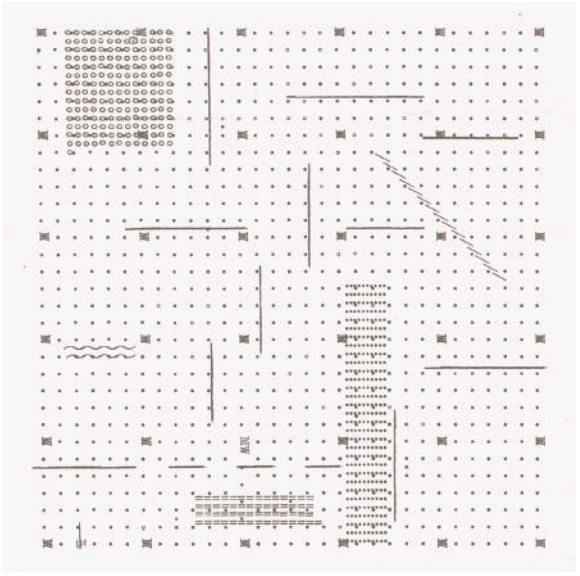

Figure 7.11 Archizoom Associati, Andrea Branzi, et al., No-Stop City, plan diagram, 1968–71.

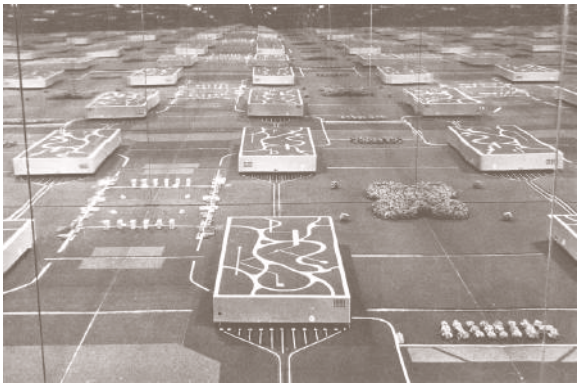

Figure 7.12 Archizoom Associati, Andrea Branzi, et al., No-Stop City, model, 1968–71.

Figure 7.13 Andrea Branzi, Dante Donegani, Antonio Petrillo, Claudia Raimondo with Tamar Ben David and Domus Academy, Agronica, model, 1993–94.

