

BUILDING THINKING ASKING: WHAT IS THE RIGHT WAY TO DO PHILOSOPHY OF ARCHITECTURE?

A PANEL DISCUSSION BETWEEN KARSTEN HARRIES AND SIR ROGER SCRUTON MODERATED BY CHRISTIAN ILLIES



KARSTEN HARRIES: When I was asked to participate in this session, I was told our conversation had to do with “Building Thinking Asking: what is the right way to do Philosophy of Architecture?” What does the title mean to the philosophy of architecture? The question of course presupposes that there is the right way—I am not at all sure that there is.

Philosophers have concerned themselves with all sorts of things. They can write about sports, about the philosophy of cooking, just about anything is suitable fodder for philosophers of different types. Now philosophers have concerned themselves especially with the different arts. This is what aesthetics stands for. And it has long

MARTIN DÜCHS (L) INTRODUCED AND CHRISTIAN ILLIES (R) MODERATED THE PANEL DISCUSSION BETWEEN KARSTEN HARRIES (CL) AND ROGER SCRUTON (CR)

been recognized that architecture is one of the arts. But it had also been recognized that architecture is the art that poorly fits with the other arts in many ways because it is so dependent on the demands that the world puts on architects. So it is essentially an impure art. At least if you measure purity by a concern for beauty. So it is the one art that, perhaps more than any other, has to be sent into the world. That is to say, architecture has to recognize not only the physical neediness of man that's obvious, but the spiritual neediness of man. That is more definitive.

So given an understanding of beauty as ideally a self-sufficient presence, the sort of understanding that we can trace back, for instance, to Baumgarten, architecture's descent into the world must be considered as something like an unfortunate concession. The architect has to almost contaminate his concern for beauty, so understood. I think architecture invites us to question this understanding of beauty, not just for architecture, but to question in general the understanding of the work of art as an ideally self-sufficient aesthetic object. Architecture's descent into the world raises this question: must the understanding of beauty not be questioned that has played such a powerful role in the evolution of aesthetics; must it not be challenged? Should beauty have a different function? In this connection I have argued that beauty should be understood as re-presenting the beautiful object—here I appeal to Ernesto Grassi for support—that the beautiful object forces us to look again. The object re-presents itself. It refuses to go away. And I think that when we go to Vierzehnheiligen and Banz Abbey we will have a chance to experience that effect of beauty on these buildings. Their beauty forces us to look again. They won't leave us alone. So I want to say that the philosophy of architecture more than any other philosophy of art invites us to rethink the nature of beauty in general, also the essence of aesthetics.

I also want to raise some questions about the relationship of architecture and philosophy. For a long time architecture and philosophy have gotten along quite well without worrying too much about each other. And many architects today still do not worry about philosophy at all. Does that say something important? To be sure, there is something like a 'philosophy envy' among a certain small group of architects, or a theory envy, so that this group is open to philosophy in a way that invites questions. That deserves discussion. But that's a little bit different from my first point, so I think we probably should stop there.

CHRISTIAN ILLIES: Thank you Karsten. I think, after having raised the issue of beauty, we cannot possibly stop Roger from commenting on that.

ROGER SCRUTON: Everything that Karsten said was really interesting, I

don't think I disagree with him in any way. But perhaps I should say a little bit about how I came about my interest in this topic, because it is unusual for an analytical philosopher to address aesthetics. Karsten is much more used to the phenomenological and art historical way of approaching things, where the meaning of architectural objects is clearly part of how we experience them. Analytic philosophy, which was my training at Cambridge, or at least when I was growing up, largely ignored questions of aesthetics. And certainly the idea that you should be interested in the objects around you was disapproved of. But I've always been interested in the objects around me. When I was sixteen and first became aware of the world, it was architecture that principally impacted upon me. I was living in a little town, Marlow, on the River Thames near High Wycombe—in a scruffy little working class house for the working poor. And around me was the beautiful old English gingerbread town of Marlow. However, the developers were at work pulling it all down and putting up their glass and steel facades and concrete girders. That awoke me to the idea that the world is perhaps not as permanent as I had hoped, and that all kinds of evil forces were at work pulling it apart. That thought was deep in me throughout my career as an undergraduate. And when I started doing research in philosophy I decided, yes, I will do aesthetics because maybe that would will help me to understand what I felt when I had seen the uglification, as Kundera calls it, of the world in which I was living. Eventually that led to my book on architecture.

