ARCHITECTURE
PHILOSOPHY

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ARCHITECTURE AND THE POLITICAL

TOM SPECTOR

We are living through a radicalized, unsettling moment in Western politics as what seemed the drift of history towards democracy, greater individual freedoms, increased fairness and greater international cooperation is at least temporarily reversed. As we finished production of this issue, ISPA was also concluding its 4th Biennial conference at a most overtly political venue— The United States Air Force Academy—which is simultaneously a Mecca for modern architecture lovers as well as an indisputable seat of the projection of American power. This fact was underscored as our philosophical discussions were occasionally interrupted by fighter jets buzzing the campus. Thus, it should make sense that even in the slow-moving world of applied philosophy, the times would lead us to produce this most overtly political issue. This development was not by design but rather by accretion—but one we eventually embraced as a legitimate extension of the exploration of the conjunction of architecture and philosophy. The issue begins at a broadly theoretical level but gradually becomes more pointedly critical culminating in a first-ever (for *Architecture Philosophy*) open letter to the architecture establishment.

To begin, Sean Akhane-Bryen and Chris L. Smith take up the concept of abjection in "The Space of the Lacerated Subject." As theorized by Julia Kristeva, abjection is the necessary demarcation process, one that begins in infancy, of distancing oneself from what is not true and proper to the individual. But this process is susceptible to cooption. Architecture can be pressed into the

> " OUR PHILOSOPHICAL DISCUSSIONS WERE OCCASIONALLY INTERRUPTED BY FIGHTER JETS BUZZING THE CAMPUS "

service of abjective strategies to banish difference or conversely, to create totalizing environments that serve power. Architecture, they argue, is not only a "potential abject, but also the instrument or vector of abjection." Bataille's writings on architecture and abjection are employed to craft an alternative to bad abjective strategies.

In a related vein, Matt Waggoner discusses Adorno's solution to the problem of living in a system of unfair power relations as the imperative "How Not to be at Home in One's Home." Adorno made no real distinction between the problems of dwelling and morality. Waggoner argues that, for Adorno, "The proper relation (to property in an age of inextricable entanglement with illegitimate power relations is)…to refuse the logic of possession and of exclusive habitation by assuming the status of a visitor in one's own home." Given the many truly awful immigrant and refugee crises across the world, this imperative applies at least as pointedly to the dilemmas of international immigration as it does to making room for strangers in more intimate settings.

Given Loos' famous assertion that "only a very small part of architecture belongs to the realm of art: The tomb and the monument" we thought it both appropriate and, given events in Charlottesville, Virginia in 2017, timely, to include Roger Paden's thoughtful proposals for the treatment of Confederate monuments in American towns in "The Use and Abuse of Historical Monuments for Life." Here, Paden resources Nietzsche, perhaps an initially unlikely choice, to help him propose a way out of the dichotomy presented between the antiquarians (who engage history as connoisseurs) and the revisionists (who advocate removal of such monuments altogether) with an approach that "serves life" by incorporating such monuments into larger works.

While the APDSR (Architects Planners and Designers for Social Responsibility) has urged the American Institute of Architects to take an ethical stance against the design of prisons for solitary confinement and capital punishment, the Institute has resisted getting drawn into what it sees as a divisive issue. For Dominique Moran Yvonne Jewkes and Colin Lorne, this situation is just another example of architects' aversion to moral introspection. "Designing for Imprisonment," discusses the current state of architects' capacity for moral leadership by using the controversy over prison design as centerpiece. In the spirit of their essay, the open letter to the American Institute of Architects following Moran's essay written by one of the editors and a group of his students makes a moral case that the Institute should come down decisively against the design of prisons for the torturous practice of long-term solitary confinement. The intention of this piece is not to create a litmus test for readers but to explore

legitimate implications of moral philosophy applied to architecture. We hope it opens new avenues for reader response.

Following this plea to the architecture profession, Brian Irwin's "Architecture as Participation in the World: Merleau-Ponty, Wölfflin, and the Bodily Experience of the Built Environment" brings the essays back to a more serene, hope-filled tenor as he invites the reader to consider the renewed possibilities for participating in, instead of visually consuming, architecture by combining insights by the great phenomenologist with those of the great architectural historian. The issue concludes with two book reviews: a review of David Wang's *The Philosophy of Chinese Architecture* by Thorsten Botz-Bornstein and a review of Steven Vogel's *Thinking Like a Mall.*

Taken together, these essays make a case for the benefits of the philosophical consideration of the political dimensions of architecture. They also form something of a bridge between the Bamberg essays in volumes 3.1 and 3.2, focussed on the human in architecture, and the next planned volume emanating from the Colorado Springs conference. They have certainly helped demarcate new areas from which to explore the conjunction of architecture and philosophy.

Tom Spector

" TAKEN TOGETHER, THESE ESSAYS MAKE A CASE FOR THE BENEFITS OF THE PHILOSOPHICAL CONSIDERATION OF THE POLITICAL DIMENSIONS OF ARCHITECTURE "

THE SPACE OF THE LACERATED SUBJECT: ARCHITECTURE AND ABJECTION

SEAN AKAHANE-BRYEN AND CHRIS L. SMITH

INTRODUCTION

In *Powers of Horror* (1980),[1] the psychoanalyst Julia Kristeva presented the first explicit, elaborated theory of 'abjection,' which she defines as the casting off of that which is not of one's "clean and proper"[2] self. According to Kristeva, abjection is a demarcating impulse which establishes the basis of all object relations, and is operative in the Lacanian narrative of subject formation in early childhood via object differentiation. (I am a subject: me. That is an object: not me.) Abjection continues to operate post-Oedipally to prevent the dissolution of the subject by repressing identification with that which is other, and particularly that which is only tenuously other: the abject. Though Kristeva's theory is braided into problematic Freudian premises, this essay will argue that abjection remains operative independent of the Oedipal model. The focus of Freudian psychoanalysis has largely been on the anxieties of being extracted from other subjects, usually the mother. It has concerned itself far less with the anxieties of extracting oneself from the blankets, nursery walls, and doors which were equally a part of the Real of infancy. We follow Kristeva and Georges Bataille in asserting that the necessary differentiations which occur between selves and other subjects in early childhood (especially the mothers and fathers and psychoanalytic fixation) also—or first—play themselves out in the differentiations of selves from objects (our blankets, nursery walls, and doors). In doing so, we contest the centrality of the Oedipal family triangle in subject formation, and recognise

a more general and parsimonious model of subjecthood implied by the theory of abjection—a model in which architecture necessarily plays a more substantial role, as both an object and instrument of abjection.

THE SUBJECT 'EN PROCESS'

Though Kristeva may be described today as poststructuralist, her early work on abjection is in keeping with Lacan. In *Powers of Horror*, abjection is introduced as a preface to Lacan's account of the genesis of the subject. According to that account, object relations emerge in the mirror stage, when an infant mistakenly identifies with a reflection of herself—in a literal mirror, or some other mimetic representation—and begins to imagine herself as an object which might be viewed from another perspective. Kristeva accepts this, but recognises that the Oedipal model, even as revised by Lacan, cannot account for the whole progression of consciousness from an experience of undifferentiated sensation to that of a self discerning objects and other subjects. Instead, Kristeva asserts that the mirror stage is a secondary repression preceded by abjection, a "primal" repression[3] which makes difference (differentiation) itself possible and "sets in motion, or implicates, the entire Freudian structure."[4] Kristeva goes as far as to say that the Freudian narrative is "exploded by its contradictions and flimsiness"[5] without abjection to precede it. Nevertheless, she declines to abandon the narrative altogether, leaving its linear progression of stages intact and only placing her account of the development of subject/object differentiations before it in time. Significantly, Kristeva credits Georges Bataille as the first philosopher to have "specified that the plane of abjection is that of the *subject/object relationship* (and not subject/other subject)."[6] As such, the earliest beginnings of the subject involve an extraction not from other subjects, but what will become objects:

> *Do we not find,* sooner *(chronologically and logically speaking) [than the mirror stage], if not objects, at least* pre-*objects, poles of attraction of a demand for air, food, and motion? Do we not also find, in the very process that constitutes the mother as other, a series of* semi-*objects that stake out the transition from a state of indifferentiation to one of discretion (subject/object)—semi-objects that are called precisely "transitional" by Winnicott?*[7]

According to Winnicott, a paediatrician and psychoanalyst, an infant still in a state of indifferentiation experiences subjective "omnipotence,"[8] believing that her own desire produces what is desired. The security blanket is a 'transitional object,' an infant's first 'not-me' possession which eases

the disillusionment of omnipotence and mediates the transition from undifferentiated sensation to the discernment of 'me' and other 'not-me' objects. The transitional object already operates symbolically, standing in for the "object of first relationship"[9] (traditionally the breast). Winnicott suggests that the symbolic operation of the transitional object belies an antecedent repression:

> *When symbolism is employed the infant is already clearly distinguishing between fantasy and fact, between inner objects and external objects, between primary creativity and perception. But the term transitional object, according to my suggestion, gives room for the process of becoming able to accept difference and similarity. I think there is use for a term for the root of symbolism in time, a term that describes the infant's journey from purely subjective to objectivity; and it seems to me that the transitional object (piece of blanket, etc.) is what we see of this journey of progress towards experiencing.[10]*

To Kristeva, abjection is that "root of symbolism in time." It is the repression which must occur before anything can operate symbolically, the first recognition of difference in that traumatic moment when that which threatens the definition of the 'clean and proper body' (*le corps propre*) is cast off (ab-jected)[11] by the animal impulse to protect the budding cognitive edifice that is the subject. "Even before things *are*—hence before they are signifiable—[the not-yet-subject] drives them out, dominated by the drive as he is, and constitutes his own territory, edged by the abject."[12] The casting off is traumatic because in a state of undifferentiation, what is abjected is necessarily also the self.

> *I expell* myself, *I spit* myself *out, I abject* myself *within the same motion through which "I" claim to establish* myself. … *During the course in which "I" become, I give birth to myself amid the violence of sobs, of vomit. Mute protest of the symptom, shattering violence of a convulsion that, to be sure, is inscribed in*

" I EXPELL MYSELF, I SPIT MYSELF OUT, I ABJECT MYSELF WITHIN THE SAME MOTION THROUGH WHICH 'I' CLAIM TO ESTABLISH MYSELF "

a symbolic system, but in which, without either wanting or being able to become
integrated in order to answer to it, it reacts, it abreacts. It abjects.[13]

From here, Kristeva follows Lacan to a conclusion which poststructuralist philosophers vehemently eschew—that the object relation is, as it was put by Lacan, "a means of masking, of parrying the fundamental fund of anguish."[14] A "desiring quest,"[15] doomed to anguished failure, for what Lacan called the *objet petit a*, the unattainable 'object-cause of desire.' In Kristeva's words:

> *The abjection of self would be the culminating form of that experience of the*
> *subject to which it is revealed that all its objects are based merely on the inaugural*
> loss *that laid the foundations of its own being.[16]*

This acceptance of the premise of primordial lack is a focus of much criticism of Kristeva's philosophy.[17] In contrast, poststructuralist philosophers and psychoanalysts such as Gilles Deleuze, Félix Guattari, and (anachronistically) Georges Bataille[18] generally posit a plenitude out of which subjectivity is folded.[19] To properly address this debate—in particular, to discern the extent to which the dispute is rooted in style of articulation rather than in fundamental disagreement—is beyond the scope of this essay. Perhaps it will suffice to say that some 'desiring quest' for that which would destroy the subject as we know it if reclaimed (reunion with the mother, the world) is necessary to render abjection an operable concept. In fact, the theory of abjection appears to be entirely consistent with at least Bataille's conception of subjecthood—abjection being, in this case, an impulse which limits our access to the plenitude from which we emerged:

> *The first labor established the world of* things*, to which the profane world of*
> *the Ancients generally corresponds. Once the world of things was posited, man*
> *himself became one of the things of this world, at least for the time in which he*
> *labored. It is this degradation that man has always tried to escape. In his strange*
> *myths, in his cruel rites, man is* in search of a lost intimacy *from the first.[20]*

Bataille and Kristeva recognise abjection and the accession to the Symbolic (language, discursive logic) as necessary preconditions of culture, but also that the repression is not so total that it cannot be undone. Far from it, Kristeva argues that the subject is always '*en process*'—by which is meant both 'on trial' and 'in process.'[21] The chaos of the undifferentiated Real is always lapping at the edges of the self. "We may call it a border; abjection is above all ambiguity. Because, while releasing a hold, it does not radically cut off the subject from what threatens it—on the contrary, abjection acknowledges it to be in perpetual danger."[22] The abject clings to the subject, lacerating it, necessitating the constant defensive action

of abjection. It is both horror and a siren's song. Tellingly, Kristeva observes that the abject is "edged with the sublime," which "has no object either."[23] It is the gallows humour which underlies all humour, and the reason eroticism shares so much territory with degradation and death.[24]

To Kristeva, the spectre of the undifferentiated Real is first and foremost a danger which threatens to bring about the death of the properly constituted subject. Bataille also recognises the subject as fragile and contingent, but is more motivated to remind us that a great ocean of ecstatic experience remains dammed up around us while subject/object relations remain 'properly' constituted. He reminds us that "[c]oitus is the parody of crime."[25]

NO SUBJECT WITHOUT A SPACE IT IS NOT

So, contrary to what is generally meant by the word 'abject' (filthy, low, wretched), it is not hygiene, according to Kristeva's definition, that determines what is abject. Rather, the abject is that which "does not respect borders, positions, rules,"[26] and threatens the legibility of a system. Here, Kristeva draws on the pioneering work of the anthropologist Mary Douglas (chiefly in *Purity and Danger* of 1966)[27] on pollution avoidance in 'primitive' cultures. Douglas is careful to distinguish between purification and hygiene (modern germ theory):

> *If we can abstract pathogenicity and hygiene from our notion of dirt, we are left with the old definition of dirt as matter out of place. This is a very suggestive approach. It implies two conditions: a set of ordered relations and a contravention of that order. Dirt then, is never a unique, isolated event. Where there is dirt there is a system.[28]*

> *… I have tried to show that rituals of purity and impurity create unity in experience. So far from being aberrations from the central project of religion, they*

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are positive contributions to atonement. By their means, symbolic patterns are worked out and publicly displayed.[29]

The insight that symbolic systems are "worked out" (not just "displayed") and ritually maintained by expelling dirt lends support by analogy to Kristeva's theory that subjecthood is established and shored up by abjection. To Kristeva, not only is there a system wherever there is dirt, the impulse to expel the dirt preceded and inaugurated the system. The corpse is the ultimate abject—just as death is the ultimate elision of the subject with the world—not because it is infectious, and neither because it is a symbol of death (yet), but because it "*show[s] me* what I permanently thrust aside in order to live."[30]

Perhaps more importantly, Douglas's work affirms the hypothesis that abjection is at work at every scale, across bodies and non-bodily objects:

… [A]ll margins are dangerous. … Matter issuing from [the orifices of the body] is marginal stuff of the most obvious kind. Spittle, blood, milk, urine, faeces or tears by simply issuing forth have traversed the boundary of the body. … The mistake is to treat bodily margins in isolation from all other margins.[31]

In fact, there would seem to be nothing in the infant's experience of undifferentiated sensation to categorically privilege the mother's nipple as the first object of abjection, and so as the symbolic locus of post-Oedipal abjection. Abjection, then, is general to the subject's intimacy with the world. This implies that architecture is a potential object of abjection—a potential abject.[32] The artist Victor Burgin goes as far as to describe first abjection as a "demarcation of space," and engages the dictum: "No space of representation without a subject, and no subject without a space it is not."[33]

A BURNING CATHEDRAL

The abjection of space presents a troubling corollary. In reverse, it reveals architecture to be not only a potential abject, but also the instrument or vector of abjection. Just as blood, tears and come are abject to bodies, traitors, scapegoats, and parvenues are abject to bodies politic. Just as shit and slough are flushed away and occluded by architecture, it is architecture again which surveils the suitably constituted subject and excludes or imprisons the category-transgressing other. Social and subjective abjection "follow the same logic, with no other goal than the survival of both group and subject."[34] Unfortunately, writes Kristeva, "the absorption of otherness proposed by our societies turns out to be inacceptable by the contemporary individual, jealous of his difference—one that is not

only national and ethical but essentially subjective, unsurmountable."[35] The complicity of architecture in this problem is perhaps obvious after Foucault, but it is Bataille, as ever, who cleaves to the deepest root of the problem.

Bataille problematised architecture by writing on the prison (among other typologies). But Bataille's prison has nothing to do with Foucault's Panopticon, and is instead, in Denis Hollier's words, "an ostentatious, spectacular architecture, an architecture to be seen."[36] The prison is both the display of the general condition of the human subject and the "generic form of architecture … primarily because man's own form is his first prison."[37] Hollier writes:

> *The greatest motive for Bataille's aggressivity towards architecture is its anthropomorphism. The article "Architecture" describes it as an essential stage in the process of hominization, as a sort of mirror stage that might be called in a parody of Lacan's title "the architecture stage as formative function of the We, man's social imago." In this sense, even though he seems to denounce the repression exercised over man by architecture, Bataille is really intervening against the catachresis requiring that man only take form with architecture, that the human form as such, the formation of man, be embedded in architecture.[38]*

That is, Bataille's animus towards architecture is rooted in his fundamental revolt against the operation of abjection in the accession of the subject to culture. Architecture is at once formative of the subject/society and that through which the subject/society generates its norms. In the cited article, Bataille describes architecture in general:

> *It is clear, in any case, that mathematical order imposed upon stone is really the culmination of the evolution of earthly forms, whose direction is indicated within the biological order by the passage from the simian to the human form, the latter already displaying all the elements of architecture. Man would seem to represent*

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" MAN WOULD SEEM TO REPRESENT MERELY AN INTERMEDIARY STAGE...BETWEEN MONKEY AND BUILDING "

merely an intermediary stage within the morphological development between monkey and building.[39]

The declination to acknowledge the distinction between living bodies and buildings is not merely a provocation. If the prison is the generic form of architecture, the cathedral must be the most profuse and comprehensive imposition of "mathematical order … upon stone," and the culmination of the "morphological development" encompassing humanity and architecture. Considering the cathedral in the context of what Bataille calls the 'general economy' of mediaeval European life reveals a mode of abjection which cuts across stone and flesh.

A salient characteristic of the Gothic cathedral at its highest development was its fractal scalelessness, or the quality of being governed at every scale by the same repertoire of geometric rules, such that a singular order could be observed in the smallest baldachin as in the tallest tower—an order exhibiting only a tenuous, grudging relationship with the dimensions of the human body. Every detail from the general arrangement of the plan to the profile of mullions might be derived procedurally, through the scaling, tessellation, rotation, and superimposition of polygons believed to be numinous. In principle, a single module (such as a square defining the width of a choir) could underlie the whole cathedral, rotations or divisions of which would determine the size of every element. So comprehensive and predictable was this craftlore that the historian François Bucher suggests, "to exaggerate one might say that a single finial preserved from a crumpled tower could suffice for a reasonably close reconstruction of the total structure, provided its position within the system were known."[40] Except for logistical purposes, it was not necessary until the moment of construction to assign a measure to the module of the cathedral, which in theory could be infinitely large and infinitely detailed. With no change whatsoever to the logic of its design, a cathedral could be expanded to absorb any surplus.

What Bataille finds objectionable in the cathedral is only an exaggeration of the bad faith he finds in all architecture—indeed in all work, or what he calls 'Icarian' projects. These are organised teleological acts which result in the 'deferral of living to later' (*la remise de l'existence à plus tard*). According to Bataille, Icarian projects circumscribe us in closed, 'restricted' economies which blind us to the Real of the 'general economy.' Restricted economies are the economies of accountancy; posed in the zero-sum terms of equilibrium, of profit here equated with loss there. They are also the economies of much psychoanalysis founded on the corresponding notions of a stable subject, developmental progression, and primordial
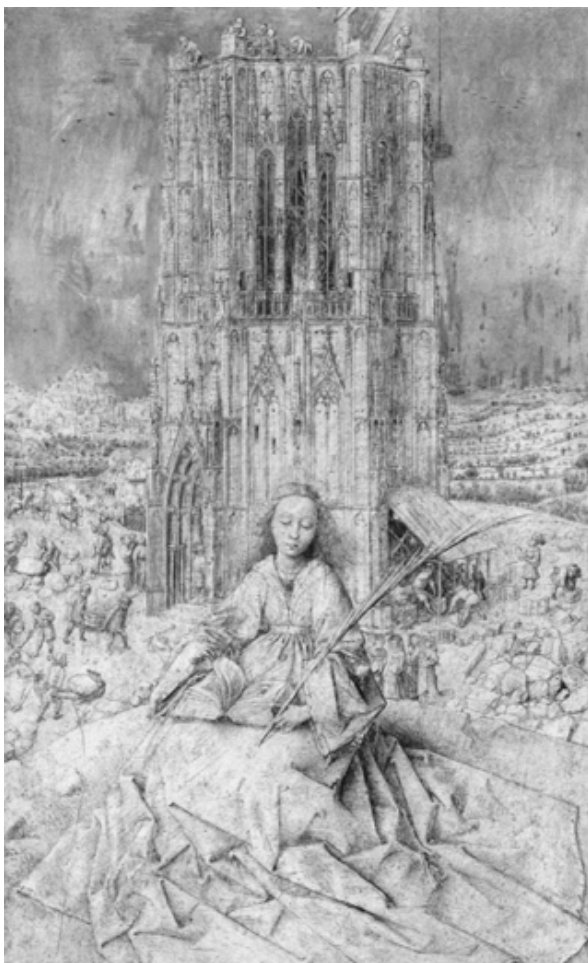
SAINT BARBARA, OUT OF
SCALE WITH THE BUILDING
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OF THE CATHEDRAL, WHICH
IS PERPETUALLY UNDER
CONSTRUCTION.

