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# Building Translating Thinking

Investigations in Philosophers' Thoughts on Architecture

by

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A thesis submitted in fulfilment of the requirements for the  
degree of Doctor of Philosophy in Architecture,  
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## Abstract

This doctoral thesis investigates thoughts on architecture occurring within the field of contemporary philosophy by analysing books and articles written by philosophers on the subject of architecture. The prime example of this is Daniel Payot's book *Le philosophe et l'architecte* (The Philosopher and the Architect) and several chapters from this work are here translated into English for the first time. The proposition maintained is that architecture has a long standing history as a topic within philosophy but even though many of today's architects have a deep affinity for contemporary philosophy this interest in philosophy is often confused by architects with their own design philosophies that tend to be sophistic and rhetorical uses of philosophy. This proposition has required the translation of several articles that make explicit the difference between the "architecture of the philosopher" and the "philosophy of the architect." Also included are two previously published writings that relate directly to this proposition. The method used is exegetic and text based; the investigation and interpretation of written works that are currently available. The aim here is to avoid all idle speculations on the possibility of a philosophical discussion on architecture taking place in the future, and instead engage with existing discussions already taking place among thinkers from around the world today. The question is finally asked – what use is philosophy to architects? Many answers are tried out, including the capability approach of Amartya Sen and Roberto Mangabeira Unger's concept of negative capability. Finally it is concluded that philosophy is worthless to architects, but like other things that are beyond price this priceless gift is needed more than ever due to the soulless expansion of the market into every aspect of human life. Philosophy gives direction to our lives and meaning to architecture, but it is not something that should be expected to have a measurable outcome.



## Acknowledgements

I thank my supervisor Dr Michael Linzey for the patience and wisdom he showed at each meeting we shared. I thank Daniel Payot for graciously allowing me to translate and publish his essay “The Judgement of Architecture” for the journal *Interstices* in 2007. I thank also the editors Ross Jenner, Tina Engels-Schwarzpaul and Julia Gatley for allowing me to include two of my published articles from *Interstices* and *Cultural Crossroads: Proceedings of the 26<sup>th</sup> International SAHANZ Conference*. I thank all the students in the History and Theory of Architecture and Urbanism courses I taught at Auckland University between 2004 and 2010, who everyday challenged me to teach architectural history and theory in new and more interesting ways. This thesis would not have been attempted without the generous help the Trustees of the William Chick Doctoral Scholarship who award me their scholarship. My wife Elizabeth is in everything I do my greatest inspiration and supporter on more levels than I know. I dedicate this thesis to the loving memory of my mother Shirley Adams who passed away during the course of its writing.



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Figure 1. Frontispiece: Drawing by Isabella Adams after Raphael's School of Athens, highlighting the young man ascending the stairs.



The building is the actor for whom architecture is the text.

Jean-Christophe Bailly, *La Ville à l'oeuvre*



# Introduction

The proposition maintained by this thesis is that the philosophy of architecture has a long standing and legitimate place within the field of philosophy, but has until now been made obscure or invisible to the architectural world because it has not been clearly distinguished from the philosophy of architects. The first task must therefore be to clearly distinguish the characteristics of the legitimate philosophy of architecture from the philosophy of architects. A brief explanation on the famous image that forms the frontispiece to this thesis will help in this important first task.

## The Necessity of Consulting Many Philosophers

The frontispiece for this thesis owes its inspiration to the conclusion of French philosopher Benoît Goetz's book on architecture and philosophy.<sup>1</sup> There Goetz introduces an intriguing image of his project by means of a new reading of a famous Renaissance image. Goetz locates and identifies with the young man climbing the steps in the centre right of Raphael's *School of Athens*, a fresco painted on the wall of the Stanza della Segnatura in the Papal Apartments of the Vatican in Rome. Raphael left no programme notes for this most famous of Renaissance images but there has never been a shortage of attempts to identify all the philosophers represented in it. Surprisingly, this particular young man in Raphael's fresco has almost never been identified, until now, perhaps because he has his back turned to us, or because he seems rather unsure of himself by retreating up the stairs when the general

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1. Benoît Goetz, *La Dislocation: Architecture et philosophie* (Paris: Les Éditions de la Passion, 2001), p.182.



orientation of all the others is towards the viewer as if in a victory procession under the triumphal arches of the classical architecture.<sup>2</sup> Goetz seizes on this lack of attribution and identifies with the young man. He is, like Goetz himself, a student of the philosophy of architecture researching the meaning of dwelling. “Just as the young man who hesitantly climbs the steps in Raphael’s *School of Athens*,” Goetz proposes, so, “we must search for the meaning of dwelling by consulting several teachers.”<sup>3</sup> Goetz uses this new iconographic identification to warn us against seeking the answers from just one master thinker. This is because, Goetz believes, of the heterogeneity and instability of dwelling, and because thinking must always take place at specific times and at particular locations, each thinker dwells in a different way and so will provide very different answers to question of what dwelling means.

So for instance, ascending a more contemporary set of stairs, we might approach the great thinkers of the twentieth century with the same question of dwelling. For Heidegger dwelling, or *wohnen* in his native German, has linguistic roots in the Old High German *Buan*, to build, and so dwelling and building have the same root meaning which also leads to *ich bin*: I am, I dwell, and this leads to *bis*: be and ultimately to *Sein*: Being, the key term of ontology, a perennial concern for Western philosophy from the time of the Greeks and the major theme of Heidegger’s famous book *Being and Time*.<sup>4</sup> But following Goetz’s advice we must not stop there because his near contemporary, the Spanish philosopher José Ortega y Gasset, was equally fascinated by the etymological roots of the word *wohnen*, but instead he connected it with equal validity but with very different results, to *wahn*: the insecure or awaited thing, and

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2. In Daniel Orth Bell’s article “New Identifications in Raphael’s School of Athens”, *Art Bulletin*: LXXVI (December 1995), pp. 639 - 646, Bell flies in the face of tradition by identifying the young man ascending the stairs, along with the figure to his right who points him towards the central figures at the top of the stairs. According to Bell these two are Appollodurus and Crito. Bell comes to this conclusion because he is convinced that the reclining figure on the stairs is Socrates (this figure is usually identified as being Diogenes the Cynic due to the cup at his side) so it makes perfect sense that the young man is flinging his hands down towards Socrates in a gesture of sympathy and the other one is directing him to Aristotle who is holding a book clearly labelled “Etica”. According to Plato, Socrates students Appollodurus and Crito were present at Socrates execution and they were the ones who were most deeply affected by the injustice.

3. Benoît Goetz. *La Dislocation*, p. 182.

4. Martin Heidegger, “Building Dwelling Thinking” in Heidegger, *Poetry, Language, Thought* trans. Albert Hofstadter (New York: HarperCollins, 2001), pp. 143 - 159 and *Being and Time*, trans. John Macquarrie and Edward Robinson (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1990).

to *gewinnen*: hope, striving and desire.<sup>5</sup> Man's dwelling is not linked to Being but to an endless striving for the essential thing that is forever missing. So these two great thinkers are using the etymology of the same word *wohnen* to say quite opposite things, one says before we can build we must rediscover an original dwelling on the earth that is happily located within the fourfold of earth, sky, mortals and gods, while the other says *bauen* and *wohnen* do not mean being at all, they mean striving and desire, because mankind is born naked and defenceless and so finds the earth to be originally uninhabitable, *unbewohnbar*, and responds by building shelters at all corners of the planet, but these dwellings will never disguise the fact that man, who emerged from out of nature, is forever foreign to nature and by necessity has need to radically modify nature. This is in contrast to all other species that are at home in nature, at least in those particular locations that provide suitable climates and habitats for their innate set of biological requirements. And we might further pose the question of dwelling to another near contemporary, the French philosopher Emmanuel Levinas.<sup>6</sup> He would argue that for the question of dwelling the home occupies a fundamental but invisible place. The home is the inaugural event of withdrawal from the immediacy of the natural world and is thereafter implicated in any contemplation of the world, thereafter man goes forth into the outside from a starting point of intimacy and inwardness. Dwelling, human existence, presupposes the intimacy of the home as a withdrawal from the immediate enjoyment of the natural world and it is only by being conscious of this withdrawal that a building can be a dwelling. Thus far he might agree with much of what Ortega proposes about the foreignness of man on the earth but Levinas adds a very important new dimension, the intimacy of the house that is the precondition of this foreignness in the world is only accomplished by the hospitable welcome of the Other, a necessary feminine alterity like "a delightful lapse in being, and the source of gentleness in itself."<sup>7</sup> In this way Levinas adds an ethical dimension of welcoming the Other that was missing in both Heidegger's and Ortega's discussions.

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5. Ortega y Gasset, José. "El Mito del Hombre Allende la Técnica" in Ortega y Gasset, *Obras Completas*, Tomo IX, 1960-1962 (Madrid: Revista de Occidente, 1965), pp. 617 - 644. [Translated as "1.6: The Myth of Man Behind Technology" in Section 1 of this thesis.]

6. Levinas, Emmanuel. "The Dwelling" in Levinas, *Totality and Infinity: An Essay on Exteriority*, trans. Alphonso Lingis (Pittsburgh: Duquesne University Press, 2002), pp. 152 - 174.

7. Ibid. p. 155.

This image of the young man addressing multiple thinkers on the question of dwelling serves as the frontispiece to this thesis and as the leitmotif that runs through it. As Daniel Charles makes clear in his *Encyclopædia Universalis* article on architecture and philosophy, just as José Ferrater Mora does in his article on philosophy and architecture, there are two quite different species of writings that can be collected under the title, “philosophy and architecture.”<sup>8</sup> There is within architecture a kind of philosophy, the philosophy of architects from Vitruvius to Gropius and beyond, and then there is within philosophy a kind of architecture, the architecture of philosophers from Plato to Hegel and beyond. This thesis is only interested in the latter category, so overlooked by architects, even when they profess a profound interest in philosophy.<sup>9</sup>

## The Philosophy of Architects

The so-called “philosophy of architects” largely consists of personal statements about an individual’s particular “design philosophy.” A good example of this is a recent book by the

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8. See Daniel Charles, “Architecture et philosophie” first of four articles under the entry “Architecture” in *Encyclopædia Universalis* (Chicago: Encyclopædia Britannica, 2011), pp. 840 - 843. [Translated as “Architecture and Philosophy” in section 1 of this thesis.] and José Ferrater Mora, “Philosophie et architecture” *Revue de Métaphysique et de Morale*: 3 (July-September 1955), pp. 251 – 263. [Translated as “Philosophy and Architecture” in section 1 of this thesis.]

9. A case in point here is Mark Wigley. His 187-page PhD and his 278-page first book both concentrate on the philosophy of Jacques Derrida for the purposes an architectural investigation, but nowhere in all this does Wigley ever discuss Derrida’s copious writings on architecture. It is not that Wigley is unaware that this particular philosopher has written a great deal on architecture, it is a conscious choice explicitly made. Wigley boldly states, “The concern here is not with Derrida’s philosophy of architecture”, see Mark Wigley, *Jacques Derrida and Architecture: The Deconstructive Possibilities of Architectural Discourse*, PhD Thesis, Auckland University, 1986, p. ii. Derrida’s writings on architecture are now collected in the book, *Adesso l’architettura*, edited by Francesco Vitale (Milan: Libti Scheiwiller, 2011). It is not an insignificant fact that the editor in this case is a philosopher and not an architect. This architectural interest in particular philosophers combined with a disinterest in what they actually say about architecture is actually not uncommon, a more recent example is Simone Brott’s book, *Architecture for a Free Subjectivity: Deleuze and Guattari at the Horizon of the Real* (Farnham, Surrey: Ashgate, 2011) which never mentions Guattari’s published articles on architecture (for these see the Bibliography below). And Branko Mitrović in *Philosophy for Architects* (New York: Princeton Architectural Press, 2011) never mentions the specific discussions on architecture that exist in the works of the philosophers he introduces for an architecture readership.

Chinese architect He Jingtang, lead designer of many of the typically bombastic and colossal public buildings now being built at amazing speed in all the major cities across China, his best known work being the China Pavilion for the 2010 Shanghai Expo.<sup>10</sup> In one of the book's essays titled "Architects' Creation Concept, Thinking and Attainment" He Jingtang mentions his "philosophy thinking", the "modern architecture creation philosophy" and China's long history of "profound cultural philosophy." One could easily mock this usage of the word philosophy as simply the peppering of a text with a term to make it sound more highbrow, to present an air of profundity to the more naïve of readers, but that would be a mistake. First of all, to do justice to He Jingtang, since his book is bilingual it is possible to see just where in the original the translator has chosen to translate into English using the word "philosophy" (*zhéxué* in Chinese). In fact in every such case He Jingtang has written the Chinese character for *lǐniàn*, usually translated as "principle", indicating a certain modesty because it implies a more general and less academic kind of thinking.<sup>11</sup> Also He Jingtang shows he is not entirely unfamiliar with genuine philosophy when in the first autobiographical essay of the book he mentions that he suffered through the dark period of the Cultural Revolution that caused him to waste the prime years of his life. Nevertheless during this time he managed to read *Dialectics, On Contradiction* and *On Practice*, the core works of Mao Zedong's philosophy.<sup>12</sup> No doubt Mao's militant dialectical philosophy has helped this architect deal with the burdens

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10. He Jingtang. *He Jingtang Architectural Design* (Guangzhou: Hua nan li gong da xue chu ban she, 2010). He Jingtang gave a lecture at the Auckland School of Architecture and Planning on 16 October 2013. He graciously answered my questions and also gifted his book to our library making it possible for me to read his writing as well as listen to him speak. He Jingtang is the director of the Architectural Academy of the South China University of Technology in Guangzhou, and as is often the case in China, he runs his very busy office, "He Jingtang Studio" as a kind of finishing school for postgraduates alongside the university.

11. Here I give credit here to my wife Elizabeth Cheng for reading the Chinese version and explaining the difference between the two words *zhéxué* and *lǐniàn*, both of which can mean philosophy.

12. Translated into English as Mao Zedong, *On Dialectical Materialism: Writings on Philosophy, 1937*, (ed.) Nick Knight (Armonk, New York: M.E. Sharpe Inc., 1990) and Mao Zedong, *On Practice and Contradiction*, introduction and commentary by Slavoj Žižek (London: Verso, 2007). Although they are written by someone who later became a communist dictator, these early works of Mao do constitute genuine philosophical writings which made important advances in the field of Marxist-Leninism. On the value of Mao's philosophy see for example the work of leading French philosopher Alain Badiou in his *Théorie de la contradiction* (Paris: Librairie François Maspero, 1972).

of the multiple contradictions facing a Chinese architect working today in a very corrupt free-market economy under a very autocratic communist rule.<sup>13</sup>

But despite this architect's knowledge of philosophy and his modesty in its usage no philosopher from the school of Athens, or from the 20<sup>th</sup> Century for that matter, would ever consider that He Jingtang's writings to be in any way philosophical, and the same could be said for the majority of architects who think and write about their "philosophy" of architecture. What we find instead in the writings of He Jingtang and other architects as well is in fact a sophisticated synthesis of aspirational goals, as a kind of utopian model of how they would like their buildings to be received by the client and by their students. So we find in his essay a *mélange* of all the concepts that are expected to be addressed by architects of public works in China today, that he labels, "the two concepts and the three features" as if to help us in case we are in need of an aid to memorize them, i.e. his students. They are the holistic concept, the sustainable development concept, and the regionalist features, the cultural features and the modernist features. All architects have to deal with and make sense of information coming from various multiple sources, each with its own traditions and vocabularies so the architect must "develop comprehensive thinking capabilities" in order to grasp the "principal contradictions and the principal aspects of the contradictions in the unity of opposites."<sup>14</sup> This actually constitutes quite a strong defence for the architect having some kind of philosophical capability, but then he glosses over all these contradictions as if complete harmony of opposites was something quite easy to achieve if we only just got down to work on it. So we have the harmony between human beings and nature, between global technology and local cultures, and between modernity and tradition, all presented as being quite achievable goals. Because all these desired concepts and features are never examined by He Jingtang, never put under the microscope of critical thinking, this *mélange* of concepts when defended by the architect simply becomes dogmatic rhetoric or worse, nothing more than public relations propaganda. In the eyes of a philosopher this would be considered sophistry because all the verbal skills learnt from philosophy, and here He Jingtang shows he has learnt much from Mao's early writings, are put to work in order to merely convince the

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13. On the many contradiction facing the Chinese architect the work of Rem Koolhaas and his students at Harvard still remains the unsurpassed reference, see Rem Koolhaas, Jeffrey Inaba, Chuihua Judy Chung and Sze Tsung Leong (eds.), *Great Leap Forward* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard Design School, 2001).

14. He Jingtang, *He Jingtang Architectural Design*, p. 27.

reader that this architect always does the most honourable and appropriate thing, and that all possible dilemmas have been resolved in his built projects.

Besides this sophistry in the use of philosophy, another common feature of the philosophy of architects is the obsessive focus on one particular thinker, just what Goetz warns us against with his new identification for the young man in Raphael's *School of Athens*. The young man is ascending the stairs to the higher level where he must consult with more than one philosopher. The examples of architectural scholars doing the contrary are many – Mark Wigley writes a book about Jacques Derrida, Adam Sharr writes a book on Heidegger, Markus Breitschmid does a PhD thesis on Nietzsche, Andrew Ballantyne is a specialist in Deleuze and Guattari, and Peg Rawes is only interested in Luce Irigaray.<sup>15</sup> In each case when the architect refers to philosophy they are referring to one master thinker they have selected as a representative of all philosophy. There are rare exceptions to this rule, such as Branko Mitrović who writes a general survey of philosophy for architects spanning from the Greeks up until Analytic philosophy, and H  l  ne Frichot who writes essays in architectural journals on various contemporary philosophers including Giorgio Agamben and Peter Sloterdijk, but they both have PhDs in philosophy as well as architectural degrees, so they are thinking and behaving more like philosophers than architects.

Why then must we consult with more than one thinker? Why can't we for the sake of time make one philosopher stand in for all the others? Goetz's answer to this has already been discussed; each thinker dwells differently and in different times and in different places, and since thought cannot exist in a vacuum their thinking about dwelling will reflect these differences too. By engaging with various thinkers this fact will soon become self-evident and so we can then avoid the trap of blindly universalising what may in fact be something quite singular and bound to a specific context. And having introduced the example of He Jingtang it can be seen just how easy it is despite the best of intentions for the philosophy of architects to degenerate into a vulgar public relations exercise. But in more general terms any genuine philosophy, its most defining feature in fact, must in a sense be a return to the beginning of philosophy and in doing so the thinker must assume they are in a sense joining in an open dialogue with all of the philosophers in history, and this is exactly what Raphael's painting at

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15. For these and many other architects who write about philosophy, see "3. Articles and Books by on Philosophy Written by Architects" in the bibliography below on p. 269.

the Vatican is depicting for us. In contrast to positivist science that accumulates, transmits and adds to knowledge in a progressive and piecemeal fashion so that a scientist is standing on the shoulders of giants (in the words of Newton), the philosopher must always return to the base of philosophy: the subjective experience of a radical doubt, the “all I know is that I know nothing” of Socrates, or the “I doubt everything except that I am doubting” of Descartes, and from this negative beginning create a positive movement towards affirmations.<sup>16</sup> You simply do not make progress in philosophy by absorbing a body of knowledge then adding something new to it in the manner of a science. And this is where architecture has a long and deep affinity to philosophy. Architecture is not simply a building science that makes progress by the progressively adding to building knowhow. Today’s architects are not more advanced in architectural terms than those of the Renaissance, the Middle Ages or Classical Greece, as any tourist who has visited the Continent will be able to confirm. Every genuine work of architecture is a return to an origin, a scraping off of the site until it is a primordial swamp and from that ground zero the first house is built again and again, and in doing so this establishes an open conversation with the entire history of architecture. That was the important discovery made by Joseph Rykwert in his book, *On Adam’s House in Paradise*, a quite philosophical work when seen in this light.<sup>17</sup>

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16. This condensed generalisation of what a genuine philosophy is comes after having read six books or chapters of books that contain the words “what is philosophy” in their titles, they are Louis Althusser, “Qu’est-ce que la philosophie?” from *Sur la reproduction* (Paris: Press Universitaires France, 1995), pp. 31 - 40, Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari, *What is Philosophy?* trans. Graham Burchell and Hugh Tomlinson (London: Verso, 1994), Pierre Hadot, *What is Ancient Philosophy?* trans. Michael Chase (Cambridge, Massachusetts: The Belknap Press, 2002), Martin Heidegger, *What is Philosophy?*, trans. William Klubach and Jean T. Wilde (New York: Twayne, 1958), José Ortega y Gasset, *What is Philosophy?* trans. Mildred Adams (New York: W. W. Norton and Company, 1960) and Bernard Stiegler, “What is Philosophy?” from *Taking Care of Youth and Generations*, trans. Stephen Barker (Stanford, California: Stanford University Press, 2010), pp. 107 - 123. I have also completed many papers in philosophy at Auckland University, notably with the renowned Heidegger and Nietzsche scholar Julian Young. But the most useful source in helping to define philosophy is Alain Badiou’s 2010 course at the European Graduate School at Saas-Fee in Switzerland on “Philosophy’s Conditions of Existence”, accessed 4 August 2012, <http://www.egs.edu/faculty/alain-badiou/videos/philosophys-conditions-of-existence/>. Peter Sloterdijk’s *The Art of Philosophy: Wisdom as Practice*, trans. Karen Margolis (New York: Columbia University Press, 2012) was also an invaluable resource.