But I was hampered by my training, I have to say. Karsten was lucky, he wasn't hampered by having a training in analytic philosophy. He looked

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at the ‘things themselves’ as Heidegger would say, or Husserl at least, and extracted from them his philosophical ideas. I had to come down from the scaffolding that analytic philosophy erects above everything and bring my logical distinctions to earth. I had to apply them to what I read about what architects say and what architectural critics say. But I was rescued by one particular architectural critic and that is Ruskin. I am sure you’ve all come across him—a slightly crazy but incredibly cultivated Victorian writer for whom architecture really was an expression of the moral life. He had problems with women. But in architecture he saw the fruit of what we are as human beings. He tried to express it in *The Seven Lamps of Architecture* and in the wonderful book *The Stones of Venice*. Those are books that everyone should read. I had the sense that this is what philosophy should be like. How could I bring my analytical training to bear on the kinds of questions Ruskin was raising: questions about the spiritual, historical meaning, the social significance of buildings, and the way in which for him the holy spirit enhances what we build? For Ruskin, buildings were not made of stone; they were made of some spiritual substance which happened to have borrowed stone temporarily in order to manifest itself to us. That’s a Hegelian thought, of course. I am sorry to hear that Hegel fled from Bamberg. But his writings on architecture show that he wasn’t that sensitive to this particular art-form. In the end I came around to see that Heidegger’s wonderful essay on “Building Dwelling Thinking” contains deep truths that we analytic philosophers have to rediscover. It is very hard though, and we have a discipline that we have to fight against to rediscover those truths. So, I’ve been wrestling downwards from that great analytical skeleton to the place where Karsten has been “wallowing” successfully for some years.

HARRIES: For me, my interest in architecture is way older than my interest in philosophy, and it has continued to be a very intense interest. It began very early. It began—I recall the exact moment—it began when I was 7 years old—we had left burning Berlin and found a home in Bad Königshofen. There’s a church outside Bad Königshofen, the pilgrimage church Mariä Geburt in Ipthausen, and that church overwhelmed me. We were not religious. It was not a religious experience, and it wasn’t an aesthetic experience. It seemed as if I had stepped into another world. As if something touched me that I had not experienced. Nowhere in Berlin had there been anything like that.

Later, when I went to Munich to the Max-Gymnasium and saw churches like the abbey church of Kloster Andechs, these churches repeated the experience to some extent. That intense experience of 18th

century churches in southern Germany antedates my interest in philosophy. I could imagine myself working today in art history—indeed in any number of history studies. My interest in philosophy emerged partly because I was also very interested in mathematics. I tended towards philosophy because I thought it less confining. After I had come to America with my parents, had studied at Yale, and begun to teach there, my colleagues in philosophy were more interested in painting as the purer art, but the architects felt the need for something like a philosophical core in our Architecture School's undergraduate program. So I was approached by the Director of Undergraduate Studies Kent Bloomer—I had just published *The Meaning of Modern Art* and grown a little tired of teaching this material. I was asked whether I would teach a beginning course in the philosophy of architecture in the architecture school. So that's how it all began. *The Ethical Function of Architecture* was, basically, the result of my course notes. It was written very much in connection with the development of that course. But it was not identical with it. Since the book was reasonably successful, it led to requests for lectures and essays that kept me going. In recent years I've done a lot of other things, but have always drifted back to this topic.

SCRUTON: That's very interesting because, I suppose, I was awakened to the problems of architecture by my experience of seeing the town demolished. It wasn't from great works of art that I learned to care about building, but from ordinary natural streets. But they nevertheless were home, and there was something 'unheimlich' about their destruction. That really awoke me to the ethical significance of architecture. Obviously Ruskin was writing about great works of architecture, just as you write. I spent some time in Rome after leaving

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university, and was overwhelmed by the fabric of the city, and especially the Roman baroque and Borromini as its greatest exponent. But I came back with the thought that if you can't defend the ordinary, vernacular, uninteresting architecture which we all appreciate without noticing it, then you haven't done architecture justice. The Americans see beautiful buildings from the past as landmarks and say to themselves, "This has got to be preserved." So you'll see a rather beautiful courthouse surrounded by horrible towers of mirror glass which completely destroy its character, and I want to say: "That wasn't the point." This courthouse only made sense because of all the things that surrounded it. If we can only treat architecture as a collection of great works of art then we have missed what really matters.