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loss. The remit of the general economy is wider than the field of traditional economics:

> *Economic science … restricts its object to operations carried out with a view to a limited end, that of economic man. It does not take into consideration a play of energy that no particular end limits: the play of* living *matter in general,* involved in the *movement of light of which it is the result. On the surface of the globe, for* living *matter in general, energy is always in excess; the question is always posed in terms of extravagance. The choice is limited to how the wealth is to be squandered.*[41]

Bataille insists that because in general, energy and wealth are always in excess, some share of it must be consumed without profit, or 'sacrificed' according to his use of the term. The fundamental problem of political economy then, is how to sacrifice the surplus so that living is not deferred to later. For Bataille, this requires the removal of the surplus from circulation in the realm of exchange values—an extravagant consumption which is a means to no end, which burns brightly like "*the sexual act … in time,*" like a "*tiger in … space*."[42] This 'useless' consumption nevertheless has the use value of briefly restoring intimacy with the Real. In fact, a failure to sacrifice the surplus leads to ruination:

> *These excesses of life force, which locally block the poorest economies, are in fact the most dangerous factors of ruination. Hence relieving the blockage was always, if only in the darkest region of consciousness, the object of a feverish pursuit. Ancient societies found relief in festivals; some erected admirable monuments that had no useful purpose … Their existence* in excess *nevertheless (in certain respects) has perpetually doomed multitudes of human beings and great quantities of useful goods to the destruction of wars.*[43]

The cathedral is one of many modes of sacrifice available to society, some more ruinous and ethically bankrupt than others. The enormous cost of a cathedral cannot all be held against its account, since some portion of that spectacular consumption was necessary to avoid even worse ruination. (Better a cathedral than a crusade.) Perhaps this is why Bataille does not attack the cathedral head-on as an instrument of theocracy, but instead uproots it, and all architecture with it, by locating the problem in something like abjection. Fundamentally, what is objectionable is the repression of the sovereignty of the subject exercised by its idealism, its presumption of an *a priori* ideal form for matter. As Hollier emphasises, this is only an ossification of the anguished relation human subjects already have to abjects, as architecture is 'anthropomorphic.' Architecture, like all symbolic practices, is a "frock coat"[44] of form and meaning thrown over the unassimilable Real. But the cathedral is particularly egregious because it is totalising (claims total moral authority) and monist (establishes a system of infinitely regressive geometries capable of assimilating all matter, all difference, at any scale). In this sense, the cathedral is the Icarian project *par excellence.* A canon of Seville is said to have uttered, in 1402, "We shall build so large a cathedral that those who see it in its finished state will think that we were mad."[45]

Not by accident, one of the events which turned Bataille towards contemplating the limits of human experience was the shelling of Notre-Dame de Reims, where he received baptism in the summer of 1914 amid

a crowd of soldiers.[46] (He would later recognise his conversion as bad faith.) German artillery arrived within range of Reims and soon after, on the 20th of September, the cathedral burned. By then Bataille and his mother had evacuated Reims, 'abandoning'[47] his blind, paralytic father to apparent doom. Bataille recalls the "filthy, smelly state to which [his father's] total disablement reduced him (for instance, he sometimes left shit on his trousers)."[48] The abjected real father, as it were, put the lie to the Name-of-the-Father. "Still," remembers Bataille, "I believe he faced up to it, as always."[49] Joseph-Aristide Bataille's immanent sovereignty, it might have seemed to his son, was analogous to a perpetually burning cathedral—a cathedral in the grip of a violent sacrifice which put the lie to the Word of the Father, which left only a Father with shit on his trousers.

The ghost of his father was no doubt on Bataille's mind when he fixated on the man with

FIGURE 2: HANS BELLMER, THE WOMAN AT THE CATHEDRAL, 1948, REPRINTED BY PERMISSION.

THE WOMAN AND CATHEDRAL ARE EQUALS IN THE COMPOSITION, BUT THIS TIME BECAUSE THE CATHEDRAL IS FORESHORTENED. THE CATHEDRAL AND WOMAN ARE ELIDED, BOTH CONSTITUTED THROUGH THE FORCE OF ABJECTION IMPOSING ITSELF ON THE HYPERGRAPHIC HORROR VACUI OF THE REAL.

shitty breeches in Salvador Dalí's painting, *The Lugubrious Game*, seeing in him an emasculation fundamental to the human condition.[50] André Breton and the Surrealists (including Dalí himself) were disgusted by and rejected the interpretation, exposing themselves to criticism by Bataille as being 'Icarian' themselves. To Bataille, their surrealism only served to exchange one restricted economy for another which happened to privilege creative inspiration in dreams. Bataille's revolt was more total, and general to abjection.

BASE MATERIALISM

Thankfully, Bataille points us to a "loophole"[51] in the Symbolic which promises to restore the sovereignty of the subject, if only momentarily. It is a narrow path "traced by the painters,"[52] which might also apply to architects:

Nothing is more common than for a painter to accept the reduction of his being to painting.

Living in a world in which to paint is one possible function, he chooses it as his limit. […] From this moment he defines this means *as an end, for he must deny his servility. […]*

Nevertheless, it is not as futile as it seems at first.

This domain of means at least offers a loophole. All traditional means are asserted as a law which one can possibly breach, and this painter, attached as he is to his scorn for what painting is not, finally comes out of by means of a negation of the limit he wanted to uphold. At this moment his passion ceases to be painting, and becomes liberty …[53]

A sovereign architecture ought to be, in Hollier's words, a "Bastille in no way different from its own storming."[54] The paradox may be a rhetorical simplification. (We recall that the Native American potlatch is "at once a surpassing of calculation and the height of calculation.")[55] A sovereign architecture, though still an Icarian project, is an architecture which 'negates the limit the architect wants to uphold.' It is a cathedral which perpetually burns, a wall which perpetually crumbles, just as the abject perpetually clings to and tears at the frayed edges of the subject.

In the Oedipal narrative of subject formation, the revolt begins with a matricide (the objectification of the mother) and culminates in a single event, the patricide. But to Bataille and Kristeva, revolt is a part of the constant deconstruction and reconstruction of the subject. Revolt serves to subvert and perhaps reform the symbolic order it ruptures through, and is the implicit goal of art which exploits the potential of non-sense

and non-meaning—including, as Hollier observes, Bernard Tschumi's Parc de la Villette. Tschumi writes, "Good architecture must be conceived, erected and *burned in vain.* [our italics] The greatest architecture of all is the fireworker's: it perfectly shows the gratuitous consumption of pleasure."[56]

Both Bataille and Kristeva prescribe revolt—a confrontation with the abject, which Bataille spoke of in terms of 'low' or 'base materialism,' and which Imogen Tyler described critically as "affirmative abjection."[57]Neither Bataille nor Kristeva were the first to observe that the accession to culture entailed a concomitant denial of our base material, or to suggest its (temporary) undoing. Hollier observes:

> *In April 1929, Emmanuel Berl published his pamphlet,* The Death of Bourgeois Thought. The Death of Bourgeois Morality *followed a few months later. Its conclusion, entitled 'Defence of materialism', proposed a materialism that deserves Bataille's label of* base materialism, *a materialism of an aggressive vulgarity which Berl presents as the proletarian weapon* par excellence, *the only ideological weapon of any weight against the bourgeoisie.*[58]

But Bataille in particular was aware that this weapon of the proletariat cuts both ways. Every explicit attempt at affirmative abjection either fails as it were to consummate its revolt, ultimately reinforcing the symbolic order it was designed to subvert, or simply reverses the hierarchy to establish another. Abject art, so-called, usually succumbs to the first pitfall. In response to an exhibition of such artworks, Hollier asks, "What is abject about it? Everything was very neat; the objects were clearly art works. They were on the side of the victor."[59] The problem is not of course that the artworks were insufficiently repulsing, but that in exhibiting them, they were constituted as objects rather than abjects, and inscribed in a particular closed political economy. Presumably the artworks were to be viewed from a

" ... A CATHEDRAL WHICH PERPETUALLY BURNS, A WALL WHICH PERPETUALLY CRUMBLES "

distance rather than licked.

CONCLUSION

It may be that affirmative abjection is definitionally futile. Culture cannot be sustained outside the symbolic order, and a project to escape project is still a project. But we infer from Bataille that architecture may be incited to do, at the very least, a little more. Doesn't its deep complicity in fact render it a singularly suitable instrument for material political action attenuating the cruelties of abjection—if only because it is most guilty?

Drawing further on Bataille, we pose an alternative inflection to the project of affirmative abjection. Lacan suggested that the conscious subject is structured as text, just as the structuralists established the intellectual habit of reading buildings as texts. Whereas a text might be persuasive, teleological, or metaphorical, a document is, in theory, according to Hollier, "aggressively realist,"[60] something which "cannot be invented."[61] Documents expose "the radical incongruity of the concrete: all at once, the most ordinary beings resemble nothing at all, cease to be in their places."[62]

A building which is a document would be one which declines to wear its frock coat—one which aggressively negates symbolic operation, so that what is formless, different, or meaningless cannot be appropriated, cannot be commodified. (A cathedral, we might say, is absolved of symbolic operation when it burns.) Such a building, so designed (or ignited) as to frustrate its own operation as an instrument of abjection, might be a venue for sacrifice, for the "gratuitous consumption of pleasure."[63] But unlike the Parc de la Villette, which may be analogous to the avant-garde non-sense poetry Kristeva once championed (but has since cooled on), a building which is a document would not so much carve meaning out of its signifying containers (a kind of Surrealist project), but rather expose the wounds of abjection which it already bears. A building which is a document might be a space for the kissing of bared wounds.

ENDNOTES

1. Kristeva, Julia. *Powers of Horror: An Essay on Abjection.* Translated by Leon S. Roudiez. New York: Columbia University Press, [1980] 1982.

2. (*propre*) "Usually, in expository prose, the context removes the ambiguities that poetic language thrives on. Kristeva is not averse to using polysemy to her advantage, as other French theorists like Derrida and Lacan have also done. The French word *propre*, for instance, has kept the meaning of the

Latin *proprius* (one's own, characteristic, proper) and also acquired a new one: clean. At first, in *Powers of Horror*, the criteria of expository prose seemed to apply, but in several instances I began to have my doubts about this. When I asked Kristeva which meaning she intended the answer was, both." Leon S. Roudiez, translator's note to *Powers of Horror*, by Julia Kristeva (New York: Columbia University, [1980] 1982), viii.

3. Kristeva, *Powers of Horror,* 10.

4. Ibid*,* 33.

5. Ibid*,* 32.

6. Ibid*,* 64.

7. Ibid*,* 32.

8. Winnicott, D. W., *Playing and Reality* (London: Routledge, [1971] 2010), 15.

9. Ibid, 12.

10. Ibid, 8.

11. Kristeva, *Powers of Horror,* 13. Abject: ab-ject, from the Latin roots *ab* (away) and *iaci*o (to throw).

12. Ibid*,* 6.

13. Ibid*,* 3.

14. Lacan, *Seminar of 1956-57*, quoted in Kristeva, *Powers of Horror,* 33.

15. Ibid*,* 35.

16. Ibid*,* 5.

17. The problematic gendering of Kristeva's model of abjection has also been criticised. See for example: Tyler, Imogen. "Against Abjection." *Feminist Theory 10*, no. 1 (2009): 77–98. doi: 10.1177/1464700108100393.

18. "There is something anachronistic in associating Bataille [1897–1962], a writer who died even before people started to talk about structuralism, with poststructuralism." Denis Hollier, *Against Architecture: The Writings of Georges Bataille,* trans. Betsy Wing (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, [1974]

1992), ix.

19. The spatial aspects of the philosophies of Kristeva, Deleuze and Guattari are compared in: West-Pavlov, Russell. *Space in Theory: Kristeva, Foucault, Deleuze.* Amsterdam: Rodopi, 2009.

20. Georges Bataille, *The Accursed Share: An Essay on General Economy,* trans. Robert Hurley, vol. 1, *Consumption* (New York: Zone Books, [1967] 2007), 57.

21. 'Process' is an English loan word (see note 2).

22. Kristeva, *Powers of Horror,* 9.

23. Ibid, 11, 12.

24. On laughter and the Kristevan Abject: John Limon, *Stand-up Comedy in Theory, or, Abjection in America* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2000), 73–75.

25. Georges Bataille, "The Solar Anus," in *Visions of Excess: Selected Writings, 1927–1939,* ed. Allan Stoekl, trans. Allan Stoekl et al. (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2008), 5.

26. Kristeva, *Powers of Horror,* 4.

27. Douglas, Mary. *Purity and Danger: An analysis of concept of pollution and taboo.* London: Routledge, [1966] 2009.

28. Ibid, 44.

29. Ibid, 3.

30. Kristeva, *Powers of Horror,* 3.

31. Douglas, *Purity and Danger,* 150.

32. For example, the symptoms of abjection in architecture have already been theorised in terms of the erotic and *unheimlich* by architectural theorist Anthony Vidler's discussion of Roger Callois' theory of "dark space" and "legendary psychasthenia." Anthony Vidler, *The Architectural Uncanny: Essays in the Modern Unhomely* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1992), 173.

33. Victor Burgin, *In/Different Spaces: Place and Memory in Visual Culture* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1996), 52.

34. Kristeva, *Powers of Horror,* 68.

35. Julia Kristeva, *Strangers to Ourselves,* trans. Leon S. Roudiez (New York: Columbia University Press, 1991), 2.

36. Denis Hollier, *Against Architecture: The Writings of Georges Bataille,* trans. Betsy Wing (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, [1974] 1992), x.

37. Hollier, *Against Architecture,* xii.

38. Ibid, xi–xii.

39. Georges Bataille, "Architecture," in *Encyclopædia Acephalica,* eds. Robert Lebel and Isabelle Waldberg, trans. Ian White et al. (London: Atlas, 1995), 35. The passage originally appeared in the journal *Documents* (no. 2, May 1929), co-founded and later solely edited by Bataille.

40. François Bucher, "Medieval Architectural Design Methods, 800–1560," *Gesta 11*, no. 2 (1972): 41, doi:10.2307/766593.

41. Bataille, *The Accursed Share I,* 23.

42. Ibid*,* 12.

43. Ibid*,* 24.

44. Georges Bataille, "Formless," in *Visions of Excess: Selected Writings, 1927–1939,* ed. Allan Stoekl, trans. Allan Stoekl et al. (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2008), 31. This passage originally appeared in *Documents* no. 7, (December 1929).

45. Quoted in the frontmatter of: Erlande-Brandenburg, Alain. *The Cathedral: The Social and Architectural Dynamics of Construction.* Translated by Martin Thom. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, [1989] 1994.

46. The cathedral was the subject of Bataille's first published text, written some time before 1920 when he apostatized. See: Hollier, *Against Architecture,* 14–19 (in which the text is reproduced).

47. Georges Bataille, *Story of the Eye,* trans. Joachim Neugroschal (New York: Penguin Classics, [1928] 2014) 78.

48. Ibid, 72-73.

49. Ibid*,* 78.

50. Georges Bataille, "The Lugubrious Game," in *Visions of Excess: Selected Writings, 1927–1939,* ed. Allan Stoekl, trans. Allan Stoekl et al. (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2008), 24–30.

51. Georges Bataille, "André Masson," in *The Absence of Myth,* (London: Verso, 2006), 180.

52. Bataille, "Architecture," 36.

53. Bataille, "André Masson," 179–180.

54. Hollier, *Against Architecture*, xi.

55. Georges Bataille, *The Accursed Share: Essay on General Economy,* trans. Robert Hurley, vol. 2, *History of Eroticism* (New York: Zone, 1993), 47.

56. Bernard Tschumi, "Fireworks" [1974], extract from *A Space: A Thousand Words,* (London: Royal, 1975). Cited in: Bernard Tschumi, *Architecture and Disjunction* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1994), 262.

57. Tyler, "Against Abjection," 77-78.

59. Denis Hollier, "The Use Value of the Impossible," in *Bataille: Writing the Sacred,* ed. Carolyn Bailey Gill (London: Routledge, 1995), 147.

59. Denis Hollier quoted in: Martin Jay, "Force Fields: Abjection Overruled," *Salmagundi* no. 103 (Summer 1994): 244.

60. Denis Hollier, *Absent Without Leave: French Literature under the Threat of War,* trans. Catherine Porter, (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1997), 141.

61. Ibid, 140.

62. Ibid, 139.

63. Tschumi, "Fireworks," 262.

HOW NOT TO BE AT HOME IN ONE'S HOME: ADORNO'S CRITIQUE OF ARCHITECTURAL REASON

MATT WAGGONER

Adorno wrote prolifically about modernism in culture and the arts, but little has been written about whether or in what form he might have addressed architectural concerns. The project of exploring this potentially fruitful intersection has been helped in the last couple of decades by authors from philosophy and critical theory contrasting his ideas about dwelling with Heidegger's and by architectural theorists considering the import of his aesthetic theory.[1] If these fall shy of the more immediate connections to architecture that some have hoped to uncover, this is because Adorno almost never wrote about specific buildings and their designers (which is the kind of specificity that you do find in what he wrote about music and literature). Neither did he publish any texts dedicated exclusively to architecture or dwelling, which is not to say that he never wrote about them or that architectural concerns are absent from his work. Adorno's writings on dwelling and architecture live here and there, emerging and then moving on to surface later, if not often as direct commentary then as a kind of architectural gaze his thinking sometimes employs. Dwelling and architecture exist like exiles in his writings even though the question of dwelling—of what it means to inhabit social and space-time worlds as embodied beings—lies as much at the core of Adorno's philosophy as it did in Heidegger's. In Adorno's case, the fact that dwelling resides there as restlessly as it does is a stylistic impression of the theory itself.

> " THE QUESTION OF DWELLING... LIES AS MUCH AT THE CORE OF ADORNO'S PHILOSOPHY AS IT DID IN HEIDEGGER'S "

I begin by revisiting one of his instances of sustained architectural specificity. Though it is no more than a couple of pages, Minima Moralia's (1951) aphorism A18, "Shelter for the Shelterless," is packed with observations about houses and housing that epitomize Adorno's incisive brand of cultural criticism.[2] I suggest the passage should firstly be seen in relation to the opening sections of Le Corbusier's *Towards a New Architecture* (1927).[3] Adorno's pronouncement at the start of "Shelter for the Shelterless" that "dwelling, in the proper sense, is impossible today" is usually set against Heidegger's desire to recover an original, pure dwelling practice. From 1949 (the year Adorno returned to Germany) until 1951, they were both working on problems of dwelling, culminating in the publication of *Minima Moralia* in the Spring of 1951 and Heidegger's delivery of the lectures "Building Dwelling Thinking" and "... Poetically Man Dwells ..." later that year.[4] But the question of whether they consciously responded to one another in these texts and what level of interaction they might have had may well be less significant for the purposes of analysis and interpretation than the fact that Corbusier's text was by all appearances a common touchstone for both of them. When Adorno also writes in "Shelter for the Shelterless" that "the house is past," for instance, he echoes Corbusier's claim that "the house will fall to dust."[5]

To acknowledge points of convergence between Adorno, Heidegger, and Corbusier is not to equivocate, and indeed, the fault lines between Adorno and Corbusier are conspicuous (just as they are with Heidegger). Corbusier identifies housing as *the* architectural question, a "problem for the epoch." Setting an agenda for architecture in the 20th century, *Towards a New Architecture* sets up the house as one of modernity's central "problems," which modern architecture was poised to solve by harnessing processes of mass production. By contrast, "Shelter for the Shelterless" insists that dwelling in modern life is a problem without a solution. More to the point, and bearing in mind Germany's "final solution" and Stalin's "Death solves all problems," Adorno held that what has to be resisted are the usually ominous implications of guarantees of a wholesale solution. Adorno's anxiety about the problem solving attitude was not simply a reaction to the historical events and conditions that shaped his life. It was also, for him, a philosophical claim (a counterpoint to the positivistic tendencies of his day) nicely summarized in his early examination of Husserl's philosophy:

> *The idea that a philosopher must produce a fixed set of irrefutable findings ... presupposes that all the tasks he sets for himself can be fulfilled, that there can be an answer to every question he raises. This assumption, however, is disputable.*

It is possible that there are philosophical tasks which, although arising necessarily in a coherent process of thinking, can not be fulfilled; thus, they lead to an impasse ... which has its roots in inherent antagonisms of the problem itself.[6]

This is the root of Adorno's much-discussed negative utopianism. It is why he regarded the highest tribute that can be paid to utopia as the refusal to entertain premature substitutes or to gloss over the persistence of contradictions forestalling its genuine realization. The paradoxical expression of such an act of fidelity is that in order to be true to utopia, one has to resist it.

While this could be seen as a manifesto for architectural pessimism—an inability to countenance Corbusier's hope for an engineered utopia—from Adorno's standpoint it is about safeguarding against the falsification of utopia. The goal was to preserve the real and future possibility of a society transformed so that living with others and otherness, without doing so at anyone's expense, is both publicly supported and privately possible. In a word, the obstacle to such possibilities for Adorno is most certainly capitalism, but more precisely it is the necessity in market societies to secure shelter through exchange and what he calls (for reasons discussed below) the "property relation."

" DWELLING IN MODERN LIFE IS A PROBLEM WITHOUT A SOLUTION "

Adorno's generation of intellectuals witnessed capitalism at a time when it was rapidly and very effectively learning how to manage the internal contradictions that Marx suspected would lead to its self-incurred demise. To Adorno and his colleagues in the 1920s and 1930s (the Frankfurt School's formative years), the hope of a successful transition away from capitalism seemed increasingly fraught as the various countermovements protesting the liberal model proved themselves to be deformed versions of the same "identitarian" (totalizing, universalizing) logic of equivalence implicit in capitalism. As long as the underlying contradictions

of society were going to remain unaltered in any substantial way for the foreseeable future, faithfulness to the idea of the right life was going to necessitate refusals to accept its semblance, no matter how well-planned or well-intentioned the proposals. His rejections of the idea of a "blueprint" for utopia suggest that he sensed an affinity between two trends: on the one hand, the sweeping programs advanced by political parties claiming to once-and-for-all solve the problems of modern society (interpreted as cultural degradation in Germany and inequality and alienation in Russia); on the other hand, the similarly sweeping proposals advanced by architects for master-planned communities and cities (Corbusier's Ville Radieuse in 1930, Wright's Broadacre City in 1932). One of Adorno's concerns about architectural blueprints for utopia was that they failed to account for the persistence of fundamental contradictions like those inherent in the property relation. His other concern about this penchant for master plans was that they seemed to harbor the same totalitarian tendencies as the parties.

Still, Corbusier's criticisms of the "cult of home" and his insistence that the problem of housing remained unsolved resonates with part of the argument of "Shelter for the Shelterless," whose title, it is worth noting, is borrowed from a chapter of Siegfried Kracauer's *The Salaried Masses* (1930). Kracauer tutored Adorno in philosophy during the latter's precocious teen years, poring over such onerous texts as Kant's *Critique of Pure Reason.* Kracauer was a trained and practicing architect in those days and *The Salaried Masses* would become one of the first critical examinations of the birth of middle class labor environs like the office space.[7] It interrogates the *fin de siècle* social fantasy that cubicle life provided respite and greater self-determination than the oppressive drudgery of the factory space, an assumption Kracauer challenges by stressing the mechanization of office work, Kafkaesque means of control implemented by office planners and new managerial systems, and the onset of an even more paralyzing work-incited ennui.

