

Profit Cities

A study into the effects of capitalism on architecture, and its future.

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Research Thesis

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Abstract:

For the past century, capitalism has been seen as the leading system of political-economics in the western world. Investors and developers, increasingly, have been trying to develop architectural structures and cities which would meet the needs of the middle class buyer and also generate extensive profit. In this there is a question of what these types developments may mean for city life as we know it; whether they will benefit the city, or whether this type of political-economic city planning will cause a greater rift between the social classes and a halting of architectural innovation. This thesis aims to develop a greater understanding of the different predictions for numerous types of economic cities, for the both the author and reader alike. The research will conclude with an informed hypothesis on what the effects of capitalism will be for the future of 'the city' and architecture.

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The Introduction of a Thought

"Because building a building costs so much money, construction – and within it, architecture – necessarily works for and within the monetary system" (Deamer, 2014:1). The most common monetary system globally after the 19th century was and still is Capitalism. It is an economic system that is attractive to the globalised world, as other forms of economics, such as Socialism, are difficult to manage on an international scale. It can be said that this has allowed for Architecture to be manipulated largely into a business rather than a form of social and constructional science. In a capitalist world profit is the defining factor when naming a project as a success or not. "Housing acquired a fundamentally new role. From a means to provide shelter, it becomes a means to generate financial returns" (Graaf, 2015).

The architectural practice, which greatly consisted of innovation, has been dormant for many in the discourse - for a simple reason - in this state of economy, innovation comes at a price only a few can afford. "Modern architecture is invariably considered to be political" (Graaf, 2015). For an architect, or anyone involved in the realm of Architecture, to be able to experiment freely, involves them abiding by the principles of capitalism,

In saying this, there is a major impact that Capitalism has on Architecture, and it is its perception within society. In larger capitalist cities there is an observation of new construction projects driving out the old – a process of gentrification quite common in Capitalism – and this has been quite prominent over the last 50 years. Construction companies are buying land, in such cities most commonly occupied, to build on and sell for vast amounts of profit. This capitalist way of building does two major things; increases property values in the area, and also drives away those previously occupying the sites. Cities are slowly being divided into two major fragments. One half it being fashioned into a profit turning mechanism, where apartment complexes are being turned around at their fastest rate to date in order to produce the most profit as is possible. These apartments end up being bought by the upper middle class, or as is happening

more often, by richer businessmen from other countries as architectural 'safe boxes'. When assessing how this will affect the future of Architecture and even society as a whole, it seems that due to Capitalism, we are heading to a place where cities will no longer be a place families and the working class can afford. "Capitalism's quest for profit can only be satisfied through the extraction of surplus value from its workers," (Heywood, 2007:122) This pattern, will in theory, lead to dystopian like cities, where the poor will be densely pack into small neighbourhoods, and the rest of the city will become (in exaggeration) composed of properties owned by upper-middle class wealthy individuals, and empty high value flats and house, of which the owners reside abroad.

In this research piece, I will be trying to identify whether there is such a thing as a 'perfect' society by reviewing several utopian theories. I will also be assessing capitalist visions and cities in relation to this, in order to make an informed decision on whether capitalist states currently, or will inevitably, lead to a dystopian future.

The Theoretical Framework & Literary Review

Theoretical Framework:

In order to fully assess whether capitalist cities, as we know them to be, will lead to a dystopian way of living, we must first understand what the elements of a 'perfect' and a 'flawed' city are. In the first case study, I will be looking at the different theories on utopia at different points in history, and discussing through the works of Plato, Sir Thomas More, and Le Corbusier, which economic and architectural structures are more likely to develop a utopian way of city living, and which seem to have faults behind their premise.

From there, I will go on to look at two realisations of theoretical utopias, both of which were founded in the United States of America during the 19th century; Pullman, Illinois, a capitalist utopian strategy based around the hopes of profit increase; and Octagon City, Kansas, an international vegetarian commune. Due to their social, geographic, and historical placement, they seemed to be two examples of opposing political-economic arrangements worth juxtaposing, especially in relation to the wider social climate that surrounds them. I will be looking at the original intentions of the developers, George Pullman and the Vegetarian Kansas Emigration Company, and also writings on the historical outcomes of both projects, in order to evaluate whether said objectives were seen through or not.