17. Rykwert, Joseph. *On Adam’s House in Paradise: The Idea of the Primitive Hut in Architectural History* (New York: Museum of Modern Art, 1972). See also my investigation of a French reception of this work in “2.1: Benoît Goetz: A French Reader of Rykwert” on pp. 223 - 235 of this thesis.

This thesis takes this affinity between the two disciplines of philosophy and architecture as its point of departure, all the while keeping in mind that the philosophy of architects is very different from the architecture of philosophers, the latter being the primary concern of this work while the former has been mostly avoided. From the start it was clear that architectural scholars were writing on philosophical topics in ever greater numbers. The graph below of the numbers of books belonging to the category “philosophy and architecture” in three different libraries verifies this global trend.

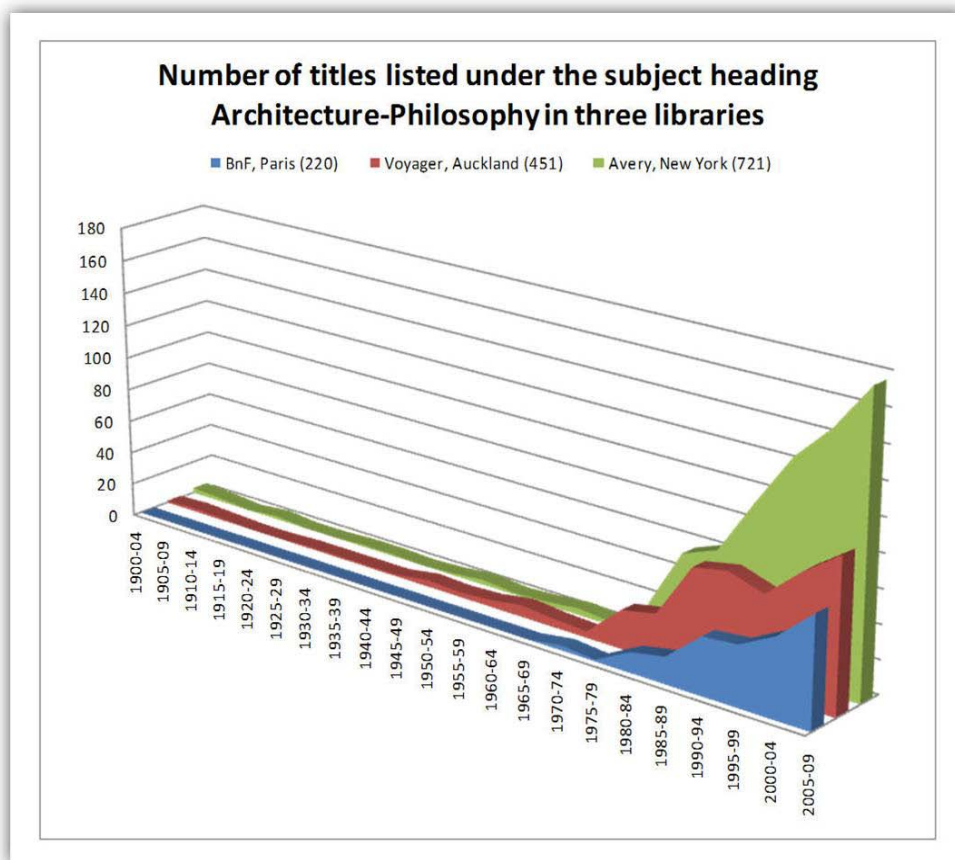


Figure 2. The rapid rise in the number of books being published annually in the subject area of “philosophy and architecture” between 1900 and 2009 in three different libraries. Made by the author in 2009.

What was quite unexpected was the large number of books and articles that have been written by philosophers on architecture in recent years.<sup>18</sup> The vast quantity of philosophical

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18. See the bibliography where there are 24 items listed under “book-length studies on architecture written by philosophers” and 36 items listed under “articles, entries in standard references, and book chapters on architecture written by philosophers.”



works on architecture available today has precluded the deep analysis that each one deserves, so in order to make this thesis achievable they are here mostly just indicated as a field for future investigations. What this thesis does do is to lay the necessary groundwork, firstly so that these works can be recognised as being a priceless gift of thought that can potentially enrich architecture as a cultural endeavour, and secondly so that they will be recognised as a separate genre from the often-tainted species of the philosophy of architects. And the best way to achieve these goals was to locate existing works that have already achieved this end, and that is why so many new translations appear in this thesis, they form a valuable propaedeutics or preliminary exercise to a future reception of all the books and articles on architecture written by philosophers listed in the bibliography.

## A Brief Note on the Need to Make and Include Translations

Since my MArch thesis also had a high proportion of content that consisted of original translation, I have already made a plea for this kind of approach in the earlier thesis. There I wrote:

Since it is not common for an architectural thesis outside of Europe to include translations a few comments are needed concerning translation. While translation is not the theme of this thesis it does form an essential tool in the defence of its proposition.... Sadly it is becoming increasingly rare for academics to investigate any research in their field other than that which is already available in their own language. This is perhaps an unnoticed side effect of the internet and the globalization of information because the lingua franca of global exchange is increasingly becoming lingua americana. A perhaps commonly-held misconception is that if a work is any good then someone else will have translated it already, therefore it is assumed to be reasonable to refer to only those works already translated. That is an assumption that must be attacked because surprisingly little gets translated into English regardless of the quality, and this partly goes to explain why it was so easy to find so many previously untranslated works for this survey.<sup>19</sup>

In the case of the current thesis, the first task in the defence of the proposition – that there is a genuine and long standing philosophy of architecture within the world of philosophy that

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19. See my earlier thesis, Tim Adams, *Heretical Rhapsodies: A Survey with Translations of Architectural Theories in France from 1982 to 2004*, March Thesis, University of Auckland, 2007, p. 4.

is quite distinct from the philosophy of architects – was to make the difference between these two categories quite clear, and the most effective way of doing this was to find published articles and books that have already done so, and since these were all written in either Spanish or French they required translation before they could be presented as evidence to English-language readers, hence the necessity of making and including these translations. In the earlier work I mentioned how translation as part of a thesis is not uncommon in Europe where due to many factors more translations are made in general. I also mentioned the common fear of translation due to the high possibility of mistranslation, that the translator is a traitor. To quote the earlier work once more:

The distrust of translation is in fact a distrust of language in general because translation merely replicates the process inherent in the nature of language itself, which is fundamentally a crossing of modalities from the inaudible to the audible, from the invisible to the visible, and from the unintelligible to the intelligible. If the uncertainty of translation makes us uncomfortable it is because it makes us painfully aware that all languages are inherently vague when they are not adequately shored up by law and enforced consensus. Without the inherent danger of vagueness between the *phōnē* and the *logos*, between the animal cry and the human speech, there would be no infancy, no knowledge, no politics and no history because they all depend on the passage between incommensurable modes of operation and the potential for disagreement that unavoidably comes with this passage.

The fear of translation is in fact also a fear of philosophy because philosophy by its very nature must embrace all languages. So when someone like Heidegger makes the declaration that German is the superior language for philosophy, he is at that moment no longer strictly speaking a philosopher but becomes a propagandist for German nationalism.<sup>20</sup> The translation between languages is in fact fundamental to the development of Western philosophy. According to Alain Badiou all genuine philosophy must have an existential aspect as well as an ontological aspect, in other words it must deal with human existence as well as search for the ultimate ground for the existence of anything, and therefore the understanding that there is an ontological difference between these two categories is also fundamental to all philosophy,

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20. Alain Badiou discusses the problem Heidegger's cultural chauvinism in relation to the openness to impure languages as an anthropological condition of philosophy in, "Philosophy's Conditions of Existence", video of a lecture given at the European Graduate School, Saas-Fee, Switzerland, 2 August 2010, accessed 4 August 2012, <http://www.egs.edu/faculty/alain-badiou/videos/philosophys-conditions-of-existence/>.

which coincidentally is Heidegger's most important contribution to philosophy.<sup>21</sup> Ontology and the question of being is undeniably a fundamental part of Western philosophy. But the problematic of "to be" – a copular verb that links the subject of a sentence to a predicate, and copular verbs exists in various forms in most languages – as a fundamental category of philosophy owes its importance in no small part to the problems caused by the attempt to translate this copular verb between languages. As anyone who tries to learn a foreign language will quickly discover, each language has very different ways of conjugating its verbs, so when for instance someone tries to translate Aristotle's use of the present participle copular verb *ōn* from Greek to another language they will need to make some compromises in their choice of terminology. Since there is no corresponding present participle for the verb "to be" in Latin, Latin translators have historically used the infinitive *esse*. All translators after this Latin choice was made now have two conjugations of the verb to work with when discussing Aristotle, *ōn* and *esse*. If we examine the chart below we can see the outline of a split in the ongoing translation of *ōn*. This has been very useful to philosophers over the centuries, particularly in the European languages, providing them with a terminology that enables them to talk about the ontological difference between existence and essence, between *seiendes* and *sein* in the German, and *étant* and *être* in the French. This is a richness in terminology that owes its origin entirely to a problem of translation. It is more obscurely translated as the difference between "being" and "Being" in English, a mere difference of capitalization that leads to difficulties in our understanding of the ontic-ontological difference so fundamental to the history of Western philosophy. In this particular case, the difficulties of translation have been a "creative mistake" that has greatly facilitated an entire branch of philosophy.<sup>22</sup>

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21. See Alain Badiou, "The Process of Philosophy", video of a lecture given at the European Graduate School, Saas-Fee, Switzerland, 2 August 2010, accessed 4 August 2012, <http://www.egs.edu/faculty/alain-badiou/videos/the-process-of-philosophy/>.

22. On the importance of creative mistakes in philosophy see Pierre Hadot, "Philosophy, Exegesis, and Creative Mistakes", in *Philosophy as a Way of life: Spiritual Exercises from Socrates to Foucault*, ed. Arnold I. Davidson (Oxford: Blackwell, 1995), pp. 71 - 77. And on the importance of the verb "to be" in philosophy see Etienne Gilson, *Being and Some Philosophers* (Toronto: The Pontifical Institute of Mediaeval Studies, 1949).

conjugation	person	Classical Greek	Latin	German	French	English
<b>Infinitive</b>		einai	<b>esse</b>	<b>sein</b>	<b>être</b>	<b>to be (Being)</b>
<b>Present tense indicative mood</b>	1st sg. 2nd sg. 3rd sg. 1st pl. 2nd pl. 3rd pl.	eimi ei esti(n) esmen este eisi(n)	sum es est sumus estis sunt	bin bist ist sind seid sind	suis es est sommes êtes sont	am art is are are are
<b>Present tense subjunctive mood</b>	1st sg. 2nd sg. 3rd sg. 1st pl. 2nd pl. 3rd pl.	ō ēis ēi ōmen ēte ōsi(n)	sim sis sit simus sitis sint	sei sei(e)st sei seien sei(e)t seien	sois	be
<b>Preterite (perfect tense) indicative mood</b>	1st sg. 2nd sg. 3rd sg. 1st pl. 2nd pl. 3rd pl.	ē(n) ēs, ēstha ēn ēmen ēste, eate ēsan, esan	fui fuisti fuit fuimus fuistis fuerunt	war warst war waren wart waren	fus, ai été	was wast was were were were
<b>Preterite (perfect tense) subjunctive mood (Optative for Greek)</b>	1st sg. 2nd sg. 3rd sg. 1st pl. 2nd pl. 3rd pl.	eiēn eiēs eiē ei(ē)men ei(ē)te eiēsan, eien	fuerim fueris fuerit fuerimus fueritis fuerint	wäre wärest wäre wären wäret wären	sois sois soit soyons soyez soient	were wert were were were were
<b>Imperative</b>		isthi	eram	sei(d)	sois	be
<b>Future</b>		ēsesthai	erō	sein	serai	(will) be
<b>Past participle</b>		ōn, ont- fēm. ousa	-----	gewesen	(avoir) été	(has) been
<b>Present participle</b>		<b>ōn</b>	-----	<b>das seiend</b>	<b>étant</b>	<b>being</b>

Figure 3. Comparison of the conjugation of the copular verb “to be” in various European languages. The red line indicates the most common choices that have been made by translators. Made by the author after consulting many online sources for the conjugation of verbs. Note that this is only a partial list of the possible conjugations of this verb in each of the languages listed.



# 1

## Introduction to the Translations

### The Production of Presence

The first translation “The Production of Presence” by Nikolaus Kuhnert, Anh-Linh Ngo, Stephan Becker and Martin Luce is a good place to start because it gives a very succinct and unusually objective overview of the current situation of the field of architectural theory. This was published in the German magazine *Archplus* in June 2006. The authors are based in Berlin so this makes them well placed to take an objective look at the global exchange in architectural ideas and to observe how certain flows of ideas between major centres can dominate then decline and sometimes even reverse tack. In particular they track the decline of European architectural theory after the brief dominance of the Italian Marxist architectural historian Manfredo Tafuri in the late 70s. This was they observe followed by the decades-long dominance of American theorists who spearheaded the so-called “linguistic turn”, as typified by Peter Eisenman. Next came the much discussed “death of theory”, which was for some time disguised by the huge success of Dutch pragmatists like Rem Koolhaas.

This leads to the current period of post-criticism represented by the American critics Robert Somol and Sarah Whiting. The current situation seems rather bleak since it is overburdened by cynicism coming from every quarter, putting into question the very possibility of any theory of architecture. They consider the German philosophers of affect, atmosphere and presence, such as Marie-Louise Angerer, Peter Sloterdijk, and Hans Ulrich Gumbrecht, as attempting to respond to this situation by making something of a retreat from linguistic speculation to the bedrock of simple bodily emotions and feelings. They conclude with the possibility of a “politics of the body” emerging from Foucault’s late writings on

biopower and governmentality. They finish by denying there ever was a death of theory, theory was instead completely absorbed into practice. This is an important piece of research because if their account of the current situation is indeed correct we could soon be experiencing the resurgence of a dominance of German thought about architecture, and given the copious and profound writings on architecture by the German philosophers Peter Sloterdijk and Gernot Böhm this seems more than likely. The only barrier to this resurgence is the slowness in the translation of these important works into English. One could speculate as to why there is such a reluctance to translate German into English, as if trying to slow down the inevitable return of the dominance of German thought in the field of architecture. For those German-speaking architects such as Peter Zumthor there is no such barrier to receiving the benefits of these new philosophical endeavours since they are already immersed in the culture from which these works are emerging. It is certainly no coincidence that Zumthor's own thoughts on architecture hinge on the currently ascending concept of atmosphere and that he is producing buildings that are regarded by many in the architectural community as being the most highly accomplished works of architecture in the world today.<sup>1</sup>

## Architecture and Philosophy

Having staked out the ground of the current situation with the first translation, the second translation "Architecture and Philosophy" by Daniel Charles will take us to the very heart of the proposition put forward by this thesis – that the philosophy of architecture has a long standing legitimacy within the sphere of philosophy and that it must be clearly distinguished from the philosophy of architects, because this has until recently tended to obscure or make invisible its reception in the architectural world, even among those architects who profess a profound interest in philosophy.<sup>2</sup> Daniel Charles' short article is in fact the

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1. Zumthor's major theoretical work is titled *Atmospheres: Architectural Environments, Surrounding Objects* (Basel: Birkhuaser, 2006) and there are no accolades that Peter Zumthor has not yet received from his peers: the Mies van der Rohe Award for European Architecture in 1999, the Pritzker Architecture Prize in 2009, and the RIBA Royal Gold Medal in 2012, just to name a few.

2. As already listed on page 4, note 9 of the general introduction above, there are many examples of architectural scholars who are deeply interested in a particular philosopher but when the same philosopher happens to write on architecture this fact often goes entirely unnoticed by the architectural scholar and is even sometimes explicitly avoided.

introductory entry under “architecture” in the *Encyclopædia Universalis*, the French equivalent to the Encyclopedia Britannica, so it can be taken as being representative of an authoritative view, fully expected to be an excellent and reliable source of reference.

Daniel Charles (1935 - 2008) was in fact a musicologist well known in France for being a champion of the American composer John Cage. One can only wonder how he got the job of writing an entry on architecture in such a venerable standard reference; nevertheless he did a fine job of it. His key source for this encyclopedia entry is naturally enough Daniel Payot’s book *Le Philosophe et l’architecte*, a work which was identified in the initial stages of this research as being the key reference for the topic of the philosophy of architecture. So Daniel Charles in effect gives us a brilliant summary of Payot’s book, selections from which will constitute the translation that follows. Daniel Charles begins by denigrating the long history of misguided attempts to assimilate architecture and philosophy, his prime example being Erwin Panofsky’s *Gothic Architecture and Scholasticism* that makes the now-familiar analogy between the Gothic cathedral and the multi-volume complete works of a medieval scholastic philosopher, otherwise known as *Summas*, as for example the *Summa Theologica* of Thomas Aquinas. Daniel Charles’s primary aim is therefore to clearly demarcate the differences between the “philosophy of architects” from the “architecture of philosophers.” He starts doing this by delving into the etymology of the word architecture with the help of the Jean-Pierre Vernant, the French specialist on ancient Greece, just as Payot does in his book. He finds that *arche* means origin, although in the context of the first Greek philosopher Anaximander it becomes associated with the concept of *apeiron*, the infinite, the primordial, the first material from which all things come, so it marks a shift away from Hesiod and the hierarchical vocabulary of myth, a shift from *monarchia* where order is maintained by a king to *isonomia* where order is immanent in the world, setting the scene for the emergence of a democracy of equals. The *arche* of architecture determines a prescriptive and spectacular inscription of the art of the *tektonikos* (carpenter, builder) or “tecture” as the origin and this predisposes architects from Vitruvius to Gropius to write their own philosophy, but today we are witnessing the decline of origin and order in architecture and some kind of an-archic-itecture is emerging in its place, perhaps it is also the re-emergence of the separation of origin and princely rule that Vernant identified as the hallmark of the end of myth.



Next Daniel Charles moves onto the architecture of philosophers, the primary interest of this thesis. Beginning with Plato the architect has always been held up as the model for the man of thought *and* action, positioned closely to the politician who acts for the polis or city in contrast to the tradesman who has no time for politics and so is not fully a citizen. Then there is the long tradition of system builders in philosophy whose philosophical works are tectonically structured after the model of architecture, building a world not out of materials but of concepts. But this system building privileges the Apollonian mode opening the door for more Dionysian destructions of these systems by philosophers who come later. Heidegger shows both aspects with his deployment of the Greek term *aletheia* meaning truth, but according to Heidegger this un-veiling is also a re-veiling, thus the appearing of truth is at once a withdrawing of truth. Daniel Charles concludes like Payot with the labyrinthine and obscure Egyptian model that was always intertwined with the Greek model that places everything in the clear light of day, as a metaphor for postmodern relativism that threatens all order with a principle of anarchy. Once again the arche of tecture, the order of building, becomes problematic, and once again architecture must turn to philosophy to explicate a way out of this confusing situation.

## The Philosopher and the Architect

The rest of the translations do just that, they flesh out the details of the situation just described by Daniel Charles and work towards answering the question, what form of a meaningful response to this situation could take place in the domain of architecture? In the selected chapters from *Le philosophe et l'architecte (The Philosopher and the Architect)*, Daniel Payot finds Hegel, Heidegger and Nietzsche to be the most useful guides. Payot has the unique ability to find the most pertinent discussions taking place on architecture within the complete works of each of these giants of German philosophy, which have until Payot's ground-breaking work been completely overlooked. Payot's arguments are too nuanced and subtle to allow for easy paraphrasing, which makes Daniel Charles synopsis of Payot all the more remarkable, and this is why it was necessary to translate such a large portion of Payot's book for this thesis. To do justice to such a profound work it must be examined first hand, at least in translated form. The Introduction, along with Chapters 1, 8, and 9 and the Conclusion to Payot's *Le philosophe et l'architecte* are all seen here in English for the first time. This was a tortuous undertaking due to the density of referencing found in Payot's writing, besides

which most of his sources are in German thus making the task of aligning each reference to its English counterpart extremely demanding and sometimes impossible since not all the German original text has made into the available English versions.

Payot like Massimo Cacciari before him and Peter Sloterdijk after him makes Paul Valéry's pseudo-Platonic dialogue "Eupalinos, or The Architect" the starting point for his investigation into the philosophy of architecture.<sup>3</sup> Valéry's work of fiction written in 1921 takes the form of a dialogue between Socrates and Phaedrus in which the latter, having once known the architect Eupalinos, becomes the willing sounding board for Socrates' investigative thoughts on architecture. In the dialogue Socrates recounts his discovery of a seashell and this is the catalyst for one of the most profound discussions on architecture to be found anywhere in the world of literature. The seashell, and later Socrates will extend this to include architectural structures built at a seaside port, belongs to the threshold realm between the realm of sea, representing amorphous being, the immeasurable, and infinite thought, and the realm of land, representing order, measure, and concrete constructions. So the seashell is in fact a metaphor for an architecture imbued with philosophical questioning, an "ontic place" that makes an ambiguous object like the philosophy of architecture seem possible.<sup>4</sup> Payot will take from Valéry's dialogue the ambiguities of constructing (*construire*) and knowing (*connaître*), or to make these terms more homophonic in the English, of constructing and construing.<sup>5</sup> So for example the difference is between "constructing" a plan, which suggests

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3. See Massimo Cacciari, "Eupalinos or Architecture", *Oppositions*: 21 (Summer 1980), pp. 106 - 114, Peter Sloterdijk *Ecumes: Sphères III*, trans. Olivier Mannoni (Paris: Hachette Literatures, 2006), p. 443 and Paul Valéry, "Eupalinos, or The Architect", in *The Collected Works of Paul Valéry*, Volume 4, ed. Jackson Mathews (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1958), pp. 65 – 150. On the importance of Valéry's dialogue to Le Corbusier, see Niklas Maak, *Le Corbusier: The Architect on the Beach* (Munich: Hirmer Verlag, 2011).

