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Constant's New Babylon, Reconstructing the Social Structure

Posted by [zeroisciro](#) on May 17, 2012 · [Leave a Comment](#)



Graphic Representation of New Babylon: *Constant Nieuwenhuys*

Have you ever felt that our social structure could be different? Have you ever felt that money causes more problems than the ones it solves? Have you ever felt trapped by the system?

Throughout my 21 years of life there have been many times when I have felt that the system we live by is unnatural and inhibiting. I have always *questioned* the school system, the government, the military, and our country's interaction with the rest of the world. I don't feel as those branches of our country are

necessarily are wrong, but something just never felt right. I hear people complain about their jobs almost every day, I hear my peers complain about school every day, and I hear people I don't even know complain about being just plain unhappy. I have long wondered what could possibly be a substitute for the social structure that most people strictly abide by day in and day out.

CAUSE

With the proposal of Constant's New Babylon in the 1950's, an alternative to our everyday reality becomes recognized. Before I go into my interpretation I should let it be known that open mindedness is required to comprehend the noteworthy qualities of this proposal. As it turns out, Constant felt the same as many people still today do. He noticed unhappiness all around him. He questioned this unhappiness, the reasons for it, and the solution to cure it. The main cause for **this root of unhappiness** in Constant's mind was the necessity of time. The reason people don't like work or school, is because it takes up all their **time** and they can't do the things they truly want to do be it traveling, following a hobby, spending time with loved ones, or just plain having fun. He had the firm perspective that time was a man made aspect of life that made happiness and fun more difficult to experience.

SOLUTION

The motivation for this proposal is in direct relation to the social structure that Constant Nieuwenhuys saw. It wasn't a direct response to the state architecture, buildings or cities though these are all representational of the social structure. Constant's solution completely obliterates the idea of time. He does this by proposing a social structure where work was not required to survive. Nobody needs to work and everybody is free of time constraint on their life. Constant's new social model is all based on the idea that, with massive amounts of free time people can **play** and be completely responsible for the actions they take. **Collective ownership** is another important term used to describe how this limitless setting of Constant's New Babylon could be possible. For it to work, everyone would need to agree to equally share everything, food, shelter, and transportation especially.

COMPONENTS

Network

The expanding aspect of Constant's New Babylon is undeniable, when you consider the people following their passions and pursuing the fun they've never had time for. It would be a network of few limitations, almost nomadic in nature. People would meet countless travelers and experience new perspective and cultures. In such an open and free environment, ideas and creativity would thrive, only adding to the expansion of the network. Whether it is thought of in psychological terms or physical terms there are many characteristics of Constant's New Babylon that would result in an expansive and complex network of people, culture, and architecture.

Topography

Constant's thesis also incorporated the idea of the built structure and how it would serve the new social model. To mitigate the built and the natural, Constant proposes an artificial landscape that intertwines the two. This would create a seamless environment between the built and the natural.

Sector

The program of the built and its relationship to the natural would be organized into sectors dependent upon the social relations of people.

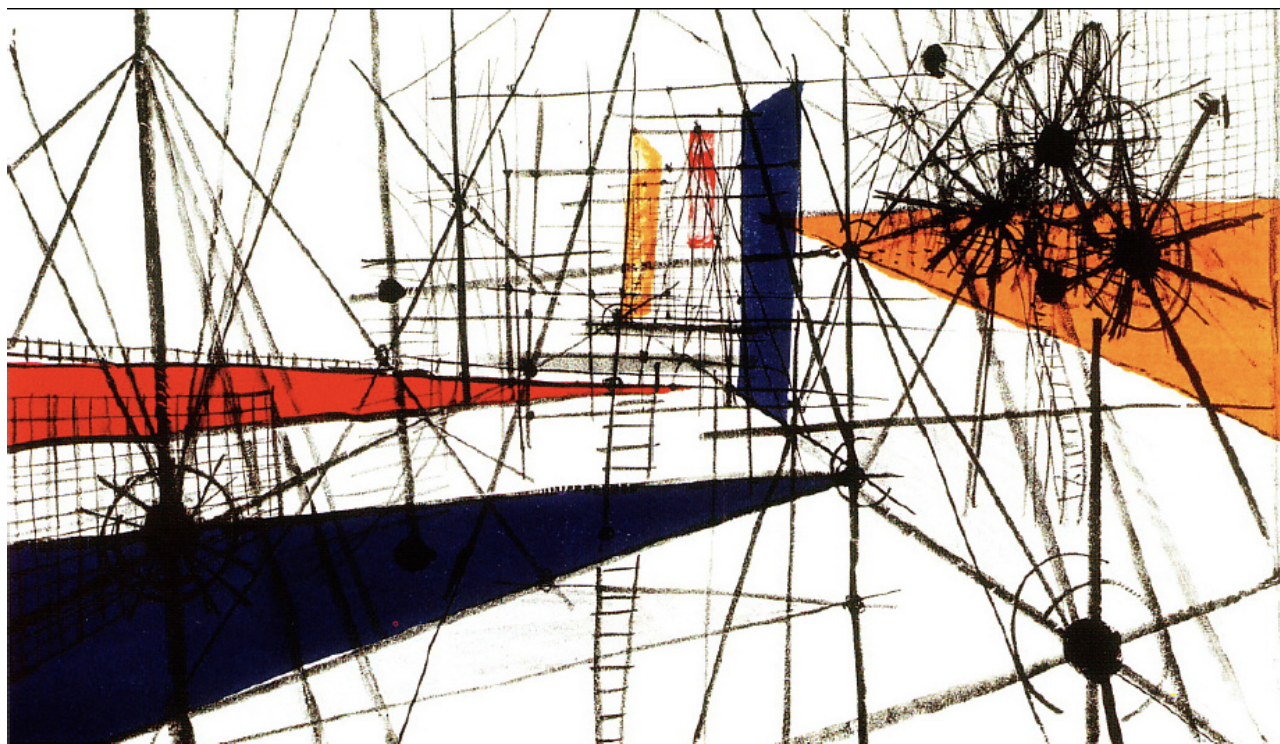
CONCLUSION

The main qualm that comes to me with Constants New Babylon is the fact that plug in architecture is the result of this limitless network. I believe that many different types of architecture could result of such a creative and fun environment. Kids could construct an entire city with their friends with soft and light materials. A family could build their dream house or shelter. People could use the land in new and creative ways to create living environments. The artificial landscape could create a situation where the natural growth of the land would being to grow into a living structure. This would be almost perfect because it would in itself be a model of what this new social structure stands for: freedom, growth, play, and happiness. I am thoroughly inspired by Constant Nieuwenhuys free thinking and diligence with his thesis for a New Babylon. I hope you will take a look at these other representational graphic depictions that he used to represent his ideas.

A Limitless Network



A Perspective View Into the Fun



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