Leading from this, I will use the results of the analysis of these smaller utopian experiments to identify whether there are patterns that are also mirrored in larger city scaled practices of similar political-economic structures. As New York, at least for the past century, has been a leading symbol of Capitalism, it seemed more than viable to use this city as the basis for the follow-up discussion on utopian theory; how the dominant economic structure of a city impacts the social and architectural development, and durability of a city. For this I will be

looking at the points made by Peggy Dreamer and James Lynch. Much like in the previous analysis of the two smaller utopian realisations, it is important that in order to make a viable statement on whether New York – as a capitalist city – may face a dystopic future, we compare and analyse it against other economic city structures. For this I will be looking at Havana, Cuba, as the socialist counterpart of New York, and also Stockholm, Sweden, of which the economy runs on the Nordic Model, a combination of capitalist and socialist ideals.

To review all the findings – originating from theory, to small realisations, and then to the comparison of large scale cities – I will be concluding by evaluating whether the capitalist stance is one worth abiding by or if it, as first hypothesised, will still cause an architectural dystopia. I will be summarising with a look at the effects of Capitalism on London and what the economic, architectural and social predictions for the major city are.

Literary Review:

"Utopia is a malleable and elastic concept." (Greene, 2011:2) Not only does the term 'Utopia' have many varying definitions, but in that, the perceived methods of reaching a utopian state are also differing depending on the ideology from which a point of view is based. In a broad definition, Utopia is the notion of a perfect society. First devised by Sir Thomas More, the term 'Utopia' has developed to incorporate different sub-terms and in that the opposing notion of 'Dystopia'. Where Utopia represents the ideal state, Dystopia reflects the contradictory, a society which is most undesirable.

The ideal society is represented differently depending predominantly on political-economical preferences. Two leading political-economical ideologies which have shaped the larger part of the 19th and 20th century have been, Capitalism, a system based around private ownership, and the exchange of goods and services for money, and Socialism, the notion that ownership should be social and that the community work to produce the goods and services they require.

Looking at the political descriptions from Andrew Heywood, Laissez-faire Capitalism is described as "the doctrine that economic activity should be free from government interference" (Heywood, 2007:51). Originating in the West, around the Renaissance period, it is defined by the notion of each person being responsible for their own property and income, and between the late 19th to early 20th century, it was further promoted in the West as an ideal economic structure and a stronghold for democracy. Contrary to this, the economic structure of Marxist Socialism follows the idea of common ownership, where everyone works as a collective in a proletariat state; government run by "a class that subsists through the sale of its labour power" (Heywood, 2007:109). In essence a state system run by the workers and wage earners, rather than owners of productive wealth, the Bourgeoisie.

The capitalist notion of 'Laissez-faire' is literally translated from French to mean 'to allow'. Looking at Capitalism through this description we can possibly define its utopian state as being a free market which is rarely regulated for exploitation and growth, and its dystopia being a society in which all economy is regulated and where one is limited in what they are allowed to do.

Although typically in Marxist Socialism, the concept of Utopia is rejected because of its theoretical basis, it still is a prominent element of a large part of socialist thinking, to the point where Karl Marx along with Fredrick Engels subsequently describe a socialist's dystopian state in 'Laws of History' as depicted in *The German Ideology* (1846). They describe five key stages of history which led to an aspired socialist society; primitive Communism and tribal societies; classic societies run on relations between masters and slaves; Feudalism; Capitalism; and finally, the rise of the classless communist state. It is simple to identify a dystopian society for Socialism; a feudalist or capitalist society, where a wealth gap and inequality is produced because of a lack of economic and social regulation. Taking one political theory into account with the other, it seems as if their 'utopian' hopes are the 'dystopian' fears of the other.