4. For a brilliant synopsis of Valéry's (very hard to summarise) dialogue see Bernard Siegert, "Eupalinos, or The Master Shipwright: The Threshold between Land and Sea as a Design Tool", *Configurations*: 18 (2011), pp. 421 - 439.

5. Marco Frascari has made the blurring of "construction" and "construing" that happens in the formation of an architectural detail into the cornerstone of his conception of architecture ever since his PhD in 1981. See Marco Frascari, *Sortes Architectii in the Eighteenth-Century Veneto, A Dissertation in Architecture*, PhD Thesis, University of Pennsylvania, 1981. What Frascari means by each term seems to change from one writing to the next, but in his dissertation construction means the tangible, but also discourse on the arts and "logos of techne", while construing means the intangible, the art of discourse or "techne of logos." Much gratitude is owed here to Mike Linzey who pointed out this additional source for this dialectical pair of terms. Payot gives as his source

actualising a set of drawings by physically building a habitable structure, and “construing” a plan, which suggests formulated in the mind a linear sequence of actions that may or may not be actualised in the future. But Payot here makes a move that is fundamental, these terms indicate a “troubling sameness” he says that need not be reconciled, rather, the important thing is to bracket them. Building and thought continually collapse into each other because they are so obviously deeply connected, thinking builds a world and building depends on the preparation of thinking. But Payot maintains that this blurring or collapsing of the two terms hides the fundamental difference between the “idea of architecture” (*idée d’architecture*) and “the architectural idea” (*idée de l’architecture*).<sup>6</sup> This is a fundamental difference for Payot and for this current work. In French this difference is even more subtle, just the lack of a definite article “*la*” from the word *l’architecture* in the phrase *idée d’architecture*. But this difference is not hard to fathom because on the one hand there is the philosophical formation of an “idea of architecture”, and the other there is the “architectural idea” generated *post factum* after contemplating architecture when it is assumed to be an already given and stable object, most often the case for the philosophy of architects.

The philosophical “idea of architecture” in Payot’s terms creates architecture because there is no such object without there first being a demarcation between the human world and the animal world, between the inside and the outside, and between culturally symbolic works of building (architecture) and haphazard assemblages with no possibility of cultural significance whatsoever (building, but not architecture). These are all cognitive-linguistic constructs, but more than that they are deeply embedded in the life-worlds of those who first conceive and then perceive these subtle differences in the world, categories which can nevertheless always be blurred or shifted. Are humans in nature or outside of nature for example? It all depends on how certain cultures conceive and then perceive nature. Some don’t even have a concept of nature so they are hardly going to conceive themselves as being outside of it. Nature is after all a Western construct, even though this is very hard for us grasp

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for his own use of these terms as being Erwin Panofsky, *Gothic Architecture and Scholasticism* (New York: Meridian Books, 1957) where the distinction between the constructing of Gothic cathedrals collapses into the construing of the summas of scholastic philosophy.

6. See note 13 on page 211 of Daniel Payot, *Le philosophe et l’architecte: Sur quelques déterminations philosophiques de l’idée d’architecture* (Paris: Aubier Montaigne, 1982) and for the translation in Section 1 below.

without a great deal of help from comparative anthropology.<sup>7</sup> In a similar fashion the *philosophy of architecture* (the “determination” of the object architecture in Payot’s terms) can seem to be all just an abstract play of words to the architect who is everyday immersed in the sea of the concrete world of *architectural* ideas (thoughts about architecture as an already demarcated and given object).

This is the starting point for Payot’s philosophy of architecture from which he goes onto a close reading of the many famous texts from the canon of Western philosophy, all the while being very conscious of the ever present danger of the troubling sameness between philosophy as conceived by architects, of which he shows no interest, and the architecture of the philosopher, which according to his introduction actually determines what is taken to be the object of architecture by shaping the deeply embedded cultural conceptualisations, hence the subtitle of his book is *sur quelques determinations philosophiques de l’idée d’architecture*, “on some philosophical determinations of the idea of architecture.”



Figure 4. Socrates' ambiguous object on the beach as described in Paul Valéry’s “Eupalinos, or The Architect”, as recreated by the author at Mission Bay, Auckland.

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7. On nature as a Western construct, see Bruno Latour, *Politics of Nature: How to Bring the Sciences into Democracy*, trans. Catherine Porter (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 2004) and on how various cultures conceptualise the nonhuman world in quite different ways, see Philippe Descola, *Beyond Nature and Culture*, trans. Janet Lloyd (Chicago, The University of Chicago Press, 2013). On how the Western concept of nature evolved, see Pierre Hadot, *The Veil of Isis: An Essay on the History of the Idea of Nature*, translated by Michael Chase (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 2006).

The next translation is of “Philosophy and Architecture” by José Ferrater Mora.<sup>8</sup> Ferrater Mora was a Spanish philosopher who spent most of his working life in America where he was the director of the philosophy department at Bryn Mawr College in Pennsylvania. He is best known for his four-volume *Diccionario de filosofía*, a standard reference for Spanish-speaking philosophers, and this short article on philosophy and architecture later became expanded as an entry in this multivolume dictionary. This article forms a very important piece of evidence in favour of the proposition maintained by this thesis – that the philosophy of architecture has long held a legitimate place in the history of philosophy and this must be considered as a distinct genre from the philosophy of architects. Ferrater Mora labels the former category “philosophy as architecture” and the latter category “architecture as philosophy.” He begins with the now commonplace critique of Panofsky’s attempt to reconcile the Gothic cathedral with medieval scholastic philosophy, recall that Daniel Charles and Daniel Payot do the same thing as a way of clearing the ground of all confusing assimilations between architecture and philosophy in the two previous translations. Ferrater Mora does not deny that they both emerge as cultural productions from the same era, given that they are contemporaneous and that they share the same geographical location, but his real concern, as is the concern of this thesis, is to identify the architecture of philosophers as a separate entity. Ferrater Mora tells us that among philosophers who take architecture into consideration there are two main kinds, and the one that will dominate at any given period alternates throughout history. There are the system builders in the manner of Kant and Peirce, who are architectonic philosophers, and then there are those philosophers who distrust all systems and so tend to engage in a minute examination of details; the destroyers of systems pushing their analysis to the extreme. It is easy for us to recognise the latter type in a more contemporary guise of the post-structuralist deconstructor or follower of Jacques Derrida. The orgies of construction are followed by the orgies of destruction Ferrater Mora says. Anticipating the antipathy of today in the wake of such an orgy, he asks, wouldn’t the sensible thing to do be to follow the middle ground?

Unfortunately the common sense solution is not the path to great philosophy, which is instead populated with great system builders like Hegel and Kant and great system destroyers like Nietzsche and Derrida, and the history of philosophy is the result of the pendulum

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8. José Ferrater Mora, “Philosophie et architecture”, *Revue de Métaphysique et de Morale*, Vol. 60, No. 3 (July-September 1955), pp. 251 - 263. Accessed 28 November 2012, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/40899942>.

swinging between these two extremes. Admittedly Ferrater Mora's prime interest is the metaphor of architecture deployed by the architectonic system builders, which is equally at work in the thinking of the system destroyers, and not in the specific discussions of architecture taking place in philosophy. But the philosopher's use of architecture as a metaphor to build a philosophical system and the inclusion of architecture as a topic worthy of philosophical contemplation are never mutually exclusive. The greatest system builder of a philosophical encyclopedia was undoubtedly Hegel, and Hegel made architecture a legitimate and worthy topic in his system, where in his *Aesthetics* he devotes a fair proportion of pages to the study of architecture from the Egyptian pyramids to the Gothic cathedrals.<sup>9</sup> The modelling of the philosopher on the architect is in fact a preparation for a fuller treatment of architecture by the philosopher so the architectonically structured philosophy of Kant is a prelude to architecture entering the consciousness of the philosopher as a topic worthy of study in its own right in Hegel.

## The Priceless Gift of the Other Translations

The other translations are "Architecture, Today" by Hubert Damisch, "The Myth of Man Beyond Technology" by Ortega y Gasset, and "The Heideggerian Words: Bauen, Wohnen, Denken" by Filippo Costa. Each one of these philosophers provides a missing piece in the jigsaw puzzle that forms the groundwork for the reception of the philosophy of architecture. In the first section of the Bibliography below is listed many complete book-length studies on architecture written by philosophers. If these are first to be discovered and then to be appreciated by architects, then these following translations will form an essential propaedeutic or preliminary exercise to their understanding. Proof that such an exercise is warranted is the simple fact that all these works have passed completely unnoticed by the architectural world until now, and this is not because there is a lack interest in philosophy among architects. What is missing is the knowledge that there exists a well-established branch of philosophy that can be called the philosophy of architecture, so architects instead read general philosophy, making

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9. G. W. F. Hegel, "Section I. Architecture", in Hegel, *Aesthetics: Lectures on Fine Art*, trans. T. M. Knox (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1975), Volume 2, pp. 630 - 700. Hegel devotes 70 pages or 5.7% of his *Aesthetics* to architecture, that same amount as he does for music and only a little less than for sculpture and painting at 90 pages or 7.35% each. Poetry is the winner at 279 pages or 22.6% of the total 1236 pages.

their own applications of discussions about aesthetic, ethics, psychology, anthropology and so on, to architecture when unknown to them there is already a vast amount of discussion going on in philosophy about architecture. Instead of the in-depth exegesis of each of the remaining translations they will here be presented as a priceless gift to reader to use them as they please. See the Conclusion for a discussion of the infinite value of the priceless gift and how this can make the architect incorruptible.

# 1.1

## The Production of Presence: The Potential of Atmospheres<sup>1</sup>

by Nikolaus Kuhnert, Anh-Linh Ngo with Stephan Becker and Martin Luce

Translation by Tim Adams.

### Criticism: The Victory of Theory

It was a wonderful time. Architecture theory could fill the void left in the 1960s when the project of modernity fell into a “crisis of legitimacy” and the discipline had to be renegotiated.<sup>2</sup> The crisis offered a way for the canonically rigid architectural discourse to refocus itself on contemporary social and cultural discourses and for architectural theory to achieve a sense of being an independent practice beyond the confines of architectural history.<sup>3</sup> Instrumentalized “critical theory” was used to subject the project of modernity to revision and

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1. [T. N. The source for this translation is Nikolaus Kuhnert, Anh-Linh Ngo with Stephan Becker and Martin Luce, “Die Produktion von Präsenz: Potenziale des Atmosphärischen”, *Archplus*: 178 (June 2006), pp. 22 - 25.]

2. Jurgen Habermas, *Legitimation Crisis*, trans. Thomas McCarthy (Boston: Beacon Press, 1975).

3. The 1960s and 70s was a time when architecture theory established itself as an independent subject for teaching and research. See K. Michael Hays, “Introduction” to *Architecture Theory Since 1968* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: The MIT Press, 1998).



to continue it in a more “critical” way. Because architecture does not have its own tools it had not developed any self-criticism, so it could only borrow from the “critical theory” of the Frankfurt School or from the canon of Marxist ideology-critique, which for example Manfredo Tafuri introduced into architectural discourse by re-deploying these tools for a political critique of architecture.<sup>4</sup> Besides this, many other disciplines dominated over the next three decades, especially in America, becoming important in the evolution of theory; attention turned in quick succession to language and the social sciences, to psychoanalytic and philosophical paradigms such as semiotics and structuralism, to postmodernism and post-structuralism, phenomenology, not to mention all the other sciences. It looked like a triumph for theory.

On the one hand, architecture (theory) succeeded, as described above, by opening up to cultural relevance, in becoming interdisciplinary because it was now “on a par” with the other, better organized, disciplines. On the other hand, with the connection to other cultural movements also came the pressure to provide a demonstration of its autonomy. Consequently there developed in American institutes of higher education a self-referential discourse, beginning with the magazines *Oppositions* and *Skyline* from Peter Eisenman and the IAUS, and later, coming from Eisenman’s own office, the ANY magazines and conferences that dominated for several decades. It was due to this highly influential American architecture theory, established by Eisenman along with exiled European intellectuals, that the theory of the 1960s filled the gap created by the failure to develop an independent architecture theory in Europe. This American development was based on a *linguistic turn*, while during the same period developments in Europe led to a *spatial turn* around the concept of typology as a space-producing category.

Exemplifying American architectural theory’s turn towards a linguistically based theory was Eisenman’s 1979 essay “Aspects of Modernism: The Maison Dom-ino and the Self-Referential Sign.” This essay is an exploration of Le Corbusier’s famous Maison Dom-ino. This schematic construction is not interpreted by Eisenman as an outline of a residential

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4. See Manfredo Tafuri, *Architecture and Utopia: Design and Capitalist Development*, trans. Barbara Luigia La Penta (Cambridge, Massachusetts: The MIT Press, 1979).

building but rather as a sign that works autonomously and independently from all aspects of construction. Colin Rowe still saw the schematic construction of the Maison Dom-ino as a classic diagram of the horizontally layered, free flowing space of modernity, while Eisenman only saw it as the emblem of a “modern, or self-referential symbolism.”<sup>5</sup> This is the *linguistic turn* in architectural theory that Eisenman would extend to include generative grammar (Chomsky), phenomenology (Husserl), philosophy (Derrida), and that laid the foundation for the triumph of American architectural theory during the 1980s.

## The Death of Theory

The price to be paid for this victory was only slowly recognised. Eisenman, by borrowing from linguistic theory propagated a “critical architecture” as a purely intertextual system, an “architecture of architecture”, and K. Michael Hays by reconnecting with the tradition of “critical theory” formed a “dialectical” argument for the autonomy of the discipline independent from the social conditions of its production, and defended the autonomy of the discipline from society.<sup>6</sup> This had the consequence that although “critical architecture” could reflect social developments “indexically”, any possibility of a direct influence had consequently been marginalized.

The carousel of theory turned so quickly that those architects simply trying to find a design theory applicable to their daily practical tasks were thrown off and left in a state of dizziness – disillusioned and disappointed that these beautiful theories could not be “implemented” in practice. Thereafter theory, like a new toy that is overly complex and only ever works erratically, has been punished for the most part by simply ignoring it altogether. Moreover it seems that theory itself by its own rapid development has simply worn itself out.

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5. Peter Eisenman, “Aspects of Modernism: The Maison Dom-ino and the Self-Referential Sign”, *Oppositions*: 15-16 (Winter-Spring 1979), pp. 118-28. Eisenman treated the Maison Dom-ino as being structured by an internal set of rules, and so the task of the architect was now to manipulate that set of rules rather than control the project or the program of the overall structure.

6. See George Baird, “Criticality and its Discontents”, *Harvard Design Magazine*: 21 (Fall 2004/Winter 2005), pp. 16 – 21.

The slow death of the theory was initially covered up by the Dutch who were practicing a playfully and colourfully programmatic architecture. Only after the SuperDutch lost traction did the silence of the gray theory become obvious to all: an over-conceptualised leaden theory of fatigue had become the defining feature of architectural discourse. The rejection of the linguistic models of the 1970s and 80s was also a movement away from the associated “critical theory.”

This American dominance constructed a theory that was undoubtedly based on European discursive traditions while the new millennium was in favour of what this had abandoned, a genuinely American project: the rediscovery of pragmatism as an independent American philosophy was to some extent the birth of a younger generation of theorists escaping the embrace of Peter Eisenman and co. who had dominated critical discourse for decades.<sup>7</sup>

## Post-Criticism: Get Down and Dirty

This controversy over the so-called post-criticism is not only a matter of a generational shift taking place within the academy. It instead reflects the discomfort of a younger generation who see the identification of architecture with resistance as an intolerable restriction on practice. This generation reproaches the protagonists of the critical project for their attitude that increases the gap between theory and practice and therefore advances the marginalization already described, because the “critical architecture” wilfully consigned important social fields, like employment, to the world of consumerism. The debates around (neo)pragmatism<sup>8</sup> are more than just “locker-room controversies” and herald a polemic reaching from “the end of ‘critical architecture’ ... to the prophecy of the end of the domain of theory.”<sup>9</sup> With what Robert Somol and Sarah Whiting now proclaim to be “projective

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7. Ole W. Fischer, “‘Critical, Post-Critical, Projective? Szenen einer. Debatte”, *Archplus*: 174 (December 2005), pp. 92 – 97.

8. See *Archplus* 156 (May 2001), issue theme: Neuer Pragmatismus in der Architektur.

9. Fischer, op. cit., p. 92.

architecture”, they take on *criticism in practice*, i.e. with *project, effect* and *performance* aligned to pragmatism and transferred into an architectural program.<sup>10</sup>

From the European point of view this is just another typically elitist East Coast debate, however it does contain a certain ambivalence; the texts fluctuate in tone between academic discourse and references to popular culture. These references to pop culture, cinema, music and television signal the desire to leave the ivory tower of theory and become more involved with the everyday world, getting both hands dirty.

As soon becomes clear, the protagonists of this debate are not about to *shelve* theory, but the performative character of architecture is once again centre stage. Or in other words, there is a shift from the *what* of representation to the *how* of presentation. Here we are at the very core of the essential problematic of the recurring debate: the conflict between theory and practice, between reason and feeling, and between representation and presence, meaning and performance, or in contemporary terms: between “hot” and “cool.”<sup>11</sup>

## The Economy of “Affects”

It is an old controversy that retraces perhaps the theoretical formulations of 18<sup>th</sup> century. Basically this debate is about the duality of mind and body, about “abstraction and empathy”<sup>12</sup> and these laments have always been attributed to an inadequacy in the face of modernity: the preference for abstract meaning. The philosopher Jürgen Safranski summarizes this inadequacy succinctly in his Schiller biography with the phrase: “Enlightenment and science are merely ‘cultural theories’ taken as proof, an external affair for ‘inner

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10. See Robert Somol and Sarah Whiting, “Notes around the Doppler Effect and Other Moods of Modernism”, *Perspecta*: 33 (2002), pp. 72 – 77.

11. *Ibid.*

12. See Wilhelm Worringer, *Abstraction and Empathy: A Contribution to the Psychology of Style*, trans. Michael Bullock (London : Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1953).

Barbarians’.”<sup>13</sup> For Safranski, Schiller’s treatise “On the Aesthetic Education of Man,” in this context represents the “founding document for a theory of modernity.” This text’s aim is mainly to achieve “the localization of aesthetics within society and thus also within the conditions and opportunities of the art of living in the modern age.”<sup>14</sup> And this only achieves the art of living by reconciling reason and feeling with a production that is “wrapped up in feelings.” This social positioning of the aesthetic, of expression and action, in a world to which the aesthetic paradigm is now applicable seems to have more relevancy today than ever before: “the aesthetic world is not just a training ground for the refinement and development of sensibility, but it is the place where man experiences explicitly what he always implicitly is: ‘homo ludens.’”<sup>15</sup>

When considered in light of this development it is not surprising that one of the key concepts in the *post-criticality* debate is “sentimentality”, a term that lent its name to an entire era: the age of sentimentality (*Empfindsamkeit*). In this era feeling is a medium for design that should pass between a “*sensibilité morale*” and a “*sensibilité physique*” and bridge the gap between mind and body.<sup>16</sup>

Is this sentimentality also suitable for overcoming the “alienation” of the established division of labour in architecture between theory and practice?

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13. Rüdiger Safranski, *Schiller oder Die Erfindung des deutschen Idealismus* (Munich: Carl Hanser, 2004), p. 410.

14. *Ibid.*, p. 409. [T. N. Entirely independent of Safranski, Rancière comes to much the same conclusion, making Schiller’s treatise the fundamental document of today’s “aesthetic regime of art.” Rancière goes so far as to claim this esthetic revolution of the Romantics was a necessary and essential move towards the political revolution of Marx but this has, explains Rancière, led to the current confusion between life and art and the denegation of art as an autonomous category. See Jaques Rancière, “The Aesthetic Revolution and its Outcomes: Emplotments of Autonomy and Heteronomy”, *New Left Review*: 14 (March, April, 2002), pp. 133 – 151.]

15. *Ibid.*, p. 413.

16. Sigrid Weigel, “Phantombilder. Gesicht, Gefühl, Gehirn zwischen messen und deuten”, in Oliver Grau and Andreas Keil (eds.), *Mediale Emotionen. Zur Lenkung von Gefühlen durch Bild und Sound* (Frankfurt 2005), p. 244.

Currently one can again find a real “economy the affects”<sup>17</sup> not only in architecture, but as a general social trend in the arts, the humanities and the media, and even in the sciences the affects now play a large role. The turn to emotions reflects the desire to make aesthetic perception a fundamental approach to the world. For architecture this means that instead of a reflexive, critical and interpretive practice, the *effect* of architecture comes to the fore again, namely effects in the sense that architecture enables (alternative) lifestyles to be configured. With the emphasis on effects that in turn produce affects, this leads to architecture without mediation and not indirectly via the interpretative acts of the attribution of meaning. This of course is already implied by a whole bundle of architectural resources: materiality, performance, body awareness, tactility, mood, sensuality, sensitivity and finally atmosphere.