HARRIES: On that we completely agree. I do want to invite us to think a little bit more about how works of architecture relate to the vernacular. For instance, my wife and I explored the area around Bamberg a bit and we noticed how the churches related to the red roofs of the houses around them. What moved us was the way architecture related to the vernacular—the way the roof of some church related to these other red roofs. There's this important dialogue going on between the vernacular and works of architecture. But sometimes the latter get in the way of more modest buildings. These get blocked by these works of architecture, by works which refuse, really, to engage with the vernacular. There is a problem when you get a building that just sits in the city, doesn't move, and doesn't engage its surroundings in an important way. It just sits there and wants to be appreciated as a self-sufficient aesthetic object. What we are talking about, what I want to talk about, is that architecture should answer to, should speak to the vernacular. Buildings should recognize they are not just sitting alone.

They should also respond to the weather. This can be seen with the strongest architecture in Central Europe—consider, e.g., Fischer von Erlach's Italianate villas. It is interesting to look at the way his southern work was appropriated by Viennese architects. They realized that the weather made it impossible to create Italian forms in the north. The weather just wouldn't allow certain domes or made their upkeep very expensive. The ice would tear them apart. For the same reason, the fabric of the French Cathedrals is not very suitable to the kind of climate we have here. The baroque architecture in Southern Germany and especially the Austrian baroque is a beautiful answer to those who tried to build Italian architecture and failed to consider how the weather would tear it apart. And the result is the typical or what we think of as the typical

South German and Austrian baroque. The weather comes into the picture, and that is to say, also, the vernacular. This means that the architect should be sensitive to the climate, consider the way the vernacular relates to the climate. The weather helps give works of architecture their special voice.

LLIES: You've both approached architecture from a very personal experience. But what role does philosophy play in this experience? Part of what you say could have been said without philosophy. Is it simply about how educated people should approach architecture. That seems to raise no specific question for philosophy, rather, more generally, the problem of aesthetic education. Or is there a specific role for philosophy in it? And what would that exactly be?

HARRIS: We can see the issue with our architecture students. There is the idea of the work as something that we ought to discuss in isolation, as a beautiful object. They want to create a beautiful object by bounding space in certain ways. That seems to be the task for many of these students. And there is a presupposition here, namely the aesthetic understanding of the successful work of art as ideally a self-sufficient object. It is here upheld, even if there are concessions to functions and so on. But I would challenge this. Here I think a philosopher's task is a little bit like yeast. He should raise questions that make architects more mindful. Some of these questions involve philosophical assumptions. This is a self-critical function of philosophy.

SCRUTON: I was going to say that there is an aspect of philosophy which is neglected by architects and which should not be neglected because architecture is an application of practical reason,

“ YOU'VE BOTH APPROACHED ARCHITECTURE FROM A VERY PERSONAL EXPERIENCE. BUT WHAT ROLE DOES PHILOSOPHY PLAY IN THIS EXPERIENCE? ”



about which philosophy has something to say. Consider the questions: “why do this?” “why add that detail?” “why go on in this way?” Philosophers have had a lot to say about those questions. For example, they have distinguished reasons about means from reasons about ends. Architecture was invaded by the functionalist heresy at a certain stage, which made all practical reasons into reasons about means. Functionalism was part of the utilitarian disease, which had a long gestation period in the nineteenth century. Ruskin was battling against that disease. Of course there are important means to our ends, but there are also the ends themselves. We have to understand them. We have to reason about them. When you lay a table, for example, or when you put your clothes on in the morning, you are not reasoning about means, you are reasoning about ends. You are saying: “How should this be, in itself?” “How should it be and therefore how should it look?” And you are always, as Kant says, looking for agreement in judgment. You try to imagine the others into the arena with you. Of course Karsten is right, weather is always important. Function is always important. But function is not the end of the architect.

HARRIES: This relates to something we said before. We spoke of the vernacular and how it makes you feel at home. And you need to feel metaphysically at home. And when you spoke of laying out a table for a nice meal, somehow this makes us also feel more at home in that room. That’s an accomplishment. And it is an accomplishment if we build and from the very beginning keep in mind that function; if we build not just to provide shelter, but bound space in such a way that we feel somehow more at home.

SCRUTON: Yes.

HARRIES: It is crucial to bound space in such a way that we feel somehow more at home, not that we necessarily will feel more spiritually at home. But that remains an important function of architecture.

ILLIES: You criticized the idea of the self-sufficient aesthetic object, which removes architecture from exactly that function. But is that not also a problem of all aesthetic decisions? When I say, “The window has to be exactly there, because there it is right. It cannot be an inch further to the left. This is its place,” am I already moving too much towards the self-sufficiency of the object and away from the homeliness? It must be like this because it has exactly the right light, or something like that. Is there some sort of tension between these two forms of thinking?

