Architects are always obsessed with the idea of realising their own town-planning projects instead of giving expression to popular demands. They advance ahead of time which stubbornly insists on an architectural language full of symbols. The man in the street is likely to resist their aesthetic and rationalistic creations out of little known internal reasons. In his mind, a house is an architectural failure if it does not correspond to the forms he is accustomed to. This factor is stronger than the builder’s determination, and the house eventually conforms to the shape it has been squeezed into, while a certain durability of almost metaphysical and subconscious values still awaits Freudian analysis. (1, 2, 6)

A breakthrough into the world, where our professorial councils might really come into their own, is with us no more than an exception rather than the rule. It would be a world in which reliance on economics and more modest means is linked with the rare discipline of joint activity and increased sensibility. (3, 4)

1 A villa built for a well-known opera singer by order of a rich solicitor in Ljubljana, was designed by a distinguished architect. It contains a metaphorical representation of Juliette’s home with a balcony, a Gothic arch and red-painted external walls.

2 One of the Slovenian impressionists endowed his home of rather modest form with Baroque elegance. Curving lines and the mask under the roof structure represent the symbol of his spiritual status.

As regards the actual existing new building mass with which our broadest masses come into daily contact, a common man, as we all know, has his own entirely elementary and determined opinion which is, by the nature of the thing, most closely connected with him and with his needs. On the other hand, and separately from this, we talk about town-planning and regional projects in a perfectly formed style and on a strictly scientific and professional level. Obviously it could not be otherwise, for the former and the latter originated, from the very beginning, separately from each other and remain separated.

As regards the former, we still know, in fact, very little and therefore we are obliged, from time to time, to confess our helplessness in order to acquire in this field a clearer insight, and to establish that we are unable to deal with such subjects in any other way but in the light of the various – if possible – latest town-planning theories and with the unavoidable presence of science. Thus discussions on the most common of life themes are always conveyed into the high spheres from which it is very difficult to view everyday problems. It is, however, strange, that we do not remember all of this more frequently, and it looks as if we have not seen this conflict in many spectacular domestic and international gatherings, nor in the reports of both special and mass media. How is it possible that we do not see that all this happens only in the ideal world of luxury publications, delegations for the exchange of experiences and in symposiums, in the vicious circle of the neo-Platonic thought whose cultivating better serves more spiritual needs yet very little the reality of everyday life.

What makes us anxious, with good reason, is the ever-increasingly complete division of this idealistic world and the increasingly intense spread of common, poor quality daily architecture which envelops our entire area.

It is an obvious fact that we have become, in our profession, so estranged from the capacity of observing our immediate surroundings that we no longer see either the phenomena or their relationships with sociological, economic and cultural values. As the saying goes: we occupy ourselves with the forestry and have forgotten the tree and its life.

If science be considered an objective observation of life, why do we not view this widespread common architecture as the field of our research? Why do we not even try to find the answers to the question that asks in which way could we distinguish some notions or even discover determined lawful relations which could be reunited into an integral view as a necessary basis of our entire theoretical approach? No matter that there would be much of the trivially empirical and that it might even seem unscientific to many whom it may concern. In every example we could hope that at least our abstract theorising – in which we have already come very far — and the fertile banality of everyday truth would come to be subject to the neces-
This individual house, by its spare outside decoration, suggests a richer and more cultured atmosphere inside, but remains unacceptable for the builder under 8 as an image of a house.

By its complete symmetry, the home of a university professor and his son-in-law reflects familial inter-connectedness, emphasized by its complete isolation, size, facade painted an intense red and its single approach. A personal note is introduced only in the difference between the front and garage doors.

If we take as an example the formerly given general lines of the plan in Slovenia with their obvious failure and think of difficult struggles which could have brought important economic success, quite independently from the endeavours of the above mentioned factors, we see, in a very illuminating light, the difference between the irregular idealistic-authoritarian approaches to things and regular, living ones. Well-known proofs, such as development of industry at Novo Mesto (Krka, IMV), “Gorenje” at Velenje, the Port of Koper, the Vrhnika—Postojna motorway, etc. belong to the greatest successes of Slovenian industry in the course of recent years, which was made possible only when the management experts for development let it go.

Over the course of the past three decades we have made large investments in domestic planning, working efforts and engagement, we formed an unprecedentedly great institutional apparatus and formed a very large number of qualified staffs. However, to our regret, we must recognize the fact that the greatest part of these investments and efforts have remained without effect, and in many instances have even given rise to a feeling of disappointment. It looks today as if the entire system of uniform institutions has become petrified and that we cannot expect from it either new ideas or fresher working forms, and still less rejuvenated impulses toward development.

The predominant part of these efforts were expensive analyses based on statistics, which we usually undertook with great enthusiasm and a great amount of perseverance in order to be able to discover, as efficiently as possible, some trend; but they always ended half-way, because the statistics, as a Yugoslav “enfant terrible” chronicle has never been able to offer up a usable idea about ourselves. With such a state of things which we all—consciously or subconsciously—feel rather clearly, there hardly remains any other way but that of our characteristic nervous flight forward and escape into as great a spatial or chronological remoteness as possible. We are giving the domestic audience a report about the tiniest details concerning town-planning developments which are far from our immediate life and local worries, we disturb them with demagogic sensations, such as affected fear of a disastrous increase in population, we minutely cultivate the fable of romantic planning values where they are not imperilled, and in general we’ve thrown ourselves passionately into the idolatry of abstract American planning, which we have substituted for that of the Soviet type, etc. We are ascending, more and more, into the spheres of the highest science in which it is spoken of in the terms—difficult to understand— of meta-ur-