## Atmosphere

Atmosphere as a category is as broad as it is vague so in this context it finds a welcome reception. Due to its vagueness it provides a space into which many desires can be projected and can therefore be satisfied. Since “atmospheric interaction” appears as a preconscious, pre-linguistic, cognitive response, which starts with affect, it has always been a particularly suitable concept for the “conceptual integration of the perception and imagination of the viewer.”<sup>18</sup> It has always been a successful form of “inclusion” before it was ever applied as an instrument: in this way religion and politics have for thousands of years generated atmospheres of sacredness and power. New to the interest in the atmospheric is the emancipatory aspect that is now brought to the foreground. So for the protagonists of *post-criticality* it is a step towards the “production of individual, ambiguous and synaesthetic facilities of reception.”<sup>19</sup> Instead of the usual understanding of atmosphere as an accessory or a decorative overlay, by addressing the transfer of atmospheric qualities it becomes a way of identifying the spiritual and essential qualities of a living constitution.

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17. Marie-Luise Angerer, “Affekt und Begehren oder: Was macht den Affekt so begehrenswert?” in *e-Journal Philosophie der Psychologie*, January 2006, <http://www.jp.philo.at/texte/AngererM1.pdf>.

18. Ole W. Fischer, “Critical, Post-Critical, Projective? Szenen einer. Debatte”, *Archplus*: 174 (December 2005), p. 95.

19. Ibid.

The atmospheric succeeds precisely because of its social conciseness: “atmospheres have taken over because they work within a Western visually-dominated culture and acquire an authenticating function.”<sup>20</sup> In a world divided into subcultures it reliably conveys an aura of things capable of becoming more and more important. Therefore the atmospheric has for the philosopher Reinhard Knodt an important social potential, which in a kind of “atmospheric competence” he has located “an important basis for a common understanding of world heritage of subcultural difference.” In atmosphere, architecture thus has a means of communication, an inclusive and comprehensive understanding that can work because “everyone in everyday life ... to a certain extent usually has this competence.”<sup>21</sup> If the very potential of atmosphere is also what makes it difficult to talk about, given the absence of any unifying aesthetic categories, then this optimism for the concept of atmosphere is highly questionable. For as (architectural) history shows, atmospheres can not only incorporate instruments of domination, in addition they are by no means without presuppositions and requirements about how they are commonly received, based on cultural conventions which certainly predetermine how they will be “decoded.”<sup>22</sup>

## The Production of Presence

Instead of hinting at atmospheres it would be more accurate and illuminating to speak, as Hans Ulrich Gumbrecht does, of the “production of presence”: presence in contrast to the emphasis on meaning, as an “affective” physicality. This is what Gumbrecht means when in his book *Production of Presence: What Meaning Cannot Convey* he introduces the dichotomy between “meaning culture” and “presence culture”, and favours a greater concern for

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20. See Ilka Becker, “Become what you are! Ästhetisierungsdruck und Atmosphären in der visuellen Kultur der Gegenwart”, Vortrag auf der 3. Intern. Graduierten-Konferenz der Univ. Wien: Verkörperte Differenzen, April 2003; see also: “dieselbe, Körper, Atmosphärik und künstlerische Fotografie”, in Tom Holert (Ed.), *Imagineering. Visuelle Kultur und Politik der Sichtbarkeit*, (Köln: Oktagon, 2000), p. 176ff.

21. Reinhard Knodt, “Atmosphären”, in *Ästhetische Korrespondenzen. Denken im technischen Raum*, Stuttgart 1994, p. 50.

22. This fact recalls Ilka Becker’s emphasis: “Besides, it cannot be assumed that atmospheres are in fact a universal medium for the transmission and participation in unspecific moods as suggested by these attempts at a philosophical nature aesthetic. Rather they carry in different ways the hallmarks of formal-aesthetic conventions, artistic codes or social environments and therefore specific conditions for their reception are also work.”

presence that meaning would otherwise dissolve. According to Gumbrecht, the Western tradition has for too long sided with the hermeneutical method, that is with the critical discussion of concepts and their interpretation, while aesthetic experience as a basic constant of human existence has been displaced so that the sensual access to the world has almost been lost. With the concept of presence the body and the senses are reintroduced into theoretical discourse. Connected to this idea is the “relativization of language (words) in favour other forms of communication”, which leads the cultural scholar Marie-Louise Angerer to a “double epistemology reversal: from frontally facing an ‘opposite’ (the book, the theatre) towards ‘immersion’ ... diving into and being drawn in are the most interesting new developments: it leads to an ‘end of theory’ and its attendant distancing.”<sup>23</sup>

It is precisely on overcoming this distance that all the efforts of the *post-criticality* debate are focused. When Robert Somol and Sarah Whiting oppose “hot” versus “cool” in their manifesto and promote the emergence of performative architecture, and when Sylvia Lavin demands architectural theory in the sense of “criticism” must found a new relationship between the critic and the creator, and does what she calls a “*critique passionée*”, then the characteristic feature of all these efforts is the call for less distance, more involvement, and a time for cooperation. Passion is preferred to cool analytical criticism, even if it makes you more vulnerable to the dominant powers that be.<sup>24</sup> This only is what is meant by “critique” and not a retreat from the political because you can add most of these protagonists to the camp of enlightened liberals who would like to project alternative lifestyles rather than just criticize the social conditions. And it is only in this sense that it can be believed that the new interest in atmospheres also leads to “social opportunities.”<sup>25</sup>

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23. Marie-Luise Angerer, “Affekt und Begehren oder: Was macht den Affekt so begehrenswert?” in *e-Journal Philosophie der Psychologie*, January 2006, <http://www.jp.philo.at/texte/AngererM1.pdf>, p. 3.

24. See Sylvia Lavin, Conversation, unpublished Lecture transcript.

25. Diedrich Diedrichsen, *Der lange Weg nach Mitte: Der Sound und die Stadt* (Köln: Kiepenheuer & Witsch, 1999), p. 302.



## The Principle of Immersion

That Angerer's keywords "diving into and being drawn into" indicate that distance can be overcome by means of a production of presence, that they are the key to creating *immersive environments*. Angerer at the same time mentions the special "architectural approach" elaborated by the art historian Dagobert Frey in his famous essay "Essential Definition of Architecture" of 1925. According to Frey the essence of the arts does not reside in abstract art historical systems, but in the way we look at them aesthetically. Within a wide range of aesthetic approaches, from the picturesque to the plastic, is the "architectural approach", a modality of aesthetic experience through which a specific enclosing reality is understood. The "architectural approach" describes an aesthetic process that we would today translate into the more contemporary term immersion.

It is in this sense that architecture is, according to Peter Sloterdijk, "before all else an immersion design"<sup>26</sup>, and architects *in theory* do nothing else.<sup>27</sup> For Sloterdijk too feeling is now central because, "the building of houses is a problem of love." Architecture is a place in which you must open yourself "totally" and give yourself over to it because "the totalitarianism of the architecture is a totalitarianism of love, the love of space, a rapture that is not only against us, but in which we are surrounded like a sheath."<sup>28</sup> This "topophile feeling"<sup>29</sup> is a prerequisite that dissolves the boundaries between the human being and the artificial environments it dives into. Immersion is therefore a technique of transgression, a sort of "centrifugal blending of images and visions."<sup>30</sup> "But what happens when we can no longer perceive isolated images through our body, if we are drawn into the pictures?" asks Marie-Louise Angerer. What "if these pictures circumvent the representational level and act on the pre-linguistic body." This is exactly where for Angerer the term affect lies because,

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26. Peter Sloterdijk, "Architektur als Immersionskunst", *Archplus*: 178 (June 2006), p. 58 – 63. [T. N. See Peter Sloterdijk, "Architecture as an Art of Immersion", trans. Anna-Christina Engels-Schwarzpaul, *Interstices*: 12 (2011), pp. 105 - 109 for the English translation.]

27. See "Peter Sloterdijk im Gespräch mit Archplus", in *Archplus* 169/170 (May 2004).

28. Ibid.

29. See Gaston Bachelard, *The Poetics of Space*, trans. Maria Jolas (Boston: Beacon Press, 1964).

30. Peter Sloterdijk, "Architektur als Immersionskunst", *Archplus*: 178 (June 2006).

“the affective body as ‘framer’ demands that images be unframed.”<sup>31</sup> Here we come full circle: Sloterdijk’s “centrifugal blending” produced immersive environments which in the end are dependent on the body as a “framework”, as a formative instrument of perception.

## In View of a Projective Architecture

And what is the moral of this story? How can a “project” be derived from all this, if we let the theorists have one more say before the practitioners themselves are allowed to get back to business? As to what the moral is Sloterdijk is also at a loss for an answer: “The ethics of the production of space is in part responsible for the atmosphere.”<sup>32</sup> Ethics is certainly a solid foundation on which to build an advanced project. One wonders only by what means and to what end?

Two of the key terms of the debate, namely “projective” and “performative” give at least an indication of a direction: “the adjective *projective* has similar connotations in German: it refers both to projection, as an imaging method ... and to project, as a draft, a design or plan for the future.”<sup>33</sup> By focusing on plan Somol and Whiting take up a meaning of architecture that goes back to Russian Constructivism that Rem Koolhaas has projected into the present: the plan understood as a *social condenser*, as an arrangement that stimulates unexpected behaviours and thus circumscribes and possibly even produces new forms of life. This is the understanding Koolhaas tried to reactivate in *Delirious New York* based on his description of the Downtown Athletic Club.

And when it comes to encouraging new and unforeseen behaviours, perhaps even instigating them, performance as the second key term of the discussion now becomes

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31. Marie-Louise Angerer, “Affekt und Begehren oder: Was macht den Affekt so begehrenswert?” in *e-Journal Philosophie der Psychologie*, January 2006: <http://www.jp.philo.at/texte/AngererM1.pdf>.

32. Peter Sloterdijk, “Architektur als Immersionskunst”, *Archplus*: 178 (June 2006).

33. Ole W. Fischer, ““Critical, Post-Critical, Projective? Szenen einer. Debatte”, *Archplus*: 174 (December 2005), p. 92.

important. After all, the Constructivists ultimately used avant-garde plans as a power of persuasion in order to model the New Man for his utopian life by means of anticipatory forms of life. The plan was a *concrete utopia*, the projection into the future and the planned world of *social condensers*. However instead of compulsively repeating the failed utopias of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century or even fundamentally saying goodbye to the project of modernity and its salvation in a new formalism, whose provenance is always sought after, “projective architecture” wants to be considered performative. Projective therefore means both *project and projection* alluding to Manfredo Tafuri who preferred these terms to *progetto e utopia*. But what does the performative plan extending into the future mean today when we have lost all faith in linear projections? Here Somol, Whiting et al remain strategically very vague. Without positioning themselves any further, they change the battlefield and open up a new venue for their argument: attention is no longer on the social body of the people, as represented by socio-political structures defined and shaped, but on the modelling of the real body, it falls to trying to approach the aspect of emotions, affects and sensations. Russian Constructivism aimed at the social body of the people, they were looking for an immediate and direct access from the effects to the emotions. This new terrain that overlaps with advertising, commercial photography and commercial films should shift the political debate from the political society to a “politics of the body.”<sup>34</sup> But what does this politics look like and how can architecture engage with it -- these are probably the questions that would have to be asked, even in terms of a overall criticism. And perhaps this is just what is missing at this point, and it may be time even for some productive misunderstandings.

## The Politics of the Body

The debate on *post-criticality* thus far seems to be a thoroughly American affair, apparently easily explained by the conditions of an academic architectural discourse, in contrast to the European tradition where universities mainly teach practitioners and the integration of theory and practice is always decided in advance in favour of practice. With this is also the previously mentioned theory fatigue: fewer students and architects in the

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34. This concept was coined by Gottfried Pirrhofer and Ulrich Wegener in the 1970s. See also Michel Foucault’s concept of politics of the body/biopolitics. [T. N. Michel Foucault introduces his idea of biopolitics in *Society Must Be Defended: Lectures at the Collège de France, 1975-1976* (New York: St. Martin's Press. 1997).]

universities seem ready for a critical debate with their discipline and on the contrary are shifting their focus to practice. From this perspective, and perhaps this is just a productive misunderstanding, it now seems that the debate around *post-criticality* is in a certain sense not less but a more theory, likely to bind practice to theoretical discourse even more strongly simply by its focus on the affective aspects of architecture. Because if the representatives of *post-criticality* manage to talk of the possibility of alternative lifestyles actually in the project, it will be useful to leave the critical position behind and for the purposes of the affective, to mix qualities of architecture with the unconscious, even more politically now in the sense of a “politics of the body.”

This “politics of the body” looks to effects that can control affects, directly accessible by people and not indirectly via the detour of hermeneutic interpretations. This trend indicates a concept of architecture constructed from three inter-linked terms, namely the *projective*, the *performative* and the *affective*. On the side of architecture questions to be discussed will concern materiality, the haptic and, now given an entirely new importance, atmosphere. While on the side of the user the questions at issue will be contextualization and the historical matter of sentimentality. However, with the possibility of new social relevance there also arises the danger of an architecture of seduction, and a weakened material effect: a danger that in their new interest in controlling emotions brings them into proximity to the “secret persuaders” of advertising, marketing and *behaviourism*.

Now it can be argued that modernity has always been a certain kind of “politics of the body.” If one considers politics to be in fact more than just power struggles, and the political includes the conflict to establish or refuse influence -- in Rancière’s sense of staging the visible -- then one can see, for example, that the discussion around the Frankfurt kitchen is absolutely political precisely because it makes the subject a matter of an exclusively spatiotemporal question. The Frankfurt kitchen is commonly taken either as an example of the application of Taylorism to architecture, or defended as working towards the emancipation of women. Paradoxically both positions overlook the architecture-spatial effects that concern the kitchen as a smaller detail in the total order of life. The criticism that it was a departure from the kitchen-living room in favour of a functional service unit ignores the fact that this new

order of things at one scale was made possible by the new order of things at a larger scale in the form of the free plan. So the emancipation of women from unnecessary work by means of the mechanization of housework, the typical politics of architecture approach, did not make this happen. Rather, in the case of the Frankfurt Kitchen, it was the relationship between architecture and society that led to new spatial arrangements and new forms of life and living spaces.

This “politics of the body” therefore constitutes a new order of things -- perceptions are no longer differentiated between interior and exterior, spatial arrangements are no longer distinguishable between private and public, and images no longer have addresses. The only difference today is the fact that it is no longer about ideal social bodies, but about specific concrete bodies. Also technologies have become highly differentiated and have themselves made it possible to model the individual in ways that allow the individual far more room for free play.<sup>35</sup>

At this point we can once again consult Marie-Louise Angerer on the new media and the much-vaunted “digital revolution” which introduced, shall we say, an “affective turn.” What at first appears to be paradoxical proves on closer consideration to be the real paradigm shift of our time. For it is only by means of technological development that we are able to experience subjectivity in a more “radical way”: “For indeed it was the ‘digital revolution’, which has rung in the complete change from language to the affect and feeling. Tactility was from the beginning a speech, an instantaneity, and an immediacy, the dissolution of time and space.... Glorious times stood before us because finally we said goodbye at last to all those poststructuralist thinkers: their theories would meet us in person on the net.”<sup>36</sup>

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35. In this connection Foucault's concept of governmentality would be to be useful to the discussion. See also *Archplus* 173, Shrinking Cities, (May 2005).

36. Marie-Louise Angerer, “Affekt und Begehren oder: Was macht den Affekt so begehrenswert?” in *e-Journal Philosophie der Psychologie*, January 2006: <http://www.jp.philo.at/texte/AngererM1.pdf>, p. 2.

So the death certificate for theory issued at the beginning is invalid. It is not the death of theory that should be deplored, rather it is its absorption into practice and its performance that should be celebrated.



# 1.2

## Architecture and Philosophy<sup>1</sup>

by Daniel Charles

Translation by Tim Adams

At no time has there ever been a shortage of comparisons made and assimilations attempted between architecture and philosophy. These are usually in the form of a reconciliation that first takes architecture and philosophy to be in opposition and then shows how the two disciplines gradually fuse into a single body or ultimate end. The results are not always very satisfying, even when the author makes ample assurances about their “objectivity” and their rigorous methodology. To take just one example: Erwin Panofsky’s famous essay *Gothic Architecture and Scholasticism* demonstrates a number of structural similarities between theology and Gothic cathedrals over the period from 1130 to 1270, and thus incurs the wrath of one of the masters of contemporary thought. Martin Heidegger in his lectures on Schelling writes, “these *Summas* are often compared with medieval cathedrals.

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1. [T. N. The source for this translation is Daniel Charles, “Architecture et philosophie”, entry from *Encyclopædia Universalis* (Chicago: Encyclopædia Britannica, 2011), pp. 840 - 843.]



Now, of course, every comparison limps. But this comparison of theological handbooks with medieval cathedrals not only limps and wilts, it is completely impossible. The medieval cathedrals and their towers vault in articulated degrees toward heaven. The counterpart would be that a *Summa* was built up upon a broad foundation to the apex toward heaven; that is, toward God. But the *Summa* starts precisely with the apex and consequently spreads out in practical, moral human life. If the comparison between a school handbook and a building and a work of art is already generally questionable, it really becomes impossible when the structural order – which belongs to the comparison – is exactly opposite in both.”<sup>2</sup>

But the reconciliation of the two domains of thinking and architecture is not merely a rhetorical device, it is a fundamental *requirement*: In Paul Valéry’s dialogue *Eupalinos, or the Architect*, Socrates confesses to Phaedrus that he had long hesitated over choosing “between building and knowing” and that his “infinite reflections” could have led “to the philosopher that I was, or the artist I was not.... There was within me an architect whom circumstances did not fashion forth.”<sup>3</sup> The fiction of “Socrates regretting a vocation that was not followed” suggests the idea of an “architecture that thinks,” in other words one that participates as the architectural historian Christian Norberg-Schulz says, “in the history of existential meanings.”<sup>4</sup> Furthermore it suggests that the “idea of architecture”, according to the contemporary philosopher Daniel Payot, is “deeper ... when, without even pretending to be particularly interested in the art of building, there is nevertheless a knowledge that is discovered or implied.”<sup>5</sup> In other words there is always an architectonic thought, like a secret thought at work in all building as such. And perhaps it is being more faithful to history and to architecture, and thus to thinking as well, to avoid their indistinctness and to show, contrary to all post priori and euphoric syntheses, how the two disciplines are becoming separate and autonomous to each other by pluralisation and dissemination, which today leads to a renewed need to question our fate.

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2. Martin Heidegger, *Schelling's Treatise on the Essence of Human Freedom*, trans. Joan Stambaugh (Athens, Ohio: Ohio University Press, 1985), p. 28.

3. Paul Valéry, "Eupalinos, or The Architect," in Valéry, *The Collected Works of Paul Valéry*, vol. 4, ed. Jackson Matthews (New York: Pantheon, 1956), p. 109.

4. Christian Norberg-Schulz, *Meaning in Western Architecture* (London: Studio Vista, 1980), p.5 [T. N. As quoted in Payot, *Le Philosophe et l'architecte*, p.9.]

5. Daniel Payot, *Le Philosophe et l'architecte: Sur quelques déterminations philosophiques de l'idée d'architecture* (Paris: Aubier Montaigne, 1982), p. 11.

## Philosophy of the Architects from Vitruvius to Gropius

“Architecture” comes from the Greek words *arche*: beginning, rule<sup>6</sup> or principle, and *tektonikos*: carpenter or builder, and as often happens when two words are joined together, the meaning of one modifies the other to create an unexpected overall sense of *arche* made out of “tecture” rather than simply meaning building. *Arche* is a supplement. Does this supplement imply, as Denis Hollier insists in *Against Architecture*, – that “Architecture refers to ... whatever allows a construction to escape from purely utilitarian concerns, whatever is aesthetic about it.”<sup>7</sup> Let us examine just what this *arche* means. As just mentioned it means both “beginning” and “rule” and according to Jean–Pierre Vernant’s interpretation it succeeds and abolishes myth because myth takes the distance between beginning and rule as the very subject of its stories.<sup>8</sup> In fact the myths of ancient Greece always tell the same story: that after the beginning the prince had a long struggle to gain rule over a kingdom. When the story is finished the dynasty stabilizes itself: *arche* designates the end of myth so law and order can then be taken for granted as already constituted, so we can then speak about the origin of the world as an original order (regrouping all the geometric relationships that weave the physical universe together). With the arrival of *arche* the world can then be viewed on a terrestrial or celestial map, and the Ionians don’t hesitate in making it into a spectacle: a *theoria*. What precisely does this making into a spectacle mean? That the dynasty has grown in size to include all the families constituting the city. No longer focused on a single personage *arche* can be geometrized: it constructs a homogeneous space (no longer hierarchical as in myth) in which the centre (or agora) is the communal space that permits the reassembled power of the ancient gods to shine at equidistance on everyone.

*Arche*: “beginning and authority without distance,” provides an open and stable reference point around which space as a field of relationships constitutes itself into a multiplicity of images that refer to an archetypal “presenting for inspection” (*theoria, historia*). Thereafter the unification of knowledge into a comprehensive view, into an isonomy, becomes possible.

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6. [T. N. Charles in the French uses the words *commencement* for beginning, and *commandement* for rule, which are nearly homophonic when spoken, thus making an analogy to the double meaning of *arche* in Greek.]

7. Denis Hollier, *Against Architecture, The Writings of Georges Bataille* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: The MIT Press, 1989), p. 31.

8. Jean-Pierre Vernant, *The Origins of Greek Thought* (Ithaca, New York: Cornell University Press, 1982), p. 114.

Architecture is therefore, “a unity of isonomic relations, which presents itself for inspection (in the spectacle, in representations) immanently and effectively and is the in which things are presented without separation from an origin.”<sup>9</sup> It is far from being the “simple building” as is often first supposed: the *arche* is a triple supplement; it presents a prescription (*ordonnance*), a spectacular appearance (*phainesthai*) and an inscribable origin.