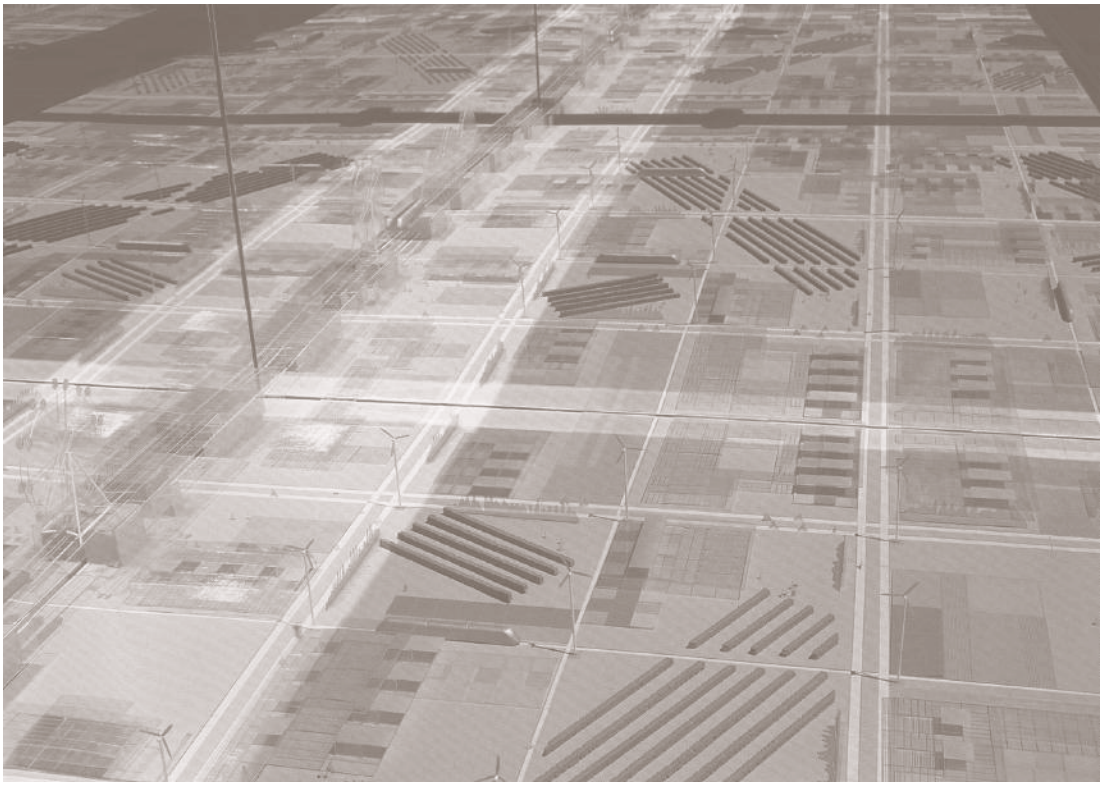

Figure 7.14 Andrea Branzi, Lapo Lani, and Ernesto Bartolini, Masterplan Strijp Philips, Eindhoven, model, 1999–2000.

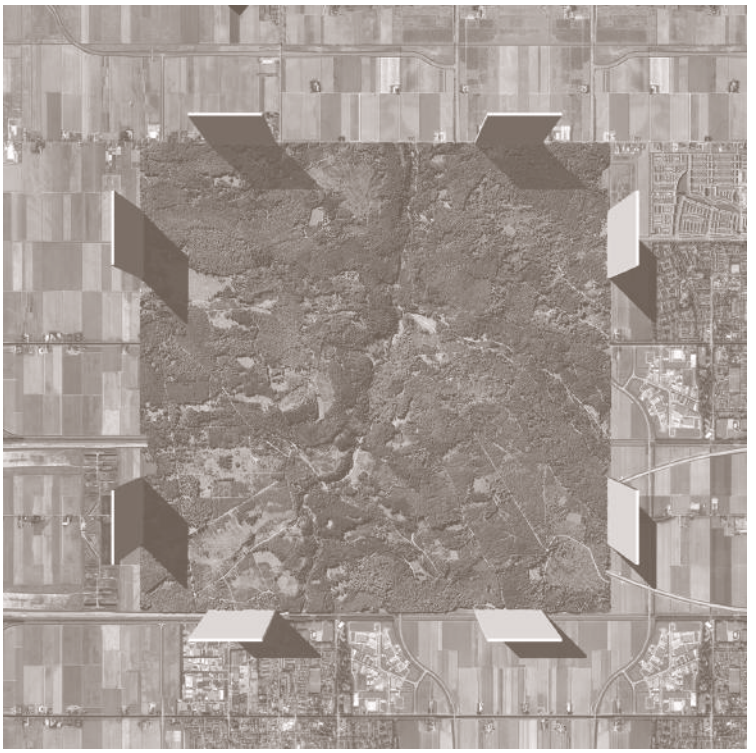

Figure 7.15 Pier Vittorio Aureli and Martino Tattara/Dogma, Stop City, aerial photomontage, 2007–8.

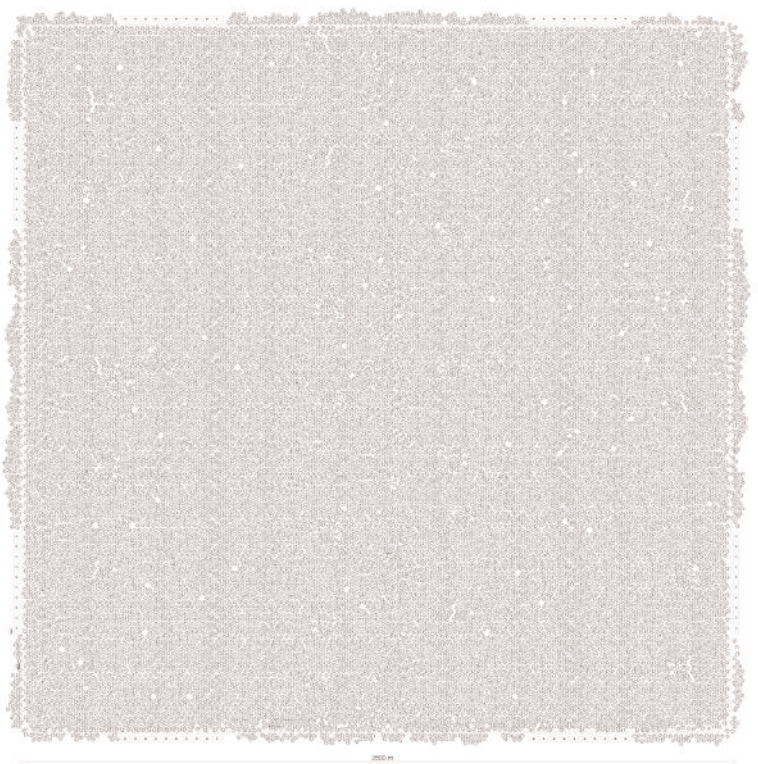

Figure 7.16 Pier Vittorio Aureli and Martino Tattara/Dogma, Stop City, typical plan, forest canopy, 2008.

