Abstract

We live in a world of technology. Technology is both the means to which we owe our lifestyle, our affluence and indeed some of our greatest problems. While technology has given the individual unparalleled affluence by means of the Industrial Revolution, its products are also threatening the very existence of our species.

Whether or not we are for or against technology, it is a fact that technology and its icons surround us, and is present in all aspect of our lives. In architecture, where the intangible powers of representation and imagery are so important, the imagery of technology is no less abundant.

This dissertation seeks to examine how the image of technology is applied in architecture. The word Technology has many connotations. Because technology is seen as the means by which society has progress, technology is often looked upon with great optimism. It is no doubt that this optimism plays a part in its popularity as icon. Technology, the origin of the word and its present day usage and connotations must be examined, only then can the use of technology in architecture be understood.

Then some buildings must be examined within the previously framed context of technology. For the purposes of this dissertation, the works of a prominent architect (Nicholas Grimshaw) who is identified with an architectural style (High Tech) that uses technological imagery heavily, will be examined. From Grimshaw’s works(particularly the British Pavilion Expo’92), links can be drawn towards technology. Elements, parts of the buildings and even the whole can be compared to technology, particularly its problem-solving potential, its constraints, and its potent imagery.

The role of technology in architecture is both representational and functional. It is important that architects strive a balance between technological function and technological imagery.