The oldest important text concerning architecture still in existence happens to be in Latin not Greek. Its author Vitruvius maintained that the architectural edifice cannot be reduced to a simple building because it is harmonious, embryonic (referring to the beginning of history) and able to be theorized or “treatable” (in other words suitable for being the subject of a “scientific” treatise with universal purpose appealing to a “true” authority).

According to Vitruvius if the building is “harmonious” it ought to have a unity that is equally distributed everywhere due to *proportio*, *symmetria*, and *modulus* (module) used to proportion each element in relation to the whole. *Commodulatio* is “a correspondence among the measures of the members of an entire work, and of the whole to a certain part selected as standard”, and this gives the building its balanced composition.<sup>10</sup> But what reference did Vitruvius use to support *proportio*? The human body, each part should relate to the other parts just as the parts of the body relate to its other parts. For example, if the module of the human body is the number of fingers then the architectural module will imitate this relationship. Hence, according to Anne Cauquelin’s formulation, “the interweaving of various architectural elements”, which is “system forming,” eventually constitutes a “symbolic body.”<sup>11</sup> If the self-sufficiency of the edifice refers to an exterior and primary model, the body, then it will be one that is inscribed within a circle and a square, in other words put into order. The text of Vitruvius’s treatise will itself ultimately attempt to imitate the building which imitates the model of man. Thus the theatre, the closed circular building that refers to an origin displayed at its centre, is the crux of representation, in other words imitation (*mimesis*).

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9. Daniel Payot, *Le Philosophe et l'architecte*, op. cit., p. 59.

10. Vitruvius, *The Ten Books on Architecture*, trans. Morris Hicky Morgan (New York: Dover Publications, 1960), Book 3, chap. I, p. 72.

11. Anne Cauquelin, *Essai de philosophie urbaine* (Paris: Presses universitaires de France, 1982).

The legacy of Vitruvius throughout the Middle Ages, the Renaissance, and the nineteenth century, occupies itself with different interpretations of *proportio*, and with the slippages of mimesis admitted by the various treatises. For Maximus the Confessor the temple represents the world and vice versa, the temple is subjected to a symmetrical order and the world to universal proportionality. This metaphor is taken up again by Kepler: the order of the world is a dome, a “great cavern surrounded and almost closed by the army of the fixed stars, as if by a wall or ceiling”, and in Palladio the dome traces the world, “this great temple achieved its perfection in a single word announced by the immense goodness of God.”<sup>12</sup> The architectural model “delineates the world,” – provided however that architecture is indeed an order subject to the same *arche* of number to which the entire universe is subjected.<sup>13</sup> Number or origin, but how is the *arche* known to man? By referring to nature, which was already – before man – “the sovereign of all.”<sup>14</sup> It is the Ancients “who learned to read in nature that which has the force of law: essentially, in other words, the language of geometry, symmetry and isonomy.”<sup>15</sup> The ancients therefore play a capital role: they are the first readers of nature, but already like an architect they must not only read it but also constitute it as a model, they are therefore “the producers of the very *arche* that they should have however only reproduced.”<sup>16</sup> The origin, the *arche*, anticipates itself. How then to escape from this infinite regression? By returning to the medieval tradition of divine revelation by means of architecture. The temple of Jerusalem becomes the thing to imitate, but since the Bible is rather vague about it, we say that God is expressed by Vitruvius, in other words he speaks the language of isonomy. Little by little the idea of architectural mimesis falls to pieces.

This decline was clearly formulated by Rousseau. He says men have banished gods to the temples, and then they have chased them out of these temples and placed themselves there. “This was the zenith of depravity, and immorality never reached greater heights than when it was seen supported, as it were, at the entryways of the palaces of the mighty by marble

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12. As quoted in Payot, *Le philosophe et l'architecte*, op. cit., p. 68

13. Denis Hollier, *Against Architecture*, op. cit., p. 35.

14. Leon Battista Alberti, *On the Art of Building in Ten Books*, trans. Joseph Rykwert et al (Cambridge, Massachusetts: The MIT Press, 1988), p. 242.

15. Daniel Payot, *Le philosophe et l'architecte*, op. cit., p. 72.

16 . Ibid.

columns, sculpted on Corinthian capitals.”<sup>17</sup> What he demanded was a return to *presentation*, prior to any re-enactment or performance.

But how does an architect like Claude Perrault respond to this? He considers that the building is itself in fact a presentation, a facade, and a discourse. But the question immediately arises: is this discourse beautiful because of “the figures of speech that it uses, or the job that it performs”? A typically theatrical conflict, yet it brings back the dilemma: “is the beauty in the text that is read or the diction and the performance of the actor who reads it?” If we abandon mimesis, we invoke the “judgement”, the “judicious disposition.” But then the emancipated architect, no longer under the spell of the Ancients obeys nothing more than “common sense” or “reason.” Staying with the metaphor of the theatre the actor decidedly becomes “the author of the discourse that he reads.” Quatremère de Quincy says that architecture “produces the model that it then follows”, and advocates the self-sufficiency of construction. He considers that *architecture can do without philosophy*: sociology will suffice. In the positivist era *arche* fades from view and the engineer compensates for what the architect lacks. “American Engineers”, writes Le Corbusier, “crush the dying architecture with their calculations.” Gropius more calmly explained: “The architect holds a too high an opinion of his function ... the engineer, on the contrary, free of any aesthetic preconceptions or history, has conquered clearly defined and organic forms.”

Is it possible then to conceive an architecture without *arche*, in other words without beginning, beyond control, rebellious in principle, *an-archic* perhaps? To directly produce plenitude *arche* needs order, and as such it is not nor has it ever been a mere supplement. This is nullified when the model appears to be already constructed according to order. Paradoxically the building both obeys and ceases to be based on order, that is to say *arche* fails to perform its role of repairing the fault or wound opened up by the separation from origin.

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17. Jean-Jacques Rousseau, *The Discourse on the Sciences and Arts and The Social Contract*, trans. Susan Dunn (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2002), p. 60.

## The Architecture of the Philosophers from Plato to Hegel

The first part of our investigation revealed the fragility of the union between the two words *arche* and *tektonikos* that form “architecture” and remain contained within the memory of language, which therefore predisposes architects to create their own philosophy.

But what do philosophers think about architecture? The answer has two parts it seems. On the one hand there are philosophies of architecture, distinct from the spontaneous reflections of the architects themselves, and on the other hand there are philosophers who don't hesitate in claiming architecture as the model on which their systems are based. The overlapping and entanglement of these two levels makes any investigation of them complicated. However a way through can be found by unravelling the progressive divergence between architecture and philosophy.

The essential theme emerging from the philosophical consideration of architecture is first expressed by Plato. Plato describes architecture as an “art of production” and not an “art of acquiring” or metier, which he then opposes to painting because painting only creates simulacra, things that are not the things themselves but are “secondary.”<sup>18</sup> Also architectural production conforms to rules: it assumes that we know “something of order” and that this knowledge is immanent to action. The theoretical (number and measure) collaborates with practice, their coexistence is hierarchical: execution (*tecture*) must follow command (*arche*). Therefore, if “to simply build” is to govern the inanimate, being an architect is a political performance. Only architecture and politics have to regain their foundation in a forgotten tradition: in the knowledge of the divine and man's relationship to the gods, where the ancients excelled. Since the world is taken to be a product (such knowledge is indispensable to the architect as archi-producer) it can no longer be deciphered in the transparency of its origin. Lost, it will only reappear when the demiurge intervenes to reconnect the sensible with the intelligible. The architect is supposed to supplement the demiurge acting as intermediary or mediator, stitching together what was separated but what cannot be seen “directly.” Plotinus even says the knowledge that makes architectural construction possible must combine divine knowledge with sensible knowledge; architecture is therefore “a metaphor for

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18. Plato, *Sophist* 265a - 266c in Plato, *Complete Works*, ed. John M. Cooper and D. S. Hutchinson (Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing, 1997), p. 289 - 290.

whatever re-assembles”, not by removing all distance but by reproducing order. The building must be a mediator, it “elevates the soul by presenting the image of the invisible”, in other words the unity of the harmony that the mason does not perceive, but which the architect sees with their mind’s eye. St. Augustine meanwhile will explain the contrast between the architect, the *arche-tektonikos*, as the fabricator who is connected to the origin, and the “simple” *tektonikos*, as the one who is “unable to ascend the hierarchy of causes.” Thus two possibilities are presented, either an irreducible distance between sensible beauty and intelligible harmony, or the void between them is eliminated, but then we run the risk of homogenizing the heterogeneous terms needed for the desired union.

As noted, it is always *arche* that is the problem, as if the fault that was concealed at the beginning can always open up again. The “anagogy” of Plato and Plotinus, in other words the sense of the ascent to the One, order and enlightenment, eventually stumbles upon this problem of foundation. A difficulty that was not resolved until the seventeenth century when Descartes decided to make a clean break with the idea of foundation as “absolute” by returning to zero.

Descartes’ text, the “Seventh Set of Objections with Replies,” is significant because here he compares himself to an architect who “digs” until he finds “rock” in order to finally construct something on solid foundations (in other words he doubts everything except the *cogito*).<sup>19</sup> However, the “foundation” that Descartes discovers is none other than himself (*ego*) as “substance that doubts, or thinks”, but it is not an external and inert rock like the one the architect builds on, it is internal and reflexive. The architect, Descartes observed, does not need any such reflexivity and may ultimately dispense with philosophizing altogether, because even if the stability of rock is relative they can, at least provisionally, always build something upon it, while Descartes requires an unwavering support (*fundamentum cussum*). However the architectural metaphor is justified because on one hand the subject must be granted a foundational character, while on the other the presentation must be both monumental and transparent, it must be considered to possess the efficacy of foundation in every respect. Only the philosophy of Descartes is able to realize what the architect aims to achieve, an “ideal” architecture that does not imitate the work of the architect rather it

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19. René Descartes, “Seventh Set of Objections with Replies” in *The Philosophical Writings of Descartes*, vol. II, trans. John Cottingham et al. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991), pp. 358 - 383.

accomplishes what only the philosophical can: self-sufficiency, the production of evidence from solid foundations, truth emanating from the certainty of the subject. But this also means that Descartes mimics architects, “since they imitate nothing” and therefore shatters the philosophers’ usual dependence on *mimesis*. If all truth is certain then the philosopher finds that it is a certainty that motivates “the engineer” (the term is Descartes’) and it no longer leads down the path of the discovery of a foundation. This emancipation of the architect promoted to engineer, opens modern architecture to “genius”<sup>20</sup> and will find its counterpart in the promotion of the architectural metaphor to characterize modern metaphysics, which after Descartes will always be understood as a system and a construction.

Therefore in Heidegger’s view, reason for Kant, “is a *focus imaginarius*, in other words a refuge in which converge all the traits of the questioning of things ... and from which, in turn, all knowledge receives its unity.” Quite possibly inspired by J. H. Lambert’s *Elements for an Architectonic* (*Anlage zur Architectonic*, 1771) Kant writes an “Architectonic of pure reason.” “In architecture”, says Heidegger, one hears: “tectonic – built, assembled – and *arche*, according to the foundations and principles governing the construction of buildings.” It reappears without the “somnambulistic assurance” that characterizes Kant and brings us back purely and simply to, “the fundamental signification of the original philosophical concepts of the Greeks”, and therefore will lead to the rediscovery of the dead end of *arche* because despite reason being called the “faculty of ideas”, it fails to be systematized since the origin of ideas remains obscure. Ideas are just “regulatory” according to Kant and, “do not present as such what is conveyed in them” – in short, unlike the Platonic ideas they do not have the “positive” status of being the discovery of truth – even if their system can be eventually constituted.

If for Kant the reality of the system remains problematic this obviously takes nothing away from its necessity. “Only the system”, says Heidegger, “is the guarantor of the internal unity of knowledge, of its being scientific and truthful. We understand that the system is the key word of German idealism and that it means nothing other than the true self-founding of the totality of essential knowledge” – in other words what Hegel called *absolute knowledge*. Since the author of the *Logic* will proclaim himself “the last philosopher”, the history of mind will cease in fact to be considered, “as a succession of opinions formulated by isolated

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20. [T. N. In French *genie*, genius, is homophonic with *le genie*, the engineer.]



thinkers.” Hegel elaborates for the first time, “a *history* of philosophy, such that this history constitutes itself as a way in which absolute knowledge gains access to itself.”

Hence the crucial importance of a thought that by thinking itself can be considered to be architecture “before” referring to any “empirical” architecture whatsoever (as Descartes still did). Moreover, if the system really works as absolute knowledge it will encompass “empirical” architecture itself and account for its history both as it is governed by the requirement of the system and chronologically as a prelude to the advent of the system. In this sense we can agree with the comparison suggested long ago by Jean Grenier between the Hegelian system and “a set of double spiral stairs whose intersections lead to encounters that are increasingly rich in divisions, which themselves produce further new unions and so on.” For Hegel architecture is an art, in other words something already bound to the mind since art is considered the first moment of Absolute Spirit, but it is also the first moment of art, the beginning of the beginning. The first architecture is “symbolic” architecture and is primarily negative, “inorganic.” Its material is massive and its forms arbitrary: it is Hegel says, “inorganic sculpture.” But sculpture is the art that in principle succeeds architecture; Hegel calls it “organic figuration.” Therefore architecture is a “not yet” that is intended to be surpassed, superseded (*aufheben*), the beginning looking forward to its (classicizing) maturation, in other words becoming adequate to mind. Since this adequation fails, architecture “exerts mind upon the exterior ... before being able to think like an adult, it has to start by perceiving itself as being different from its surroundings – by which it succeeds in transforming its surroundings, by building in other words.” Hence the artisanal character of symbolic art produced by the *Werkmeister* or “foreman” who is further described in Hegel's *Phenomenology of Spirit*: they can only develop at this stage instinctive constructions, not yet saturated by mind: in the eyes of Hegel, they “receive mind as a foreign and deceased spirit that abandons its living interpenetration with effectivity and, being itself dead; between these crystals devoid of life.” Most certainly the first architects dedicated themselves to building tombs, these tombs are the pyramids. It is in Egypt from the beginning that architecture designates death as its prerequisite.

One could say this forgets about constructions made prior to the pyramids, the solid and massive Tower of Babel around which people congregated during sacred festivals – or else the cities of Media and Persia. Hegel responds: they are not works of art, their unity is

“simply the first stage and does not in itself strive towards difference.” The pyramid appears to be a crypt, it draws its identity not from a pre-existing identity, but “an identity posed by the spirit,” and it envelops a hollowness, a difference, death itself. So that it is Egypt that thinks for the first time the negative as Absolute, or the “negation of the Absolute by itself”, under the species of the death of god, the god of “natural religion” that is not yet the personal God of revealed religion because it is still animal, still cosmic. Here death is a negation but “only direct and natural”, and not yet “spiritual.” It is only a moment, when the Absolute discards what it contains originally by nature. It must be seen from above: as a birth of a resurrection that is constitutive of the divine. The Egyptians must lead towards the Greeks.

We can now understand the status of hieroglyphs: they are enigmas awaiting a language that is “of the mind, clear and unequivocal”, in other words Greek. And the status of the labyrinth: death is the outline of an internalization of the spirit, but it still does not show itself other than in the form of a building that encompasses it, in which it is concealed. Architecture is therefore, from Hegel’s point of view, which Daniel Payot has retraced beginning with Egypt, the “articulation of a building, pyramid or labyrinth, symbolically known as death which is not hidden other than to manifest the desire of thought, a thought which understands itself as being reborn from the ashes and death, from the crypt where the symbolic building is enclosed.... There is, in short, in the labyrinth of the symbol the discovery of a way out: to have escaped it from the start – and going through it is to find the exit that we had already entered.”<sup>21</sup>

## Beyond Modernity

By taking advantage of the meditation on the relationship of architecture and *arche*, the discourse of the philosophers will only confirm what the architects themselves have always suspected: to see this art as a model for philosophy by emphasizing the “Apollonian” aspect of Vitruvius, in short to imagine that architecture is what the West uses, with Oedipus’ help, to put the sphinx to death and found a unitary tradition centred on reason – all this is and probably has never been more than wishful thinking: a theology. The theological summas

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21. Payot, op. cit. p.47 [T. N. see the translation in section 1.3 of this thesis]

have never completely extracted the cathedrals from what Hegel called “natural religion” and, symmetrically, the edifice of thought does not collapse by trying to give itself foundation.

Does the twentieth century offer anything more consoling? Didn't the Greek temple teach Heidegger – that under “the opening of the world”, “resting on a rock”, it makes “the obscure stand out from this raw support?” The earth says Heidegger is, “in essence that which encloses.” In contrast to the world, the earth is the secret place, “where fulfilment of all that blooms returns to find shelter as such.” It only reveals itself, “if it remains unrevealed and indecipherable. The earth therefore works against any attempt to penetrate it.” The earth is said to be “an absence and a withdrawal from which proceeds any entry into presence.” The withdrawal, in turn, far from designating the absence of being signifies the revealing of its presence: the act of withdrawal “properly belongs to being. The concealment, the withdrawal, is the way that being endures as being, in other words it is not in accord with itself.... Revealing and withdrawal are one and the same, not two.”

Therefore, whatever the allegiance of Heidegger may be – and of the entire West – to ancient Greece and the original Greek terms, when seen with clarity *arche* will restore, in the words of Emmanuel Levinas, “the wonders of our architecture their function as makeshift desert shelters.”<sup>22</sup> Should we therefore completely reverse the perspective and no longer worry about *arche* but instead focus on the other component of the word “architecture”, the tecture, which Heidegger in “Building Dwelling Thinking” reminds us evokes the idea of engendering, and more broadly *technē* – art or technique? But doesn't *technē* introduce in turn an operative and manipulative dimension – even that of engineering – which bypasses all *logos* and tends today to make “techno-logy” a contradiction in terms? “This tragic tecture”, suggests Daniel Payot, “is perhaps already that of the Egyptians, which Hegel stressed knew no ‘clear and unequivocal’ language and that is why they tirelessly expended themselves, with no other purpose than expenditure even in a gigantic work of construction: driven by no rule, neither any *arche* nor any telos, but in front of which we can only construct, invent images, or laugh at the forever illegible ‘text’ of death.”<sup>23</sup>

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22. T.N. Emmanuel Levinas, “The Poet’s Vision” in Levinas, *Proper Names*, trans. Michael B. Smith (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1996) p.137.

23. Payot, op. cit., p.198. [T. N. See translation in section 1.3 of this thesis.]

It seems that Hegel has blocked all the exits, as we might say today. But he could not avoid accepting the existence of a “double beginning”, and therefore a gap between Egypt and Greece, between the pyramid and the theatre, and between the labyrinth and the temple, and the fact that his system, no matter how accomplished and complete he tries to make it, does not give a clear reply (other than “logically”) to the primary question: “how and why to exit Egypt?”<sup>24</sup> This is a question that does not refer, even from the start, only to the Old Testament. It underlines the simple observation that Greece, geographically and historically, is not Egypt. It is impossible therefore to systematize everything in a Hegelian way: it is impossible to generalize. To say for example that in the wake of Hegel “the truth is not given” is still to systematize; Heidegger, as we have seen, simply stated that withdrawal is the “way” that being is offered to us. A slight but important difference: it separates modernity, inconsolably thirsting for the absolute, the background to the loss of *arche* (which it considers irremediable), and “postmodern” relativism of our times, which can be diagnosed as the advent of a principle of anarchy.<sup>25</sup> It is on this point that everything in the era of postmodernity could rebound: if, as Heidegger thought, “another beginning” is indeed possible then philosophy has not yet finished with architecture. And it is not because “thought no longer constructs buildings”, but rather because it wanders down “paths that lead nowhere” that it is permanently destined to the labyrinth.<sup>26</sup>

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24. Payot, p. 208. [T. N. See translation in section 1.3 of this thesis]

25. Reiner Schürmann, *Heidegger on Being and Acting: From Principles to Anarchy*, trans. Christine-Marie Gros (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1987).

26. “Chemins qui ne mènent nulle part” (paths that lead nowhere) is the title of the French translation of Heidegger’s book *Holzwege*, translated into English as *Off the Beaten Track*.



# 1.3

## The Philosopher and the Architect: On Some of the Philosophical Determinations of the Idea of Architecture<sup>1</sup>

by Daniel Payot

translated by Tim Adams

### Introduction

The aims of art are almost the same as those of intelligence.

Hegel, *Introduction à l'esthétique*, p. 89.

Enough will have been gained if dwelling and building have become *worthy of questioning* and thus have remained *worthy of thought*.

Heidegger, "Building Dwelling Thinking", p. 158.