Similarly, "Shelter for the Shelterless" insists that shelter fantasies cannot be abstracted from the material conditions that make optimistic programs of escape, refuge, or shelter-based "problem solving" acts of wishful thinking. The conditions informing Adorno's spatial-architectural pessimism in "Shelter for the Shelterless" include the wartime decimation of the housing stock (Germans, including Heidegger, called it a "housing shortage," which Adorno thought was specious, a way of ignoring the past); the exclusions and the violence of state-sponsored nativism (promoting authentic ties to home and homeland); the mechanizing

effects of technology and mass production on all forms of interiority (including the invasion of the factory model, with its compulsory discipline and injunction to produce and be useful, into the private sphere); and the inescapable means-end logic of the property relation. Adorno's adamance about the underlying conditions of dwelling and the impossibility of extricating oneself from their contradictions responds as much to Heidegger as to Corbusier, despite the obvious tension between Heidegger's concerns about technological reason and Corbusier's technophilia. Adorno's disagreement in both instances is not with the claim that we were not building right, but with the claim that we have the capacity to definitively resolve housing's problems here and now as if they had only to do with misguided conceptions of genuine or optimally efficient dwelling and not with the economic foundations of society.

"Shelter for the Shelterless" illustrates the unresolved nature of dwelling's problems by throwing a spotlight on some of the attempts to evade them and how they fail. German post-war "traditional residences" are contaminated by the "musty pact of family interests." Regardless of one's relation to what took place in them, one cannot live in them free of guilt. "Functional modern houses" like Corbusier's machines for living in facilitate the "straying of the factory model into the private sphere." "Period-style houses" that have been restored and then purchased as historical novelties are mausoleums embalming their inhabitants alive. "Hotels and furnished rooms" sought after in some avant-garde attempt to sidestep the trappings of bourgeois ownership make a mockery of those who really have been driven into homelessness or provisional housing situations. Bombed-out cities and the abandoned structures of what had recently been labor and concentration camps, but are now too politically toxic to repurpose, have become omens of the fate of all housing. Like

" ARCHITECTURAL BLUEPRINTS FOR UTOPIA...FAILED TO ACCOUNT FOR THE PERSISTENCE OF FUNDAMENTAL CONTRADICTIONS "

the job that one needs in order to avoid homelessness in a society that commodifies shelter, these neglected structures serve as concrete symbols of the disposable nature of everyone and everything in late modernism after they no longer prove useful. And finally, Adorno cites the Bauhaus-inspired craft movement in architecture, furniture, and design that had set out to eschew form in favor of function but eventually backslid into stylized, curvilinear ornamentation, which is precisely what Corbusier, Loos, Gropius, and others indicted as bourgeois pretension.[8]

Adorno offers the reader a compendium of what are still contemporary tactics for evading the contradictions of dwelling. We could read these six pseudo-solutions as descriptions of various chic-urban attempts today on the part of city planners, private developers, architects, and shelter consumers to make dwelling strategies seem like solutions to bigger problems. The argument of "Shelter for the Shelterless" is that none of them resolves anything because the underlying issues remain unchanged. Nothing escapes the predicament of dwelling in modern life and our attempts, clever and noble though they may be, are shabby conceits and naively complicit.

He credits the inadequacy of these solutions to the structural constraints of the property relation, which is of course something most architects admit and have experienced first-hand. There are two explanations for Adorno's preference for the term "property relation." First, when the Institute for Social Research relocated to Columbia University in the 1930s (because it was forced to shutter when National Socialism rose to power), it began avoiding anything that could have been perceived in the U.S. context as overtly Marxist terminology. They self-censored terms like communism and revolution, even substituting seemingly innocuous terms such as "market society" and "capitalism" for a variety of more generic designations like "exchange society," "instrumental reason," and the "property relation."[9] But the second reason Adorno preferred the language of the property relation is because it allowed him to accentuate the claim that property is indeed a relation, not a thing, which is to say that property is the quintessential example of what Adorno and his colleagues, inspired by Georg Lukacs' writings on the subject, called reification.[10]

Heidegger opens his remarks in "Building Dwelling Thinking" by saying that dwelling is about belonging. The difference between Adorno's philosophy of dwelling and Heidegger's has, in a nutshell, to do with Adorno's suggestion that belonging in communitarian and contractual models of inclusion and ownership is an extension of the logic of possessive exclusion. Although to belong is surely to be in a relation of sorts,

to belong in those ways is to be incorporated—to "rest in the preserve of Being" (Heidegger) or to be assimilated as an appendage of the self (Locke)—thereby nullifying the otherness and particularity (the "non-identity," in Adorno's phraseology) of the thing or person that belongs. To insist on the word "relation" when speaking of the system of private property is to recognize that everything that belongs (a home or a homeland, for instance) is only naively and ideologically the exclusive domain of those whose claims of belonging are deemed legitimate. All property, including every home and every homeland, exists in relation to what lies beyond it, which our ways of speaking and thinking about them disavow.

Adorno's reflections on the nature and scope of the property relation go beyond architecture's often complacent recognition of the constraints of client expectations and market demands. The deepest problem of housing in a capitalist society is that it is a basic need that can only be purchased as a commodity (by most) with wages—money earned by finding purchasers for another commodity, labor—in a market that will not always need to increase production to full employment levels and is sometimes economically compelled to decrease it by shrinking the labor force.[11] This is the double bind of a market-based shelter economy. In addition to the basic economic contradiction that makes dwelling, in the proper sense, impossible, Adorno unpacks the moral facets of its conundrum as well, insisting that regardless of one's relation to it (as property owners, renters, or participants in one of shelter's sub-economies—squatting, camping, living in rehabilitated refuse) every relation to home (and to homeland) is implicated in a system that entails one kind of unsheltering or another.

He argues, for instance, that there is no morally responsible way to own because ownership is inherently exclusive, always taking something from

someone somewhere in the social ensemble (contrary to Locke's claim in the *Second Treatise* that it does not); that the application of techniques of mass production to housing strips them, as it does all commodities, of a singular relation to the owner, negating the claims of genuine belonging; that there is no way out of entanglement since to try and extricate oneself from the system of shelter and shelter impropriety would leave one intolerably exposed; that the interiors of houses have become scenes of pseudo-autonomy from an external world that has, nonetheless, thoroughly intruded upon interiority. "Wrong life," Adorno concluded, "cannot be lived rightly."[12] Economically, morally, and in many cases physically, we are all somehow unhoused.

It was perhaps too hasty, though, to have suggested that Adorno rejects all forms of problem solving. He does offer something, but as one should expect from a consummate dialectician, it takes the form of a paradox. In "Shelter for the Shelterless," he holds that the solution to the predicaments of housing will consist in living in one's home in full knowledge that if one owns (for instance), one does not singularly own anything, and that in some sense it is owners who are objectified and who become possessions. Looking beyond its effects on owners, ownership participates in the unsheltering of others (a claim that can be illustrated in many ways, one of which is the well-studied regional correlation today between increases in property values and subsequent increases in eviction rates).

There is no way out of these kinds of entanglement, so the only responsible course of action, Adorno claims (to the consternation of many of his Left-wing peers and readers, still today), is to participate in an "uncommitted, suspended way," and "not to attach weight to it."[13] This would be hardly different than the knee-jerk architectural shrug were it not for an astonishing additional claim he makes: one must "learn how not to be at home in one's home."[14] A good deal can be said about this deceptively compact formulation: it appears to have originated from Kierkegaard's *Stages on Life's Way* (1845), which Adorno quotes in his first post-habilitation book-length study of Kierkegaard (*Kierkegaard: Construction of the Aesthetic,* 1933); Walter Benjamin includes it in his *Arcades Project* (finally published in 1999 but written in the 1930s), not citing the original but Adorno's rendition of it; Adorno revisits it in *Minima Moralia* (in "Shelter for the Shelterless") two decades later, ostensibly as a way of responding to Nietzsche's pride at having never been a homeowner, but more broadly in response to the aforementioned pseudo-solutions to the moral conundrums of housing in post-war Germany; and it resembles

Freud's concept of *das unheimliche*, the uncanny, which is to say not homelike, strangely familiar, or not at home with oneself (many of the Frankfurt School's members, including Adorno, were greatly influenced by Freud, who in a 1919 essay describes the uncanny as an experience of strangeness in the ordinary).[15]

I think we have to read Adorno's dictum as an entreaty to take up relations to homes and homelands—to how we "construct" them geographically and architecturally, as well as to how we inhabit them—in ways that are not just open to neighbors, strangers, and other kinds of visitors, including those who have been excluded or rendered obsolete by various incarnations of the property relation. Even more radically than that, it means that we will need to see ourselves as visitors in our own homes, guests of a sort with no more exclusive claim to them than others. His is an ethic of displacement and a politics of unbelonging that starkly contrasts with communitarian and contractual traditions of right, where moral responsibility is predicated either on a sense of belonging within a community of shared norms and identity or on the abstract logic of an equivalent exchange of possessions. Adorno's argument is that in both cases, communities and contracts are constituted on the model of the property relation, where the good is dependent on claiming sovereignty over this place, this identity, this property, claims that rely on necessary exclusions.

" OWNERSHIP PARTICIPATES IN THE UNSHELTERING OF OTHERS "

What would be the outcome of such a dramatically reconstituted understanding of property, home, belonging and dwelling? The ethic of displacement points, I suggest, toward the formation of anti-communities, ad hoc and provisional aggregations of those who are commonly displaced and for which the foundational value that binds people together is not identity but non-identity, living with difference. Like the uncanny, it would make the

ordinary strange and the stranger at home.

This idea of informal, ad hoc communities and alternative kinships appears throughout Adorno's writings, including his reflections on American exile after returning to Germany (in which he wrote warmly about the reception he received and about the spirit of collaboration he experienced, despite arriving with a very different methodological and theoretical orientation than what was practiced in the U.S. at that time).[16] The question he leads us to ask is how we might live (and design living arrangements) in ways that subvert the logic of exclusive possession, even though there is no way to escape it under present conditions. Since choosing not to dwell is not an option, and since there is no dwelling in modern life that escapes the property relation, how can we "be at home," how can we rethink its meaning and practice—but also how can we develop, design, and build housing that installs some new practice of being at home so that home is not a possession that excludes but a relation that invites intimacy amid environs of otherness? How can new paradigms of constructing dwelling systems, structures, and arrangements allow for the mobilization of reciprocal styles of residence, where residents are visitors and visitors are welcomed. To do so would be to address the "problem of the epoch" by modeling housing on the precarity of the unsheltered exile rather than on the security of the native/owner with so-called authentic ties to place and property.

Are there pathways from Adorno's post-war philosophy of housing to the present? I will not labor over the obvious associations with contemporary social and political movements like sanctuary cities, the right to the city, and the right to housing, except to affirm that these are certainly benefactors of the kind of reasoning that one finds in Adorno's writings on housing, hospitality, and dwelling. I can think of other examples as well. Richard Rothstein's *The Color of Law* (2017) includes a section near the end of the book in which he permits himself to speculate on how housing segregation could be rectified if there was political determination to do so. He imagines policies aimed at incentivized means of rolling back local zoning practices and federal tax benefits that promote segregated housing patterns. This could be accomplished by making tax subsidies conditional on the inclusion in wealthy areas of a sizable percentage of affordable housing stock and by mandating aggressive measures to attract racially diverse tenants.

Rothstein argues that, although the Supreme Court does not currently recognize it, the legal justification for such assertive measures is based on the fact that it was de jure policies backed by federal and local

governments that for decades created and sustained housing segregation, and thus government has a 14th-amendment obligation to rectify the consequences of its New Deal-, Civil Rights-, and even post-Civil Rights-era illegalities. The intergenerational effects of inclusive housing (through access to better-funded schools and community resources for the children of relocated tenants, for instance) would be enormously impactful.[17] To be sure, even this does not escape entanglement since it involves displacing families from neighborhoods in which they may have deep roots in the community, but it also requires wealthy neighborhoods to open themselves to changes that would fundamentally alter the makeup of those communities as well. Measures that make dwelling inclusive (particularly in middle and upper-middle class white neighborhoods) by dismantling and repairing the harms of housing segregation would be consistent, I think, with what it could mean in a practical, present-day sense to learn how not to be at home in one's home.

FIGURE 1: MARTIN LUTHER KING JR. MEMORIAL, WASHINGTON, D. C.

In the period between 1964 and 1968, prominent voices in the civil rights movement, including President Johnson himself, became intensely vocal about the incapacity of the new civil rights laws—outlawing discrimination in public accommodations and extending the right to vote—to overcome segregation and its direct effect on income and opportunity inequality.[18] Martin Luther King, Jr. argued that expanding the quantity, access, and

" KING'S RHETORIC ROUTINELY EMPLOYED ARCHITECTURAL METAPHORS "

location of low income housing in the U.S. was a necessary step toward racial and economic justice. Usually known for its theological imagery, King's rhetoric routinely employed architectural metaphors as well, such as when he said that "true compassion is more than flinging a coin to a beggar ... It comes to see that an edifice that produces beggars needs restructuring"[19]; and when he lamented to Harry Belafonte that after all of their efforts and the eventual passage of the civil rights laws in the 1960s, he realized that economic inequality linked to housing segregation would continue unabated. He worried that they had done little more than integrate into a "burning house." (Figure 1).

In 1967, King adopted the image of a "world house" which informed an essay of the same name:

> *A famous novelist died. Among his papers was found a list of suggested plots for future stories, the most prominently underscored being this one: "A widely separated family inherits a house in which they have to live together." This is the great new problem of mankind. We have inherited a large house, a great "world house" in which we have to live together—black and white, Easterner and Westerner, Gentile and Jew, Catholic and Protestant, Moslem and Hindu—a family unduly separated in ideas, culture and interest, who, because we can never again live apart, must learn somehow to live with each other in peace.[20]*

The image of a world house asks us to see human beings as common inhabitants of the earth who are mutually affected by one another's suffering and insecurity. It is an image of living with difference, which is not only suggestive of welcoming and responding to the other. Implicit in its concept is the idea that I can lay no exclusive claim to a singular instance of housing, homeland, social belonging, or citizenship since there is but one planetary mesh of interconnected housings. King tries to reimagine the shelter of physical residence, political recognition, and economic well-being that white society assured for itself at others' expense as a site of ordinariness that has to become uncanny, defamiliarized. As a radically exteriorized conception of what it means to be housed, this image is reminiscent of what Adorno tries to accomplish with a seemingly very different kind of spatial-architectural metaphor.

Adorno's "no man's lands" are playful in their discourse with the meaning of utopia, which is another kind of no-place. To impute utopian significance to places whose historical references include dumping grounds and the space between two fronts in trench warfare (where the carnage of bombed buildings and disfigured bodies abound) is tongue-in-cheek, a conscious attempt on Adorno's part to insist that utopias will not yet come in the form of successfully implemented solutions to sweeping

problems. For now, they will appear in the rubble of failed solutions, the refuse of damaged life. "The resurrection of the dead," Adorno wrote, "will take place in the auto-graveyards."[21] But no man's lands are not only scenes of destruction and obsolescence. They are also sites of contiguity, non-spaces of in betweenness that lie beyond the boundaries of regions of exclusive possession and control. To inhabit the no man's land is thus to exteriorize the self, to abandon the security of the carapace for the vulnerability and precarity of border regions. No man's lands are deconstructive zones of contact and cross-contamination where binarily conceived relations no longer hold, relations between subject/object, self/other, mind/body, resident/stranger, life/death, reason/affect, utopia/dystopia, home/exile.

Adorno's no man's lands acknowledge that our materiality is an inescapably shared feature of our existence as embodied beings, making us both dependent on and responsive to that which is outside us. This is true because of our need to seek food and shelter amid external environs and social arrangements and because of historically specific intrusions into interiority—mental, affective, and aesthetic interiority through the culture industry, architectural interiority through the mass production of houses and the penetration of the spaces of work and life by new forms of influence and control, and the interiority of social and political belonging, when in the name of authentic ties to home and homeland one is dislocated, either into exile or to the concentration camp. This is why, rather than Kierkegaard's constructions of selfhood through images of interiority (his touchstones tended to be the accoutrements of the 19th-century bourgeois apartment), Adorno preferred Kafka, whose characters could not find refuge. They were instead expelled onto barren surfaces, exoskeletal and exposed. In reference to Kafka, Adorno once called upon the image of no man's lands to describe the

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" THE IMAGE OF A WORLD HOUSE ASKS US TO SEE HUMAN BEINGS AS COMMON INHABITANTS OF THE EARTH WHO ARE MUTUALLY AFFECTED BY ONE ANOTHER'S SUFFERING AND INSECURITY "

unlocatable position of characters who suffered an "unsuccessful death," having been so thoroughly depleted and made obsolete that, though not physically dead, they exist in a kind of socially dead/undead state.[22]

But like the unsuccessful deaths in Kafka's stories, Adorno sees promise in the precarity and dislocation of no man's lands. He sees them, for one thing, as scenes that expose us, and for that reason they also expose the real nature of embodied life. The shared frailty of bodies and of the environs upon which they depend is a reminder that to be an embodied being is to be something that lives outside itself (this is another sense in which Adorno used the phrase no man's land, to describe the experience of exteriorization). In other words, embodied life contains within its phenomenology a template of what we mean by dwelling. The necessity of corporeal beings to seek housing in a place, in relations of both physical and social geography, is never purely subjective and cannot be individualized. The sensorium of embodied subjectivity is not even something that happens on its own; it is enlivened by contact with and exposure to other bodies and bodily states. Embodiment bears an essential relation to dwelling because to inhabit a body is to inhabit bodies as such, a common corporeality stitched together by the reflexivity of the touch and by collective modes of meeting shared needs and responding to shared vulnerability. The human experience of dwelling begins with embodiment, with the fact that consciousness is inseparable from the somatic and the sensorial, which are, like everything physical, inherently responsive to, dependent upon, and passively and actively bound up with that which is external to consciousness. Modes of dwelling in bodies and in space are not those of enclosure and sovereignty but of cohabitation and an ethically enlivening non-sovereignty.

No one ever singularly inhabits a body because embodiment is not, as we like to imagine it, a state of being a self-sufficient thing. Its existence is inseparable from and can only be constituted as such within a matrix of contact and connectivity that can either prove sustaining or detrimental, depending on the quality of the bonds. What we should add to this is that the scope of that which stitches me into the world is not exclusively the interfacing of organic bodies. It includes the kind of tethering that binds bodies together by housing them in time and space. There are other ways that I come to exist as a place-holding being in the world and that I am delivered into and hopefully preserved in such constitutive contact with it and with others. For if, as Judith Butler argues in Senses of the Subject, it is not the case that there is already a pre-existent "I" prior to being touched, but that the touch instead enlivens me as a feeling, sensing self, then we must

also maintain that there is no way to conceive of the human being apart from the kind of tethering and contiguous relations that enable me to inhabit the external world.[23] We are fastened to one another by virtue of our common embodiment, but our bodies are also intertwined with one another and with the world inside a global tissue of connected environs that includes such things as streets, neighborhoods, cities, infrastructures, and coverings, the matrix of shelters and shelter arrangements in which we dwell. It is within these structures that we reside with varying degrees of satiety and security, some more enlivening than others. Just as the body does not enclose us from others, shelter does not enclose us from that which surrounds us and in relation to which we are only ostensibly distant and distinct. Rather, dwelling is the activity and shelter the fabric with which the self is extended into and implicated in worlds of being and belonging, which I take to be what King envisioned when he adopted the image of a world house and what Adorno envisioned when he upheld no man's lands as potentially fruitful shared experiences of propulsion into scenes that exteriorize us, over which none of us can claim exclusive nativity or possession.

This brings me, finally, to the other architecturally compelling feature of no man's lands in Adorno's works. It is that Adorno's models of living with difference—aggregations of the commonly dislocated and the kinds of alternative bonds that crystallize among them—invite redefinition of the meaning of housing and home, of the designed character of dwelling and the social arrangements it facilitates. Repositioning exilic states as the foundation for ethical responsibility, Adorno inverts the relation between home and exile such that our model of home is fashioned after the non-exclusive relations that characterize communities of shared displacement. This aspect of Adorno's philosophy of dwelling is just as consistent with King's interest in an expanded and exteriorized conception of the

66 UTOPIAS... WILL APPEAR IN THE RUBBLE OF FAILED SOLUTIONS, THE REFUSE OF DAMAGED LIFE 99

house as it is with different models of family and kinship (which were also present in King's reflections on the world house). For it is on the basis of a traditional concept of kinship that homes and homelands have historically acquired their meaning as scenes of common identity and exclusive claims of the right of belonging and possession. Learning how not to be at home in one's home will necessitate, then, learning how to forge bonds of belonging that are predicated on intimacy and proximity between aliens and strangers rather than kin and countrymen. Reimagining houses and housing as no man's lands enlists us in the project of reconstituting the social arrangements that have traditionally organized and orchestrated shelter, and it includes risking their contamination with conceptually promiscuous alternative cohabitation structures. These would no longer be arrangements whose bonds are rooted in exclusive claims of cultural and genetic belonging, nor the claims of contractually legitimized, inherited or purchased belonging.

It is difficult, for obvious reasons, for us to imagine dwelling and housing apart from the logic of possessive exclusion rooted in relations of the family and private property. We know that under the circumstances, when territorial sovereignty, patriarchal vestiges, and the property relation circumscribe every form of dwelling, we would intolerably expose ourselves to insecure states if we did not participate in the shelter-based economy according to its rules. This is why Adorno's "solution" cannot take the form of a master-planned blueprint for utopian dwelling. What he offers us instead is an architectural counter-image to the blueprint by comparing the task of reimagining dwelling and housing to images from land surveys. The blueprint is an abstraction, a rationalization of reality, whereas aerial photographs of the surface of the earth capture the materiality of the terrain. In "Notes on Kafka," having likened the unsuccessful death to a no man's land, Adorno argues that Kafka's stories function like wartime aerial photographs of demolished cities, neighborhoods, buildings, and homes. He describes this function as the production of an impossible view from the standpoint of an as yet unforeseeable utopia, "hell seen from the perspective of salvation." His writing "feigns a standpoint from which the creation appears as lacerated and mutilated as it conceives hell to be." Recalling Jews in the middle ages who were tortured, executed, and hung head down, Adorno tells us that "Kafka, the land-surveyor, photographs the earth's surface just as it must have appeared to these victims during the endless hours of their dying."[24] When Adorno describes these views of the extremes of exposure, suffering, and insecurity as the standpoint of salvation, he is suggesting that we need to invert our notions of pessimism and optimism. Genuine optimism does not conceal

realities beneath abstractions and pseudo-solutions. Its conception of utopia is not that of the blueprint but of the preservation, if only in thought (whose focal point is like an image from afar), of an as yet unforeseeable transformation of the material conditions for dwelling and cohabitation. "To include [Kafka] among the pessimists, the existentialists of despair, is as misguided as to make him a prophet of salvation" since "the light-source which shows the world's crevices to be infernal is the optimal one."[25]

Ever since the ideal cities of Corbusier and Wright, the "optimal solutions" of architecture to the problems of housing have not captured the depth of the damages incurred by dwelling because of its enmeshment in the property relation. Rothstein and others remind us how those blueprints, once approximated in the development of New Deal housing programs and postwar suburbs, led to the even deeper entrenchment of racially exclusive property relations. With the aid of federal support and local zoning practices, the approaches they inspired contributed to the intransigence of segregated housing patterns and the intergenerational economic debilitation of African Americans that resulted from those patterns. In no small part, ideological notions of the proper family model played a role in justifying the exclusions of housing as well, both because of racially coded discrimination against single parent families and because of the inviolable status accorded the nuclear family and individual property, effectively shielding them against government's ability to prevent or police the segregationist practices of developers, real estate agents, banks, and neighborhood associations.