The notions Utopia and Dystopia often play on the ideologies not only of economics and politics but also within other areas of society. As mentioned by

Franco Borsi, "After twenty-five centuries of existence, utopian ideas belong to all fields: Philosophy, the social sciences, political sciences, historical sciences, Literature, Architecture and urban development, and science fiction" (Borsi, 1997:9). It would be impertinent to dissociate political economics from the grander changes within both society and the architectural discourse. Almost all political ideologies have constructed for themselves an economic system for which property and its development is managed. Architects have prided themselves on creating ideal buildings and cities for the future. Utopia, an ideology of a perfect society, is often a key principle when thinking of the future. "Architecture [is] intimately tied both to Commercialism and to the power relations of an industrial society" (Scott, 2002:46). In the utopian ideals of a capitalist society, only those through their own capabilities may be able to own their private individualised property, which in turn makes profit for the developers. Such a society relies heavily on sale and purchase, and there is question on how this will affect the types of architecture produced in such a capitalist utopia, and what the implications on the discourse will be.

The Utopian City

In this initial point of analysis of political-economics and utopias, I will be looking at three examples of utopian societies throughout history; the first being Plato's *Republic*, one of the earliest utopian-like theories; the second being the hypothetical state that coined the ideological term, Sir Thomas More's *Utopia*; and finally Le Corbusier's *Ville Contemporaine* (Contemporary City), a 20th century industrial capitalist utopian plan. I will be assessing their different physical and political structures, benefits and defects. After analysing the three, I will be looking to describe the broad requirements and themes of a utopian city in order to inform my later assessments.

380BC - Plato's Republic:

The utopian city has been expressed and designed in several ways by various architects, philosophers and theorists. However, the definition of what makes a perfect society can date back to even ancient Greece. A key example of this is Plato's description of an ideal state in his *Republic*. "Life in Plato's ideal state has affinities with life under a totalitarian government. The laws which Socrates suggests are repressive. There is no division between the public and the private. Only what is conducive to temperate living is encouraged, and excess and vice of any kind are strongly discouraged. Neither wealth nor poverty is permitted, as each leads to vice." (Wright, 2012)

Plato's ideal state was ideal, at least for time in which it was written. Through the development of technology and increased views on politics and the social necessities of living; his argument of an ideal state, as mentioned by Socrates, maybe highly repressive. In some terms can be called dystopian in comparison to later utopian systems.

1516 - More's Utopia:

Sir Thomas More was the English social philosopher, who with his peers, coined the term 'Utopia' in the 16th century. More's *Utopia*, was a hypothetical society created during a discussion with his peers, Raphael Hythlodaye and Peter Gilles. Said to have been influenced by ancient Greek philosophers, most notably Plato, More describes this society as being what would be thought of in later history as a somewhat totalitarian socialist state where there is no private property. With even the houses being placed under an occupational rotation, where households are redistributed every ten years. The communal sharing of workload and property, although in hindsight seems like innately fair social structure, is flawed in that it relies heavily on an existing wealth and the morality of the leading 'Prince'. Through his *Utopia*, More has "conjur[ed] an isolated island to describe a better world but one that in hindsight sounds fascist, prescient now that the 20th century is over" (Greene, 2011:2)

1922 – Le Corbusier's Ville Contemporaine:

Before his discontent of Capitalism and his conversion to right-wing Syndicalism, in 1922 Le Corbusier, one of the most influential architects of the 20th century, presented to the world his original hopes for a utopian city, *Ville Contemporaine* (Contemporary City). A city plan consisting of roughly 3 million inhabitants, and multiple glass-façade steel-framed skyscrapers, each sixty-story high. One of the major aspects for his design was based around mechanical transportation; not only were the buildings connected by large raised highway intersections, it was also designed to allow for smaller aircrafts to land between the buildings. His basis for the project was founded by notions of American industrialisation, and hoped that key French industrialists would imitate this.

His utopian theory here revolves around industry, with three the key elements of his city being the large office building, the industrial transport system, and the housing. The largest structures here being points of business and finance; a city built for a person to travel from one's home to their place of work and back. An

exclusively capitalist city, surrounded by the notion of ordered living and green space.

