

SESSION 2014

Épreuves orales

**EXPOSÉ DE LA PRÉPARATION D'UN  
COURS****405**

Ce sujet comprend 3 documents :

- Document 1 : Extrait de *Ripley Bogle* – Robert McLiam
- Document 2 : Extrait de *The Sense of Sight* – John Berger
- Document 3 : *The Three Magnets* from *Architecture+Urbanism, Manchester School of Architecture Year Book 2013*

## Document 1

London in general is a funny old place. Yes, it is. You know it is. I like old London. In all its grimegrey glory. Lives live here. Lots of them. In the candletime the snow is dry and whitened, unlike Ireland where winter is wet and brown. Ah, London. Such a city! I've walked it all. So very many casually wealthy people around and so many determinedly poor. The Lordly and the Abject. London lives for them both - in almost equal measure. Their province and their right. Though as Mick as Mick can be, I don't feel at all foreign in traipsing these streets. It's a city of foreigners anyway. Hardly an Anglo-Saxon face to be seen. Good old egalitarian England! Arabs, Africans, Americans, West Indians, East Indians, Germans, Pakistanis, Jews, Chinese, Japanese, French, Scottish, Irish and, doubtless, a liberal deposit of the fucking Welsh. Don't get me wrong. It's no bad thing but compared to that lot I'm St Fucking George himself!

Now, which is your London? Which is the city that you know? Rich-poor, North-South, East-West, up-down, in-out? Me, I know them all. The lot. All those different, differing Londons. Golders Green, Muswell Hill, Chiswick, Chelsea, Camden, Kennington, Finchley, Fulham, Rotherhithe, Richmond, Notting Hill and Bethnal Green. I know them all.

I know these places as a tramp. As a watcher. That's what trampdom gives you - audience status; the observer's, the artist's overview. We tramps, we watch you all - and listen too. Rude perhaps but we've got bugger all else to do.

London is a whole different, exclusive city for us tramps. The most differing of all those listed Londons. It's much bigger for a start, the trampcity, though, paradoxically, its geography is more minute, more precise. The scale is increased but the mapping is concentrated. Tramps know the city in its smallest essence. They know its stones, its pipes and bricks and doorways and pavements. We sleep on them after all. I mean, think for a moment how well the average person is acquainted with his or her bed. Right? Well, there you are. That's how well we know the streets of our city. That's the beggar's ground-level slice of London, his close-up, his particularised urban view. I've felt the friendliness of the pavement. I've felt the chase and lull of sleep in its impermeable embrace. I'm not complaining, believe me. Eventually, at the arse-end of endurance and hardships most things have their saving graces, their quirks, their own peculiar charms.

Robert McLiam Wilson, *Ripley Bogle*, 1989 Vintage 1998 pp.18-19

## Document 2

## Manhattan

As a moral idea, an abstraction, Manhattan has a place in everybody's thinking throughout the world. Manhattan represents: opportunity, the power of capital, white imperialism, glamour, poverty—depending upon the world view of the one who is thinking. Manhattan is a concept. It also exists. In its streets a visitor is at first astounded by both the power and the weakness of his previous imagination. From this astonishment comes a paradox. They are, at one and the same time, streets in a dream and the most real streets (offering nothing behind what *is*) that he has ever seen.

I can seize on details: wheel-less cars abandoned under hundreds of living-room windows as though on a deserted beach: a diamond brooch in the form of the word **LOVE** in a window at Tiffany's: figures on street corners in Harlem, guarding with defiance the space and repose within their black bodies, because it is the only space and repose which is inalienably theirs. There are no symbolic details here. What you see is what you see; nothing more. Meaning is where you are. There is no hidden significance, no inner meaning. [ . . . ]

The streets are worn and stained like interiors. The steps, railings, hydrants, kerbs, have not aged with constant use over a long period of time. Rather they have been broken and damaged by violent successions, like a basin in a public lavatory, a cell door, a bed in a lodging house. Each sidewalk has a terrible intimacy. At street level in Manhattan there is no distinction whatsoever between intimate and public events. (The distinction disappears in the same way on a battlefield.)