Adorno's critique of architectural reason is an immanent critique that thinks through the categories and concepts of architectural perspectives and practices. What is architecture to

" ADORNO'S 'SOLUTION' CANNOT TAKE THE FORM OF A MASTER-PLANNED BLUEPRINT FOR UTOPIAN DWELLING "

do when its entire task is beset by the ineluctable contradictions of the property relation? Adorno's answer is that architecture must do what art did during the period of high modernism and what artists at its periphery (such as Gordon Matta-Clark) have intimated in their works. Architecture must become anti-architectural, not in the sense that it no longer plans, designs, and builds dwellings and dwelling arrangements, but that it does so in ways that feign an impossible standpoint (rather than blueprinting false solutions) by reimagining dwelling as no man's lands of exteriorized contiguity and dwelling's ideal social arrangements as alternative kinships. It has to learn how not to be at home in its traditional mandate to build spaces that reinforce our preconceptions of proper social space. Dwelling in the proper sense may be impossible today, but its future may be what is, til then, deemed improper.

ENDNOTES

1. Samir Gandesha, "Leaving Home: On Adorno and Heidegger" in *Adorno and Heidegger: Philosophical Questions* (Redwood City, CA: Stanford University Press, 2007, pp. 101-28); Hilde Heynen, Architecture and Modernity: A Critique (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1999).

2. Theodor Adorno, *Minima Moralia: Reflections From Damaged Life* (New York: Verso, 1974). I use "Shelter for the Shelterless" to translate "Asyl für Obdachlose" rather than Jephcott's "Refuge for the Homeless." For an extended investigation into "Shelter for the Shelterless," see Waggoner, *Unhoused: Adorno and the Problem of Dwelling* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2018).

3. Le Corbusier, *Towards a New Architecture,* Frederick Etchells, trans. (New York: Dover, 1986). Most readers will be familiar with the history of the text and its title. Originally published in French in 1923 as *Vers Une Architecture,* the first English translation by Etchells appeared in 1927, in which the title was interpreted as *Towards a New Architecture.* In 2007, Getty published a new English translation returning Corbusier's title to the original *Toward an Architecture.* When referring to the book's title in what follows, I follow the Etchells translation since it remains the most widely used version of the text in English.

4. Martin Heidegger, *Poetry, Language, Thought.* Albert Hofstadter, trans. (New York: Harper Collins, 1977, pp. 141-160, 209-227).

5. Heidegger questions the role of the house in a far less pointed and pithy way in "Building Dwelling Thinking": "Today's houses may even be well planned, easy to keep, attractively cheap, open to air, light, and sun,

but do the houses in themselves hold any guarantee that dwelling occurs in them?" (p. 144).

6. Theodor Adorno, "Husserl and the Problem of Idealism," *Journal of Philosophy* (Vol. 37, no. 1, January 4, 1940: pp. 5–18).

7. Siegfried Kracauer, *The Salaried Masses: Duty and Distraction in Weimar.* Quintin Hoare, trans. (New York: Verso, 1998).

8. Adorno, 1974: pp. 38-39.

9. The Institute for Social Research was the institution, founded in Frankfurt under the auspices of its University, that gave birth to the group of scholars known as the Frankfurt School, some of whom were less directly connected to the Institute than others. See Martin Jay, *The Dialectical Imagination: A History of the Frankfurt School and the Institute for Social Research,* 1923-1950 (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1973).

10. Georg Lukacs, *History and Class Consciousness: Studies in Marxist Dialectics* (Cambridge, MA: MIT, 1971).

11. Marx, of course, goes one step further when he argues that even labor shrinkages are economically strategic for capital. They create what he calls an industrial reserve army: unemployed (often homeless or insecurely sheltered) workers who are ready at a moment's notice to report to the factory or the office as soon as their labor is again required.

12. Adorno, 1974, p. 39.

13. Ibid.

14. Ibid.

15. Theodor Adorno, *Kierkegaard: Construction of the Aesthetic.* Robert Hullot-Kentor, trans. (Minneapolis: University of Minneapolis Press, 1989); Walter Benjamin, *The Arcades Project.* Howard Eiland and Kevin McLaughlin, trans. (Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1999); Sigmund Freud, "The 'Uncanny'" in *The Standard Edition of the Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund*

Freud, Volume XVII (1917-1919): *An Infantile Neurosis and Other Works,* pp. 217-256. I suspect there are still more reference points for the quote that I am not yet aware of.

16. Theodor Adorno, "Scientific Experiences of a European Scholar in America" in *Critical Models: Interventions and Catchwords* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1998, pp. 215-242); Adorno, "Foreword" in *Prisms.* Samuel Weber and Shierry Weber Nicholsen, trans. (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1967, pp. 7-8).

17. Richard Rothstein, *The Color of Law: A Forgotten History of How Our Government Segregated America* (New York: Liveright Publishing, 2017).

18. See Ira Katznelson, *When Affirmative Action Was White: An Untold History of Racial Inequality in Twentieth-Century America* (New York: W. W. Norton and Company, 2006).

19. Michael Eric Dyson, *Come Hell or High Water: Hurricane Katrina and the Color of Disaster* (New York: Basic Civitas Books, 2007).

20. Martin Luther King, Jr., "The World House" in *Where Do We Go From Here: Chaos or Community?* (Boston, MA: Beacon Press, 1968, p. 177)

21. Adorno 1967, p. 271.

22. Adorno 1967, pp. 270-271.

23. Judith Butler, *Senses of the Subject* (New York: Fordham University Press, 2015).

24. Adorno 1967, p. 271.

25. Ibid.

ON THE USE AND ABUSE OF HISTORICAL MONUMENTS FOR LIFE: NIETZSCHE AND CONFEDERATE MONUMENTS

ROGER PADEN

The practice of preserving various parts of urban landscapes for historical purposes raises a variety of normative, metaphysical, and conceptual questions that invite philosophical analysis. The normative questions are particularly interesting. Why should we preserve historical sites? What sites are worth preserving? How should they be preserved and interpreted?[1] In this essay, I apply Nietzsche's theories of history and culture as found in the first two Untimely Meditations to provide a fresh critical framework to some normative questions raised by a particularly difficult instance of historical preservation; namely, the preservation of Confederate monuments. This framework allows me to argue that some monuments should be removed from their prominent public sites, while others should be retained and reinterpreted.

NIETZSCHE ON THE ADVANTAGES AND DISADVANTAGES OF HISTORY

Nietzsche's work might seem to be a strange place to look for ideas concerning historical preservation. He wrote very little about cityscapes (and what little he did write is largely confined to an early work, the first *Meditation* on David Strauss; and he wrote nothing at all about historical preservation.[2] His most systematic writing about history is found in the second *Meditation*, "On the Uses and Disadvantages of History for Life," which begins with a rather unpromising quote from Goethe: "I hate everything that merely instructs me without augmenting or directly invigorating my

activity."[3] As the study of history is rarely thought invigorating, it might be supposed that Nietzsche would be an opponent not only of the study of history, but of historical preservation, as well; but this supposition would be mistaken as he immediately goes on to argue that, if history does not invigorate, it is

> *a costly superfluity and luxury [which must be hated by us] because we still lack even the things we need and the superfluous is the enemy of the necessary. [However,] we need history ... but we need it ... for the sake of life and action, not so as to turn comfortably away from life and action.... We want to serve history only to the extent that history serves life: for it is possible to value the study of history to such a degree that life becomes stunted and degenerate...* [4]

In fact, Nietzsche held that history is essential to a well-lived life, but that only some approaches to history can serve life, while others are always dangerous to it. Moreover, he believed that any approach can become dangerous if relied upon exclusively. The point of the second Meditation is to show how history – and what kinds of history – can be useful.

In that *Meditation*, Nietzsche argues that humans differ from other animals, not because we are essentially rational while they are not; rather, we differ because we have far better and more complex memory. This seemingly small psychological difference, however, has great consequences: humans are "historical animals," while other animals, lacking a sense of history, live entirely (and happily) in the present. It also follows that these other animals are incapable of significant historical action and cannot grow or change as a species in historical time, while humans live in a world with both a past and a future and, consequently, can plan alternative futures. At the limit, humans can make a project of themselves: unlike animals, they can engage in historically-significant, transformative action.

Nietzsche argues that, to live historically-significant lives, our lives must contain both "historical" moments that involve remembering history and "unhistorical" moments that involve forgetting or ignoring history. To plan, we must be aware of our situation and this requires knowledge of our past, but, to act and create, we must forget – even dismiss – parts of that past. Thus, the "historical and the unhistorical are necessary in equal measure for the health of an individual, of a people, and a culture."[5] However, because he believes that the modern age suffers from "an excess of history,"[6] he focuses his argument on the claim that too much remembering is dangerous; that "there is a degree of ... historical sense which is harmful and ultimately fatal." [7]

Nietzsche distinguishes several approaches to history. Two unnamed approaches, which are wholly harmful to life, are described in the first

and second *Meditations*, and when he criticizes "the oversaturation of an age with history," I believe that it is these two unnamed approaches that he has in mind.[8] The first—and less important of the two—I will call "scientific history." On Nietzsche's view, scientific historians are "idler[s] in the garden of knowledge," "pedantic micrologists," "who stand aside from life so as to know it unobstructedly."[9] But, because the facts they seek are objective, isolated historical facts, unrelated to life and action, they can only be a harmful distraction. I will call the second, more important, approach, "teleological history." As Daniel Breazeale points out in his Introduction to the *Untimely Meditations*:

> *Though the second Untimely Meditation is sometimes read as a blanket rejection of "historicism," this is far from the truth. What Nietzsche rejects ... is not the basic thesis that every aspect and expression of human life is unavoidably conditioned by history, but rather, the progressive or whiggish consequences that are typically—albeit, in Nietzsche's view, quite illicitly—drawn from this thesis. It is not historicism per se to which he objects..., but rather the unexamined teleology that usually accompanies it.[10]*

Since Hegel and the neo-Hegelians took such a teleological approach to history, throughout the second *Meditation*, Nietzsche repeatedly criticizes their views, which present history as the inevitable unfolding of a pre-established and providential plan. Especially dangerous versions of this history, on Nietzsche's view, portray this unfolding as essentially complete, as having arrived at what Hegel called, "the end of history."

Nietzsche criticizes this approach on a number of grounds. Most important, he claims that "it implants a belief … in the old age of mankind, the belief that one is a latecomer and epigone" who believes he or she is living at the end of history.[11] Since, in this approach, this belief is accompanied both by the notion that "as things are they had to

> "NIETZSCHE HELD THAT HISTORY IS ESSENTIAL TO A WELL-LIVED LIFE, BUT THAT ONLY SOME APPROACHES TO HISTORY CAN SERVE LIFE"

be, as men now are they were bound to become, [and] none may resist this inevitability"[12] and by the notion that the present age possesses "the rarest of virtues, justice, to a greater degree than any other,"[13] epigones are led to the belief that new, historically-significant action is both impossible and undesirable; and this, in turn, leads to "the total surrender of the personality to the world-process"[14] Thus, as a teleological approach comes to dominate a person or a society, "the instinct for creation will be enfeebled and discouraged"[15] and will be replaced by a "cynical ... prudent practical egoism, through which the forces of life are paralyzed and at last destroyed."[16] Epigones seek "self-contentment," while avoiding disturbing "enthusiasms"; indeed, "stupefaction is ... the goal" of those who take this approach.[17] This self-satisfaction, however, is purchased at a great cost: because epigones are incapable of historically-significant action, they are condemned to an a-historical, animal-like existence.

In the second *Meditation,* Nietzsche explicitly discusses three approaches toward history that, unlike the first two, are useful or even "necessary for life."[18] The first is "antiquarian history." The antiquarian turns to history to "preserve and revere."[19] The advantage of antiquarian history is that it can help create a community by presenting it as the result of a wholly-positive history and, in doing so, it can give its members an identity. The antiquarian can

> *look back to whence he has come, to where he came into being, with love and loyalty.... By tending with care that which has existed from of old, he wants to preserve for those who shall come into existence after him the conditions under which he ... came into existence.... The history of his city becomes for him the history of himself; he reads its walls, its towered gate, its rules and regulations, its holidays, like an illuminated diary of his youth and in all this he finds again himself.... Here we lived, he says to himself, for here we are living; here we shall live, for we are tough and not to be ruined overnight. Thus, with the aid of this "we," he looks beyond his own individual transitory existence and feels himself to be the spirit of his house, his race, his city.[20]*

Nietzsche holds that this "antiquarian sense of veneration of the past is of the greatest value when it spreads a simple feeling of pleasure and contentment over the modest, rude, even wretched conditions in which a man or a nation lives." It not only gives "less favored generations and peoples" the courage to endure, but it "restrains them from roving abroad in search of something they think more worth having," thereby dissipating their energies and abandoning their identity.[21] It protects a people from being unfaithful "to its own origins and ... given over to a restless, cosmopolitan hunting after new and ever newer things."[22]

Antiquarian history can have certain disadvantages, however. It does not make distinctions as all parts of the antiquarian's history are equally revered and, because nothing is criticized, nothing is understood. More important, by undermining the power of judgment, antiquarian history

> undermines continuing and especially higher life..., [as it] no longer conserves but mummifies.... For it knows only how to preserve life, not how to engender it; it always undervalues that which is becoming.... Thus it hinders any firm resolve to attempt something new [and] paralyzes the man of action...[23]

The second form, "critical history," is adopted by "a being who suffers and seeks deliverance."[24] Nietzsche argues that if, "he is to live, man must possess and from time to time employ the strength to break up and dissolve a part of the past: he does this by bringing it before the tribunal, scrupulously examining it, and finally condemning it."[25] This approach remembers the past only in order to condemn its evils. It provides several advantages to its practitioners: it supplies an antidote to antiquarian history, but more important, it frees people from the past and opens up an unbounded future. But it also has several disadvantages. Because "every past is … worthy to be condemned, for that is the nature of human things, [this approach to history suggests that] it would be better if nothing existed."[26] But by rejecting too much of the past, it leaves critical historians without a horizon to orient their actions: it rejects the existing, historically-grounded self and replaces it with a new one that is so weakly grounded that it turns to mindless cosmopolitan consumption.[27]

The third approach, "monumental history," is adopted by those who wish to "act and strive."[28] Focusing on great individuals and their struggles, this approach makes use of the past to inspire: it finds greatness there and argues that we, too, can be great, if only we "flee from resignation" (the belief

that historically-significant action is not possible) and use "history as a specific against it."[29] This approach has several advantages: it can give us the courage to act in historically-significant ways; it can distance us from our current situation; and it can bring about a new world in which lesser individuals can lead happy lives. But it also has certain disadvantages. The past is always different from the present and the historical analogy on which this approach depends is false. More important, monumental history, on its own, cannot guide us and does not lend itself to planning. Thus, it can lead to great mistakes and pointless destruction.

Nietzsche claims that each of these three approaches has a role to play in a well-ordered life and society. We need antiquarian history to help ground us in that which is valuable in our lives; critical history to distance ourselves from our mistakes; and monumental history to inspire us to significant action. But, we need to balance each approach against the others. If monumental history dominates, change can become irrational and may lead to disaster. If critical history dominates, we can lose both identity and community. If antiquarian history dominates, we can lose our ability to face the challenges of the present effectively.

In order to understand Nietzsche at this point, it is essential to understand what he means by "life" and why he values it; and to do this it is necessary to read the two *Meditations* together as they develop parallel distinctions that are central to understanding that concept. In the second *Meditation*, Nietzsche contrasts cosmopolitans with people who understand and properly use history, while in the first, he contrasts "cultural philistines" with "geniuses," who understand and properly use culture.[30] In each pair, the second term denotes someone who lives life well, while the first denotes a person who does not. The descriptions overlap to a great degree.

Nietzsche claims that epigones inevitably become cosmopolitans who live for the present moment (understood to be the last historical moment) and seek pleasure through the satisfaction of immediate felt needs. As such, they are "given over to a restless ... hunting after new and ever newer things ... thought more worth having."[31] Given Nietzsche's contrast between historical and a-historical beings, cosmopolitans are a-historical beings who live less-than-human lives in which the "forces of life are paralyzed and at last destroyed."[32] The cultural philistine is described in similar terms. These philistines "devised the concept of the epigone-age [in which they think they are living] with the object of obtaining peace and quiet."[33] They do this to reject the life of the restless, searching genius; and then repress even the memory of that rejection. Desiring only "self-contentment," they declare that "all seeking [for a truly better life] is at

an end."[34] Characterized by "a lack of style or a chaotic jumble of all styles,"[35] both cosmopolitans and philistines reject self-transformation, and this rejection paralyzes and destroys their life force.

This notion of self-transformation is central to Nietzsche's concept of life. He describes life as a "plastic power" and claims that the greatness of "a man, a people, or a culture" can be measured by the degree to which they possess it.[36] This plastic power is inwardly-directed, as it names "the capacity to develop out of oneself in one's own way, to transform and incorporate into oneself what is past and foreign, to heal wounds, [and] to replace what has been lost..."[37] This notion of life is connected to Nietzsche's notion of culture, as he not only believes that a good life requires a vital connection with true culture, but his notion of life is modeled on the idea of culture: it is the epitome of a good life as it involves a continuous transformation which aims at a "unity of artistic style in all the expressions of the life of a people"; at "a stylistic unity within which the manifold phenomena which characterize it are harmonized."[38] While Nietzsche points out that this stylistic unity cannot be attained through systematic and oppressive exclusion, he nevertheless thinks that it can be attained only through struggle, as we always find ourselves in states of partial disunity and disorganization. This "grand style originates [only] when the beautiful carries off the victory over the monstrous"; only when life creates a new order out of existing disorder.[39] A good life is one that seeks to create an integrated beauty from a chaos of existing forms.

Pursuing this project requires many things. Negatively, it requires the rejection of the "modern" all-consuming search for pleasure; it requires the rejection of the life of the cultural philistine or cosmopolitan.[40] Positively, what it requires can be determined by reference to the three ways in which history can be useful to life. As emphasized by

" THIS NOTION OF SELF-TRANSFORMATION IS CENTRAL TO NIETZSCHE'S CONCEPT OF LIFE "

antiquarians, we (as individuals, peoples, or cultures) need a stable and valued foundation in our identity.[41] As emphasized by the critical historian, we need to be able to consider and devalue parts of our history and identity. Finally, as emphasized by the monumental historian, we need the courage to reject a life of pleasure so as to pursue "life."

HISTORIC PRESERVATION IN THE UNITED STATES

Oddly, given our self-conception as a future-oriented society with little time for the past, the United States, like Nietzsche's Germany, seems "oversaturated" with history – and with the wrong kinds of history. This can be seen in the many political battles that are fought over the proper interpretation of our history, in which each side – rather than seeking to promote "life" in Nietzsche's sense – attempts to "use" history to support its political program, while charging the other side of "abusing" history when it does the same. In these battles, American preservationists have typically adopted two approaches toward history described by Nietzsche. The dominant approach has been teleological; a secondary approach, antiquarian.

Serious preservation work began in the U.S. during the early nineteenth century with attempts to preserve Mount Vernon and Independence Hall. These projects were undertaken by members of upper-class eastern society, and the approach they took to historical preservation—in which they sought to preserve those sites and structures that played important roles in the development of the nation—still dominates the practice. According to William Murtagh, "patriotism fueled the energies of nineteenth-century preservationists to the excluding of any other interest." Preservationists adopted this approach because they believed that "it is good policy in a republican government to inculcate sentiments of veneration for those departed heroes who have rendered service to their country in times of danger." To achieve this goal, they sought to protect the houses of worthy political or military figures, along with important political buildings and battlefields, treating them as "shrines or icons." The dominant theme of these efforts has been a "secular pietism" which sought to preserve buildings thought "worthy of attention for transcendent [i.e., nation building] rather than intrinsic reasons."[42]

Such an approach to preservation fits particularly well with the historically dominant self-conception of the United States that understands the country through phrases drawn from a religious context: our county is like a 'city on a hill' with a unique 'manifest destiny.' This approach is clearly teleological in nature, but as the United States achieved

hegemonic status, this approach increasingly took what Nietzsche thought its most pernicious form, which portrays us as living in "an epigone-age" or, as a best-selling book of a few years back put it, as living at *The End of History*.[43] According to Nietzsche, both these approaches, but especially the latter, would have the effect of producing a cynical, self-satisfied cosmopolitanism that would make self-transcending actions ("life") increasingly difficult for both individuals and cultures.

Beginning in the early twentieth century, a second form of preservationism took an antiquarian approach toward history and should be understood as part of a wider project to raise the status and power of the post-Civil War South. Central to this project is "the myth of the Lost Cause," which attempts to put the South's defeat in the Civil War in the best possible light. It does this by arguing for a set of mythical ideas including the idea (1) that slavery was a benign institution; (2) that slavery was an institution in decline; (3) that slavery was not the cause of the South's secession; (4) that, in the face of demographic and industrial differences, the South could not have won the Civil War; (5) that Lee was one of the greatest generals in history, who bravely fought for a "lost cause," while Grant was an incompetent brute; and (6) and that Southerners and Southern society were morally superior to their Northern counterparts.[44] Partisans of this myth have adopted a preservationist program similar to that of the dominant culture. They have sought to preserve the mansions and plantations of important political figures, but they have placed a relatively greater emphasis on military sites, placing statues of Confederate generals in public places, and displays featuring Confederate battle flags.