Socrates remembers that he discovered something on a beach that captured his imagination, an object that was pure and white; a shell, a bone, a tool? Its order and harmony called out for some kind of imitation; its beauty demanded a creative act that would reproduce it and thus guarantee its preservation and permanence. There were two ways this could have

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1. [T. N. The source for this translation is Daniel Payot, *Le philosophe et l'architecte: Sur quelques déterminations philosophiques de l'idée d'architecture* (Paris: Aubier Montaigne, 1982). This is a translation of the following selected sections: Introduction, pp. 7-11; Chapter 1, The Intermediate Beginning, the Moment of Architecture, pp. 15 – 24; Chapter 8, The Temple and the Echo, pp. 159 - 183; Chapter 9, A Joyful Building? pp. 185 – 202; and Conclusion, Oedipus and "Archaism" pp. 205 - 209.]

been achieved, either the symmetry and smoothness of the contemplated form could be scaled up to a larger size, then the perfection of the proposed enclosure would surely inspire its inhabitants to loving reflections on wisdom and truth, or else one could build a monument of reflection in speech and words, a knowledge that would capture its truth, then the beauty of the original object would seem to be a premonition or reoccurrence of an eternal truth. A difficult but necessary decision had to be made between the two. Socrates chose the path of knowledge but there remained within him the architect he decided not to become, who lives on in his thoughts and inspires them. Thus he painfully remembers in contrasting terms that are usually kept apart: a building that speaks, or better yet, sings the harmony of the world, while language, beautiful and true, is a constructor. Socrates says: “Chance, placed in my hands the most ambiguous object imaginable. And the infinite reflections that it caused me to make were equally capable of leading me to that philosopher that I became, and to the artist that I have never been.... There was within me an architect whom circumstances did not fashion forth.” Phaedrus echoing these confidences says: “I now understand how you could hesitate between constructing (*construire*) and knowing (*connaître*).... ”

This is a Socratic dialogue but it’s not Platonic, we are quoting from Paul Valéry’s dialogue, *Eupalinos, or The Architect*.<sup>2</sup> In a certain sense we will be staying close to this parody, this fictional account of Socrates regretting he did not pursue a different vocation. Or rather, passing through various references we will attempt to comment on the matter proposed in that work concerning a certain sameness<sup>3</sup>, embarrassing and perhaps irrepressible, between

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2. Paul Valéry, “Eupalinos, or The Architect”, in *The Collected Works of Paul Valéry*, Volume 4, ed. Jackson Mathews (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1958). [T. N. All notes belong to the original text unless otherwise stated. The above quotations from “Eupalinos” are found on pp. 110, 109 and 124 respectively and the phrase “language is a constructor” is found on p. 106.]

3. [T. N. The term used here for “sameness” is *mêmeté* and is not found in any French dictionary. It is a neologism created by Voltaire in his article “Identité” from his *Dictionnaire philosophique* (1746), where it means an individual’s troubling identity, constant throughout one’s life despite the fact that all the atoms in their body may have been replaced, and all their memories and beliefs may have been radically changed, thus it is a nominal sameness. See Voltaire, *The Works of Voltaire. A Contemporary Version*, trans. William F. Fleming (New York: E. R. DuMont, 1901), vol. 5, pp. 114 - 118. By choosing *mêmeté* over the more commonly used terms *similitude* or *resemblance*, Payot creates a connection to the term mimesis discussed at the beginning of Chapter 4.]

a certain performance of building – where the end product can speak or sing – and philosophy.

But our object is just as ambiguous as the object on the beach found by Socrates: it is nothing more than an encounter, a convergence between the two fields of thought and architecture, a union that cannot happen when each is left to itself. Before we begin our own examination, in order to gage a measure of its uniqueness, we will examine a few theoretical constructs that would respond to our fictitious Athenian's hesitation with some assurance.

So we have Philippe Boudon defining architecture as a “spatial thinking” and remarking that: “One can ... observe ... relatively frequently in certain kinds of *architecture* the presence of what is an underlying thought or at least the presentation of thought.”<sup>4</sup> The building is a foundation for thoughts that thereafter ensures, reinforces, and sustains them. Or in an article by Marcel Brion, architecture provides thought with a place for its permanent inscription: so there is “the importance ... of buildings that man uses, whether voluntarily or not, to write his metaphysics.”<sup>5</sup> Architectural (or architectonic) thought, meaningful construction, and thinking: this confluence of “to construct” [*construire*] and “to know” [*connaître*] is in fact the very subject of Erwin Panofsky's essay *Gothic Architecture and Scholasticism*<sup>6</sup>: between 1130 and 1270, due to their structural analogies, the cathedral and the *summa*, the built construction and the collected knowledge, are tightly bound together and share a common destiny.<sup>7</sup>

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4. Philippe Boudon, *Sur l'espace architectural, essai d'épistémologie de l'architecture* (Marseille: Éditions Parenthèses, 2003), p. 74.

5. Marcel Brion, “Remarques sur l'architecture”, in *Les Etudes Philosophiques* (January-March 1946). See also: Émile Mâle, *Religious Art in France, The Twelfth Century: A Study of the Origins of Medieval Iconography*, trans. M. Mathews (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1978) and *Religious Art in France, XIII Century: A Study in Mediaeval Iconography and its Sources of Inspiration*, trans. Dora Nussey (London: J. M. Dent and Sons, 1913).

6. Erwin Panofsky, *Gothic Architecture and Scholasticism* (New York: Meridian Books, 1957).

7. For a critique of the perspective constructed by Panofsky in this text, see Philippe Boudon, *op. cit.*, p. 37 ff., and Martin Heidegger, *Schelling's Treatise on the Essence of Human Freedom*, trans. Joan Stambaugh (Athens, Ohio: Ohio University Press, 1985), p. 28. [T. N. In Latin *summa* (plural *summae*) means summit, sum total, summation and summary. During the medieval period it came to mean a text that summed up an entire field of knowledge, such as the *Summa Theologica* by St. Thomas Aquinas which Pajot will discuss in Chapter 6 of his book.]



There are several recent studies that have made us familiar with the idea that architecture is a kind of thought. To name one Christian Norberg-Schulz who considers: “Architecture ought to be understood in terms of meaningful (symbolic) forms. As such it is part of the history of existential meanings.”<sup>8</sup> But already Alain in his *Vingt leçons sur les Beaux-Arts* from 1930, at the start of the fourteenth lesson writes, “I will now treat architecture as a sign, as a sign of man. Without doubt the most powerful language.... Buildings have a clear meaning like words.”<sup>9</sup> “The Language of the people speaking to themselves,” even if verbal language cannot translate this word for word, architecture nevertheless generates thought: “Notice in this regard it is just like man thinks. First he constructs something, then he ornaments it, and finally he contemplates his work, it is in the same way that he gives form to his thoughts.”<sup>10</sup> Buildings like the pyramids are, “the most solid image of our thoughts”, which Alain sees as the concretion of a “Spinozist immortality”<sup>11</sup> – presented to thought as a sign of its reality and its perfection: “We find the mere presence of a building strongly foreboding, we feel its indivisible unity of mind and thing.”<sup>12</sup>

All these essays are responding in their own way to the matter raised in *Eupalinos*, and they propose how to deal with this problem. But perhaps they do not fully grasp the true meaning of the matter because they seem to know in advance that on one side there is thought and on the other there is architecture – and so therefore their reunion seems quite possible. They set up an encounter between two objects, they know where the differences lie, and they have the means to reduce it. But for Valéry’s Socrates the question is more profound: building and thought collapse into each other, from the beginning they are inseparable: it is not a matter of reconciling diverse unities but conversely, of resolving the confusion so that each

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8. Christian Norberg-Schulz, *Meaning in Western Architecture* (New York, Rizzoli, 1980), p.5. See also *Intentions in Architecture* (Cambridge, Mass.: The MIT Press, 1965).

9. Alain (Émile Chartier), “Vingt leçons sur les Beaux-Arts”, in *Les Arts et les Dieux* (Paris: N. R. F., La Pléiade, 1958), p. 564. See also: Alain, *Système des Beaux-Arts* (Paris: Idées/Gallimard, 1926), Book 6, “Architecture.”

10. Alain, “Vingt leçons sur les Beaux-Arts”, op. cit., p. 570. Alain adds – and we will try and pay attention to this: “And see how the mind shows itself through the arts, like it was trying to erect some kind of Hegelian system. (Ibid., p. 569).

11. Ibid., p. 566.

12. Ibid., p. 565.

can belong to a specific region. If Socrates was so hesitant, it was precisely because he could not establish a secure border between knowledge and architecture, because he was forever falling back into their indistinctness, to the troubling sameness, which could have been proposed in terms of either of the two endeavours.

It is this troubling sameness that we intend to interrogate here. But how do we know in advance which thinking in the philosophical realm will confess to this troubling sameness, or in architecture, where the admission will be even harder to solicit? The discovery we made on the shores of *Eupalinos* will not guarantee any assurances from either side, it only indicates that they are somehow connected. But how do we access this place? We cannot start out from architecture and navigate our way towards thought since we can no longer take architecture to be a separate region: its location is still too problematic. So we will follow the reverse course: we will try, in the vocabulary of Philippe Boudon, to go from thought and its exposition to an architecture that supports it and lets it dwell; reaching this place of knowledge where it encounters what it names architecture and it recognizes as being such.

To begin it will help to declare what this project presupposes: that “architecture” – what is named as such – is only ever encountered in the vicinity of thought, is only ever implicated when it is compromised by knowledge. We must accept what is seemingly paradoxical: that there is no architecture other than in thought. Certainly we live in and frequent houses – sometimes even palaces – and our communions take place in churches. But where does “architecture” begin? Is it itself habitable? What presence does it build? “A work of architecture”, writes Bernard Teyssèdre, “belongs to a different order than that of a shelter.”<sup>13</sup> It is not something to be used immediately or empirically – where one would encounter only stones, volumes and spaces, it is instead, according to a certain semantic extension that Denis Hollier quoting Georges Bataille calls, the “job” (*besogne*) of words.<sup>14</sup>

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13. Bernard Teyssèdre, *L'esthétique de Hegel* (Paris: Press Universitaires France, 1958), p. 31.

14. Denis Hollier, *Against Architecture: The Writings of Georges Bataille*, trans. Betsy Wing (Cambridge, Massachusetts: The MIT Press, 1989), p. 30 ff. [T. N. Hollier here quotes from Bataille's article “L'informe” from the journal *Documents* 7 (December, 1929). The original French term used is “*besogne*” which means work, business, job, task, but also connotes a task one takes little pleasure in, and in certain contexts has a vulgar meaning of to have sex vigorously as in the phrase “pour atteindre la besogne”: to complete the task (of having sex), a meaning that Bataille no doubt intended given his well known interest in eroticism.]

Architecture is from the start a play or effect of words – and these words need to be interrogated from the start, or rather, it is an effect of knowledge: a domain bounded, circumscribed, and assigned a place in relation to knowledge by knowledge itself in search of its own attributions. Here this domain will be named the “idea of architecture” (*idée d’architecture*) and its various determinations will be examined.<sup>15</sup>

This is precisely what constitutes our material: in the various texts cited we will not privilege the explicit “scientific” or “technical” notes *on* architecture. This author affirms that the only affirmations of interests here will be those that lead to the same indecision, richness of significance and potentiality of thought that was the concern of Socrates in *Eupalinos*. That is why we do not limit ourselves to the theoretical approaches to architecture whether they are aesthetic or professional. Perhaps in fact the “job” of words – the idea of architecture – is even richer when treated without pretence to any particular interest in the art of building, when its knowledge is discovered or implied nevertheless. And especially when this implication occurs during the processes by which thought searches to give itself a name by an act of exclusion. The convergence of knowledge and building will take on its widest and most productive meaning when it is not subjected to any project of “technical” explanation.

Therefore in response to the Valéryan interpellation we will study the philosophical determination of the idea of architecture. And it is to Hegelianism, the philosophy that questions thinking and interrogates itself that we will first pay our attention. In a sense, and because we want to stay with the question raised by *Eupalinos*, our work will form a commentary on Hegel even if it involves many other references beyond those pages which Hegel devoted to architecture. By following all the pathways opened up to us we hope to gain a measure of the effects of these determinations, which in the process of thinking tie architecture – what thinking names as such – together with thought.

On the horizon of these readings we hope to perceive another question, one that will perhaps give them direction: how is architecture concerned with thought and made according to it? How can we understand the occurrence of an idea of architecture by way of philosophy?

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15. The “idea of architecture” (*idée d’architecture*) and not “the architectural idea” (*idée de l’architecture*). In the latter formulation there is an object posited in advance, meaning there is first something that exists that is architecture, and only then can we form an idea about it. For all the reasons just stated we cannot start out from such a presupposition.



Figure 5. Play shell, Wynyard Quarter Play Space, Auckland, designed by Isthmus Group Architects.  
Photographed by the author, 10 December 2012.

## The Intermediate Beginning, the Moment of Architecture<sup>16</sup>

From the perspective just introduced, there is nothing obvious about architecture; it cannot be treated as if it was something self-sufficient and already there, belonging to an order that allows it to be a stable object for reflection. If Hegel is accorded the primary place in our attempt to determine the idea of architecture it is because he takes architecture to be a moment and not a given state of affairs. It is not a matter of producing a thought or a representative knowledge *about* architecture, like aesthetics in the narrow sense of the term; it

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16. [T. N. Chapter 1 of Daniel Payot, *Le philosophe et l'architecte* (Paris: Aubier Montaigne, 1982), pp. 15 - 24.]

is first of all a matter of reading the analyses Hegel devotes to architecture to find the position it has as a moment of knowledge, as a stage of thought.<sup>17</sup>

This position and this stage are privileged because the moment of architecture in the Hegelian text is the very *beginning* itself. Before we confront the internal articulations of these texts, it would be worthwhile taking a brief overview of the situation.

Architecture for Hegel is a fine art. This attribution is not by itself unusual but it is interesting here for two reasons. First it connects architecture to thinking because art in general reconciles the idea with its sensuous presentation.<sup>18</sup> It is “one way of bringing to our minds and expressing the *Divine*, the deepest interests of mankind, and the most comprehensive truths of the spirit.”<sup>19</sup> Secondly and most importantly art is the first moment of absolute spirit.<sup>20</sup> The in-itself of spirit as an in-and-for-itself, the moment of the “the immediate actuality and presence of the Absolute,” and the “liberation of the spirit from the content and form of finitude.”<sup>21</sup> To describe architecture as a fine art for Hegelianism is already to make it participate in a beginning.

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17. The analyses that we follow here are essentially found in the following book chapters: from *Aesthetics: Lectures on Fine Art*, trans. T. M. Knox (London: Oxford University Press, 1975): “Introduction”, “The Symbolic Form of Art”, “Architecture” and “Sculpture”, from *Phenomenology of Spirit*, trans. A. V. Miller (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1977), “Natural Religion”, and from *The Philosophy of History*, trans. J. Sibree (Kitchener: Batoche Books, 2001). “Part I: The Oriental World.” Throughout this work the expression “the Hegelian text” refers to the “corpus” formed by these three main references. [T. N. Wherever possible the existing English translations have been substituted in place of the French translations used by Payot. When the French texts are based on longer German versions than those used by the English translators it has been necessary to refer to the French translations.]

18. A frequent assertion, see for example *Aesthetics*, pp. 7 and 70.

19. *Ibid.*, p. 7.

20. See *Encyclopedia of the Philosophical Sciences*, Part 3 (“Philosophy of Mind”), Section 3 (“Absolute Mind”) that shows the movement of the Spirit in the succession from art to religion to philosophy. The *Aesthetics* only says: “art ... only fulfils its supreme task when it has placed itself in the same sphere as religion and philosophy” (*Aesthetics*, p. 7) and “art as itself (is) proceeding from the absolute Idea.” (*Ibid.*, p. 70.)

21. *Aesthetics*, p. 324. See also the introduction of the first part of the *Aesthetics*: The situation of art in relation to finite effectiveness. [T. N. The second quote is not in the English translation.]

But architecture is more precisely the beginning of art that is itself the beginning; first of all, “architecture confronts us as the beginning of art, a beginning grounded in the essential nature of art itself. It is the beginning of art...”<sup>22</sup> The moment of architecture in the movement of art is analogous to the moment of art in the movement of the spirit, which Denis Hollier expresses in the following terms, “The pages on architecture are ... a sort of redoubling of aesthetics as a whole and, by extension, the entire system in which this aesthetics lies.”<sup>23</sup> The philosophy of art, a “circlet of ... scientific necessity” for the “organic totality” of the “whole of philosophy”<sup>24</sup>, will further contain a necessary circlet for the organic totality of the Aesthetics, where it will place architecture as the very first link in the chain that ultimately leads to philosophy.

In all that follows we must never forget what is at stake here. It will be immediately confirmed by the logical development of the question induced by this general approach: what does architecture begin, what in fact must it begin?

## The Childhood of Art

Architecture, like all the other arts, must be studied according to the double differentiation of the general concept of beauty that characterizes the becoming of art. If the content is constituted by “the Idea, while its form is the configuration of sensuous material”<sup>25</sup>, the manifestation of this idea is accomplished in two ways, firstly as the gradual succession of

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22. *Aesthetics*, p. 624. See also p. 630: “If therefore in the series of particular arts architecture is treated first, this must not merely mean that it is presented as the art offering itself for treatment first on the strength of its being so determined by the nature of art; on the contrary, it must equally clearly be seen to be the art coming first in the existence of art in the world.”

23. Denis Hollier, *Against Architecture*, p. 6. We owe a lot to this book and not just here in this chapter, particularly for its opening pages that examine the Hegelian texts on architecture and a little further on, under the title “The Architectural Metaphor”, for what we call the “idea of architecture.” We hope to make clear where it is close to Hollier’s analysis and where it diverges from it. Note also that our first part (Chapters 1 and 2) pick up several points made by Jacques Derrida in the article, “The Pit and the Pyramid: Introduction to Hegel’s Semiology,” from *Margins of Philosophy*, trans. Alan Bass (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1982), pp. 69 - 108.

24. *Aesthetics*, p. 24.

25. *Ibid.*, p. 70.

artistic representations regarding the “sequence of definite conceptions of the world.”<sup>26</sup> And secondly as the expression of this sequence in “the specific modes of the sensuous being of art” corresponding to the particular arts.<sup>27</sup> Therefore art is in the first instance realised in the evolution of forms, from symbolic art to classical art to romantic art, and in the second instance according to the sequence of the particular arts, from painting to sculpture to architecture to music and poetry.<sup>28</sup> Each one of these arts is affirmed for itself autonomously in relation to the others.<sup>29</sup> But at the same time that each art form<sup>30</sup> follows its own objective so there are two systems of differentiations, “just as the particular art-forms, taken as a group, have in them a progress, a development from the symbolic into the classical and then the romantic, so on the one hand we find in the individual arts also a similar progress because it is precisely the art-forms themselves which acquire their determinate existence through the individual arts.”<sup>31</sup>

As a sensuous existence architecture evolves according to the three moments in the history of forms, so we must speak about a symbolic architecture, a classical architecture, and a romantic architecture.<sup>32</sup>

As a figure objectifying one of the forms of art, architecture is nevertheless essentially linked to the symbolic, “architecture corresponds to the symbolic form of art, and, as a particular art, realizes the principle of that form in the most appropriate way.”<sup>33</sup> “Therefore architecture in its fundamental character remains throughout of a symbolic kind.”<sup>34</sup>

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26. Ibid., p. 72.

27. Ibid., p. 73.

28. On this double differentiation of the Idea, see Bernard Teyssèdre, *L'esthétique de Hegel* (Paris: P. U. F., 1958), p. 53 ff.

29. *Aesthetics*, p. 614.

30. Ibid.

31. Ibid.

32. Architecture covers the entire becoming of art, which is one of its peculiarities. So in fact, “sculpture ... is so deeply penetrated by classical form, and that of painting and music by the romantic form, that only a more or less narrow room is left for the development in these arts of the typical character of the other art-forms”, while for architecture, “the artistic forms, the strictly symbolic, the classical, and the romantic, are its determinants at different stages and are here of greater importance than they are in the other arts.” (*Aesthetics*, p. 643).

33. Ibid., p. 632.

34. Ibid., p. 634.

What essentially interests us here under the name of the “idea of architecture” is that the precise object of research is not architecture in general but the first architecture that Hegel calls symbolic or independent, and which exhausts its determination as a figure: architecture, the beginning of art, finds its fundamental expression in symbolic architecture, the beginning of architecture, the multiplication of the abyss that decidedly and precisely locates its inaugural character.<sup>35</sup>

## Inadequacy, Exteriority

The beginning is presented empirically as being an inadequacy. The materials required by architecture are provided by “matter itself in its immediate externality as a mechanical heavy mass.”<sup>36</sup> Its dominant feature is its massive and cumbersome submission to the laws of gravity.<sup>37</sup> Consequently its forms fail to bloom, the regularity and symmetry imposed on it arbitrarily and externally by its materiality make it unable to fully harmonise with the body.<sup>38</sup> Its overall appearance will therefore take on the forms of crystallization<sup>39</sup> and the inorganic.<sup>40</sup>

The latter term sums up this frank description, which along with various other remarks on the empirical aspects of the first architecture doesn’t allow it much room for greatness. Apart from some trivial exceptions, it is entirely negative, as if no positive determinations should, or even could, possibly be at work here. And indeed whenever the Hegelian text shows any interest in the material and sensual appearance of architecture we always find an accumulation of negative terms. Its most frequently affirmed characteristic: the inorganic.

For Hegel the description of architecture usually amounts to confronting the fact that it is not yet adequately organic. The massiveness of its materials and the arbitrariness of its forms, as just mentioned, basically tell us nothing other than adequacy is still lacking. All descriptive

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35. In what follows the unspecified term “architecture” means the first, independent or symbolic architecture and therefore at the same time according to Hegel the essence of architecture.

36. *Aesthetics*, p. 84.

37. *Ibid.*, p.86.

38. *Ibid.*, p. 84.

39. *Ibid.*, p. 89.

