



7 / OUTWARD SIMPLICITY OF FORM AND PACKING OF FORM

In some cases the “brutal” effect of geometry takes rather simple character. It is not always a matter of load-bearing structure as it is in the previous case. In the case shown here, the Sala house in Berkeley, it is more a matter of pure geometry, once again relying on the framework of an aperiodic grid as the basis for differentiation — but applied to the *space* and rooms, not only to the building structure.

In the Sala house, whose section is shown below, I determined on an extraordinarily simple outside volume: a three-story tower, more or less

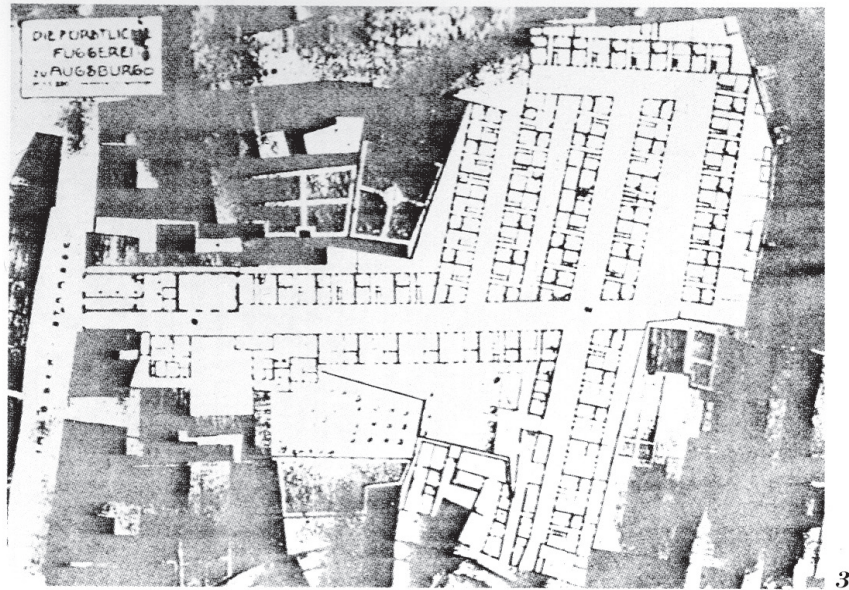
square in plan (20 feet by 20 feet). However, what may be seen in this section is the way the house is then crammed with smaller, ordered spaces, each unique in position and configuration. Yet the whole is managed so that these various small volumes pack tightly and neatly, without leftovers. This creates a strong and definite form, geometric in its essence, yet adapted and flexible and able to contain what it needs to contain, without any raggedness.

We see a similar thing in the ground plan of the Fuggerei in Augsburg. This plan (built in the



SECTION

Aperiodic grid visible in the cross-section of the Sala house



Aperiodic grid visible in the ground plan of the Fuggerei, Augsburg

16th century) contains a series of small rows of workers' houses, arranged in very strict rows. Yet because of the site, its boundaries, and an orientation created by originally existing orchards, the rigidly drawn lines and repetition fit the land, fit the boundaries, and create a unique and unforgettable internal configuration — one of the most beautiful small in-town villages in Europe.

In both cases (the Fuggerei and the Sala house), the principle is the same. A rigid and definite geometry is introduced in a nearly brutal manner, but is then treated, bent, filled, and modified, so that its coherent existence, while being adapted to rooms, circumstances, needs, and land, is nevertheless able to happen beautifully within a visible and satisfying order.



8 / A FURTHER STRUCTURAL EXAMPLE

Let us examine one more case in considerable detail. Here I show one of the college buildings from the Eishin campus. Although the presence of these buildings on the site is necessarily loose to fit the land (see site plan in Book 3, chapter 6), the buildings themselves are the simplest possible rectangles, *but laid into the ground in such a way as to make the land harmonious.*

What is the sequence of events that shaped this building? First, the building got its long shape simply from the way it was needed to sur-

round and form space. The simplest response to this shape was that it should be a firm, precise rectangle. There was no reason to make the building bend or wiggle. There was no reason to make it go in and out. The idea that a building becomes more “organic” if it has a more complex form, even when based on notions of the interior organization, is almost always wrong. In this case, the best and simplest solution was for it to be a rectangle of the right length to do justice to the land. Density prescribed that it be two sto-