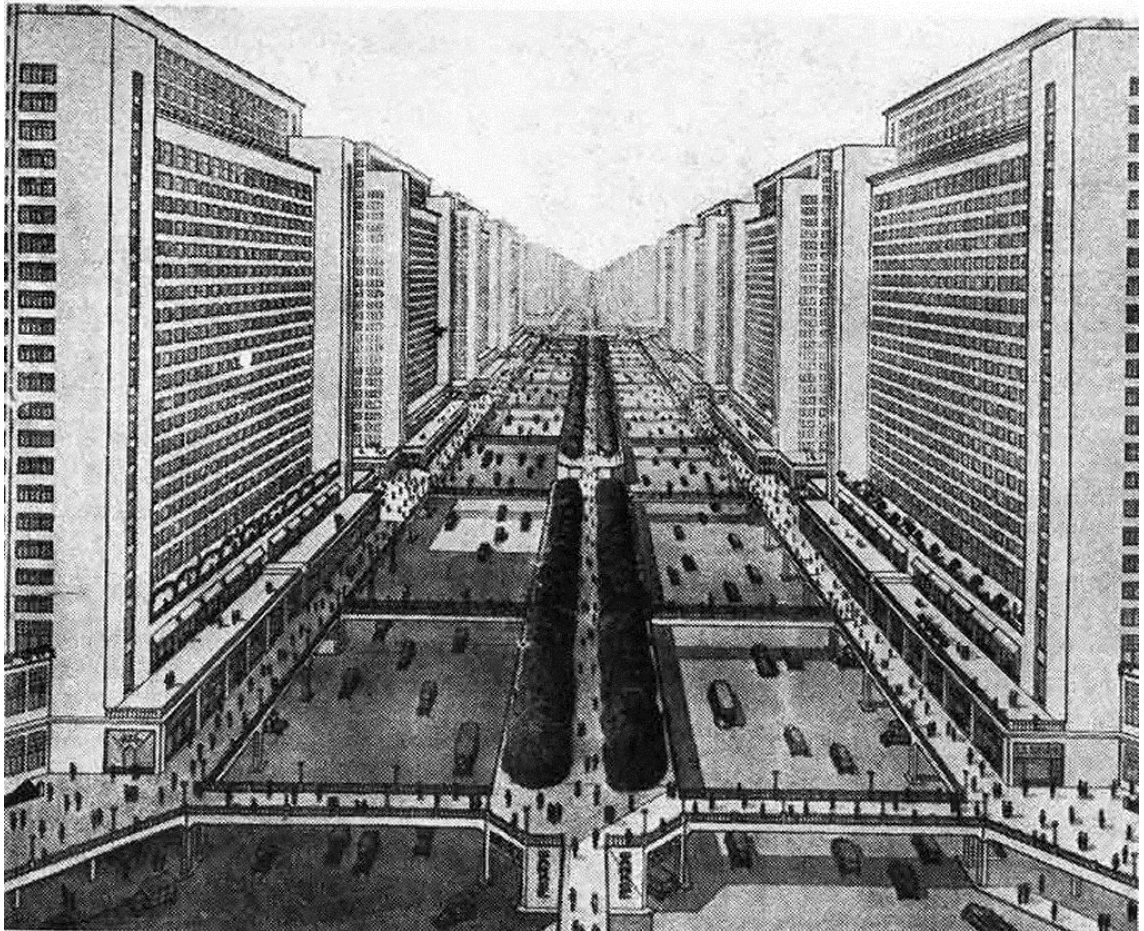


Fig. 2 Le Corbusier's *Ville Contemporaine* (1922)

Although this theoretical design seems quite industrialised and modern, it might not have created the 'ideal' state of which Le Corbusier sought. Even Le Corbusier himself responded to his design with another version of a utopian city; *La Ville Radieuse* (The Radiant City). Where *Ville Contemporaine* was inspired by American industrialisation and Capitalism, *La Ville Radieuse* drew heavily from Le Corbusier's new interest in Syndicalism. *La Ville Radieuse* abandoned the classist structure of its predecessor, with housing distributed based on spatial need rather than one's financial situation.

"The one thing nobody would have is a place to bump into each other, walk the dog, chat, strut, or do any of the hundred other random things that one

does on a street, and which being random were loathed by Le Corbusier... [the] inhabitants surrender their freedom of movement to the omnipresent architect." (*The Shock of the New, Episode 4*, 1980) This observation mirrors the Marxist socialist critique of Capitalism on the basis of 'alienation'. Capitalism, especially in discussions of communal interaction, is often seen to fall short. The ideological emphasis is so dominated by the notions of the 'individual' and 'profit' that people become separate units in a wider system.

