

Japan

Library of Tokyo College of Economics

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Let us consider the case of designing a house for somebody. If the client has got a firm and imaginative idea of his family's life which is based on the character of the family unit as a whole and the personality of each individual family member, and if the architect can sympathize with it and be able to create a space which would fit the image, it should result in a fine architecture.

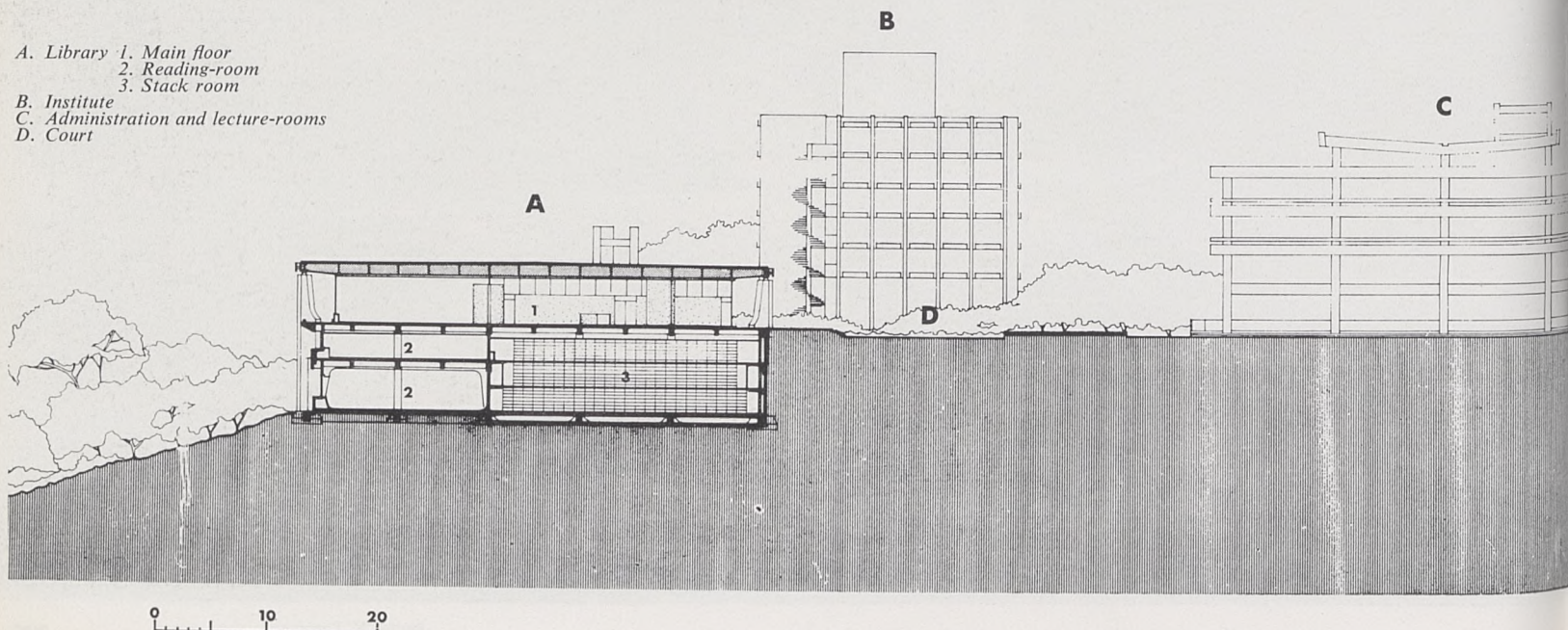
It would be wrong for the architect to instruct the client and his family how to fit their life into the house he designed with an architectural idea or another, which may not be relevant to the life of the particular family at all.

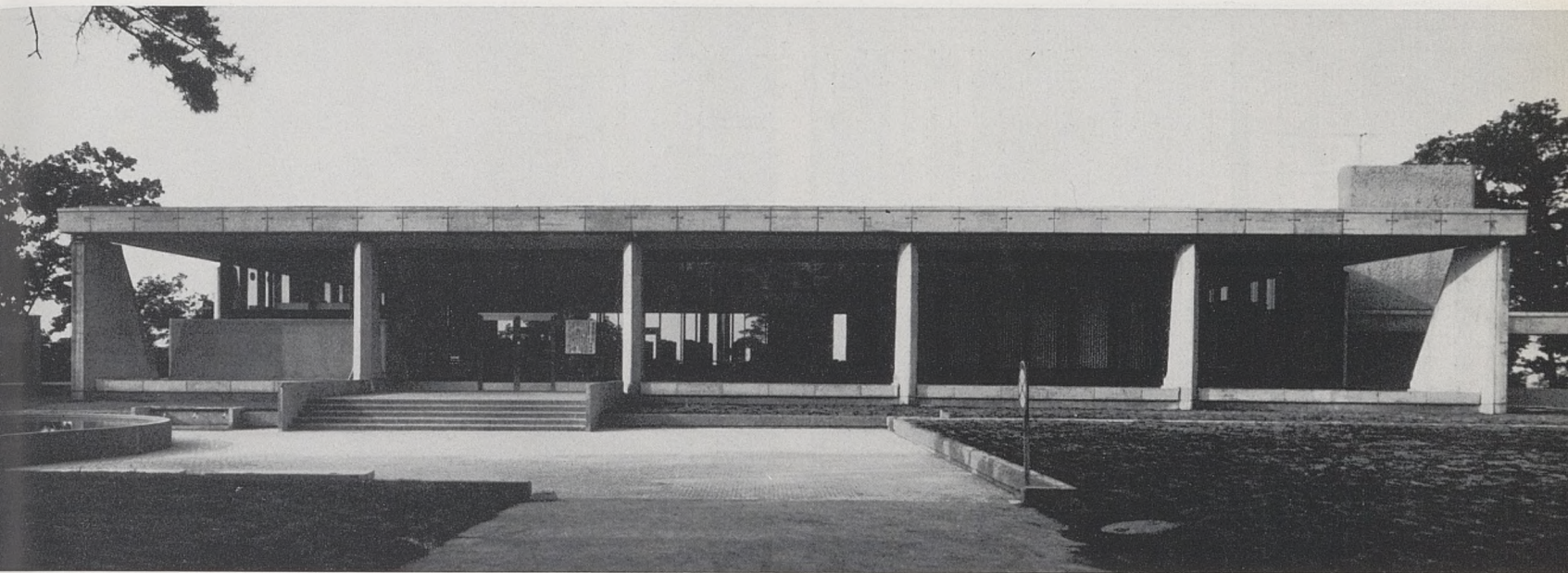
This simple fact seems to be ignored so often in architectural thinking. In many cases the client has no idea of what his family's life should be like in their new house except for such trivial details as the shape of door knob or the height of shower head in the bathroom. On the other hand, architects often love to talk about such great topics like crisis of contemporary civilization or future living space on the ocean, rather than everyday life of the client's family. There seems to be little common ground for discussion between two people, one for whom and the other by whom the architecture is created. This is deplorable.