40. *Ibid.*, p. 643.



commentary within the economy of the text is submitted as normative evidence to the fact that architecture that begins is neither classical nor sculptural. This leads to the surprising formulation that, “we may call (independent architecture) an *inorganic sculpture*.”<sup>41</sup> This designation is doubly ambiguous firstly because it defines architecture by means of a figure that supposedly historically succeeds it,<sup>42</sup> and then because sculpture is defined precisely as organic, as an “organic configuration.”<sup>43</sup> Therefore the formulation is contradictory, a sculpture less than organic is nothing. But this nothing, or nearly nothing, in fact defines the moment of architecture, architecture is not sculpture since it is not organic, but it is not something else either, it has no other model, no other positivity. It is in this sense the “not yet” of classicism, this becomes explicit when Hegel reads the internal becoming of independent architecture as an evolution towards sculpture.<sup>44</sup>

Architecture is the childhood of art, an age that can only be defined by reference to the adulthood that supersedes it, “architecture may itself attempt to go so far as to fashion in its forms and material an adequate artistic existence for that content; but in that event it has already stepped beyond its own sphere and is swinging over to sculpture, the stage above it.”<sup>45</sup> Classicism, and sculpture which objectifies it, is the adult age that independent architecture is tending towards as it develops from childhood to adolescence.<sup>46</sup>

Architecture as childhood is what will be both superseded and replaced: elevated (*relevé*).<sup>47</sup> The stakes that we mentioned above are precise: architecture must *still* be organic,

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41. Ibid, p. 633. Emphasis added.

42. The same ambiguity is found in the text where Hegel seeks to determine all the earliest constructions, “we will have to look around for buildings which stand there independently in themselves, as it were like works of sculpture”, *Aesthetics*, p. 632, emphasis added. See Hollier, *Against Architecture*, p. 8.

43. *Aesthetics*, p. 89,

44. *Aesthetics*, p. 637.

45. *Aesthetics*, p. 84.

46. This development directs the division into three section of the chapter on independent architecture in *Aesthetics*, vol. II. On the childhood of art, see also *Aesthetics*, vol. I, “Symbolic Form of Art”, p. 308.

47. According to a now familiar usage, we translate the German terms *Aufheben* and *Aufhebung* as elevated (*relevé*) and to elevate (*reliever*). [T. N. Payot here follows Derrida’s decision to translate Hegel’s term *Aufhebung* as “*relevé*” in preference to Jean Hyppolite’s “*supprimer*” and “*dépasser*”, see Jacques Derrida, *Margins of Philosophy* (Sussex: The Harvester Press, 1982), p. 20, n. 23. The standard English translations are

because the beginning must *only* be beginning, because according to a “dialectical necessity”<sup>48</sup>, the adequacy must be reserved only for the second moment of art, for sculpture. Sculpture in fact is further along the road towards “spirit’s return to itself,”<sup>49</sup> “it gives to spirit itself, purposive as it is an independent in itself, a corporeal form appropriate to the very nature of spirit and its individuality.”<sup>50</sup> All this determines a maturity that corresponds to affirmations of the *interiority* of the spirit that ultimately leads to truth.<sup>51</sup>

If architecture is only ever childhood, lack, and the desire for maturity, then we understand why it doesn’t leave us with much to describe, because there is no positivity to show. How to describe the lack of interiority if not by revealing it as a defect? This means assigning externality as the only field of activity for architecture, in other words *not yet* having interiority.

In fact, “the meanings implanted in architecture it can in general indicate only in the externals of the environment that it creates”,<sup>52</sup> it is “the art whose medium is purely external”<sup>53</sup>, and thus, “its task consists in so manipulating external inorganic nature, as an external world.”<sup>54</sup> These affirmations constitute the real empirical description of architecture in Hegel, they secure what is essential, the essential beginning of architecture. For the spirit, before it can think like an adult, it has to start by perceiving itself as being different from its surroundings, it has to succeed in transforming its surroundings, in other words it has to build.

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“sublation” and “supersession.” The problem for translation here is that the German term means both raising up and replacement, a recurrent theme throughout Hegel’s philosophy.]

48. *Aesthetics*, p. 701. [T. N. Translation slightly modified to conform to the French version.]

49. *Ibid.*

50. *Ibid.*, p. 702.

51. *Ibid.*

52. *Ibid.*, p. 632.

53. *Ibid.*, p. 634.

54. *Ibid.*, p. 83.

## The Gap

Because it is doomed to exteriority architecture manifests itself as being too close to nature, “We may call this form, in general terms, the *symbolic* form of art. In it the abstract Idea has its form outside itself in the natural sensuous material from which the process of shaping starts.”<sup>55</sup> The beginning by necessity is still compromised by immediacy, the insignificance of the non-spiritual, by “what is objective in itself.”<sup>56</sup> That is why the first building cannot be the hut or the temple, these buildings are already too complex, too much of the interior, too differentiated (they are means to an exterior end<sup>57</sup>). “With such an inherent division (between the means and the end) we cannot make a beginning, for in its nature the beginning is something immediate and simple, not a relativity and essential connection like this.”<sup>58</sup> Therefore after writing about the hut and the temple, with which “we could not make a beginning”<sup>59</sup>, Hegel nevertheless says, “Instead we must look for a point at which such a difference does not yet arise.”<sup>60</sup> This impossibility must be transgressed because it is a matter of reaching the tenuous place where the construction, while still attached to nature, to its simplicity, its immediacy, its independence<sup>61</sup>, however *begins* to free itself.<sup>62</sup>

It does this not by any particular feature of its structure but by its very existence, the mere fact that the building is erected shows that nature has been worked and formed, that is to say transformed, that its immediacy has already been superseded.<sup>63</sup> This work constitutes the specificity of architecture as a moment and it also assumes for the first time the specific gesture of all art. “What we have to do is to establish the beginning of art by so deriving it

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55. *Ibid.*, p. 76.

56. *Aesthetics*, p. 631. See also *Aesthetics*, Introduction, “Art begins therefore in inorganic nature, is realized *in it*. ” Emphasis added. [T. N. No corresponding sentence was found in the English translation]

57. *Aesthetics*, p. 632.

58. *Ibid.*

59. *Ibid.*

60. *Ibid.*, p. 632. See Hollier, pp. 7 to 9.

61. *Ibid.*

62. This place or point is the *real* beginning of architecture even if no empirical form corresponding to it can be cited. Note that Hegel took care to specify at the beginning that the search here is not for an empirical beginning, “we must throughout exclude both the empirical facts of history and also the external reflections....”( *Aesthetics*, p. 630.)

63. *Aesthetics*, p. 659: architecture is a distortion of nature.

from the Concept or essential nature of art itself that we can see that the first task of art consists in giving form to what is objective in itself, i.e. the physical world of nature, the external environment of the spirit, and so to build into what has no inner life of its own a meaning and form which remain external to it because this meaning and form are not immanent in the objective world itself. The art on which this task is imposed is, as we have seen, architecture which originally began to be developed earlier than sculpture or painting and music.”<sup>64</sup>

In this text, as for the one that preceded it, we are dealing with a double operation, which further explains the general determination of the beginning, firstly it shows that the beginning is one moment in a larger totality, the task of architecture is the same as that of art as a whole, and secondly at the same time we must make visible in the beginning the need for its succession, if architecture precedes the other arts this must mean that it performs this task less perfectly than whatever follows it.

This second point is stated many times in the Hegel’s text. For instance, “the architectural purpose [*Bestimmung, détermination*] of serving as a *mere external* nature and environment for the spirit,”<sup>65</sup> “architecture, bound as it is to the laws of gravity, labours to bring (the inorganic) nearer to an expression of spirit,”<sup>66</sup> here, as for symbolic art in general, the expression, “remains struggling and striving after ... true presentation.”<sup>67</sup> Architecture is unable by itself to fully meet the requirements of art in general. It remains limited, chained to what it begins to make work and therefore is condemned to, “remould the inorganic, as the opposite of spirit, into a spiritually created purposeful environment with forms which *have their purpose outside themselves*.”<sup>68</sup> Unable to free itself from the exteriority that it forms, it cannot maintain “purely external relations with the spiritual.”<sup>69</sup> It is in this sense that the

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64. Ibid., p. 631.

65. Ibid., p. 702. Emphasis added. [T. N. The French version translates Hegel’s term *Bestimmung* (regulation, purpose, destination, classification, determination) as *détermination*, a keyword throughout Payot’s book, and is even included in the subtitle: “On some Philosophical *Determinations* of the Idea of architecture.” It is translated as “purpose” in the standard English translation of Hegel.]

66. Ibid., p. 701.

67. Ibid., p. 76.

68. Ibid., p. 702. Emphasis added.

69. Ibid., p. 84.

expression of the symbolic is in general characterized, “as a difference between outside and inside, by a lack of appropriation, adaptation, or adequacy between the idea and the form that is supposed to signify it, so this form cannot constitute the pure expression of the spirit. A distance still separates the idea from its representation.”<sup>70</sup>

This sheds light on the material inadequacy and the imperfect and inorganic correspondence between material and form, the gap between them as already mentioned is the effect of a wider and deeper inadequacy in which form and content, sensual expression and meaning, presentation and idea remain external, allusive, and heterogeneous to each other.<sup>71</sup> Signs with a gap that is only the beginning of the spirit, still unable to internalize them or to affirm itself among them, precisely because it is not yet “itself” and nature is not yet its “other.”

## The Search

We are therefore led to think that architecture essentially exists in a moment that is cut off from spirituality, where by necessity only its inadequacy can be found. The moment of architecture is essentially that of the imperfect determination of the idea, its inorganic expression, “the meanings taken as content here, as in symbolic art generally, are as it were vague and general ideas, elemental, variously confused and sundered abstractions of the life of nature.”<sup>72</sup> These concepts and ideas are “abstract at first and indefinite in themselves, so that in order to represent them to himself man catches at what is equally abstract, i.e. matter as such, at what has mass and weight.”<sup>73</sup> We find the operation that we located above in terms of

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70. Hegel, *Leçons sur l'Esthétique*, trans. S. Jankelevitch (Paris: Aubier-Montaigne, 1964), vol. I, p. 152. See also *Aesthetics*, 309, “such inadequacy between meaning and the immediate artistic expression....”

71. See *Ibid.*, p. 626, the light that makes the building visible remains exterior and doesn't emanate from the object itself as it does for painting.

72. *Aesthetics*, p. 637.

73. *Ibid.* p. 635. See also *Aesthetics*, p. 76: “First, art begins when the Idea, still in its indeterminacy and obscurity, or in bad and untrue determinacy.... Being indeterminate, it does not yet possess in itself that individuality which the Ideal demands; its abstraction and one-sidedness leave its shape externally defective and arbitrary.” *Aesthetics*, p. 314: “only abstract meanings, not yet in themselves essentially individualized....” This indetermination and generality of the idea makes the beginning something that is insignificant in itself, see *Aesthetics*, p. 630.

“content” now transposed, the defect of architecture is now a defect of the subject, the interiority and the self-determination of the spirit<sup>74</sup>, the ideas it uses to produce a sensuous presentation are not “collected together as factors in a *single* consciousness.”<sup>75</sup> Which is why this presentation can only be imperfect, symbolic, in other words incipient, provisional, and needing to be surpassed, “The symbolic, as we understand it, stops where there are no more general and abstract ideas that form the content of representation, but the free subjectivity, the signifying subject is explaining itself.”<sup>76</sup>

This shows the fundamental determination of the idea of architecture as constituted by Hegel, so that by itself it cannot reach the truth. In fact, “truth in art requires, as truth in general, the adequacy (*Zusammenstimmen*) of inner and outer, of concept and reality.”<sup>77</sup> But such adequacy cannot be achieved or effected by what is defined as being the moment of indeterminacy of the idea, which is precisely the case for architecture, so being prior to the “return of spirit to itself”<sup>78</sup> it cannot know how to arrange an absolute and true presentation, “the Idea being indeterminate does not yet possess *the individuality which the Ideal demands*, what it must have for there to be *a true appearance*, in other words beauty. While the idea is not penetrated by *individuality of the Ideal*, we can say that the form in which it appears *is not its true form*.... So long as the idea is not embodied in *an absolute form*, any other form it assumes it will remain *exterior* to it.”<sup>79</sup>

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74. See *Leçons sur l'Esthétique*, vol. III, p. 73, “And then the defect appears again which consists not in the subject that is signifying as such, but its exteriorization.”

75. *Aesthetics*, p. 637. The emphasis is Hegel's.

76. This shows why symbolism is superseded by classicism, and architecture superseded by sculpture. See also *Leçons sur l'Esthétique*, vol. III, pp. 9-10, “The idea, in accordance with its concept, cannot stay with the abstraction and imprecision of general ideas. It is by itself a free and infinite subjectivity and apprehends this in reality as such as being spirit. However, as free subject spirit determines in itself and by itself, and due to this self-determination finds in its own concept the exterior form that suits it and so it can unite with the part of reality that belongs to it.”

77. *Aesthetics*, p. 341. [T. N. The French version translates Hegel's term *Zusammenstimmen* (*Zusammen* together, *stimmen* tune or mood, therefore to match colours, to harmonise in music, to agree, to correspond, to tally with) as *adéquation*, which in the English version of Hegel is translated as harmony, but here translated as adequacy to stay closer to Payot's meaning and the connection he later makes with the medieval principle of adequation between reality and intellect found in Thomas Aquinas and Saint Augustine.]

78. *Aesthetics*, p. 702.

79. *Aesthetics*, p. 76. emphasis added. [T. N. Modified to conform to the French version.]

There is a gap between architecture and the truth. And yet they must have some kind of relation since at the beginning the lack still works because it is not simply a lack, it is also a desire for what is lacking. The truth is already evident, anticipated in its very defectiveness, in the presentation of it as being still separate, it already penetrates what is not its true form.<sup>80</sup> That is why the first art *searches* for the adequacy, organization, and fusion, that the lack nevertheless initially defines, “There is first the *search* for true unity (between concept and reality), *the aspiration* for the absolute unity, an art form which has not yet reached this perfect interpenetration, which has not yet found the content that suits it and does not yet a precise and definitive form. Content and form are *searching* for each other and so they have yet met, recognized each other or become united, form and content remain external to each other, and have between them only a relationship of contiguity.”<sup>81</sup>

The idea is only ever searching<sup>82</sup>, it cannot find its proper place in an adequate representation<sup>83</sup>, but by itself it is that which searches for the adequacy that would end its restless search. The idea extends itself in the desire for itself and is deformed and exceeded by being unable to be figured or found. This immeasurability is that of the sublime<sup>84</sup>, its effect is

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80. This determination of the beginning is evident in the following example, “You could say that such an art ... has nothing to do with beauty. And yet even in this art there must be some kind of correspondence, any correspondence whatever between content and form.” (*Leçons sur l’Esthétique*, vol. I, p. 76.)

81. *Leçons sur l’Esthétique*, vol. I, p. 148 emphasis added. See also *Ibid.*, p. 151: “This art is an art that seeks and aspires, and this is why it is symbolic. But in its concept and in its reality is still an imperfect art.” *Ibid.*, vol. III, p. 11, “Symbolic art *seeks* (underlined by Hegel) to achieve unity between the inner meaning and outer form” (that classical art found, and romantic art made obsolete); *Ibid.*, p. 35, “... the search is precisely the great defect of symbolic art.” *Ibid.*, vol. VI, p. 23: “The first place, by the very nature of things, belongs to *architecture*. It represents the beginnings of art because art in its childhood has not yet found the representation of its spiritual content, neither the suitable materials nor the corresponding forms, which forced it to confine itself to the simple *search* for the true match.” (the emphasis is Hegel’s.)

82. *Aesthetics*, p. 76.

83. “Here the Idea still *searches* for its true artistic expression.” (*Leçons sur l’Esthétique*, vol. III, p. 9. The emphasis is Hegel’s). While on the contrary, “sculpture represents the spirit in its bodily form, in its immediate unity, in a state of serene calm and happiness.” (*Ibid.*, vol. I, p. 165.)

84. The sublime is the *general* character of the symbolic (see *Leçons sur l’Esthétique*, vol. I, p. 150, on symbolic art as a whole, “This art belongs to the category of the sublime, and what characterizes the sublime is the effort to express the infinite” see also *ibid.*, vol. III, p. 34, what classical art supersedes is “art uniquely

a violence exerted on the exterior form and its material that despite everything is still interrogated and ordered to correspond to the idea.<sup>85</sup>

It must therefore be shown that architecture is where, “a battle between the content which still resists true art and the form that is not homogeneous with that content either ... a continuing struggle for compatibility of meaning and shape.”<sup>86</sup> The moment of architecture is one of antagonism because it is the search for peace; because spirit is striving towards itself it must be seen as forcing the sensual.<sup>87</sup> The sensual is violated<sup>88</sup>, but it does not yet submit, it still resists and retains some of its independence. That is why, even if it is already compelled to express the spiritual, it can only reveal its difference from the spirit, as a sign or an allusion to it.<sup>89</sup>

But this allusive character is the very definition of the symbol – and we understand definitively why architecture is the essential figure of symbolic art, “The symbol is a representation having a meaning that is not made of a body with an expression, a representation, there is always a difference between the idea and its expression.”<sup>90</sup> This more precisely defines the general situation of the beginning – and of architecture as the beginning. In fact, where the best definition of the symbolic occurs in the text<sup>91</sup>, Hegel will determine it to be in reality an intermediary. The symbol concerns or circulates between two borders, it is not their meeting but the passage between them. In only four pages of which we speak, the symbol is located between indifference and individuality, between the sign itself and the unity of the representation and the represented, between total inadequacy and complete adequacy, between natural immediacy and the spiritual fusion, and between exteriority and interiority. The beginning is already a transition. And architecture is already *prepared* for it.

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symbolic and sublime” see also Ibid., p. 38). Hegel, however distinguishes within the becoming of symbolic art, intermediate between its beginning and its dissolution, a sublime art or art of the sublime itself, see *ibid.*, vol. III, pp. 36 and 106 ff.

85. See *Leçons sur l'Esthétique*, vol. I, pp. 149 - 150.

86. *Aesthetics*, p. 317.

87. *Ibid.*

88. *Leçons sur l'Esthétique*, vol. I, p. 149.

89 *Ibid.*, vol. III, pp. 68, 70-71, 87-88 and vol. VI, pp. 23 and 150.

90 *Ibid.*, vol. I, p. 151.

91. *Aesthetics*, pp. 304 - 308.



The difficulty of such an attribution reveals itself in the juxtaposition of the following two sentences that nonetheless capture the Hegelian position of the beginning, “The symbol, in the meaning of the word used here, constitutes the beginning of art, alike in its essential nature and its historical appearance. It is *therefore* to be considered only, as it were, the threshold of art.”<sup>92</sup> Symbolic art is on the borderline of art, it is also the first expression that precedes true presentation, the moment of inaugural transition whereby the general concept of art begins its incarnation, but which from an adult point of view falls into the “not yet” art, “In general, this whole field of symbolic art forms, as we have already said, a field that might be called pre-artistic.”<sup>93</sup> Thus, any philosophical value of the beginning, other than its content<sup>94</sup>, resides in the work of dialectisation that from the outset already effectuates a passage towards middle age, “The goal ... which the symbolic art-form strives to reach is classical art, and the attainment of this goal marks the dissolution of the symbolic form as such. Classical art, however, though it achieves the true manifestation of art, cannot be the first form of art; it has the multiple *intermediate* and *transitional* stages of the symbolic as its *presupposition*.”<sup>95</sup>

Architecture, rigorously determined, is therefore an art that is both beginning and transitory, a propaedeutic. It succeeds the pure naturalness, but self effaces at the end of its affirmative moment, when confronted the interruption of what it had prepared. The following text perfectly situates this *phase* that essentially belongs to architecture, “For architecture is the first to open the way for the adequate actuality of the god, and in his service it slaves away with objective nature in order to work it free from the jungle of finitude and the monstrosity of chance. Thereby it levels a place for the god, forms his external environment, and builds for him his temple as the place for the inner composure of the spirit and its direction on its absolute objects ... This is the way we erect God his temple, this is the way we build his house. We make external nature undergo transformations and suddenly it is struck by the flash of lightning of individuality. God makes his entrance in his temple and takes up

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92. *Aesthetics*, p. 303. Emphasis added.

93. *Leçons sur l'Esthétique*, vol. III, p. 30. See also *ibid.*, “... true art, that art is a symbolic antecedent phases...” and *ibid.*, p. 34, “Preliminary attempts to create a uniquely symbolic and sublime art. ”

94. *Ibid.*, vol. VI, p. 34.

95. *Aesthetics*, p. 317. Emphasis added.

residence. The flash of lightning of individuality is the means by which he shows himself, and his statue rises up from now on in the temple.”<sup>96</sup>

We must now establish how the childhood of art fulfils the preparatory work so that it receives the return it deserves....

## The Temple and the Echo<sup>97</sup>

### The Non-Conforming Building

Perhaps it is not a total exaggeration to say that what is here named “tecture”, as an object of affirmation or a source of questioning, constitutes one of the most important tasks for contemporary reflection. Certainly we have already seen, and this needs to be confirmed, that building, edification, and production together form one of the essential axes of Western thought since Plato and Aristotle. But it may well be that once freed from any determination or orientation of an archi-instance during the epoch that we will interchangeably refer to as post-Kantian or post-Hegelian, “tecture” becomes one of the cornerstones of thought, a question that can now be confronted on its own terms, even if this does risk misappropriating its correct provenance.