Often it is said that Le Corbusier's vision didn't receive the capabilities of revealing its true social impact due to its ideological nature. However, in mentioning this, it is important to note that several architects and developers after Le Corbusier tried to implement his ideas into the city, often with unsatisfactory results. "[his views were that] We need houses as efficient as machines, mass production houses in skyscraper cities set in parkland. 20th century homes for 20th century people.... Years later, architects began to build Le Corbusier's dream, but what people usually got was the skyscraper without the park." (Ward, 1974:75/77)

A Summary of a Utopian City's Needs:

When deliberating the three aforementioned utopias, even with their differing economic structures, patterns do emerge in what people generally believe to be 'ideal'. They all share the belief that a Utopia must stand disconnected with known history. When discussing More's work, Borsi describes the founding act of *Utopia* as being "an act of separation, insuring that there was no longer any connection (at least physical) with the world of history" (Borsi, 1997:27). We can also see this in *Ville Contemporaine*; Le Corbusier calls for a 'destruction' of an existing city, in order to fully develop an ideal symmetrical plan. Also, the notion of work and home also resonates heavily in utopian plans; one must have a place to work, in order for one to have a place to live.

In a broad definition, a utopian state, no matter the political-economic structure it has, must be a new structure disassociate from our existing perceptions of a city; must have a strong workforce; material needs are met

whether by communal sharing or individual wealth; nature and green spaces are often sought; people have – even if limited – a form of political choice; architectural structures are repetitive and systematic; and also the goings-on within the city are in some way structured.

The 19th Century Utopian Realisation

As my aim is to later make an advised hypothesis on whether capitalism as we know it today will succeed in creating the dystopia its leaning towards or not, I must look at not only the theoretical, but also the physical fulfilments of these. I will be assessing whether their objects were accomplished or not, and what their impacts on utopian theories and their economic ideologies were.

The 19th century brought around the second party democracy as we know it today to the United States of America, increased voting rights, utopian theories of the Second Great Awakening, The American Civil War, the abolishment of slavery, and great industrial prosperity. Needless to say America during the 19th century was a time of social, political and economic disparities. With this comes different views of the future, and in turn different utopian theories.

Two prominent utopian examples of 19th century America were *Pullman*, Illinois, and *Octagon City*, Kansas. The first is a capitalist industrial stratagem; the development records of which could inform the possible progresses of current capitalist cities. And the second being a vegetarian socialist-inspired commune. *Octagon City* would serve as a perfect comparative Utopia for *Pullman* due to their theories' opposing economical structure, and their shared social and historical context.

Pullman, Illinois; The Industrial Town:

American industrialist George Pullman, decided in the 1880's to develop his 'ideal industrial town'. Named after its developer, *Pullman*, Illinois, was a town design around Capitalism and industry. The vision was to build a completely new city, with all the property originally owned by Pullman's company.

Inhabitants would work in Pullman's factories and retail places, receive their wages from Pullman, and live in accommodation where rent is paid to Pullman.

"Each dwelling was provided with gas and water, access to complete sanitary facilities and abundant quantities of sunlight and fresh air. Front and back yards provided personal green space, while expansive parks and open lands provided larger, shared ones. Maintenance of the residences was included in the rental prices, as was daily garbage pickup" (Historic Pullman Foundation, s.d). For 19th century America, this for the working class seemed to be the ideal town to live in, work and accommodation were seen to be a certain. The model for *Pullman* was based on the production of content employees and reasonable profit for its founder and his investors. Conditions were thought to be so pleasant that at the 1896 Prague International Hygienic and Pharmaceutical Exposition, *Pullman* was voted the 'world's most perfect town' with its housing employing modern commodities such as indoor plumbing and large green spaces, and the towns scenic Victorian architecture.