SCRUTON: Yes. Now you see, when you are doing philosophy, or philosophy about architecture, you are asking the question: “How do you

reason about the intrinsic rightness of something? What are the constraints? Is it just that you are trying to create a home, or is it about something else?" To me, that is what aesthetics is about. And I think analytical philosophy is probably in need of correction here. However, I may be the only one who thinks that. [Laughs] The question you raised puzzles me. Interestingly enough, Wittgenstein in his few remarks about aesthetics, fixes on that very example. He thinks of a door. What guides me in designing and making a door? And he says, you don't ask whether it is beautiful or not. You ask: "is it right? does it look right to you?" "does it fit in?" The functionalists think they can settle such questions by procedures and that's what's wrong with them. When there is no procedure for answering a question, there may be a real question nevertheless.

HARRIS: Here we must recognize how conditioned the question of what is right or wrong is by historic circumstances. Take the example of Vierzehneiligen. Balthasar Neumann had planned a cruciform basilica with the altar to the Fourteen Saints to be placed in the crossing, as one might



FIGURE 1: VIERZEHNHEILIGEN,
BANZ, GERMANY

expect. But the architect in charge of executing Neumann's plans, Gottfried Heinrich Krohne, whose own earlier design had been rejected, missed the sacred place by quite a few yards by moving the church to the east, which caused the sacred spot to fall into the nave. Apparently, this Protestant architect did not take it to be all that important: what did a few feet matter. But they did matter. What was to be done? The executed plan hints at the ingenious solution at which Neumann arrived. He made things right. Here you have an understanding of what is right that is very different from the sense of right that would be part of a society that doesn't bring the religious into the story. Neumann could not say, "Oh it doesn't matter, a few yards to the east or the west"—because here the architecture had to respond to precisely this very specific sacred place.

We no longer reckon with place in that way. Take the example of a house. The place has significance for any number of reasons. And then you ask, "What's right?" There is no simple answer. It depends on the context in which the question gets raised and then different answers will be given in a different context.

SCRUTON: What animated me when I wrote *The Aesthetics of Architecture* was in part the sense that people give phony answers to the question, "What is right?" They invent something like Corbusier's Modulor, in order to justify the nonsensical things that they do. I think we should recognize that people take refuge in systems, when it is precisely the systems that are wrong. Alberti wrote beautifully about this when he said that what matters in architecture is the appropriate. He hardly ever uses the word "beautiful" or any equivalent of it. But the appropriate object in the appropriate place matters and that should guide architecture. For that it is very hard to find rules. Maybe you are saying that the rules have to be constructed post facto. We generalize from what has been successful. That's what the rococo style in this room exhibits. No architect, I hope, had anything to do with this—a local builder did it.

HARRIES: It's not rococo.

SCRUTON: Late baroque, then.

ILLIES: The problem I have with "feeling at home" is that some people feel at home in buildings I think they shouldn't feel at home in. Especially in the standard architecture of today—with its appalling inappropriateness.

HARRIES: Since you mentioned it, I think this is a good place to pursue this question, a question that Heidegger has discussed in "Building Dwelling Thinking". First of all, he gives us a very broad definition of

‘building.’ And he points out that philosophy and architecture, both in a sense, have built—one in a conceptual space, the other one in a real space. From the very beginning people have tried to orient themselves in space by bounding it in various ways to make themselves feel at home. And they have not just done that by building in the literal sense by raising structures, but they have also done so conceptually, mainly through language, by slowly controlling their environment. They are both ways of grappling with the task of making this world into a home. This need has been a fact from the very beginning and it remains a need architecture must meet to prove itself.

SCRUTON: I think that the word ‘*wohnen*,’ which is in the title of Heidegger’s essay, could also be translated as “settlement.” I think that’s really what he had in mind, and that’s something that all human beings need. We are, naturally, settled beings. We can be launched into nomadic existence in desperate situations. But our natural condition, and that is especially true of European civilization, is settling in one place. And maybe the story of Romulus and Remus, of how the settler took advantage over the wanderer, tells us something. Settling means having boundaries, and recognizing within those boundaries that we are sharing things. We don’t share everything. We don’t share our wives and children and the rest of our domestic assets. Nevertheless of the things we do share the most important is often the temple—which is the mark of our settlement. That is why with Heidegger we can say that it’s important to get the sacred place to be in the right place.