Nor are there any barriers in space. No border which can be reached is respected. Only the traffic lights work; otherwise there are no civic conventions. What keeps people out (or in) are locks and, in the case of the defeated, despair. Between the Bowery and Wall Street or the Bowery and Madison Avenue, the traveller walks through invisible rope after invisible rope, strung across the open spaces at waist level. These ropes keep the derelict in; they are made out of their own despair. Their despair is no secret: it is there in the bricks injected and polished with dirt, the smashed windows, the boarded-up shop fronts, the broken angles of the doorways, their scavenger clothes, ageless and sexless. There are many places in the world, cities and villages, where the destitute are more numerous than in Manhattan. But here the derelict possess nothing with which to make even a mute appeal. They have become nothing more than what they appear to be. They are nothing but their dereliction.

The skyscrapers establish their norm. One's eye wearies of making the distinction between vertical and horizontal; the right angle no longer reads as such; what might recede flatly into the distance recedes instead, upwards, at an indeterminate angle into the sky. The principle of the horizon is broken. If you picture the experienced space of other cities as being sheets of paper laid out more or less flat on their sides; here the sheet of paper has been twisted into a paper-funnel bag. The loss of the essential right angle within perception is compensated for by the proliferation of nearby rectangles—doors, windows, walls, steps, grids. The paper funnel-bag is made of graph paper with squares printed on it. It is filled with faces, languages, cars, bottles, trees, fabrics, machines, plans, stairs, hands, threats, promises, reports from all over the world.

*The Sense of Sight*, Writings by John Berger, 1985, pp.61-63  
Pantheon Books . New York

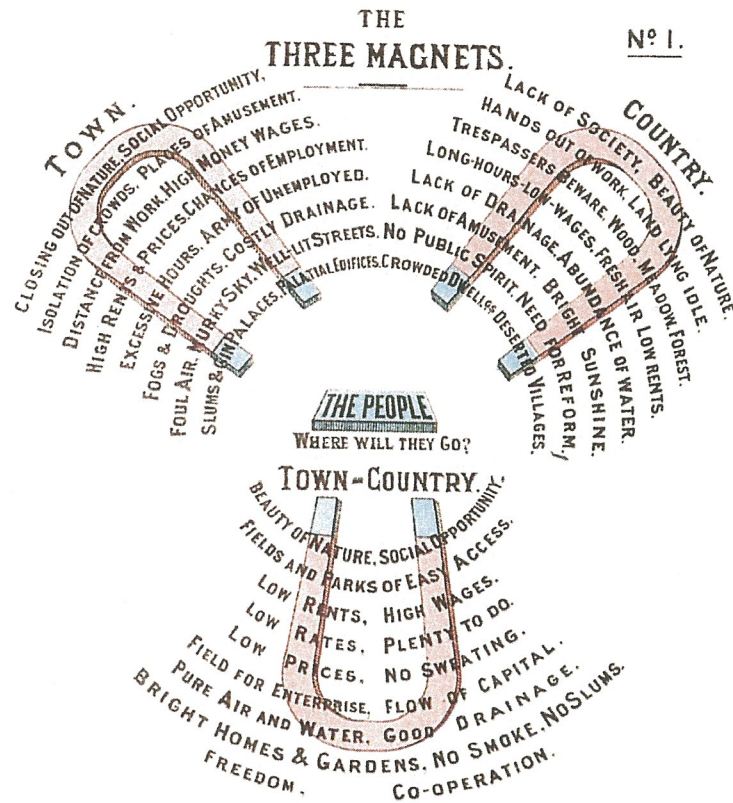


Document 3

**ARCHITECTURE + URBANISM**

MANCHESTER SCHOOL OF ARCHITECTURE YEAR BOOK 2013

The Three Magnets



[...] London (and other cities) in the 19th century were in the throes of industrialization, and the cities were exerting massive forces on the labour markets of the time. Massive immigration from the countryside to the cities was taking place [...].

[...] To Howard the cure was simple – to reintegrate people with the countryside. In trying to understand

5 and represent the attraction of the city he compared each city to a magnet, with individuals represented as needles drawn to the city. He set about comparing the ‘town and country magnets’ but decided that neither were suitable attractors for his utopian vision. Instead he believed that “Human society and the beauty of nature are meant to be enjoyed together” – his solution “the two  
 10 magnets must be made one.” [...]

<http://architectureandurbanism.blogspot.fr/2010/10/ebenezer-howard-garden-cities-of-to.html>