Fig. 3 *Pullman the Company Town* (s.d)

"The town of *Pullman* was established as a model community... It turned out to be a miserable failure. And conditions in the town were so terrible that it was

the catalyst for one of America's most famous strikes: The Pullman Strike of 1894." (Novak, 2014) *Pullman* had several flaws, most of which derived from its capitalistic nature. In order to produce the most profit for the wealthier business owners, *Pullman* had an extensive class system which differentiated managers from the lower employees; the lower white employees from black American employees; and even those employees living within the town from those living beyond its borders. Pullman's prohibitionist and repressive ways although seemed brilliant to the investors, when the workforce moved in, problems began to occur; where individual freedoms and inequality is present within a democratic context, revolt is soon to follow. This was further amplified when Pullman's company, *Pullman Palace Car Company*, suffered losses causing Pullman to lower the wages and increase the rent on his employees. *Pullman*, as the utopian society it was built to be, soon collapsed and in 1889 was absorbed into Chicago as a normal town.

Octagon City, Kansas; The Vegetarian Commune:

Octagon City, Kansas, was an agricultural utopia, founded by the Vegetarian Kansas Emigration Company. The major principles for this town was the idea of an all vegetarian population; an exclusively octagonal design for all the structures (see appendix 1); and a communal way of living. The town was originally meant to have farmhouses, public buildings and a large number of homes. In 1856 almost sixty families arrived to live in this supposedly prosperous town only to find one log cabin. The lack of suitable shelter and workspace, paired with the unprepared nature of the families caused many to leave because of poor health and lack of basic living necessities. "*Octagon City* never came to be. Even by utopian society standards, it failed spectacularly when most of its original settlers left after just a few months." (Zhang, 2014) The project in all barley lasted a year. The failure of this utopia resided heavily in the lack of resources and experience – which was almost the opposite of *Pullman*, where resources were plentiful.

The Best of Two Theoretical Disappointments:

When comparing the two towns, it is difficult to identify which is the best or worst structure based on whether they failed or not, due to them both disbanding at some point. However, we can assess them based on a few factors; economy, duration, social situations, and architecture.

When discussing the economics of the towns, it is clear from their founding that they were meant to run on different systems; Capitalism and Socialism. Where *Octagon City* found it difficult even to produce enough food, for a longer period *Pullman* was still producing wages for the employees, even if they were reduced greatly compared to the start. One non-debatable factor of comparison between the two was duration; *Pullman* lasted longer than *Octagon City*.

In saying this, two factors that have more fluid answers are the social and architectural situations of the towns. Although *Pullman* had extensive architectural structures and amenities, it was greatly lacking on the social front. The inequality in its structure ultimately led to its downfall. When comparing this to *Octagon City*, at face value *Pullman* seems the better of the two structures, as a major disappointing element of *Octagon City* was its lack of structures, which caused a loss of moral for the inhabitants. When deciding based on this which utopian theory was better it is understandable why people might decide the capitalist plan of *Pullman*, however an important note to take was that the physical interpretation of the *Pullman* hypothesis was built almost exactly to the plans and still failed, however *Octagon City the Utopian Theory* was never realised, the only elements that *Octagon City, Kansas* shared with its plans, was in essence, the name. Due to *Pullman* failing due to its classist nature even with a structurally complete town, it is therefore reasonable to argue that if *Octagon City* was structurally realised, paired with the equality of social living, it may have at least survived longer than *Pullman* and its capitalistic structure.

The Present Economic City

The results found when scrutinising the tried utopian theories presented a few points of insight, of which may prove to be useful when analysing whether current cities may lead to failures similar to those experienced by *Pullman* and *Octagon City*.

Similar to the structure used to look at the realised utopian theories, I will be first investigating the elements and history of a current capitalist city, then comparing it to one of a socialist nature to decide whether certain outcomes occur on the basis of having a certain economic system or not. After which, I will be cross-comparing the result with the findings based on a mixed-economy state. As mentioned in the framework of this research piece, the cities I will be looking at are, New York, USA; Havana, Cuba; and Stockholm, Sweden.

For the analysis I will be discussing the cities' chosen economic systems and their effects. There will also be a conversation on what is happening in the cities' architectural discourse, what the predictions of the future for it are, and if the aforementioned economic system will play a part in these calculations.