As Nietzsche notes about antiquarian approaches to history in general, this project can help preserve the antiquarian's identity, but it does so at some cost. David Lowenthal has argued:

> "ODDLY, GIVEN OUR SELF-CONCEPTION AS A FUTURE-ORIENTED SOCIETY WITH LITTLE TIME FOR THE PAST, THE UNITED STATES, LIKE NIETZSCHE'S GERMANY, SEEMS 'OVERSATURATED' WITH HISTORY"

In recoiling from tragic loss or fending off a fearsome future, people the world over revert to ancestral legacies. As hope of progress fades, heritage [Nietzsche's "antiquarian history"] consoles us with tradition.... [However, this search for historical justification is] oppressive, defeatist, [and] decadent.... Breeding xenophobic hate, it becomes a byword for bellicose discord. Perverting the "true" past for greedy or chauvinist ends, heritage undermines historical truth with twisted myth. Exalting rooted faith over critical reason, it stymies social action and sanctions passive acceptance of preordained fate.[45]

And indeed, Southern antiquarian history has helped perpetuate racism, while stifling education and economic growth. A Nietzschean, however, would reject the myth of the lost cause for a different reason, namely, that like all antiquarian histories, Southern antiquarian history undermines "higher life" and "paralyzes the man of action."[46] As Lowenthal put it: "Miring us in the obsolete, the cult of heritage immures life within museums and monuments."[47] The myth of the Lost Cause, like most antiquarian histories, does not aid "life."

Moreover, contrary to what Nietzsche argues, this antiquarian history has not protected the South from consumerist cosmopolitanism as its partisans have adopted the same practical egoism that Nietzsche thought the most reprehensible consequence of cosmopolitanism. The myth of the Lost Cause gives some Southerners a relatively shallow identity and explains their supposedly-unjust relative poverty, powerlessness, and cultural subordination, only to allow them to more easily pursue their consumer interests. Indeed, the only difference between this antiquarian history and the more dominant teleological history is the dating of history's end: both present us as epigones, living at the twilight end of meaningful history; both produce "stupefaction"; and both make historically-significant, transformative action difficult.

ON THE USE AND ABUSE OF CONFEDERATE MONUMENTS

Following the 2016 murder of nine black parishioners at the Emanuel AME Church in Charleston SC, the debate over the preservation of Confederate monuments intensified. Several photos of the murderer with a Confederate battle flag led to protests at public sites featuring this flag, particularly at the State House in Columbia, and these protests raised questions—and inspired further protests (and counter-protests)—concerning the many Confederate monuments located on public sites. Perhaps the most significant of these protests, which occurred in Charlottesville, VA in 2017, was triggered by the City Council's decision to remove a statue of Confederate General Robert E. Lee and to rename

the park where it stood. This decision attracted the attention of a number of white supremacist groups who, seemingly with President Trump's blessing, protested against the statue's removal. One of these white supremacists killed a counter-protestor.

The issue ostensibly at stake in most of these controversies is whether such statues should be kept in place, removed to other sites, or simply destroyed.[48] From a Nietzschean perspective these controversies reflect two approaches to history: Southern antiquarians seek to preserve the statues in place, while their opponents, who have adopted a critical approach, call for the statues to be removed or destroyed. Antiquarians offer several arguments in favor of their position. First, they argue that attempts to remove these statues amount to an attack on "Southern" heritage and identity. Note, for example, how the intentionally provocative phrase chanted by Neo-Nazi protestors, "Jews will not replace us," reflects Nietzsche's antiquarian who asserts that "here we lived, here we are living, and here we shall live, for we are tough and not to be ruined overnight."[49] In addition, Southern antiquarians argue that removing these statues amounts to an attempt to "erase history" and is, therefore, an attack on truth.

Critical historians who favor removing these statues respond that these statues are monuments and, as such, do not simply record history (as the erasure charge implies); instead, they memorialize it. Monuments commemorate; they celebrate, honor, or valorize events, often by depicting a person who played a significant role in them. These figures are valued for the role they played in these historically-important dramas; their personal character is of secondary importance. Statues of Lee, for example, are erected, not because he was an especially virtuous person, but rather because he was a noteworthy Confederate general. Moreover, by expressing value judgments, monuments serve

'MIRING US IN THE OBSOLETE, THE CULT OF HERITAGE IMMURES LIFE WITHIN MUSEUMS AND MONUMENTS'

the needs of contemporary politics. This service can be seen in the history of Confederate monuments raised during the Jim Crow period so as to refashion contemporary Southern society around a fixed, fundamentalist identity looking favorably on slavery and most at home when surrounded by racist institutions and practices. When this identity was again challenged during the Civil Rights era, these monuments were given legal protection to make their removal difficult, thereby adding a new layer to the institutional racism associated with this identity. Given that the purpose of these statues is to valorize particular historical events in support of a specific Southern identity associated with existing oppressive institutions, attempts to remove them are best understood, not as attempts to erase history, but as attempts to oppose these institutions.[50]

Southern antiquarians try to respond to this argument with a *reductio ad absurdum:* if monuments valorize and if slavery is evil, then we should remove all statues that celebrate slave owners, including those of Washington and Jefferson and, if this is true, we would soon have to remove all memorials. The objection to this slippery-slope argument is obvious: these statues valorize Washington and Jefferson, not as defenders of slavery, but for other, highly significant, historically-transformative actions. Putting this objection aside, however, note how the antiquarian's argument reflects Nietzsche's claim that critical history is problematic because, since every past is worthy of condemnation, it soon rejects all history. But Nietzsche, unlike the Southern antiquarian, makes this claim in support of a broader point; namely, that, since the critical approach tends to sever all connections to history, it is dangerous to life: "men and ages which serve life by judging and destroying a past are always ... endangered men and ages."[51]

The real problem with the two approaches to history that have shaped the controversy over Confederate statues is that neither approach "serves life." At best the antiquarian approach might preserve, or "mummify," a (particularly unacceptable and vexed) form of life and identity, while critical history, because it destroys its own historical horizon, tends to produce a weakened personality that itself cannot tolerate criticism. But these criticisms raise two questions: First, philosophically, how should history be approached? And second, how can these philosophical criticisms help solve the essentially historical/architectural controversy over Confederate statues? As to the first question, at the end of his critique of critical history, Nietzsche writes:

For since we are the outcome of earlier generations, we are also the outcome of their aberrations ... and errors, and indeed of their crimes; it is not possible

wholly to free ourselves from this chain. If we condemn these aberrations and regard ourselves as free of them, this does not alter the fact that we originated in them. The best we can do is to confront our inherited and hereditary nature with our knowledge, and through a new, stern discipline combat our inborn heritage and implant in ourselves a new habit, a new instinct, a new second nature, so that our first nature withers away.[52]

It would seem that, here, Nietzsche is arguing that these two approaches need to be combined, if they are to support life; that it is necessary to both criticize one's history and to ground oneself in it. We must understand not only that our identity grows out of our past but also that it cannot simply be identified with it. In addition, we need the courage to take on the task of developing a new identity out of our history—of bringing unity to the historical manifold—and this, Nietzsche argues, is only possible with the aid of monumental history. In addition, we must separate the notion of growth and development from the teleological notion of inevitable fate: we must incorporate notions of inescapable struggle and contingency into our history.

But how can such a complex approach to history be represented in an urban landscape? How can monuments help us accomplish this task? Consider another example: The Appomattox Memorial in Alexandria VA is a bronze statue of an unarmed Confederate soldier standing on a stone base with inscriptions on four sides. Modeled on a painting by John Elder of a soldier viewing the Appomattox battlefield after Lee's surrender, the statue portrays a soldier standing with crossed arms, equipment hanging from one shoulder and one hand holding a hat. (Figure 1) His head is bowed, his eyes look down. His expression is often described as "somber" or "contemplative." The inscriptions state that the memorial was "Erected to the Memory of Confederate Dead of Alexandria by their Surviving

" CRITICAL HISTORY IS PROBLEMMATIC BECAUSE, SINCE EVERY PAST IS WORTHY OF CONDEMNATION, IT SOON REJECTS ALL HISTORY "

Comrades" and, claiming that "They Died in the Consciousness of Duty Faithfully Performed," list 100 names. The memorial is set at the center of an intersection where, at the beginning of the war, local troops assembled in advance of an invading Union army to march south to join Lee, and the soldier looks south along the path they took. Originally set on a broad median, the site of the memorial was greatly reduced to accommodate the construction of a new parkway, eventually named after Jefferson Davis. On the intersection's southwest corner stands the Lyceum, Alexandria's history museum.[53] The memorial was erected by the Robert E. Lee Camp of the United Confederate Veterans (UCV) in 1889, early in the Jim Crow period. Realizing that the statue would be controversial, the UCV successfully petitioned the Virginia House of Delegates to protected it from being removed and, indeed, although it was thought a fine work of public art when in was erected, it has long been controversial. This controversy came to a head in late 2016, following the Charleston murders, when the City Council voted to remove the statue to another location and rename the adjacent parkway.[54]

As with other recent controversies, this controversy took the form of a debate between antiquarians and critical historians, and conventional alternatives would have us choose between the antiquarian preservation of the statue as is, or its critical removal. A third approach that Nietzsche's thinking opens us to—one that "serves life"—would be to incorporate the existing memorial into a larger work of art by taking advantage of the remaining, narrow landscaped median immediately south of the memorial. This median should be the site of two low panels displaying friezes visible to passing pedestrians and motorists. The western (southbound) side of these panels should contain scenes of slaves being marched south from the auction houses of Alexandria, home to one of the largest slave-trading operations in the country. The eastern side of the panels should contain scenes showing self-emancipated slaves traveling north on the underground railroad, an important route of which ran through Alexandria. To the south of these panels, in the middle of the next intersection, a new statue should be erected showing members of the 29th and 31st Brigades of "U.S. Colored Troops," who helped defeat Lee's army at Appomattox. An account of Alexandria's role in both the slave trade and the Civil War, and an account of history of the statue and these recent changes, should be available at the adjacent Lyceum, and at the Alexandria Black History Museum, a few blocks north.

This new work of urban art avoids the pitfalls of dichotomous thinking that contributed to the debacle in Charlottesville by weaving

together Nietzsche's three approaches to history so as to make a complete monument that serves life. Critical history would be served by the low panels showing slaves being marched south. These panels would make the evils of slavery visible, and their presence near the soldier would indicate the cause of the war. As could be made clear at the nearby museums, their height and orientation, relative to the soldier, and delayed construction would gesture at their 'invisibility' perpetuated in repressive bad faith by the myth of the lost cause. Antiquarian history would be served by retaining the contemplative look of the soldier. Pondering his loss in this cause, he might now be understood as realizing that the 'duty' which he "faithfully performed" was embedded in a controversial identity, shaped and imposed by economic interests that may have differed from his own. He now faces the future with a new task: mummification or the development of a new, more vital identity based on a more complete understanding of history. Monumental history would be served by the statue of the black soldiers at the southern end of the ensemble, by the slaves emancipating themselves as they travel north on the railroad, and, possibly, by the Confederate soldier

FIGURE 1: APPOMATTOX MEMORIAL, ALEXANDRIA, VA

now given an opportunity for a new identity. This new memorial would also reject the teleological history of most memorials by showing that the conflict at the heart of the memorial is not yet fully resolved: the myth is still with us; the soldier has not yet begun his new life. The task of forging a new American identity rooted in the crimes and ideals, the struggles and the values of the past is not yet complete, nor is its outcome clear. The purpose of the new monument is to lead people to contemplate these ideas. Of course, this statue possesses several unique advantages (its emotional qualities and location) that make it easy to re-purpose. Other statues would be more difficult to redesign and some are best taken down. In some cases, there may simply be no room to add new materials. In others, the statues might simply be too caught up in the Myth of the Lost Cause, too antiquarian, or too racist to be successfully transformed. Public artists can be very creative people and may be able to salvage many existing statues, but in judging their proposals the important question to ask is: "Does this proposal transform this monument in such a way that it serves life?" If not, it should be removed or destroyed.[55]

Nietzsche's theories of history and culture can help us understand that cities need to incorporate history into the urban fabric and that both historical preservation and memorialization have central roles in the urban design. Memorials can fulfill this role, but only if they aim at engendering the life goal of vital, unified, and beautiful identities. As the United States continues to ponder the role of Confederate monuments in its urban spaces, Nietzsche's life-serving approach to history provides a useful alternative to the debilitating stand-off between subservience to history and cosmopolitan forgetfulness.

ENDNOTES

1. William J. Murtagh, *Keeping Time: The History and Theory of Preservation in America* (Hoboken, NJ: John Wiley and Sons, 2006), p. 5; see also Charles B. Hosmer, *Presence of the Past* (New York: Putnam, 1965).

2. Friedrich Nietzsche, "David Strauss: The Confessor and the Writer," In Friedrich Nietzsche, *Untimely Meditations,* edited by Daniel Breazeale. Translated by R. J. Hollingdale. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997): 1-55. Hereinafter, "Strauss."

[3] Friedrich Nietzsche, "On the Uses and Disadvantages of History for Life," In Nietzsche, *Untimely Meditations*: 57-124, p. 59. Hereinafter, "History."

4. Nietzsche, "History," 59.

5. Nietzsche, "History," 63.

6. Nietzsche, "History," 67,

7. Nietzsche, "History," 62.

8. Nietzsche, "History," 83; and Nietzsche, "Strauss," 30-35.

9. Nietzsche, "History," 59, 68, and 117.

10. Daniel Breazeale, "Introduction." In Nietzsche, *Untimely Meditations:* vii-xxxiii, p. xv.

11. Nietzsche, History, 83.

12. Nietzsche, "History," 107.

13. Nietzsche, "History," 83,

14. Nietzsche, "History," 107.

15. Nietzsche, "History," 95.

16. Nietzsche, "History," 83.

17. Nietzsche, "Strauss," 10-11.

18. Nietzsche, "History," 75.

19. Nietzsche, "History," 67.

20. Nietzsche, "History," 72-3.

21. Nietzsche, "History," 73.

22. Nietzsche, "History" 74.

23. Nietzsche, "History," 75.

24. Nietzsche, "History," 67.

25. Nietzsche, "History," 75-6.

26. Nietzsche, "History," 76.

27. Nietzsche, "History," 76.

28. Nietzsche, "History," 67.

29. Nietzsche, "History," 68.

30. Nietzsche, "Strauss," 11.

31. Nietzsche, "History," 73-74.

32. Nietzsche, "History," 83.

33. Nietzsche, "Strauss," 10.

34. Nietzsche, "Strauss," 10-11.

35. Nietzsche, "Strauss," 6,

36. Nietzsche, "History," 62.

37. Nietzsche, "History," 62.

38. Nietzsche, "Strauss," 7-8.

39. Friedrich Nietzsche, "The Wanderer and his Shadow," in Friedrich Nietzsche, *Human, All Too Human.* Translated by R. J. Hollingdale. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996): 301-395, p. 334.

40. William Arrowsmith, "Introduction," in Friedrich Nietzsche, *Unmodern Observations.* Edited by William Arrowsmith. (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1990), p. xi, quoting "History," 60.

41. Nietzsche, "History," 63.

42. Murtagh, *Keeping Time,* pp. xxvii, xxviii, and 11-24; also see Hosmer, *Presence of the Past,* pp. 298-303.

43. Francis Fukuyama, *The End of History and the Last Man,* (New York: Free Press, 1992).

44. Edward H. Bonekemper, *The Myth of the Lost Cause: Why the South Fought the Civil War and Why the North Won* (Washington, DC: Regnery History, 2015); and Caroline Janney, *Remembering the Civil War: Reunion and the Limits of Reconciliation,* (Chapel Hill, University of North Carolina Press, 2013), pp. 251-254.

45. David Lowenthal, "The Heritage Crusade and its Contradictions." In Max Page and Randall Mason, *Giving Preservation a History,* (New York: Routledge, 2004): 19-43, p. 19.

46. Nietzsche, "History," 75.

47. Lowenthal, "The Heritage Crusade," p. 19.

48. Monica Hesse, "A Quandary Set in Stone," *Washington Post,* 5/9/2016, C1; Christopher Phelps, "Removing Racist Symbols Isn't a Denial of History," *The Chronicle of Higher Education,* Jan 29, 2016, pp. 48-51; Sarah Fenton, "The Confederacy, Its Symbols, and the Politics of Public Culture," *AHA Today,* 1/9/2016.

49. Nietzsche, "History," 73.

50. In fact, the erasure charge is more accurately applied to the attempts to preserve these statues, as these monuments materialize an ideology that attempts to erase the history of slavery. This is consistent with another of Nietzsche's criticisms of antiquarian history; namely, that it "possesses an extremely restricted field of vision" (Nietzsche, "History," 74).

51. Nietzsche, "History," 76.

52. Nietzsche, "History," 76.

53. Office of Historic Alexandria, "The Confederate Statue," *https://www.*

alexandriava.gov/ uploadedFiles/historic/info/brochures/ ConfederateStatueBrochure.pdf/, accessed 5/12/2015.

54. Sullivan, Patricia, "Alexandria will seek to move Confederate statue and rename Jefferson Davis Highway," *https://www.washingtonpost.com/local/ virginia-politics/alexandria-will-seek-to-move-confederate- statue-and-rename-jefferson-davis-highway/2016/09/17/ fec35310-7b53-11e6-ac8e-cf8e0dd91dc7_story.html?utm_ term=.1b5f0e67d0e7rnon/* accessed 9/26/2017.

55. The controversy surrounding the Confederacy Memorial Carving at Stone Mountain, Georgia that gained prominence during the 2018 Governor's race between a white male and a black female candidate may be one such example admitting of no life-serving solution.

DESIGNING FOR IMPRISONMENT: ARCHITECTURAL ETHICS AND PRISON DESIGN

DOMINIQUE MORAN, YVONNE JEWKES, AND COLIN LORNE

INTRODUCTION

Architectural ethics has only begun to consider in earnest what it means, in a moral sense, to be an architect.[1] The academy, however, has yet to adequately to explore the ethical problems raised,[2] to evaluate the types of moral issues that arise, and to develop moral principles or moral reasons that should guide decisions when encountering these moral issues inherent in certain project types. This is the case despite the practice of architecture entailing "behaviours, our choices of which may be illuminated by ethical analysis."[3] Although distinguishing practice from product allows ethical critique of the practice involved in designing buildings, and recognises the significance of the architect's moral agency, there remains very little empirically-based understanding of how the

architect, once identified as a moral agent, operates as such, and still less about the circumstances in which 'professional' conduct may be at odds with 'ethical' behaviour.

Architects encounter moral dilemmas in everyday practice, in designing buildings to address clients' briefs. Although they may undertake moral consideration when accepting or declining commissions, analyzing this process is in its infancy in architectural and ethical scholarship, consequently little is known about how architects balance moral concerns against the need for profitable work. Although McNeill has characterised the architects' refrain 'if we didn't design it, someone else would' as a "worrying abdication of ethical responsibility,"[4] it could alternatively be viewed as exhibiting direct moral concern, that if they themselves do not undertake a particular commission, another architect (or possibly non-architect) would, and possibly with much worse consequences, under what Wisor has termed the "moral problem of worse actors."[5]

Prison design, as a building type, thrusts the ethical role of the architect sharply into focus. Design is a key element in prison modernisation programmes, and a staple for many firms. But architects' involvement is not without controversy. The problematic nature of prisons themselves, (their questionable effectiveness in deterring criminal behaviour or enabling rehabilitation, and the ethically dubious practices which may take place within them), has meant that the legitimacy of incarceration is continually debated. As physical objects of the carceral estate, prison design offers a compelling 'test case' for how the role of the architect can be legitimately conceived as ethical.

It seems little progress has been made since Banham registered his concern that the architecture profession acts as a "black box,"[6] drawing and making objects rather than designing in relation to social and ethical issues. Although the profession readily assumes responsibility for aesthetic design of buildings as commodity-objects, as well as legal obligations surrounding delivery, architects as professionals are more uncertain about their moral responsibilities towards those who inhabit or are affected by their buildings.[7] To counter the 'black box' mentality Jeremy Till has called for architects to deploy architectural intelligence as responsible agents concerned less with the production of abstract objects, and more with their role in enabling wider social processes, thereby engaging their ongoing complicity with the social consequences of their actions.[8]

THE ETHICS OF ARCHITECTURE AND THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT

Considering what sorts of conceptions about architectural ethics might

prove effective in allowing us to gain some perspective on the ethics of prison design requires us to review previous thought on this topic.

Thomas Fisher argued that in his Continental ethics, Karsten Harries treated architecture "primarily as a *product*, not a practice," resulting in an ethical perspective "that attaches moral values and their realisation to *buildings*, not to the people who build them"[9](our emphasis). Although the relationship between ethics and aesthetics has long preoccupied scholars of architectural ethics, as evidenced by Wasserman et. al.'s assertion that "a building's aesthetic embodiment is a part of its virtue, its ethical value,"[10] in creating buildings which are aesthetically pleasing, there may be a tendency to equate their beauty with notions of their healthiness, sociability, democracy, sustainability and social justice, just as there is sometimes an assumption that buildings which are less aesthetically pleasing are somehow 'worse' on these counts. However, Fisher described the attachment of moral value to buildings as a form of "mysticism;"[11] a building might be "inhumane in that it is bleak and uninhabitable. It does not follow, nor is it intelligible to suggest, that the building itself has inhumane values."[12] It is, he argued, on the basis of this misassignment of values that Harries offered an 'impossible vision' of artefacts reflecting values without the moral input of the individual (moral) agents who created them. Fundamentally, Harries' approach failed to recognise the significance of the architect's moral agency in the practice of architecture. Fox concurred that the built environment is not an appropriate focus of moral concern; the "non-rational, non-sentient, non-living, non-self-organising, non-self-renewing, built environment is not... of moral consequence in its own right."[13] He continued: "questions regarding built environments should only enter into moral discussion in so far as these environments are considered to matter to, impact upon, or in some way affect, those kinds of beings or entities

66 FISHER DESCRIBED THE ATTACHMENT OF MORAL VALUE TO BUILDINGS AS A FORM OF 'MYSTICISM' 99

in respect of which we think we have direct moral obligations."[14]

This urge to focus on architectural practice and the moral agency of the architect points up an important distinction between 'architecture' and the practice thereof, with both Fisher and Fox having argued that philosophical ethicists have not yet adequately explored the ethical problems posed by architectural practice. Instead, most of the attention has been confined to such legal considerations as intellectual property and to responsibilities to clients; core elements of business ethics for the design of any building, not just a prison, and equally applicable to architects, building contractors, and any other professionals involved in design and construction. Fisher, however, claimed that architecture merits its own branch of applied ethics, arguing that it has special issues as a consequence of the idiosyncrasies which distinguish it from the arts, sciences and social practices. Previous attempts to address architectural ethics have, he argued, failed to produce worthwhile outcomes. The way to identify architectural ethics, he contended, is to "place architectural practice, and thus the architect as *moral agent*" and not just legal or professional operator, at the centre of focus[15] (our emphasis). As Carroll put it, "there can be no question that architects as designers of built environments can use their skills for good or ill, morally speaking."[16] The identification of architectural practice, rather than product, as the location of ethical agency is a useful philosophical advancement, but the practical operation of this agency is opaque. Professional architectural codes of conduct or of ethics, such as those introduced by the Royal Institute of British Architects (RIBA), or the American Institute of Architects (AIA), are relatively ineffectual in relation to the architects' moral obligations.[17] These codes of conduct represent general guiding principles and rules of conduct which express the considered opinion of the profession primarily on business ethics, in part to protect the profession against liability problems. In the main, they focus on business, fiduciary, insurance or liability functions. As codes of conduct, these stipulations are rigid and do not facilitate individual, flexible ethical choice. Motivation for obedience is driven by compulsion, membership requirements and punishment for violation.