In this regard, the fact that Aureli was a student of Bernardo Secchi and Paola Viganò is equally significant here. As Secchi and Viganò have articulated the concept of the *città diffusa*, they have reconciled a tradition of critical theory and architectural autonomy with the increasingly evident empirical facts of diffuse urban form. Secchi has referred to the "*città diffusa*" as the most important urban morphology for the twenty-first century. In this regard, Secchi and Viganò have articulated a theoretical framework, political position, and methodological approach using landscape as a medium of urbanism for the contemporary city.[21]

.....

From the perspective of contemporary understandings of landscape as urbanism, this genealogy offers a number of significant insights. The first of these is the notion of program or plan as a social agenda, as evidenced in quite distinct political points of view. While Futurama was clearly conceived as a corporate advertisement by way of popular amusement, Broadacre and the New Regional Pattern were conceived as critical responses, at least in part, to the social pathologies, economic injustices, and unhealthful conditions of the traditional industrial city. Both projects advocated limits on the physical scale of industry, agriculture, and housing, arguing in favor of meaningful proximate relationships between work, family, food, and civic life. Proposed remedies to the social inequities and ill health of pure capitalist development feature in both Broadacre and the New Regional Pattern as the projects imagine the spatial implications of social limits on private ownership, accumulation, and speculation.

Each of the three projects propose radical decentralization, not simply as a depiction of a mature Fordist industrial economy as in Futurama, but as the organic condition of North American settlement patterns. Both Wright and Hilberseimer refer in other contexts to the failings of the modern metropolis as a dangerous and unsupportable contradiction of the organic relationship evident in human occupation of the landscape over a longer historical trajectory in the West. In this regard, Wright's interest in an organic architecture tends much more fully toward a regional argument for the midsection of America, whereas Hilberseimer located an organic urbanism in the conditions of modern industrial economy itself, as distinct from Wright's interest in models of regional adaptation. In both instances, the relatively unexamined relationship of Wright's and Hilberseimer's organic models of urbanism on theories of natural selection recommend themselves for further study.

To manifest their decentralized visions, each project maintains a significant role for architects, especially as a public figure in political and planning decisions, yet each equally depend upon a greatly reduced role for architecture as the primary medium of the public or civic realm. Instead, Wright's Broadacres, Hilberseimer's New Regional Pattern, and Branzi's Agronica propose landscape as the medium structuring spatial relations between extant natural environments and engineered infrastructural systems. Each project proposes a renewed and redefined role for agrarian in the ordering of public and private space. This definition stretches the traditional bounds of the landscape medium understood as a decorative art or environmental science. No small part of that relevance is landscape's promise to work across scales, rendering meaningful

relationships between the larger regional environment and local social conditions. This potential is evident in Hilberseimer's use of variously scaled courts, yards, and gardens to relate domestic life to the larger public parklands that connect them. Wright's project places greater importance on family farming as a staple element of every citizen-subject's daily duty. In Broadacre, kitchen gardens give way to small-scale cooperative farms and their markets in the formation of a public landscape primarily formed by agricultural uses at a variety of scales, whereas the Settlement Unit is based upon pedestrian public parkland forming the confluence of individual semiprivate courtyards. This subtle yet significant distinction between the three authors' various conceptions of public life is evident in the status of public landscape: productive agricultural land for Wright, extensive parkway viewshed for Bel Geddes, occupied and programmed parklands for Hilberseimer. The cumulative effect of these strategies for contemporary interest in landscape as urbanism is to inflect the local conditions of individual dwelling and the broader civic realm of public infrastructure toward a more mature and robustly realized set of relationships with their ecological contexts.

Each of the projects described here in relation to the agrarian impulse in midcentury planning equally portend the ascendance of an aerial subject as the appropriate inhabitant of a democratically decentralized North American urbanism. Each of the projects proposes a renewed role for civil engineering and public works projects in the making of a newly conceived public realm. This new public space is primarily experienced through the automobile and its accommodations, replacing the traditional role of the pedestrian promenade and public plaza as the basic integers of public space. As a necessary corollary to the age of aerial subjectivity, each equally portends a public life of mass spectatorship, broadcast media, and electronic communications. As we will see in the next chapter, this correlation of landscape as a medium of urbanism with particular forms of aerial subjectivity and representation has a long history. This affinity between the sites and subjects of the aerial with the landscape medium continues to inform contemporary readings of landscape as urbanism, as the airport has itself become both subject and object of the landscape urbanist agenda.