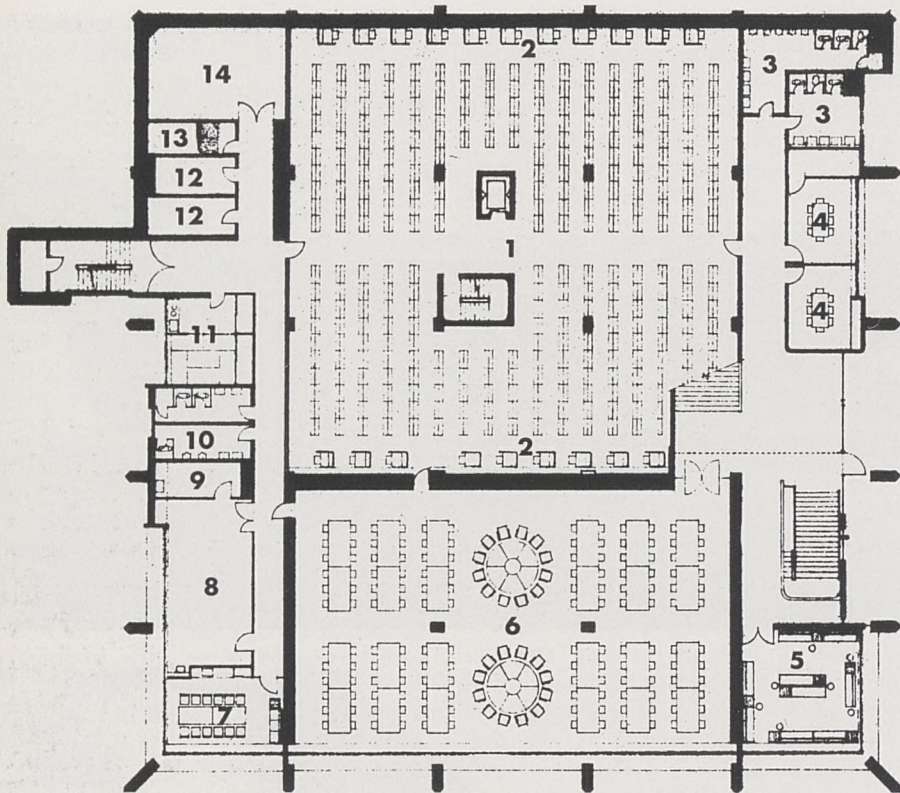
The most important factor in architecture, in my opinion, is the relationship between 'life' which is performed in it and 'space' it possesses. Life—or you might like to call it function—alone does not determine space, neither does space alone define life. A certain interaction between the two is what architect should be concerned and should aim at. Life is delicate, alive and at the same time very concrete. It is peculiar to each family or each group of people who will use the building. It does not exist in abstract as a typical pattern.

In the case of the Library for the Tokyo College of Economics, I did not intend to create a typical solution for the University library. There was a firm and unique programme of how the library should be run and be used, which was carefully prepared by the University over a long period of time. The activities within the building were clearly defined and briefed. And there was a beautiful site which sloped steeply towards south with a fine view through pine trees. It was very fortunate for me that I only had to concentrate in creating space which would interact well with the function and the environment. It was to be a unique solution to a unique problem, and for me that is what architecture is all about.

- A. Library 1. Main floor
2. Reading-room
3. Stack room
- B. Institute
- C. Administration and lecture-rooms
- D. Court







- Reading-room
1. Stack room
 2. Carrels
 3. Toilet
 4. Seminar room
 5. Lounge
 6. Reading-room
 7. Staff's lounge
 8. Binding room
 9. Dark room
 10. Toilet for staff
 11. Building Employee
 12. Cloak room for staff
 13. Shower room
 14. Storage

Bird's eye view of Main floor