These codes of conduct tend to focus on protecting the client (the person who procures the services of the architect) and as a result they often appear deficient as vehicles for advancing the greater good. Clients' priorities, however, may be short-term, exploitative, commercial, and detrimental to user wellbeing or to environmental concerns. In this case, serving the client through fulfilling this kind of code of conduct may be highly antithetical to achieving these worthwhile goals. While codes

contain platitudes towards the environment and the public, they contain little incentive beyond telling architects to act within the law. Thus, Till's assertion that acting professionally is different from acting ethically, and that the two operate according to different parameters, makes sense here. Professional conduct is determined by adherence to various codes, whereas ethical conduct addresses the wider responsibilities of the architect, to those "in respect of which we think we have direct moral obligations"[18] including those beyond the immediate client.

The omission of these wider responsibilities towards others who stand to benefit or suffer from architects' buildings gains particular poignancy when applied to consideration of those who have little say in the matter of whether or not they want to inhabit them. Thus, ethically motivated architects must, at minimum, concern themselves with a social ethic extending beyond the short term fiscal exchange of architectural commissions. As Till pointed out, "a client may argue that they are not paying for an architect to address these broader ethics, and an architect may say that the whole idea of wider responsibilities smacks of idealism"[19] The point is though,

> *that issues of social ethics are inherent in the design of any building, and just to ignore them does not mean that they will go away. Better then to face up to them, and in this way deal with the tension between the values and priorities attached to the professional codes and those implicit in social ethics.* [20]

By 'social ethics', Till meant the ethics concerned with social context and social implications, and which pertain to a collective vision of a 'good' society in contrast to ethics which focus on the on the more contractual concerns regarding what we owe to one another. Although Till did not refer here to any particular circumstance of architectural commissioning in which professional conduct with

"PHILOSOPHIC STUDY OF... THE DESIGN OF PRISONS, IS EMBRYONIC"

clients was at odds with ethical behaviour in the social sense, the role of architects in designing prison buildings can be beneficially examined in exactly these terms. In the remainder of the paper we therefore consider prison design as a test case for the social ethics of architectural practice.

ARCHITECTS' SOCIAL ETHICS OF PRISON DESIGN

If the ethics of architecture is a nascent philosophical field, then the philosophical study of the practice of architecture within the correctional field, namely the design of prisons, is embryonic. Philosophical discussion of architectural ethics rarely focuses on any particular type of building, in line with Taylor's assertion that buildings themselves cannot be the targets of moral criticism: "moral criticism presupposes moral agency, and so is only appropriately applied to people and their actions, not to inanimate objects."[21] Although judging it appropriate to critique of the practices of the people involved in designing buildings, he argued that buildings as inanimate objects are morally innocent. Having said this, Taylor hints, in his demonstration of this point, at the ethically questionable nature of prisons; "a building constructed *for an evil purpose*, such as a dungeon, might later be used for a good purpose, such as an exhibition space or a chapel, and vice versa."[22] (our emphasis)

If for Taylor a dungeon serves an 'evil purpose', then he is in accord with retired architect and writer Arthur Allen, who surveyed the history of architectural scholarship as it pertains to imprisonment. Allen found that "the provision of architectural service to institutions that aggravate rather than resolve the problems they are asked to manage is a complex issue arising in the operation of confining buildings."[23] In a survey originating with the idealism of nineteenth century penal institutions, he observed that there was no published architectural concern on the subject of the suffering caused by prisons until a discussion in 1973 in the magazine *Architectural Forum,* which urged that "architects consider withdrawal from design of prisons for non-violent inmates."[24] Allen argued that the "proposition that architects can and should consider the record of success or failure of their clients' intentions and operations is at the heart of this problem."[25] In narrowly observing their internal professional codes of conduct, in terms of integrity, honesty and diligent design in matters of structural safety and so on, some architects still, he argued, pretend innocence of the conflict between professional and social ethics in their work.

In 1977, Allen began publishing about the moral agency of architects with respect to incarceration. He questioned the architect's "traditional

obedience"[26] in the case of prison building, noting that although they built them, architects seldom wrote about or discussed prisons. Encouraging architects to be more attuned to the prison debate of the time, he argued that

…if [the prison debate] concludes that imprisonment is unavoidable, then I can agree that decent architecture will have its place. If prisons, however, are found to be ineffective instruments of misery, then architects must question their part in the prison business.[27]

Addressing the moral agency of architects, he later wrote that "the architectural profession is unusually silent, even evasive, concerning the moral character of its clients;"[28] and considering the language architects use to discuss clientele, and architecture's apparent isolation from social debate, he argued that:

If architects design prison cells, which in their dreadful simplicity are designed for solitary confinement, then surely architects and architecture are implicated in the mental and physical destruction which occurs in these cells. If there is any doubt about the cruelty of solitary confinement, or of imprisonment, I suggest that architects read social, rather than architectural, criticism.[29]

He effectively argued that by using a technical jargon to describe buildings, architecture creates a professional mystique which avoids making reference to the moral or political character of the patrons of architecture, contributing to what he described as "a wide language gap between architects and writers on the issue of imprisonment."[30] Terms such as 'good design', 'pure, crisp and clean design', and 'visual logic', enabled the architect to refrain from "comment on the moral and ethical character of captives and captors," and to "flatter the institution with limited moral and ethical comment on the nature of its prison designs."[31] He also argued that euphemistic language is used by architects in public relations terms, in deflecting

" THAT THE ETHICS OF THE PRACTICE OF ARCHITECTURE WITHIN THE CORRECTIONAL FIELD HAS THUS FAR BEEN LARGELY OVERLOOKED BY THE ACADEMY STRIKES US AS REMARKABLE. "

attention from troubling issues; for example in architectural designs where groups of cells are called 'villages' and corridors between 'villages' are called 'walks' or 'streets' – labels, through the use of which, he posited "we are only fooling ourselves."[32] He concluded that:

> *If architecture continues to support questionable institutions and movements, and to defend them with euphemistic and specially constructed ethical languages, then the profession's part in deception and its self-centred indifference to moral and ethical issues cannot be defended on moral and ethical grounds.[33]*

That the ethics of the practice of architecture within the correctional field has thus far been largely overlooked by the academy strikes us as remarkable. In 2004, ADPSR (Architects/Designers/Planners for Social Responsibility) launched a Prison Design Boycott for Alternatives to Incarceration in the United States, asking architects and allied professionals to refuse prison work. It asked architects to decline death chamber and Supermax prison commissions on the grounds of human rights violations. Supermax prisons are considered to inflict torture through long-term solitary isolation and the carrying-out of death sentences, which are considered to be *prima-facie* torture. This pledge campaign was not specifically aimed at the American Institute of Architects [AIA], but it asked the AIA to amend its Code of Ethics and Professional Conduct to prohibit the design of these facilities. Later, in 2013, ADPSR added a separate petition campaign asking AIA to amend their Code of Ethics to specifically prohibit the design of spaces intended for killing, torture, or cruel, inhuman, or degrading treatment. "Cruel, inhuman, or degrading" is a key human rights standard widely held to include solitary confinement of the kinds currently used within the United States, including but not limited to Supermax prisons. The campaigns triggered intense media debate but in December 2014, the AIA rejected the proposals. Although dialogue between AIA and ADPSR continues, the AIA position is essentially that ethical decisions rest firmly with architects' practices, and with individual architects .

In narrowly observing their internal professional codes of conduct, architects can, Allen argued, pretend innocence of the conflict between professional and social ethics in their work. His suggestion of pretended 'innocence' perhaps invites an unwarranted scapegoating of architects, hence we argue for a better understanding of the contextual nature of the constraints architects face in acting in accordance with the moral values they may hold. Although we may speculate about these constraints, very little is understood of the socially embedded nature of ethical stances in relation to architectural practice, and the contextual nature of these

stances, for example, in relation to prevailing punitive philosophies. Punitive sentiment (i.e. the attitudes towards imprisonment widely held in a given context), and the nature of the processes through which prisons are built (e.g. privatisation, private financing, design and build contracts, competitive tendering) may predetermine the role of the architect and the nature of his or her involvement in prison design. In the highly incarcerative settings of the US and UK, architects' reluctance to address these issues may be due to the lucrative nature of projects generated when imprisonment is used politically to placate public anxiety. In essence, challenging public authorities and fellow professionals on substantial moral issues may damage business.

The commissioning of prison buildings varies in different contexts, shaping the capacity for architects to introduce design creativity into the process, and defining the nature of their involvement. In order to design with a concern for social ethics in mind, architects will need early involvement in a building project to creatively engage with and query the client's brief, rather than adopting a narrower technical role in relation to predetermined plans. Such an approach allows architects to include the client as part of the commission, rather than focus only on the building itself, thus enabling consideration of architecture's social ethics. The potential for such an approach, given the various financing and contracting processes in place in different contexts, may have profound implications for architects' deployment of moral agency in relation to the social context of imprisonment.

In the UK, for example, the Private Finance Initiative process means that consortia of contractors and architects tender for prison projects whose basic design has already been determined prior to the tender being offered by the Ministry of Justice, thus minimising architects' creative

" IN THE HIGHLY INCARCERATIVE SETTINGS OF THE US AND UK, ARCHITECTS' RELUCTANCE TO ADDRESS THESE ISSUES MAY BE DUE TO THE LUCRATIVE NATURE OF PROJECTS GENERATED "

input, and perhaps also assuaging their sense of responsibility for the built outcome itself. This process only allows architects to participate as providers of an efficient process with predetermined outcomes. In the lower incarceration setting of Denmark, by contrast, tenders for prison commissions ask bidders to deliver their own designs for the prison, *ab initio,* with the result that architects have a much freer hand, and with it, a concomitant sense of responsibility. At the state level in the US, the design *ab initio* system prevails, but designs which appear too 'lenient' will not be successful: "at the end of the day, my clients are my clients. We've been told we can't make it look too good, because the public won't accept it."[34] It seems only reasonable to assume, then, that architects operating in different commissioning environments will see their moral responsibilities—as well as their options—differently. In other words, architects' ability to introduce more 'humane' elements into prison design in Denmark may act to assuage the ethical concerns felt by their counterparts in the U. K. If architects' ethical concerns are assuaged in this way, we believe that it is not necessarily through a form of the 'mysticism' of attaching moral value to a building so roundly critiqued by Fisher but through the anticipation of genuine improvements in people's lives that accrue because of architects' actions. Thus, the case of prison design suggests that concern over the ethics of not only architects' actions, but also the products of those actions due to their long-term consequences over peoples' lives is not at all misplaced and should be part of an ethically-motivated architect's deliberations.

Even the usually ethically-neutral subject of aesthetics becomes morally relevant in the case of prisons. It may be the case that restrictions imposed by clients on the design of prisons (e.g. predetermined plans offered for tender, issues of 'public acceptability' of designs, tight build budgets, preferred/cheaper layouts and finishes) may reduce the appeal of prison design to architects seeking to deliver humane, aesthetically pleasing buildings. Conversely, it is possible that architects focus on prison aesthetics to the detriment of concern for the lived experience of prisoners. Through the aesthetics of their prisons, architects communicate the purpose of imprisonment and the relationship between prisons and the community.[35] Aesthetically bland, functional, and rather nondescript exteriors of recently built UK prisons, for example, may be read as indicators of a loss of public empathy for prisoners.

CONCLUSION: PRISON DESIGN AS ARCHITECTURAL ETHICS IN PRACTICE

Architecture still lacks its own branch of applied ethics, in which

architectural practice, and the architect as moral agent, are focal. Whilst these issues are usually considered in rather abstract terms, we argue that prison design brings them more clearly into focus, enables advancement of discussion of the ethics of architecture, and enhanced understanding of the ethics of architectural practice. It does so in the context of the transition from ideal to nonideal theory in ethics and political philosophy, describing principles for the design of institutions and the conduct of persons in a moral and political order that is realistic, rather than utopian, and that asks how long-term ideal goals might be achieved, or worked toward, in ways that are morally permissible and politically possible as well as likely to be effective.[36]

With the exception of McNeill, there are few studies which consider how the architect, once identified as a moral agent, thinks and operates as such, and accordingly we know little about the moral issues arising from architecture's idiosyncrasies. Professional codes of conduct are generally expected to address these issues but, operating largely to protect the consumer procuring architects' services, and the profession against liability, they address business ethics rather than issues that arise out of architects' design function. Learning the declarative form of the professional codes of conduct cannot address the complex ethical demands of architectural practice.[37] Ethical conduct addresses social context, which exists beyond the short term fiscal exchange of architectural commissions, and involves longer term vision. Negotiating these commissions is not straightforward. The need to make a profit may compromise architects' ability to act on ethical concerns, compelling them to explore nonideal situations, the ways in which these dilemmas are addressed and worked through in relation to actual commissions accepted or declined, as well as any derivative duties discharged.

"EVEN THE USUALLY ETHICALLY-NEUTRAL SUBJECT OF AESTHETICS BECOMES MORALLY RELEVANT IN THE CASE OF PRISONS."

It is clear that some architects grapple with these questions and are fully aware of the ethical dilemmas they face. Indeed it seems that prominent architects debate this point – for example, at a recent discussion about conscience in architectural practice, audience members commented that "beautiful things can do ugly things"[38] and "Architects are whores of the arts, we have a conscience as long as clients want it."[39] In his summing-up the Chair stressed the importance of social value in design, and another speaker stated: "We serve. It is our job to decide who we serve, and how."[40] Clearly, the appetite exists for giving due consideration to the effects of our actions.

We opened with a question about architects' negotiation of their moral roles. Tracing the nascent development of the philosophical field of architectural ethics, it is clear that philosophical discussion locates social responsibility with the individual architect as a moral agent--a stance confirmed both by the comments of professional architects, and by the reluctance of the AIA to assume any responsibility for the ethical conduct of its members beyond the standard professionalism of business ethics.

We argued here that taking prison design as a 'test case' enables a more grounded understanding of architects' navigation of ethical dilemmas beyond professional business practice, dilemmas which require them to address their wider responsibilities and to decide to whom, beyond the immediate client, they consider themselves to have obligations. In our view these obligations extend to both the prisoners who inhabit their buildings and suffer incarceration individually, and to a society which bears the collective burden of the economic and social costs of imprisonment. As professional architects' discussions of conscience make clear, architects' ethical roles beyond their professional responsibilities remain under-explored, as evidenced by the lack of academic debate over the ethical role of the architect in prison design, and despite longstanding discussion of the ethics of imprisonment itself.

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SHOULD ARCHITECTS REFRAIN FROM DESIGNING PRISONS FOR LONG-TERM SOLITARY CONFINEMENT? – AN OPEN LETTER TO THE ARCHITECTURE PROFESSION

TOM SPECTOR, AIA, WITH CRAIG BORKENHAGEN, MARK DAVIS, CARRIE FOSTER, JACOB GANN, TOU LEE HER, AARON KLOSSNER, EVAN MURTA, RYAN RANKIN, MARIA CRISTINA RODRIGUEZ SANTOS, CONNOR TASCOTT, SARAH TURNER, AND SPENCER WILLIAMS

FIGURE 1:
PELICAN BAY STATE
PRISON PRISON

In a profile in the November, 2012 issue of the magazine *Architect,* activist-architect Raphael Sperry, a founder of the group Architects Planners & Designers for Social Responsibility (APDSR) discussed his petition to amend the AIA's Code of Ethics and Professional Conduct to include a

prohibition on "the design of (prison) spaces intended for long-term solitary isolation and execution."[1] This issue is both serious and timely. It deserves contemplative attention before any action is taken. The purpose of this letter is to provide the the architecture profession a condensed analysis of the possible justification for taking the action Mr. Sperry advocates. After review and consideration, we are persuaded that Mr. Sperry's proposal does merit action by the AIA.

Far from the prison system's causing architects to perpetuate injustice, the design of incarceration facilities is a building type showing real creativity and concern for prisoner rehabilitation. The article in *Architect* mentions several firms engaged in such work but many others can be found to impress the observer with the variety and vitality of this specialty.[2] Thus, while certainly not without its structural deficiencies, charges that the American justice system is incorrigible and that it can only corrupt architects' best intentions do not withstand scrutiny and should not form the basis for any AIA calls to action.

The proposal promoted by APDSR, however, is more targeted than this. Specifically, Mr. Sperry is asking AIA members to foreswear designing facilities for long-term solitary confinement and for the administration of the death penalty on the concept that these punishments amount to human torture, and that architects cannot make themselves part of any torture apparatus. Approval of the Sperry proposal, then, depends on two important assertions: that long-term solitary confinement is torture, and that architects, by virtue of their professional roles, have a special responsibility in this situation to oppose policy enacted by democratically elected state and federal governments. To maintain the focus and brevity of this document, the controversies surrounding the death penalty will not be addressed. We will only take up the case against solitary confinement.

Prison design for long-term solitary confinement—also called disciplinary segregation—in the United States can be traced back to the Philadelphia Prison of 1829. Though much studied and even emulated in Europe at the time, the practice fell into disrepute in the early twentieth century. It was only revived in the late twentieth century during the great rise in imprisonment and consequent boom in prison construction. In the U. S., more than 80,000 inmates live in some form of disciplinary isolation.[3] Approximately 25,000 of these are housed in what has come to be known as "supermax" prisons.[4] Though conditions differ from prison to prison, a widely accepted definition of solitary confinement is "the physical and social isolation of individuals who are confined to their cells for 22 to 24 hours a day."[5] Typically, prisoners do not enter long-term

solitary confinement from initial sentencing. They are placed in solitary as a quick fix to end a variety of disruptions they cause within the prison system. Even teenagers are regularly placed in solitary for extended periods.[6]

Humans are fundamentally social beings. Much of our sense of reality, of emotional stability and sense of self derives from fairly constant interactions with other people. Thus, it comes as little surprise that, deprived of this crucial source of reality, people who are already displaying adjustment difficulties would quickly become even more unhinged from reality in disciplinary segregation. The permanent psychological impact of solitary confinement is well-documented.[7] Even those who enter disciplinary segregation with an apparently strong and stable sense of self will begin to experience a constellation of psychiatric problems in a short period of time. Isolation panic and delirium are but two manifestations of "confinement psychosis," a medical condition typified by "psychotic reaction characterised frequently by hallucinations and delusions, produced by prolonged physical isolation and inactivity in completely segregated areas"[8] Symptoms of psychological distress can begin in only a few days. A report to the United Nations proposed 15 days "as the limit between solitary confinement and prolonged solitary confinement."[9] Stuart Grassian found in his interviews of 49 inmates of the Pelican Bay "Supermax" prison in Northern California that "seventeen were actively psychotic… in urgent need of hospital treatment, and twenty-three others suffered serious psychopathological reactions to solitary,"[10] Surely, we feel compelled to conclude, a disciplinary system which results in most of its prisoners suffering severe psychological trauma is indistinguishable from torture.

We are far from alone in this conclusion. The Inter American Court of Human Rights has similarly stated in several cases that prolonged

solitary confinement, in itself, may violate Article 5 of the American Convention on Human Rights: "prolonged isolation and deprivation of communication are in themselves cruel and inhuman treatment, harmful to the psychological and moral integrity of the person, and a violation of the right of any detainee to respect for his inherent dignity as a human being. Such treatment, therefore, violates Article 5 of the Convention..." The UN Human Rights Committee has objected to "... the practice of solitary confinement which affected the physical and mental health of persons deprived of freedom and which amounted to a cruel, inhuman and degrading treatment." Perhaps the most comprehensive statement against solitary confinement was expressed by The Istanbul Statement on the Use and Effects of Solitary Confinement, adopted on December 9, 2007 at the International Psychological Trauma Symposium, Istanbul.

> *It has been convincingly documented on numerous occasions that solitary confinement may cause serious psychological and sometimes physiological ill effects. Research suggests that between one third and as many as 90 per cent of prisoners experience adverse symptoms in solitary confinement. A long list of symptoms ranging from insomnia and confusion to hallucinations and psychosis has been documented. Negative health effects can occur after only a few days in solitary confinement, and the health risks rise with each additional day spent in such conditions. Individuals may react to solitary confinement differently. Still, a significant number of individuals will experience serious health problems regardless of the specific conditions, regardless of time and place, and regardless of pre-existing personal factors. The central harmful feature of solitary confinement is that it reduces meaningful social contact to a level of social and psychological stimulus that many will experience as insufficient to sustain health and well being.[11]*

Despite the United States' ratification in 1994 of the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment passed by the United Nations in December 1984,[12] the U. S. Supreme Court has steadfastly refused to engage the issue of solitary confinement as torture. In cases involving solitary confinement, it has in modern times repeatedly reasserted the state's interests over those of prisoners and the right of the prison administration to institute whatever punishment deemed necessary, including solitary.[13] Thus, its use is still sanctioned by the high court making its torturous features a continuing issue here.[14]

The frequent use of disciplinary segregation, its predictable effects on inmates' psychological states, and its resulting identification with torture poses a dilemma for professionals whose work engages the American

penal system. Medical professionals, who are charged with safeguarding individuals' well-being, are wholly unable and unwilling to certify who is and who is not able to withstand the psychological stresses of solitary confinement. Though in some cases, such medical intervention might be a blessing, singling out individuals as too psychologically fragile for solitary implicitly certifies the rest as fit to withstand its rigors—and this is simply antithetical to physicians' ethics.[15] As a result, such decisions are left for prison administration solely. Similarly with architects. The AIA Code of Ethics' Ethical Standard 1.4 specifies that "members should uphold human rights in all their professional endeavors." Since any mainstream interpretation of human rights includes the right not to be tortured, and since long-term solitary confinement can be counted on to inflict substantial psychological pain, a recognized form of torture, the logic behind asking architects to forego design of prison facilities for long term solitary confinement appears to be a straightforward extension of the AIA's existing Code of Ethics. We recommend that the AIA adopt Mr. Sperry's proposal. It is a stand that is long overdue.