New York, USA:

"Americans are abandoning their white-picket fence... in favour of a shorter walk to work... The high demand for city living has led to a wave of high-rise construction projects across the country, in cities such as New York." (Frizell, 2014) Over the past century New York has been the location for most of the financial exchanges within Capitalism on a global scale. The city has become a spectacle of wealth and profit, with the cityscape being dominated with skyscrapers. "The skyscraper [is] a subject of ideological battle, the symbol of capitalism's triumph" (Dreamer, 2014:25). The triumph implied here is global power. Capitalism has dominated global economics in the 20th century. Using business and the profit created through this, New York was literally built from the

ground up, home to some of the tallest buildings in the world at certain point of history.



Fig. 4 Woolworth Building (s.d)

Although the financial stability of the city is still persevering and more people are choosing New York as their ideal living situation, there is still questions of the social and architectural nature to be answered. The city is increasingly becoming for the individual working person, with over a third of New York inhabitants living in single-person dwellings and the average age being 35 years old, which is younger in comparison to the average age of 38 years old across America. In order to deal with what is described as New York having “the highest population density of any major city in the United States, with over 27,000 people per square mile” (NYC Department of City Planning; s.d) developers have continued to build taller and taller rectangular buildings. Critics from across Europe have described this type of architecture as being “ugly and uncultured... they barely recognised the tall office buildings as architecture at all... see[ing] it as a product of engineering and construction, built in the service of capital” (Dreamer, 2014:35/36). The approaching Dystopia here isn't in the failure of an economic system, but of the negative effects the system is having on major aspects of society and its culture.

Havana, Cuba:

The counterpart chosen to juxtapose against the economical and architectural situation of New York, is the socialist city of Havana, Cuba. "As the first Socialist state in the Americas and as an articulate member of the Third World, Cuba presents to the globe a cultural image that is complex, ambivalent, and provocative." (Lynch, 1979-1980:100) Cuba's capital city originally was flourishing with new architectural forms and ways of living, up until the USA placed an embargo on the country based on deferring economic stances. This caused a limitations of construction materials and other commodities that were necessary for further development. There were many proposed architectural structures that were developed, however no matter the innovation, there was a constant "grey sameness [that] oppresses the eye." (Lynch, 1979-1980:104) (see appendix 2). The embargo had a knock-on effect with other areas of society. Where there was promise of the government supplying all, from housing to education, everything seems to have become increasingly underfunded. A key example of this is in the health care; "Patients have to bring their own medicine, their own bedsheet, and even their own iodine to the hospital. Most of these items are available only on the illegal black market, moreover, must be paid for in hard currency" (Totten, 2014). It is fair to describe this socialist state as a somewhat failing one, with its only hopes residing in the removal of certain foreign policies on business with the county; most of these policies created by capitalist based states. Therefore, even with the abolishment of said policies, the socialist structure becomes 'tainted' with its interactions with capitalist systems, causing the city to maybe prosper, but not under a fully socialist economic structure.

Stockholm, Sweden:

When looking at the present economic climate, it is important to not disregard Keynesian economic, which became a prominent form of economy in Scandinavian Europe, known widely as the Nordic Model. The Keynesian structure combines capitalistic business with a prominent social welfare system.

"A new concept of 'planning' took shape—one compatible with liberal democracy and based on Keynesian economic doctrine... Sweden in particular became a role model for many architects in Western Europe and America." (Colquhoun 2002:193). This new concept relied on heavily on state-sponsored housing; a move characterised as part of social reform. This was heavily inspired by the notion of the government being 'the house of the people'.

This social and economic structure seems to have worked well for the Scandinavian model. Based on average salary, Swedes earn less than the average New Yorker, however, based on the OECD not only is Sweden more environmentally sound, but the country also has a higher 'life satisfaction' and 'work-life balance' rate than the USA.

The Economic Comparison:

Before beginning the comparison, it is clear that the socialist system of Havana, Cuba is in the worst state out of the three cities. It can almost be said to be a dystopia in itself. However, does this mean that the more capitalistic cities would not lead to a dystopian way of living? The answer to that cannot so easily be answered. Out of Sweden's Nordic Model and New York's fully capitalist one, it seems that they both bring forth different merits and flaws. However, while in Stockholm architects are still able to experiment with both smaller and larger designs, developers and architects thinking of building New York are limited to designing tall buildings capable of being densely inhabited, which – in turn – affects the quality of life and happiness experienced by the residents of the city. When innovation halts, it is near impossible to improve anything, and with New York still quite far from perfect, it would never reach a utopian state, and more likely than not, fall into an architectural dystopia.