HARRIS: I am surprised to hear you quoting Heidegger!

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SCRUTON: I am an educated man! [Laughs]

HARRIES: Today it seems to me that we face, thinking of architecture, two challenges: One is the increasing scarcity of space. I think that architects are still profligate in their use of space because they don't realize that space is becoming a scarce resource. I think that this is something that architects can learn from history: to reckon with space as a scarce resource. We aren't just talking about cars and air pollution, but space itself. And the other challenge is in a way an opposite challenge. We are liberated, as never before, by the digital revolution. It opens up an entirely new space. So there is a tension here between, on the one hand, the increasing scarcity of space and, on the other hand, that opening up of space which promises a new freedom. There is the call of freedom that speaks on the one side. And there is the opposite call to be settled in one place. I think the successful architecture of today should not try to find a solution in the middle, but has to recognize that that tension is part of a successful life. That we cannot have it one way or the other, that that thought shortchanges us. So we have to give space to freedom, and also to the need to have a home. We need both. Without that we impoverish ourselves.

SCRUTON: I think that one of the things that troubled me when I first started thinking about this is an incident that occurred in 1979, I think, when I published *The Aesthetics of Architecture*. I was reading Gideon's book *Space, Time and Architecture*. I thought here was somebody who didn't really understand physics and who is playing around with concepts beyond his grasp. He made it look as if architecture is simply about space and not about that much more important thing, which is the boundary that encloses space. Gideon gave the sense of conquering the world, of opening up and of making it our own, when in fact all the great architecture we know from the past history was putting boundaries around space, making it smaller. People had to make it smaller in the Middle Ages. Those little hilltop towns in Italy, which everybody loves, contained an awful lot of people—a thousand or two thousand people in that tiny little area. They had to be in that area because it was the only thing they could defend. But by being crowded in that space, they made their piled-up homes beautiful, and I think all were at home there. Italians now may go to America and make a fortune, coming back to build some absolutely appalling bungalow in the valley underneath. But still their heart is in that little village on the top. I think that idea that we enclose space, that we make it smaller, so as to adapt it to ourselves, is a really important part of the architectural motive.

HARRIES: Yes, I agree with what you said, but I think we shouldn't forget that other metaphor, which finds its expression in an understanding of the church in the image of Jacob's ladder, a ladder that escapes the earth and that opens it up [Gestures to the sky]. You will see in the church of Vierzehnheiligen how self-consciously the architect opens up the architecture to the infinite.

ILLIES: That sounds as if Karsten becomes a Hegelian and Roger turns into a Heideggerian. We should close the conversation before the transformations get out of hand, and open it to the audience.

AUDIENCE QUESTIONS

QUESTION: What about Heidegger's "terror of time." Where do you think it belongs? Does it belong to architecture or philosophy?

HARRIES: Where does it belong? It belongs to both. I think it is part of the human situation.

QUESTION: That means it belongs to space as well?

HARRIES: I think the two are related. As a matter of fact, the separation of time and space is itself very problematic. I talk a lot about that. How space and time are one. In other words, I am not satisfied by separating the arts of space and the arts of time. I think space enters into music, and time enters into architecture. And so the "terror" comes to both.

QUESTION: You both mentioned vernacular architecture. I want to ask, what do you think about the role of tradition and style? It imposes rules: rules which allow us to understand and still to create homely architecture.

SCRUTON: I think it's a fundamental question. When rules are a priori rules, worked out without consulting the object, and preceding the practical problem, you might justify them perhaps in functional terms. But there are also certain rules

in architecture that define tradition rather than reasoned solutions. They are not a priori maxims, but the collective wisdom over the many years—people worked them out by trial and error. Architects see (for example) that when you make a room like this you should have a molding that goes along just below the ceiling, which has got three or four parallel lines in it, so as to bring the wall to an end. That's something discovered over many centuries. And until modernism came along it was accepted. Those are the sort of things that are, I would say, legitimate rules in architecture. They are not a priori rules, they are the résumés of experience—that's what a tradition is. Why do human beings need traditions, and when is it right to depart from them and when is it wrong to follow them? These are the big questions of the twentieth century.

QUESTION: You spoke of the spiritual in architecture. Can there be such a thing as exclusively secular architecture?

SCRUTON: Jolly good question. [To Harries] Shall I just say something?

HARRIES: You start.