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12. Part 1 Article 1 of the UN Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment states: "For the

purposes of this Convention, the term 'torture' means any act by which severe pain or suffering, whether physical or mental, is intentionally inflicted on a person for such purposes as obtaining from him or a third person information or a confession, punishing him for an act he or a third person has committed or is suspected of having committed, or intimidating or coercing him or a third person, or for any reason based on discrimination of any kind, when such pain or suffering is inflicted by or at the instigation of or with the consent or acquiescence of a public official or other person acting in an official capacity. It does not include pain or suffering arising only from, inherent in or incidental to lawful sanctions." http://www.un.org/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=a/res/39/46

13. Hilary McConnaughey, "Punishment Narratives: Tracking Supreme Court Jurisprudence Concerning Solitary Confinement," *Colgate Academic Review,* v8, fall 2010. McConnaughey concludes, "In sum, the Supreme Court expanded the concept of solitary confinement so that it is warranted for a variety of infractions and can be an expected part of a person's sentence." (99).

14. Recent Supreme Court attitudes toward solitary confinement reverse, somewhat, the opinion expressed in the nineteenth century, when it observed that solitary confinement "was an additional punishment of the most important and painful character," IN RE MEDLEY, 134 U.S. 160 (1890) http://laws.findlaw.com/us/134/160.html

15. Jeffrey L. Metzner MD and Jamie Fellner Esq. "Solitary Confinement and Mental Illness in U. S. Prisons: A Challenge for Medical Ethics," *Journal of the American Academy of Psychiatry and the Law Online,* v38n1 104-108. March 2010

ARCHITECTURE AS PARTICIPATION IN THE WORLD: MERLEAU-PONTY, WÖLFFLIN, AND THE BODILY EXPERIENCE OF THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT

BRIAN IRWIN

INTRODUCTION

Many discussions of Merleau-Ponty's treatment of the bodily experience of space turn to his opus *Phenomenology of Perception*, where he most explicitly takes up the theme. Yet in Merleau-Ponty's own view this treatment, while providing rich and valuable insights into spatial experience, remains unsatisfying: ultimately *Phenomenology of Perception* does not escape a dualism that, despite the work's inestimable contributions to the philosophy of embodied experience, situates it within a flawed tradition running back through Husserl, Kant, and Descartes. As Merleau-Ponty himself puts it, "The problems posed in Ph.P. are insoluble because I start there from the 'consciousness'-'object' distinction." [1] Only in his later philosophy, particularly with his development of the ontology of the flesh, did he approach the fulfillment of his goal to leave this distinction and all its Cartesian corollaries behind once and for all. If we want to derive from his work an approach to architecture that doesn't recapitulate these Cartesian assumptions, that instead seeks to understand architectural practice and experience as important ways in which we belong to the world, then it is to his later philosophy that we should turn.

In this essay I want to emphasize in particular that our mode of engaging with the world, in Merleau-Ponty's later writings, can be understood as one of *participation*, as I argue in the first section.

In considering how this principle might apply to architectural theory in practice, I turn to Heinrich Wölfflin, whose "Prolegomena to a Psychology of Architecture" suggests a way of thinking about architecture in participatory terms. I conclude with a few remarks about how these ideas may be applied to the contemporary world of architectural theory and practice.

DRAWING OUT THE THEME OF PARTICIPATION IN MERLEAU-PONTY'S LATER PHILOSOPHY

It is a bit ironic that vision figures so prominently, even in the very titles of two of Merleau-Ponty's last works —*The Visible and the Invisible* and "Eye and Mind"—considering that in these writings he makes a radical departure from the ocular-centrism that has for so long characterized the Western philosophical tradition. In Merleau-Ponty's use, though, vision functions as a synecdoche for sensing in general. In the ontology of the flesh, the visual and the tactile are bound up in a general sensing which is embedded in the "flesh of the world," the term Merleau-Ponty uses to signify that element in which sensing and sensible, subject and object, occur together, wherein "between the seeing and the seen, between touching and the touched, between one eye and the other, between hand and hand, a blending of some sort takes place – then the spark is lit between sensing and sensible, lighting the fire that will not stop burning."[2] Indeed, the tactile can be taken as primary insofar as it is by means of the tactile that the embeddedness of vision in the world is explicated. The visible "envelops, palpates, espouses the visible things."[3] Merleau-Ponty asks:

> *What is this prepossession of the visible, this art of interrogating it according to its own wishes, this inspired exegesis? We would perhaps find the answer in the tactile palpation where the questioner and the questioned are closer, and of which, after all, the palpation of the eye is a remarkable variant. …*
>
> *[B]etween my movements and what I touch, there must exist some relationship by principle, some kinship, according to which they are not only, like the pseudopods of the amoeba, vague and ephemeral deformations of the corporeal space, but the initiation to and opening upon a tactile world. This can happen only if my hand, while it is felt from within, is also accessible from without, itself tangible, for my other hand, for example, if it takes its place among the things it touches, is in a sense one of them, opens finally upon a tangible world of which it is also a part.[4]*

Compared to vision, the immediacy and density of contact with things through touch better reveals the common dimension of the sensing and the sensed. For the hand that touches is manifestly a thing in the world – a thing we can see, and indeed a thing we can touch (with the other hand). It meets resistance when it slaps against the table in the same way that

the ball meets resistance when it lands in the palm.[5] This commonality of touching and touched – their mutual embeddedness in the place of contact – is what makes it possible for the tactile world to open up to sensing. This phenomenon, in fact, is enough for us to overthrow our naturalistic idea of the thing as object, as essentially separate from ourselves, since we find ourselves suddenly *among* the world of objects, and this, as he says elsewhere, "results in an ontological rehabilitation of the sensible."[6] This is the crux of Merleau-Ponty's later ontology – or not crux but what he terms *chiasm*: the flesh of the world finds expression in both sensing and sensible as two sides of the same coin. While there is a gap (he uses the term *écart*) between these two sides, they are nonetheless characterized by "overlapping or encroachment, so that we may say that the things pass into us, as well as we into the things."[7] It is a relation of intertwining, such that there is not an ontological separation between the self and the world, but an emergence of self from the world (and of the world from self). As he says in a working note to *The Visible and the Invisible* with the header "The chiasm," "A relation to Being is needed that would form itself *within Being*."[8] The experience of tactility is the best example of this relation because it most clearly depends on our moving about within the world, discovering its resistances and textures through grasping, stroking, or palpating actions, and providing resistances of our own through our acts of touch. Given the nature of this bodily engagement with the world, it is very difficult to imagine that we simply *represent* the world through touch, or that a world of objects is translated by touch into a tactile representation.

Only once we see this do we see that vision and the visible operate according to the same principle; that, in fact, "the palpation of the eye is a remarkable variant" of the tactile encounter with things, and vision does in fact participate in the sensible world as surely as does touch. For at

> ❝ IN THE ONTOLOGY OF THE FLESH, THE VISUAL AND THE TACTILE ARE BOUND UP IN A GENERAL SENSING WHICH IS EMBEDDED IN THE 'FLESH OF THE WORLD' ❞

a fundamental level, as the example of tactility demonstrates, this is just what it is to sense: to make contact with the world, to be among things rather than before them. After all, I am visible as a seeing thing, even if by physiological circumstance I am not directly visible as a seeing thing to myself; as Merleau-Ponty notes, "[i]t is a marvel too little noticed that every movement of my eyes—even more, every displacement of my body —has its place in the same visible universe that I itemize and explore with them."[9] Just as it is only by belonging to the world of touchable things that the hand is able to feel, so the eyes can only see by virtue of their being within a visible world.

So we see that this sort of belonging is characteristic of sensing in general; that the sensible world is open to us as sensing beings because of our chiasmic relation to it from within—an active participation, a movement that always takes us beyond ourselves in the incessant palpation of our surroundings. And, as actions are carried out by our whole moving, sensing body, rather than merely any isolated sense, the unity of the body is entailed in any sensory experience. The senses interpolate each other, and operate according to each other's modes. Thus we *see* the tactile qualities and *feel* the visible qualities of things; or as Merleau-Ponty puts it "there is encroachment, infringement, not only between the touched and the touching, but also between the tangible and the visible, which is encrusted in it, as, conversely, the tangible itself is not a nothingness of visibility, is not without visual existence."[10] The chiasm, in which sensing and sensible are intertwined, also allows for the intertwining of the senses with each other. As he notes elsewhere, "Cezanne said that one could see the velvetiness, the hardness, the softness, and even the odor of objects. My perception is therefore not a sum of visual, tactile and audible givens: I perceive in a total way with my whole being; I grasp a unique structure of the thing, a unique way of being, which speaks to all my senses at once."[11]

To "see," then, is to be intertwined through all our senses with the world around us. Vision therefore does not involve rendering a picture or representation of the world, which would entail standing outside of it, at a distance. Merleau-Ponty takes Descartes' *Dioptrics* as paradigmatic of "thought that wants no longer to abide in the visible and so decides to reconstruct it according to a model-in-thought."[12] On the Cartesian view, there is a separation between "the thing itself" outside us and that which occurs for the mind, "that other thing which is only reflected light rays and which happens to have an ordered correspondence with the real thing."[13] Such a conception leads Descartes to hold outline and form as most essential in engravings, for they "present the object by its outside, or

its envelope" in contrast to which coloring is merely incidental decoration.[14]

But we don't perceive the world from the outside, we perceive it—and can only perceive it—by participating in it. In being "[i]mmersed in the visible by his body, itself visible, the see-er does not appropriate what he sees; he merely approaches it by looking, he opens onto the world."[15] In contrast to Cartesian representationalism, "I do not see [space] according to its exterior envelope; I live it from the inside."[16] For the painting that moves us is not the one that most accurately renders the form of the object, but that which binds us with the things of the world, in which the world has been allowed to express itself through the expressive body of the painter. Merleau-Ponty quotes Klee, who says of artistic expression, "A certain fire wills to live; it wakes. Working its way along the hand's conductor, it reaches the canvas and invades it; then, a leaping spark, it arcs the gap in the circle it was to trace: the return to the eye, and beyond."[17] Being expresses itself in a gesture that ties together the individual and the world such that "it is impossible to say that here nature ends and the human being or expression begins."[18] It is in the resonances that leap from the world to inhabit the artist, course through her and emerge back into the world again, that artistic expression is achieved. Though the thought is inspired by painting, the principle applies to experience generally: it is through chiasmic participation in the world through moving acts of perception and gestures of expression, that meaningful inhabitation is accomplished.

"WE SEE THE TACTILE QUALITIES AND FEEL THE VISIBLE QUALITIES OF THINGS"

HEINRICH WÖLFFLIN AND ARCHITECTURE AS PARTICIPATION IN THE WORLD

If we don't presuppose, as so much of Western thought has, a representationalism that places the subject and the world in ontological opposition to each other, and instead start from the

Merleau-Pontian perspective that, as fleshy beings, we are part of the world and belong to it, what will be the consequences for how we conceive the built environment? Rachel McCann, in applying the lessons of Merleau-Ponty's later philosophy, speaks of architecture as a "carnal echo," which emphasizes that the power of an architectural work emerges from the intertwining of human beings with their surroundings.[19] We can see in the analysis by the 19th century art historian Heinrich Wölfflin that, in fact, traditional Western architecture has been motivated, consciously or not, by a logic of carnality.

In "Prolegomena to a Psychology of Architecture," Wölfflin argued that the forms that had defined traditional architecture since classical times reflected the ways in which we relate to the world as embodied beings, especially through what we would now call a proprioceptive sense. What had sometimes been reduced, in Wölfflin's estimation, to a question of being "pleasing to the eye," was in fact a question of how we relate to structures as motile upright creatures. As he wrote, "physical forms possess a character only because we ourselves possess a body. If we were purely visual beings, we would always be denied an aesthetic judgment of the physical world. But as human beings with a body that teaches us the nature of gravity, contraction, strength, and so on, we gather the experience that enables us to identify with the conditions of other forms."[20]

Wölfflin is giving expression here to an idea that is consonant with the fact that we do not stand before the world as cognizing observers, but belong to it as participants. For our manner of understanding structures is not purely conceptual; rather, it proceeds from our own experience as fleshy beings with our own mass and weight. As he writes, "we read our own image into all phenomena. We expect everything to possess what we know to be the conditions of our own well-being."[21] We understand the physical world in terms of the categories we share with it; so, for instance, we "have carried loads and experienced pressure and counterpressure, we have collapsed to the ground when we no longer had the strength to resist the downward pull of our own bodies, and that is why we can appreciate the noble serenity of a column and understand the tendency of all matter to spread out formlessly on the ground."[22]

This natural experience of weight, of the downward pull that roots us and that is both condition and constraint for our upright, vertical postures, is expressed in traditional architecture not just in the column, but also, for instance, in the use of rustication at the lower portions of buildings. By emphasizing the mass of materials, rustication produces a sense of bottom-heavy stability, a sense that is not just established visually,

but proprioceptively, involving our own sense of balance, and a sense of movement as well. Similarly, arches over doors and windows discharge the weight of materials around the apertures so that they protect movement (entrance and egress of our bodies, or even just of our line of sight) without being oppressive, while elements conveying a freer sense of movement, expressiveness, and even whimsy are typical of the upper portions of buildings built in traditional Western styles. This logic is expressed in Louis Sullivan's prescriptions for office building design, for instance, which Kent Bloomer describes as "an expression of taut firmness at the bottom, an expression of efflorescence and ornament at the top," allowing the building as a whole to express an "upward awakening."[23]

For Wölfflin, "[o]ur own bodily organization is the form through which we apprehend everything physical."[24] This apprehension, he claims, is a sort of empathy, and it is self-evident in our relations to others: children can't see someone cry without bursting into tears themselves; people adopt the expressions of strangers around them; a person who is hoarse speaks and we clear our own throats.[25] But it extends as well to our interactions with objects, structures, and everything else in our world as a general characteristic of our experience. Hence, for instance, an architectural asymmetry "is often experienced as physical pain, as if a limb were missing or injured."[26]

There is thus an anthropomorphism that is essential to the meaning of structural forms – an anthropomorphism that is present whether we will it to be there or not.[27] We read the relation of height to width in a building, for instance, as a relation between a sense of ascent and repose. This kinesthetic sense in turn connotes a whole personality: an upright orientation is vital, active, dignified. A horizontally-oriented building, on the other hand, may connote restfulness or calm (or

" THERE IS THUS AN ANTHROPOMORPHISM THAT IS ESSENTIAL TO THE MEANING OF STRUCTURAL FORMS – AN ANTHROPOMORPHISM THAT IS PRESENT WHETHER WE WILL IT TO BE THERE OR NOT "

perhaps inertia and sloth – and whether the former sense is evoked or the latter we might chalk up to the quality of the design). The perfect square, meanwhile, is distinctive for lacking a clear anthropomorphic orientation: it "is called bulky, heavy, contented, plain, good-natured, stupid… We can not tell if the body is reclining or standing."[28]

Think of what it means, in this light, to say that a building "faces" the street, or that we stand at the "foot" of the stairs leading up to the entrance, or that, as Juhani Pallasmaa says, "[t]he door handle is the handshake of the building."[29] Structures lend themselves to these metaphors because they reflect us back upon ourselves through a close and profound resonance. A door or window that has a vertical orientation, for instance, frames the upright form of the human body, an effect that may be emphasized through the use of arches or transom windows that extend and emphasize headspace: every aperture is a kind of potential aedicule. The picture windows that became popular in the postwar period, on the other hand, suggest a supine form, and thus bear a sensation of inertness. Or think again of how the freest movement of energies—the rhythmic and organic character of foliated ornamentation, for instance—are natural to the upper portions of buildings in traditional architecture, a reflection of the fact that, as Wölfflin points out, the most expressive part of the human body is the head.[30] If, on the other hand, a design is indifferent with regard to this anthropomorphizing tendency, we may read it as "turning its back on us," seeming "cold" or "lifeless," being orientationally "indecisive," as the form of the square is for Wölfflin; that is to say, we imbue the meaning of structures with human characteristics, even if they are only notable for their absence. Whatever these characteristics might be, they solicit us to respond in an embodied way, much like a person who engages us in a conversation, with their particular tone and body language and so forth. The question of whether a structure solicits a disposition in us that enhances our sense of bodily well-being is the question of whether that structure is *dignifying*.

We can reflect again on the flesh of the world from the Merleau-Pontian perspective. Consider the flesh of buildings: in their weighty mass, their anthropomorphic form, and not least their function as places of human inhabitation, they are chiasmically intertwined with our own flesh. They are organic in this sense, and organic in this specifically human way: as products of thought and language (which are themselves expressions of bodily capacities, from the Merleau-Pontian perspective), they express human ideas, the carnal existence of those ideas made manifest in the material world, and made manifest precisely for the sake of our

own inhabitation in the world. For this reason, the flesh of architecture perhaps gives clearest expression to what it means to belong to the world, to participate in it, to continue into it and to be a continuation of it.

The architect Peter Zumthor describes architecture as "a kind of anatomy... Really, I mean the word <body> quite literally. It's like our own bodies with their anatomy and things we can't see and skin covering us— that's what architecture means to me and that's how I try to think about it. As a bodily mass, a membrane, a fabric, a kind of covering, cloth, velvet, silk, all around me. The body! Not the idea of the body – the body itself! A body that can touch me."[31] Zumthor conceives of architecture as an extension of our bodily organization into the world. (Figure 1) But architecture is also the manner in which the world draws us to inhabit it. And in this intertwining of body and world is the possibility of a certain kind of expression, an elevation of the experience of inhabitation as such.
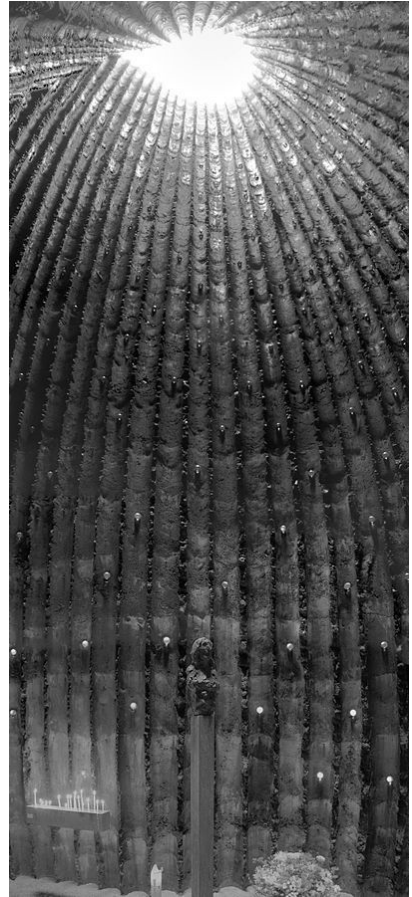
FIGURE 1: WACHENDORF FELDKAPELLE INTERIOR, BY PETER ZUMTHOR

CONCLUDING REMARKS

The chiasm, Merleau-Ponty says, is "an exchange between me and the world, between the phenomenal body and the 'objective' body, between the perceiving and the perceived,"[32] and the flesh is the "element"[33] in which the chiasmic intertwining between the body and the world takes place. Such an ontological perspective lends credence to Wölfflin's analysis of the bodily logic of traditional Western architecture: if our bodies participate in the world from within, rather than across the distance that would separate an ontologically distinct subject and

object, then it would make sense to understand architecture – the practice of providing the means of inhabitation for human bodies – as expressing the "basic conditions of organic life;"[34] that is, as being organized according to the same principles as those by which our bodily experience is organized. Moreover, when Wölfflin's treatment of architecture is cast in terms of Merleau-Ponty's later ontology (a philosophical project which, of course, he antedates by more than half a century), it can help us to conceive just what it would mean to think about – and *do* – architecture from such an ontological orientation.

This orientation can help to diagnose a particular peril of contemporary architectural practice: the emphasis on the conceptual over the concretely material. Pallasmaa has argued that over the last century, architecture has increasingly become "an art form of instant visual image."*35* In adopting this purely visual disposition, we are rendering our structures "repulsively flat, sharp-edged, immaterial, unreal."[36] This disposition is expressed especially in a commitment to abstract form, an uncanny echo of the Cartesian "model-in-thought" that Merleau-Ponty criticizes.[37] The over-emphasis on the visual, absent a synesthetic engagement with the other senses, is emblematic of a dualistic separation between the object outside of us and our mental experience of that object. What leads Descartes to regard outline and form as the most essential elements in engravings also leads architects toward the supremacy of the purely visual.

Consider, as an example of the trend, Rafael Viñoly's comment that his recent prominent addition to the New York skyline, 432 Park Avenue, (Figure 2) is based on "the purest geometric form: the square… The body of 432 Park Avenue remains abstract and radical – a pure product of the grid."[38] The elevation of geometrical abstraction as an aesthetic ideal stands in telling contrast to Wölfflin's characterization of the square as "bulky, heavy, contented, plain, good-natured, stupid." What appeals to Viñoly from a perspective of intellectual abstraction is indecisive and "stupid" when considered from a perspective of embodied engagement.

This tendency is exacerbated by something Loureiro has pointed out: that the technologies employed in architectural design have increasingly subsumed the creative and poetic craft of the architect in such a way as to elevate the visual image of the architectural work above the built work itself. "Now," he writes, "it is the picture that generates the building. Photo-realistic 3D renderings… are 'models for photographs,' and not depictions of architectural ideas."[39] Meanwhile, Rob Imrie has found that discussion of the body is all but absent in architectural education, and in the thinking of many contemporary architects.[40]

But if we regard the human body as participating in the flesh of the world, and thus as intertwined with things, including architectural works which are so essential to our experience of inhabitation in the world, we will acknowledge that this intertwining occurs through all the senses, and that these senses seek out, in Wölfflin's phrase, "the conditions of our own well-being."[41] We might find the conditions for well-being in ornament, for instance, which can play such an important role in the kinesthetic sense of an "upward awakening" in a building, to use Bloomer's phrase. We might find it, as well, in the use of natural materials which integrate a haptic sense; as Pallasmaa says, "stone, brick, and wood… allow the gaze to penetrate their surfaces and… enable us to become convinced of the veracity of matter." The textures of these materials are of the natural world. They have a depth that is lacking in concrete and glass: "Natural material expresses its age and history as well as the tale of its birth and human use."[42] These materials take us beyond the visual, beyond the bird's-eye view of the tabletop architectural model and the flat forms of geometrical abstraction, into that synesthesia that characterizes our sense of belonging as participants in the world.

FIGURE 2: 432 PARK AVENUE, NEW YORK

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Of course, Wölfflin was writing in the 19th century, and could speak of the principles of Western architectural design as adhering to a generally continuous tradition going back to classical times.