The Conclusive Hypothesis

In this conclusion I will be looking to draw on the themes of my findings to assess the current position within this discussion of one last city, London, England. After making a judgement on where it stands ideologically, I will then go onto discuss my revised opinion on the capitalist city. And to bring to a close this piece, I will announce my own hypothesis, based on the research put forth in this discussion.

London, England:

My final assessment into seeing what Capitalism has done to cities, is London, England. London is home to some of the leading areas of industry, finance, arts and politics in the world. It is a city where you are able to find such a large variety of architecture, influenced by several different histories and social developments. However, when discussing present history, although the UK is run under a mixed economy, London definitely leans more towards Capitalism. It is home to the largest banking district in the UK, Canary Wharf, and based on the Department for Communities and Local Government's Statistics for the September quarter of 2015 there are almost four times as many private housing developments in London than there are social ones. Not only do these private developments add to the growing gentrification problems of the city, but as mentioned previously, a substantial amount of the buyers are often rich foreigners. A prime example of this would be Maine Tower, set to open in 2019.

"The flats, which started at £350,000 for a studio, sold out within four hours, with half of the buyers living overseas; many of the purchasers of Maine Tower's 'elite lifestyle services' have never seen the plot on which the 41-storey skyscraper will be built." (Gordon, 2015) The way in which these properties are bought further proves the notion that these apartments are no more than capitalistic assets. If this pattern continues, we will end up with developments purposely being built with the intent to be unoccupied.



Fig. 5 Maine Tower, Canary Wharf (s.d)

The Final Hypothesis:

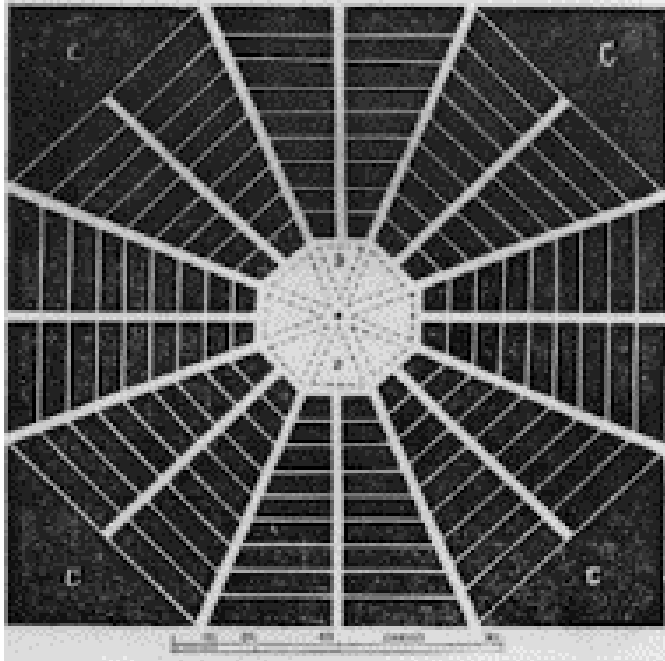
After researching and analysing several theories on perfect societies, and cross-comparing them with historical and present cities, it seems that Capitalism is the political-economical structure that has, so far in history, succeeded in not failing as routinely as other forms of economics. In saying this, Capitalism is a long way from creating a utopian society. In fact, it is still more likely to produce a dystopian society but it might take this political-economic structure quite a while longer to reach that.

My final hypothesis based on this research is that;

Within time, the increased gentrification found in current capitalist societies will cause an overwhelming rift between the social classes. This, as found in other times of historical oppression, will lead to the downfall of the system and its ideals, bringing forth in its place a dystopic city until a reformed political-economy can take hold.

Appendix

Appendix 1:



Octagon City (s.d)

Appendix 2:



Us Interests Section, Havana (s.d)

List of Illustrations

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