SCRUTON: I have in recent years been quite intrigued by that question because I am very much impressed by what the classical tradition achieved. In all its forms. In particular, in vernacular architecture. You are familiar with the vernacular Georgian house. It uses details which are mimicked in the next house. There's something similar with the German baroque cities. But the origin of the repeated details is not secular. It is holy. The details come from the Greek and Roman temples in the neoclassical case or from the baroque churches in the German case. So it looks as though the deeper ground of vernacular architecture does not come from the secular world. It comes from something holy—whether you say it was handed down by God, or just say it comes from the religious instinct. Funnily enough, if you look back at the book of *Exodus*, at the moment when God hands down the tablets of the law to Moses, he hands down at the same time the design for a temple. He says "I don't just want you to stop committing adultery and am not only speaking of the other things you've been doing. I want you to build a home for me, and here's how you do it with columns, architraves, and capitals." It's very much a metaphor, but we do think ultimately that the origin of architectural grammar has to be divine. Today we live in a secular society that doesn't believe there is a divine origin of things. So somebody could say that this leaves us in the wilderness

HARRIES: I would give a somewhat different answer with less emphasis on the classical tradition. But I would also say that it is a mistake to divorce the sacred from the beautiful. And that the vernacular buildings

that Roger speaks of, in some measure, all recognize the beautiful. In unpacking this, I don't consider myself particularly religious. I would emphasize the re-presentational function of the beautiful; that is where we should begin. When I deck out a table for a festive meal, that is what I do: I invite people, as it were, to feel good in that room at that table. I think that's what vernacular architecture does too. That's what a good, well-placed door does.

SCRUTON: A festive meal, though, traditionally, allows you to see a state of grace.

HARRIES: Yes, and I would welcome that. I think that we recognize the importance of the distinction between the sacred festal and less festal times. And the same thing goes for spaces. This is part of a successful life.

LLIES: Would you say that a similar thing happens even in modernist architecture, where you don't start with divine points of reference? But architects still need, do they not, some normative points of reference? You look for certain qualities to replace the divine points of orientation, for example the ideal of 'equality.' They can give a kind of orientation for an entire building. So you still have an orientation in normative ideals—functionless ideals which are then incarnated in the entire building.

HARRIES: I would like to then turn to particular examples. I would agree with you here, but what I would not overlook is the offering of the site. It's not just the materials, it's not just the setting, it's the recognition of the site and its constraints. The building then re-presents the landscape; it lets us look more happily at it. A good building is not like a scar on the land, it lets you look more happily at that land—at the same land. I think quite a few modern architects succeeded very well at that. So I would not restrict it to a certain style. I mean I happen to like the eighteenth century, but if I

were to build myself a house today, it would be modern.

SCRUTON: Well, yes, I would disagree with that bit! [General laughter]

QUESTION: If we were to look at architecture today, it is on the one hand characterized by different approaches with different priorities. On the other hand, we have to try to integrate architecture. What shall we do? Should we try to correlate the different approaches in a more substantive way, or should we remain constant on this different approach?

SCRUTON: Hegel says in the introduction to the “Elements of the Philosophy of Right,” when philosophy paints its gray in gray, then has a form of life grown old—meaning that philosophy comes after life. It’s a reflection upon it, and it is not the premise upon which life begins. I think this is also true about the philosophy of architecture. You don’t want architects to begin from a philosophy of architecture. You want them to be architects. Philosophers meditate on what they are doing, and perhaps make sense of it. But there is always a danger in trying to start from a philosophy of something and then arriving at the thing. One of my writings consists of a book on the philosophy of wine. I’ve never thought that someone could start making wine by learning the philosophy of it. But of course wine is an incredibly pregnant object for a philosopher to think about, and also to drink. So the philosophy comes afterward. Of course you can come to the conclusion, through philosophy, that this architect is doing something really interesting and this one is perhaps doing something wrong or whatever, but those are not topics that architects themselves need to be very interested in.

HARRIES: I would just want to add that, yes, philosophy should come afterwards, but I think it should come afterwards with its questions. That is, it should make the architect a little bit less sure of himself. It should invite him to call into question certain assumptions. For example, the attitudes towards space of the students in our architecture schools. I think it needs to be challenged. It needs to be questioned. So I see the function of philosophy in architecture schools to be a little like yeast that makes the dough rise, as it were.

ILLIES: Thank you very much. We’ve had fascinating conversations between Karsten and Sir Roger and Heidegger and Hegel. But it is time to come to an end. Let us do what Roger warned us not to do; we inverse the order. We’ve had philosophy, and now we turn to wine.

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