But I am not sugggesting that the lesson to draw here is that architecture needs to return to its traditional forms to recoup a sense of multisensory engagement and of participation between human beings and the built environment. If the various modernisms and post-modernisms that have arisen since Wölfflin's time have tended toward obliviousness with regard to this function of architecture, by ceaselessly challenging convention they have also opened up the field to as many new architectural possibilities as can be imagined. Architects like Pallasmaa, Zumthor, Steven Holl, and many others have found in this realm of possibilities new ways of giving expression to the idea of architecture as participation in the world. As varied and heterogeneous as embodied experience is, these possibilities will surely never be exhausted.

So, finally, we might find the conditions for our well-being by asking a new range of questions. Rather than asking what a work of architecture represents, we can ask: what spirit of participation in the world does it elicit, and how does this relate to the purpose of the structure? How does it engage us through all of our senses? What ideas are expressed *through* the body? To ask such questions is to ask how architecture performs its essential function: to structure our inhabitation of the world. It is also, notably, to acknowledge an ethical dimension intrinsic to architecture. For if architecture is properly attentive to this function, then it is attentive to producing well-being for every human. There could be no more ethical a task.

ENDNOTES

1. Merleau-Ponty, Maurice. *The Visible and the Invisible,* Alphonso Lingis, trans (Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1968), 200.

2. Merleau-Ponty, Maurice. "Eye and Mind," in *The Merleau-Ponty Aesthetics Reader,* Johnson, Galen A. and Michael B. Smith, eds. (Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1993), 125.

3. Ibid., 133.

4. Merleau-Ponty, *Visible and the Invisible,* 133.

5. Perhaps we only understand the notion of resistance in things in the world because we experience it as bodies. Merleau-Ponty describes the body as an "exemplar sensible, which offers to him who inhabits it and senses it the wherewithal to sense everything that resembles himself on the outside" (Merleau-Ponty, *Visible and the Invisible,* 135). These comments suggest a kind of bodily logic which we extend or project onto the world, and by which we come to understand the world, an idea that resonates with Wölfflin's theories on architecture.

6. Merleau-Ponty, Maurice. "The Philosopher and His Shadow," in *Signs.* (Chicago: Northwestern University Press, 1964), 166-7.

7. Merleau-Ponty, *Visible and the Invisible,* 123.

8. Ibid., 215.

9. Ibid., 134.

10. Ibid.

11. Merleau-Ponty, Maurice. "The Film and the New Psychology," in *Signs,* Richard C. McCleary, trans. (Chicago: Northwestern University Press, 1964), 49-50.

12. Merleau-Ponty, "Eye and Mind," 130.

13. Ibid., 131.

14. Ibid., 133.

15. Ibid., 124.

16. Ibid., 138.

17. Ibid., 147.

18. Ibid.

19. McCann, Rachel. "Entwining the Body and the World: Architectural Design and Experience in the Light of 'Eye and Mind'," in *Intertwinings: Interdisciplinary Encounters with Merleau-Ponty,* Gail Weiss, ed. (Albany: SUNY Press, 2008), 267.

20. Wölfflin, Heinrich. "Prolegomena to a Psychology of Architecture," in *Empathy, Form, and Space: Problems in German Aesthetics 1873-1893,* Harry Francis Mallgrave and Eleftherios Ikonomou, trans. (New York: Getty Center for the History of Art and the Humanities, 1994), 151.

21. Ibid., 152.

22. Ibid., 151.

23. Bloomer, Kent. *The Nature of Ornament.* (New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 2000), 83. Ironically, the modernists' *cri de coeur* that form must follow function derives from Sullivan's declaration that "shape, form, outward expression, design, or whatever we may choose of the tall office building should in the very nature of things follow the functions of the building" (Sullivan, Louis. "The Tall Office Building Artistically Considered," in *Kindergarten Chats and Other Writings,* (New York:

Dover, 1979), 208.). Sullivan's point was that visual functionality could be *enhanced* by ornament, not that any expression that wasn't structurally necessitated ought to be suppressed.

24. Wölfflin., "Prolegomena," 157-8.

25. Ibid., 156.

26. Ibid., 155. So ubiquitous is the desire to find symmetry in things, Wölfflin observes, that in the case of that rare object that on the face of it defies symmetry – the one-handled mug – we unconsciously treat the handle as the "back" of the mug, so that a lateral symmetry is maintained (Ibid., 164).

27. This anthropomorphism extends to other objects as well, and even to geographical regions: Yi-Fu Tuan notes that cities give the impression of having a front and a back, and "[m]ost people in the United States probably regard the northeastern seaboard as the nation's front" (Tuan, Yi-Fu. *Space and Place: The Perspective of Experience*. (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1977), 42).

28. Wölfflin, "Prolegomena," 168.

29. Pallasmaa, Juhani. "An Architecture of the Seven Senses," in *Questions of Perception: Phenomenology of Architecture, Steven Holl, Juhani Pallasmaa, and Alberto Perez-Gomez*. (New York: William Stout, 2006), 33.

30. Wölfflin, "Prolegomena," 176.

31. Zumthor, Peter. *Atmospheres,* 11. Accessed July 11, 2015. http://ebookbrowsee. net/gdoc.php?id=466463785&url=982c587b925fe3103a612676616e5bd.

32. Merleau-Ponty, *Visible and the Invisible*, 215.

33. Ibid., 139.

34. Wölfflin, "Prolegomena," 160. Though Wölfflin is concerned with Western architecture, it would be interesting to apply his insights to non-Western traditions.

35. Pallasmaa, Juhani. "Hapticity and Time," *Architectural Review* 207 (2000). See also his argument in *Eyes of the Skin* (London: Academy Editions, 1996).

36. Pallasmaa, "Seven Senses," 29.

37. Merleau-Ponty, *Visible and the Invisible,* 134.

38. Garutti, Francesco. "Rafael Viñoly/432 Park Avenue/New York," *Abitare,* June 2013.

39. Loureira, Felipe Guimarães de Souza Fernandes. "The Image in Power: Vilém Flusser and the Craft of Architecture," *Architecture Philosophy* 1(2) (2015): 222.

40. Imrie, Rob. "Architects' Conceptions of the Human Body," *Environment and Planning D: Society and Space,* 21 (2003), 47-65.

41. Wölfflin, "Prolegomena," 152.

42. Pallasmaa, "Seven Senses," 29.

Book reviews

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In this book, David Wang attempts to derive a philosophy of architecture from Chinese sources. The attempt is made at a moment when revivals of old ways in China are once again discussed in academic literature (for example, Billioud and Thoraval in their *The Sage and the People: The Confucian Revival in China*, which appeared in 2015). Wang's book cannot be read as a textbook showing how to systematically apply certain Confucian or Daoist ideas to modern architecture. Instead, it should be read as a philosophical reflection on contemporary architecture delivered from a Chinese point of view. The book contains many fresh considerations and provocative ideas about how non-Western sources can challenge well-established Western architectural theories.
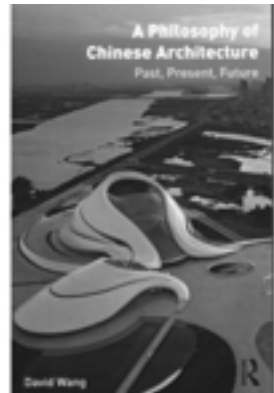
The book is divided into three parts: Past, Present, and Future. The first part explains traditional Chinese architecture and contrasts it with Western paradigms. The "Present" part is concerned with the opening of China towards the West and the influence of postmodernism. The "Future" part talks about influences like virtual reality but also about the possibility for future development of a Chinese philosophy of architecture.

On the one hand, the book is inspired by Jianfei Zhu's *Architecture of Modern China: A Historical Critique* (2009), which suggests a new "criticalist" approach to architecture. On the other hand,

Wang does not address the theme of criticality that was important not only for Zhu but also for critics of Chinese architecture like Peter Eisenman who had once declared Chinese architecture conservative and accommodating because it lacks a tradition of resistance. For Eisenman, the critical consciousness linked to European Enlightenment is missing in the Chinese tradition.[1] Wang's comparative approach has a different starting point, which is not The Enlightenment but Plato. Wang wants to go back to the roots of all differences, which is Plato's essentialism and its absence in China. In particular, Wang employs Plato's distinction between matter and spirit to contrast Chinese philosophies of architecture with Western ones. Wang makes the following four distinctions:

First, in China, "excellence of being is not always dependent on infusions of moral value into material objects" (65) because the Platonic distinctions between matter and spirit do not exist in Chinese culture. This assertion put Chinese architecture on a completely different track missed by most Western architects.

Second, while the Confucian notion of the morally perfected person is important, the value of that person is entirely internal and will not manifest itself materially. Wang puts much weight on the quotation of a certain Wan Juren (source not documented) who would have written about Confucius's notion of ren that the virtuous nature is purely internal. According to Wan Juren, Confucius does not suggest that one should "externally pursue any kind of technical perfection or realization of material end," (5, the source is referenced as Zuangzi). The essence of things is not defined philosophically (as it was by Aristotle) and, as a consequence, no values or virtues can act on material or on architecture. Instead, "in China moral instantiation [remains] in between relational social roles" and the "moral focus is on people and their social enactments." (5) Chinese architectural conceptions are fluid because there are no essences like beauty or the good but everything depends on the social situation.

Third, in the West, spirit is individual, while in Chinese architectural thought spiritual components appear as constellations. Feng shui, for example, "is about losing human individuality into the larger cosmos." What matters is not the essence, but the "positioning alone assures beneficial outcomes" (5).

Fourth, the Platonic idea of reason leads to a concept of time-dependent progress towards ideals, which does not exist in China either. Due to its Platonic idealistic heritage, Materiality held negative

connotations as it is always opposed to the spiritual and non-material truth and able to retard progress. Therefore, Western architects attempted to introduce much non-material light, a goal not found in Chinese architecture, which is most obvious in Western religious architecture. (43)

Thus, with these four contrasts, Wang draws a sharp distinction in intent between Western Platonic essentialism and Chinese relational truths. But such an orientation invites the question: without such Platonic essences, some essential foundations, will those purely "relational" truths not lead to relativism? Wang offers a few provocative conclusions. For example, what is called pastiche style in the West cannot be called such in China because "Chinese philosophy accommodates this style of affairs." (6) Logically, you cannot have a pastiche unless you have some theoretical framework that informs what is not pastiche. There is no ideology of style in China, which means that anything goes as long as it is "relationally" justified: "prior to 1840, Chinese structures were not motivated by an ideology of style." (7) After 1840, there is a proliferation of styles but no indigenous theoretical tradition to guide design thinking. This is how the Chinese could reinvent postmodern hybridity without being postmodern. The hybridity we find in China is "not a self-conscious choice" and therefore not really postmodern (124) in conception. Instead it is simply due to a lack of purified aesthetic ideologies.

This relativism is pushed one step further when Wang legitimizes an aesthetics of clutter. Since there is no aesthetic ideology of proportion and since the wen (cultural pattern) is clearly open-ended, clutter becomes a positive term. The Chinese notion of wen is an untranslatable term meaning, in different contexts "pattern," "structure," "writing," and "literature." The pattern of wen is found not only in culture but also in animals, vegetation, and cosmological phenomena. Wang applies this

in an unusual context. The clutter on Chinese sidewalks is "teeming with activity" (66) and Wang holds that wen can be understood as "a cluttered array of things." (80)

In Chinese architecture, everything moves towards a fluidity-based paradigm, which can be contrasted with the essentialist styles of Western architecture in which purified or fixed notions of style tended to be justified by essentialist concepts of styles based on (Platonic-Aristotelian) philosophies. Chinese architectural reality is fluid as it is determined by the *ying* and the *yang,* which produces no essence but just *qi. Qi* is a cosmological notion providing coherence among all things. It translates as "breath" and is used in the sense of "energy flow" in traditional Chinese culture, especially Chinese medicine and martial arts.

After all those considerations of fluidity and interrelatedness one could perhaps conclude that Chinese architecture is organic. If this is the case, Wang could have developed this line of thought further. A fluid and dynamic perception of architectural space is precisely what organic architecture, initiated by Frank Lloyd Wright and developed by generations of architects, always wanted. Organic architecture promotes harmony between all elements, natural and architectural, precisely in the way in which Wang describes the qi flowing out of the play of *ying* and *yang.* As is, those tantalizing connections between East and West go unexplored.

It is in the context of fluidity that Wang also makes interesting statements about different preservation cultures in East and West. Fluidity-based architectural paradigms will find the preservation mentality pervasive in the West too restrictive: "In a correlative world in which fluid change is fundamental, wood gives way to fire, fire to soil, in a cyclical process." (23) Is the Daoist penchant "to let things be" (67) favoring preservation or against preservation? There is no clear answer to this in Wang's book.

However, in all his elaborations on fluidity and dynamism there is a paradox. European styles change while Chinese styles have remained relatively constant until the modern era. If architecture is so fluid in China, why did styles remain constant? Instead they evolved in non-fluid Europe. Stylistic evolution in the West owes much to an artistic self-consciousness arising out of the tradition of resistance of which Eisenman spoke. Wang acknowledges the stable character of Chinese architectural styles. His answer to the paradox of fluid architectural conceptions not bound by Platonic essences that nevertheless led to stylistic stasis is to explain the idea of fluidity within an overall largely static

conception by reference to the cosmic fabric called fen, which Buddhism-informed neo-Confucianism saw as a familial-social cosmic system guaranteeing unchanging social roles. (52) Each *fen* conducts itself in correct *li*-rituals. Similarly static are the *Yingzao Fashi,* (營造法式) a 12th century manual of Building Standards, which formalized imperial construction as an expression of social hierarchy. Another reason for stasis is the imperative of moral excellence that philosophies about the *li* tended to express in the form of theoretical logic. Here Wang points to Xunzi, who believed that architecture can be subsumed under the embrace of *li*-ritual: "A benefit of this approach is that moral excellence is embedded in the theoretical logic." (143)

What seems to matter most for Wang is that there is no Platonic essence in Chinese thought able to formulate the good and the beautiful. Since nothing philosophical could be said about the goodness and beauty of material, Chinese literati never embraced architecture as a contemplative pursuit. Architecture was seen as a craft, which gave it a lot of freedom. This is possibly true. However, was the West that unfree? Ideas concerning the good and the beautiful have changed a lot over the centuries in the West. True, European culture tended to justify aesthetic truths in terms of philosophical truth (since Plato), which is not the case with the more vague Buddhist-Confucian prescriptions. At the same time, this lack of philosophical back-up might be the reason why, as Wang points out, modern Chinese architecture has not yet found its own vocabulary. (123)

I want to conclude by returning to the concept of the organic. Jianfei Zhu's "relational critique" seems to point more consistently to the idea of an organic whole. Wang also mentions Liu Xiaohu from Wuhan who uses terms like *feng shui* and *xiao* (filial peity) in organic contexts (143). The Hangzhounese architect Wang Shu is also often

mentioned as a protagonist of the "fluency" inherent in Chinese architectural culture. Would a real alternative architectural thinking moving beyond Platonism but incorporating "criticality" with the organic not be the next step in this search for a philosophy of Chinese architecture? Wang does not take this step. He derives a critique of the Western tradition from Chinese sources. However, calling this a "a Chinese philosophy of architecture" seems to be too ambitious. An aesthetics of clutter and fluidity-based paradigms can inspire interesting critiques but it will take more work to develop those critiques into real philosophies.

ENDNOTES

1. Peter. Eisenman, "Critical Architecture in a Geopolitical World" in Cynthia Davidson and Ismail Serageldin (eds). *Architecture Beyond Architecture: Creativity and Social Transformations in Islamic Cultures.* London: Academy Editions, 1995.

Thinking like a Mall: Environmental Philosophy After the End of Nature
Steven Vogel
Boston: MIT Press, 2016.
Paperback: $24
reviewed by Tom Spector

Steven Vogel agrees with what Warwick Fox called attention to two decades ago, a view which I believe all we architecture-philosophy types share: that an environmental ethic is both incomplete and of little effect without a robust account of the human-made environment incorporated into it. *Thinking Like a Mall* attempts such an account, not so much by describing the relationship between the built and self-determining environments as by dismantling the divide between them. Vogel takes his title from Aldo Leopold's treatise "Thinking Like a Mountain," in which Leopold describes his personal journey out of an ego-centric view of nature to one understood in more relational terms. If Vogel can make the case that that a shopping mall (that much unloved building type) is no less and no more natural than Leopold's mountain, then he can well extend the argument to include all built environments. While he makes progress on these fronts, we may yet hesitate to agree he has

laid the problem to rest.

Vogel argues that mainstream environmental ethics has tried to create a sense of separation between humanity and nature to justify its prescriptions. "What ends nature is nothing other than the human touch, a touch that, rather Midas-like, has the uncanny ability to transform the natural into something outside of nature." (11) This divide creates an insoluble contradiction for environmental ethics in its current formulations. It seems that either we think of nature as everything that exists by and for itself without the interference of humans, or else we make room for a larger conception of nature that also includes what humans do as being part of nature. But here's the problem: if we consider humans as part of nature, then there's no reason to consider, say, hydroelectric dams as any more unnatural than beaver dams and cities are no more or less than the habitats we create that are most natural for us. But if we leave human activity out of the equation, then it becomes problematic to find untouched nature, and to determine how far back we have to go before the influence of mankind spoiled it. After all, it appears highly likely that humans caused the extinction of the wooly mammoth in Pleistocene times.

Environmentalists have avoided this contradiction by trading on an equivocation. They use "nature" to mean "wild, untouched and self-determining" when it suits them, but then they make an about-face and insist that humans are part of nature when it comes time to formulate an action plan. He sees an "odd inconsistency" if the nature we are called on to preserve is nonhuman nature. The environmentalists who worry about the destruction of nature also believe that "humans need to learn to live more in accordance with nature."(11) Human anthropocentrism, the unwillingness to accept that
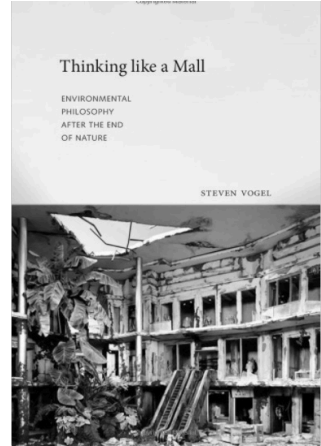
we should live more within the natural order of things rather than seek to transform them more to our liking, is the source of the problem. "But if the production of a toaster or the changing of a temperature or the restoring of a prairie involves the transformation of nature into something that is no longer natural, then it is not at all clear that humans are embedded in nature."(12) Here is the crux of the contradiction: If human actions are outside nature, then what could it possibly mean to advocate that we live more in tune with nature? Conversely, if we humans are in fact part of nature, then so are our buildings—and this leaves the environmentalists without a cause. There is no basis for bemoaning technology.

Some Environmentalists would have it that the value of untouched nature is its independence. Others, its diversity or richness. Therefore, we have an obligation to help preserve its diversity. But how do we get from this definition to an obligation? What if we try to assert that there is something wrong with human-created global warming that extends beyond its effect on other humans and into its effect on the natural order of things? We could say, "yes, but its going to be very destructive," but in the larger sense, this assertion is simply untrue. It will be just as productive as it is destructive. So we could amend that statement and say that it will be very disruptive, which is certainly true, but disruption is itself entirely natural and goes on all the time out in nature. So we could amend it still more and say that it will be disruptive at a speed and scale rarely found in nature, and that is also certainly true, but then that is not always the case either—nature can be astoundingly disruptive- and in short order: Every time a volcano blows, for example, or a 100-year drought occurs. So, if there's nothing we are doing or causing that nature doesn't already, then where is the foul?

Thus, Vogel thinks we do well to abandon the word "nature" altogether as a source of guidance for an environmental ethic. But he notes one last way the word nature is used, and this is why environmentalists have been resistant to abandoning it: it is often used normatively, natural is associated with what's right, and unnatural is associated with what's wrong. But taking nature as a guide for right and wrong human action is going to lead to some pretty odd results. Think of what a spider does with its prey. So, he says, trying to act more 'naturally' in this sense scarcely seems like a good idea.

Vogel concludes that Nature is a useless concept, not only because there seems to be so little of it remaining, not only because we cannot seem to decide whether we are part of it or not, but also because it

provides no moral guidance—only circularity. It becomes something more like a religion based in a set of unprovable assumptions and less like a set of rational reasons underlying prescriptions for how we should act. He wants to drop nature, and adopt "environment," which includes the built environment, into an environmental philosophy. Thus, if we want to ground an environmental ethic, it will have to be that certain actions and products are bad or good for us humans—and we will just have to bring the rest of nature along with us. It is logically impossible to protect nature's independence from us. All environment—shopping malls as well as the Amazon river basin are equally potentially capable of moral consideration.

Part of my hesitation in fully embracing this line of thought lies in how Vogel analyzes the concept of nature: much like a blender analyzes an avocado. You hate to congratulate him for liquifying a perfectly useful idea (within its limits) into something unrecognizable. Most any concept can be found to contain contradictions and irrationalities when pushed to its limits, but this should not cause us to abstain from the entire notion— which is what Vogel wants us to do. His point that environmentalists conveniently equivocate is well taken, but should that not be a reason to demand clarity from them and not necessarily a reason to abandon the term "nature"? I still think there is a commonsense meaningfulness to being in touch with or alienated from nature that finds expression in such useful antidotes as the Boy Scouts, the National Parks, treks into wilderness, dismay when native species are overrun by invaders, the desire to clean up roadside trash, immense sadness at the barrenness caused by coral bleaching, and so many more instances. Are we really supposed to give up on the idea that getting to appreciate what goes on outside of human purposes provides a source of moral import even if not a source of moral guidance?

Where I really want to take issue, however, comes in the last chapters, where he reduces environmental ethics to democratic politics. He says that since mountains and wolves cannot speak for themselves, then only humans in dialogue can speak up for them. This idea seems to leave no point of triangulation from which to critique what those humans in dialogue decide for the wolves. In fact, I find this surprisingly naive— philosophically as well as socially. It almost seems a desperate move. Apart from this disappointment, however, he does quite a nice job analyzing the tragedy of the commons in relation to global warming. He argues that the problem is not that any individual's contribution to the problem is negligible, and therefore futile to hold accountable, but rather it is the lack of mechanisms by which individuals can band together to act for the common good that lead to tragic results. As I was reading this section, I realized that the tragedy of the commons just is the state of nature.

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Does the paper acknowledge existing scholarship in philosophy and architecture respectively?

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Is philosophy engaged directly?
Is there an argument?
Is there analysis of the claims made?
Is the logic of the argument presented explicitly?
Are the paper's arguments valid and sound?

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Is architecture's relevant history/contemporary situation acknowledged?
Is architecture's history/contemporary situation dealt with accurately?

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