If in philosophy there is one work upon which this question and this risk impose themselves as a starting point and a horizon, it is undoubtedly the work of Martin Heidegger. There is no need to be reminded of the eminent and decisive place that *Denken* occupies in the “way of thinking” that marks this work, suffice it to simply list a few book and essay titles

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96. *Aesthetics*, p. 84. [T. N. The second paragraph after the ellipsis is not included in the English translation but is found in *Leçons sur l'Esthétique*, vol. I, p. 164.] See also following on from the same text [ibid. p. 84]: “But by architecture, after all, the inorganic external world has been purified, set in order symmetrically, and made akin to spirit, and the god's temple, the house of his community, stands there ready. Then into this temple, *secondly*, the god enters himself as the lightning-flash of individuality striking and permeating the inert mass, and the infinite, and no longer merely symmetrical, form of spirit itself concentrates and gives shape to something corporeal. This is the task of *sculpture*.” See also *Aesthetics*, p. 85, “Now when architecture has built its temple and the hand of sculpture has set up within it the statues of the god, this sensuously present god is confronted, *thirdly*, in the wide halls of his house, by the *community*.”

97. [T. N. Chapter 8 of Daniel Payot, *Le philosophe et l'architecte: Sur quelques déterminations philosophiques de l'idée d'architecture* (Paris: Aubier Montaigne, 1982), , pp. 159 - 183.]

that explicitly show this, along with a few others that infer it.<sup>98</sup> But note that for the Heideggerian pathway to thinking as a process, the question will essentially reiterate what “production” means – it’s as if any endeavour that asks “what is called thinking?” must also necessarily rethink what is and has always been called production. Thus terms like *herstellen*, *hervorbringen*, *bauen*, or *poiesis* and *technē*, due to their frequency and their position in the economy of the texts they appear, form one of the chains, one of the deep channels that make the work of Heidegger the key reference for whoever today feels compelled to think.

Furthermore this work is organized – among other questions but most importantly – around recognizing the necessity for the completion of metaphysics as a requirement of the contemporary epoch, and conjointly for the universalisation of modern technology – to rethink production in its Aristotelian and “onto-theological” determinations according to the Hegelian definition, but also according to the Marxist position as well. In Heidegger this requirement takes the form of a binary gesture, firstly to show that the “conceptual traditional mechanics” of metaphysics, that is to say of Western thought, has essentially been built upon a certain concept of production; thus erecting a building does not only and specifically concern construction, craft and trade, but embraces all world views, all philosophies, and all theologies of the West, so it concerns the essay “The Origin of the Work of Art” as much as the totality of being, the world just as much as God the supreme being – all are thought from a conceptual logic that is in fact a particular interpretation of being-produced and its “reading” in terms of causality and efficiency.<sup>99</sup> Secondly, to think outside that production, or rather beneath it, the problematic that establishes and governs its metaphysical interpretation, a problematic that has its determination centred in the traditional conception of truth as

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98. See for example, Martin Heidegger, *What is Called Thinking?* trans. John Glenn Gray (New York: Harper and Row, 1968), “The Thinker as Poet” and “Building Dwelling Thinking” in *Poetry, Language, Thought*, trans. Albert Hofstadter (New York: Harper & Row, 1971), “Principles of Thinking” in *The Piety of Thinking*, trans. James G. Hart (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1976), “The End of Philosophy and the Task of Thinking”, in *Basic Writings*, ed. David Farrell Krell (London: Routledge, 1993), *Discourse on Thinking*, trans. John M. Anderson and E. Hans Freund (New York: Harper & Row, 1971) and “Moira (Parmenides VIII, 34 – 41)” in *Early Greek Thinking*, trans. David Farrell Krell and Frank A. Capuzzi (New York: Harper & Row, 1975).

99. See the entire beginning of Martin Heidegger, “The Origin of the Work of Art”, in *Poetry, Language, Thought*, trans. Albert Hofstadter (New York: Harper & Row, 1971), in particular p. 29.

concordance and conformity – *homoiosis* or *adaequatio* – is generally organized as the representation or staging of thought.<sup>100</sup>

The question of “tecture” now becomes more precise: what is building and the built work when production is no longer thought in terms of causality, as “an activity whose performance has a result”,<sup>101</sup> if the product is no longer determined exclusively as a result or an effect, and the essence of the work is no longer sought in terms of the level of conformity with what it is supposed to represent? What edifies, if it no longer ultimately stages – re-presents – the truth conceived as the complete instantiation, when it is indifferent to the outside and adequate in itself? What is a building that has become non-conforming, from now on seemingly removed from any homologating influence?

Such questions go towards forming the context for what is without doubt the Heideggerian architectural edifice par excellence: the Greek temple in the essay “The Origin of the Work of Art.” These well-known pages conduct what can be called a phenomenological description of the temple and so justify our revisiting them one more time.<sup>102</sup> But what usually goes unnoticed here is just how this text arrives at such a description, and just what it leaves open for further analysis. The first mention made of the Greek temple occurs several pages before the passage already quoted.

To discover the being-produced of the product and to “facilitate a sensible view,” Heidegger describes, “a well-known painting by Van Gogh” depicting a pair of peasant shoes.<sup>103</sup> The analysis concludes with, “The art work lets us know what shoes are in truth.”<sup>104</sup> This generalized result is formulated as, “In the art work, the truth of what is has set itself to work”, and “Art is truth setting itself to work,”<sup>105</sup> an affirmation that will become the *leitmotif*

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100. On truth-adequation we will confine ourselves to one text, see *ibid.* pp. 36 and 50 - 51; on the “stage”, see p. 52. On “representational thought” in general see for example, “The Age of the World Picture” in *The Question Concerning Technology and Other Essays*, trans. William Lovitt (New York: Harper Row, 1977), pp. 115 - 154, and *The Principle of Reason*, trans. Reginald Lilly (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1991).

101. “Building Dwelling Thinking”, in *Poety, Language, Thought*, *op. cit.*, p. 157.

102. See “The Origin of the Work of Art”, p.35 - 36.

103. *Ibid.*, p. 32.

104. *Ibid.*, p. 35.

105. *Ibid.*, p. 38.

of the entire text. However immediately after having set up the “theme” of his analysis, Heidegger seems to take a pause, and then asks:

... perhaps the proposition that art is truth setting itself to work intends to revive the fortunately obsolete view that art is an imitation and depiction of reality? The reproduction of what exists requires, to be sure, agreement with the actual being, adaptation to it; the Middle Ages called it *adaequatio*; Aristotle already spoke of *homoiosis*. Agreement with what *is* has long been taken to be the essence of truth. But then, is it our opinion that this painting by Van Gogh depicts a pair of actually existing peasant shoes, and is a work of art because it does so successfully? Is it our opinion that the painting draws a likeness from something actual and transposes it into a product of artistic production? By no means. The work, therefore, is not the reproduction of some particular entity that happens to be present at any given time; it is, on the contrary, the reproduction of the thing's general essence. But then where and how is this general essence, so that art works are able to agree with it? With what nature of what thing should a Greek temple agree? Who could maintain the impossible view that the Idea of Temple is represented in the building? And yet, truth is set to work in such a work, if it is a work.<sup>106</sup>

This text aims to separate artwork as a whole from any determination as imitation or copy, what is properly set to work in it does not happen by conforming to the real. Yet one can notice a progression here. Heidegger had earlier spoken of a painting by Van Gogh and he returns very naturally to this example here again. But now he adds another example, the Greek temple. Why? Does this second example simply confirm what was already shown in the first example? Then why the need for this repetition?

In fact what is said here about the temple does follow the same logic as the first argument. But its introduction here does not seem like a repetition, it increases the case in a very decisive way. The temple is not a figurative work because, as is said a little further on, “it portrays nothing.”<sup>107</sup> It is non-figurative but in such an essential way that its analysis points to the essential non-figurativity of *all* works of art, including the one that still seems to represent the real – Van Gogh’s painting of shoes for example. After all, isn’t it obvious that this painting is a “depiction of reality”? Doesn’t the “sensuous apprehension” I have of it refer me to the “real” shoes as the referential object whose appearance Van Gogh has, intentionally or unintentionally, reproduced? The temple is therefore not just one work among many others

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106. Ibid, p. 36 - 37.

107. Ibid., p. 40.

that could have been mentioned, it is a work that shows more than any other the work-being of the work, its absolute non-conformity. If one could still believe that the painting was telling the truth of the product-being (of the “real” shoes”), the reference to the temple, that is not in any way a picture, shows definitively that the work does not maintain any kind of adequate relationship with any external instance or any other “reality” (any being, any “essence”), and therefore if there is a truth of the work or in the work it will have a totally different meaning.

It shows the strategic importance of this reference: what can be said about the Greek temple can be said of the work of art, of the essence of the work – and everything else, including the analysis of the work of art in general, that follows the description of the temple emerges from this description. The temple is there to “finish with” the interpretation of the work in all its forms as a representation, as a copy or image, not only as a representation of a real being but also as an image of an Idea, to “finish with” in other words the Platonic interpretation of the work and the product that governs it, in its foundation, all of Western metaphysics; to dismiss in its entirety the metaphysical problematic of production.

Perhaps this situation of the Greek temple justifies that we take it as our guide, aid or standard in our reading of the Heideggerian analysis of the work of art and production, that is something that is built, erected, and constructed, being another mode than that of conformity or adequation, and would this tell us more than anything else about what “tecture” is and about what is the “truth of what is set to work”?

## The Initial Work

What we are seeking in the first few pages devoted to the Greek temple is the passage from a conception of truth as *adaequatio* – but we still have to know how it is that the work in question is not indebted to it – to another conception of truth, and at the same time we will try to see if a new interpretation of the built work and the building can emerge from this change.

The description of the temple does in fact organize such a double displacement – and that's why it seems to be the “critical point” of the entire essay, it decides and orients what will form the essential “solution” of “The Origin of the Work of Art.” Let us say, presenting

the same reality from two interconnected points of view, that firstly the phenomenological description of the Greek temple allows for the introduction of the concept of the work under the general device (*dispositif*) that we will call the “aletheiac”, and secondly, that all properly Heideggerian interpretation of the work throughout the text – even when it no longer considers only the temple but the work of art in general – is authorized and feeds on the description of the temple. Let us quickly demonstrate this.

Primarily two elements are identified concerning the temple, it “fits together and at the same time gathers around itself the unity of those paths and relations in which birth and death, disaster and blessing, victory and disgrace, endurance and decline acquire the form of destiny for human being”<sup>108</sup>, the temple “opens up a world” by resting on rock, and it “brings out the dark from its brute support,” as revealed by the appearance (*phusis*) and development that houses and accommodates, the temple “sets forth the earth.”<sup>109</sup> These two dimensions, the relationship between them and the effect this relationship has are summarized in one sentence, “The temple-work, standing there (*dastehend*), opens up a world (*eine eröffnet Welt*) and at the same time (*zugleich*) sets this world back again on earth (*stellt diese zurück auf die Erde*), which itself only thus emerges as native ground (*heimatlichen Grund*).”<sup>110</sup> By its dual power to liberate by its instance both the gratifying or imperious force of the elementary, and the perilous or confident affirmation of the destiny of a people, the Greek temple reveals there are two dimensions at work – the earth and the world – and two movements – an opening and a setting forth – and it is this “duality” that constitutes it and makes it what it is – a work. This “duality” – this word can only be provisional – constitutes the being-work of the temple-work.

But now with these “two essential traits (*zwei Wesenszüge*)”<sup>111</sup> that this “reading” of the temple has just made apparent, the whole Heideggerian analysis of the work of art and the truth in the work is already set in place, the important terms for this text, we might say, have established themselves.

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108. Ibid., p. 41.

109. Ibid, pp. 41 and 45.

110. Ibid., 41.

111. Ibid., 42.

The duplicity at work in the work – at the same time (*zugleich*) opening up a world, and, bringing forth the earth by accommodated its being<sup>112</sup> – is indeed interpreted shortly after as a conflict between the earth and the world (*Das Gegeneinander von Welt und Erde ist ein Streit*, the work is an “instigating of this striving”, *eine Anstiftung dieses Streites*<sup>113</sup>); in the efficacy of this struggle truth happens, thought, “in recollecting (*Erinnerung*) the Greek word *aletheia*”<sup>114</sup> as a bursting forth, that is to say both advent (*zugleich*) or deployment and a “perpetual concealment”<sup>115</sup>, “Concealing denial is intended to denote that opposition in the nature of truth which subsists between clearing, or lighting, and concealing. *It is the opposition of the primal conflict.*”<sup>116</sup> The work, the instigator of the conflict between the earth and world, is the efficacy of this original conflict by which, in the original opposition of clearing and concealing, truth happens<sup>117</sup>; this setting forth can unfold the interpretations of creation or production<sup>118</sup>, of guarding and preserving the work<sup>119</sup>, that is to say in the end the historical dimension of art, that grounds (*gründet*) the history of a people who, through it, opens a world out of its ground, that is to say, releasing its earth which only then becomes a home ground (*heimatlichen Grund*).<sup>120</sup>

This excessively succinct pathway through all the essential theses of “The Origin of the Work of Art” thus shows that any part of the entire argument is authorized by what we have called the “duplicity” of the work, and that the very affirmation of the duplicity of the work in general depends on the particular and precise duplicity that emerges from the description of the temple. Although it is true that the work of art, in essence, is this being that, “must ... contain within itself the essential traits of the conflict”<sup>121</sup>, it is equally true that it is precisely the Greek temple that first manifested and allowed this “aletheiac” structure to emerge.

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112. These two features are at first analyzed separately, respectively on p. 42 and p. 43.

113. Ibid, p. 48.

114. Ibid., 49.

115. See *ibid.*, p. 50?.

116. Ibid., 53. Emphasis added.

117. See *ibid.*, p. 55.

118. Creation is “determined by the nature of the work” (*ibid.* p. 58); “it is the work that makes the creators possible in their nature”. (*ibid.*, p. 69.)

119. See *ibid.*, p. 64.

120. See *ibid.*, p. 73.

121. Ibid., p. 61.



But why this particular example, why a temple and why a Greek one? Was it chosen randomly from other possible examples? Could Heidegger have achieved the same result by describing another work indifferently chosen from the vast reserve of key works that inform the history of art? And why not stay with it, even develop or complete the analysis as was done in the case of the “well known painting by Van Gogh”?

But what fundamentally is a Greek temple? First of all it is a work of architecture. This response, although quite banal, conceals two dimensions that are essential here, firstly because as we noted earlier a building “portrays nothing”, it is not a reproduction, a representation, or the figuration of anything that was already there: its event or erection, its instance (*Dastehen*) is not of the order of the secondary, the return or the likeness, it succeeds nothing, no object, no product, and secondly because we can say the building is posited “like” a rock, reveals or shows itself immediately without the intermediary of any artificial support, it is thus a self-fulfilling and “brute” support: the earth itself, neither transformed nor already worked, but offered in the immediate and pure expression of its presence, the *phusis* which it is inherently – initially apparent. And furthermore this temple is Greek, which for anyone who follows the text of “The Origin of the Work of Art” closely means that it is contemporary with the word *aletheia* – with the memory (*Erinnerung*) whose task is to rethink truth; as the happening “for the first time in the West” of art as instauration (that is to say, the setting forth of the truth)<sup>122</sup>, and also without doubt the decisive expression for the first time of the sacred (and did Heidegger ever speak of the sacred that was not in one way or another finally “Greek”?)

What in summary is the Greek temple? It is the brute earth that hosts it and whose coming is im-mediate; the world that it opens is, historically, one of beginnings, in it the duplicity is total, obviously initial, the conflict that it erects is the closest to the original.

We asked why precisely a Greek temple? Let us respond that it is without doubt for its inauguration – its emergence in various senses – for its instauration, that allows it to clearly set truth to work, not in the sense of *adaequatio* – which always implies the delay or the secondness of re-presentation, but in the sense of bursting forth, of *aletheia*: and it is for this

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122. See *ibid.*, p. 73.

inauguration that the Greek temple is perhaps in the economy of the text the monstrative work in which the essence of the work can be seen.

But if this is indeed the case, shouldn't we say that for all works, non-architectural works and even non-Greek ones, that we must be able to perceive the character or trait of inauguration – and in short that a work of art only such to the extent that it manifests this trait? Essentially what do we learn from the “sensuous apprehension” of the Greek temple, is it not, as Maurice Blanchot somewhere said, that all works are *beginnings*?<sup>123</sup>

It is in fact this power of inauguration that Heidegger aims to establish as the essence of the work of art. And it certainly could not be otherwise because, as identified above, the path of thinking that gives rise to “The Origin of the Work of Art” attempts to depart from the determination of truth as a particular being's conformity to or “translation” of the truth in terms of reproduction and representation. In a philosophically decisive proposition he states, “truth does not exist in itself beforehand, somewhere among the stars, only later to descend elsewhere among beings.”<sup>124</sup> Following this there is first the affirmation that truth imposes or constitutes *itself* in a “spontaneous” gesture which belongs *to itself*<sup>125</sup> – the work is nothing other than this institution (it is neither the means nor the support nor an intermediary, rather truth itself is set to work and institutes) – and then the formulation is complete, bringing together the entire analysis (which we shall see justifies the title of the essay): “Art lets truth originate” (*Die Kunst lässt die Wahrheit entspringen*).<sup>126</sup>

This bursting forth for which art is its fulfilment, is christened four times in the last few pages of the text as bestowing (*freie Schenkung*), grounding (*Stiftung*), beginning (*Anfang*),

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123. [T. N. In Blanchot's best-known theoretical work from 1955 he writes “The writer writes a book, but the book is not yet the work. There is a work only when, through it, and with the violence of a *beginning* which is proper to it, the word being is pronounced.” See Maurice Blanchot, *The Space of Literature*, trans. Ann Smock (Lincoln: The University of Nebraska Press, 1989), pp. 21 - 22, emphasis added.]

124. *Ibid.*, 59.

125. See *ibid.*, p. 59 and, in the *Epilogue* added in 1961, p. 80.

126. *Ibid.*, 75.

and origin (*Ursprung*).<sup>127</sup> These four terms all have the character of inauguration, or more precisely, they all clearly and exclusively name the originary, inaugural character of this institution of truth that is art. To art belongs the “immediacy of the beginning” (*das Unvermittelte of Anfangs*) and the “spring that leaps” (*stiftende der Sprung*).<sup>128</sup> So Heidegger concludes, “This is so because art is by nature an origin (*ein Ursprung*): a distinctive way in which truth comes into being, that is, becomes historical.”<sup>129</sup>

This explains the overall title of the lectures we are now commenting on, *Der Ursprung of Kunstwerkes*, which means the origin of the work of the art, but also the artwork as origin, as emergence. This also clarifies what is presented in the middle of the text as a program of analysis, to make manifest the “pure immanence (*das reines Insichstehen*) of the work.”<sup>130</sup> That it needs to have “the traits of a conflict” now means that the work must be such that in its happening – and it is nothing other than this fulguration – the bursting forth of truth is set to work, it takes place. That is to say, it is a unique event, a sudden appearance, an impromptu opening, a necessary form or status without precursor, a beginning that has all the obviousness and all the immediacy of an unexpected gift, an initiating and originary leap.

Art is foundational, the work of initiating. The Greek temple, because it is in every conceivable way inaugurating, is perhaps what we can call the archetype of the work of art as a beginning. It is truth in its happening, bursting forth and originating.

Very well then, but why after all that can we read in the same essay the repeated reaffirmation that “architecture, painting, sculpture, and music must be *traced back* to poesy (*zurückgeführt werden*)”<sup>131</sup>? Why say that, “Building and plastic creation, on the other hand, always happen already, and happen *only*, in the Open of saying and naming. It is the Open that *pervades* and *guides* them (*Von diesem werden sie durchwaltet und geleitet*)”<sup>132</sup>? What

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127. See *ibid.*, p. 75. *Anfang* (beginning, start, inception, origin, morning etc.) is rendered into French by Brokmeier as “*reprise*” (recovery, resumption, renewal, repetition), this translation is well argued in a footnote, but it undoubtedly fails to express the dimension of initiation indisputable in the German term.

128. *Ibid.*, p. 75.

129. *Ibid.*

130. *Ibid.*, p. 40. [T. N. Translation modified.]

131. *Ibid.*, p. 70. Emphasis added.

132. *Ibid.*, p. 72. Emphasis added.

does this relation mean, this condition proposed in advance for all the plastic works of art? Why this supremacy of “naming” that this work seems to obey, and on which it depends? Doesn’t this dependency work against or even contradict what was nevertheless clearly affirmed as the constitutive inauguration of *all* works of art? What happens to the originating leap of the Greek temple if it now appears that it is only achievable within a horizon *already* opened, already (previously?) disclosed and released, in a space of play or conflict that was already inaugurated elsewhere?

## The Pavilion of Being

The difficulty that these issues raise may perhaps be overcome, or at least be more clearly discerned, by reading a remark that at first seems too obvious to be of interest, because between the phenomenological description of the temple and the affirmation that architecture (along with the other plastic arts) is governed and led by “naming”, there is in fact in an entire passage, several pages long, whose content we have so far failed to comment on. This passage refers to the creation or production of the work. In this passage there is certainly an explanation of the “regulation” that we have just discovered, and its relationship to the inauguration of the work that we previously discovered.

What in fact has happened here? As we have seen, the analysis of the temple made possible the entire “aletheiac” structure, the interpretation of the work as the happening of truth. However, a few lines after this development, before the start of the third and final part of the essay sub-headed “Truth and Art,” Heidegger seems to brutally break away from the course of his exposition. Here we can read, “Indeed it almost seems as though, in pursuing the exclusive aim of grasping the work’s independence as purely as possible, we had completely overlooked the one thing, that a work is always a work, which means that it is something worked out, brought about, effected. If there is anything that distinguishes the work as work, it is that the work has been created.”<sup>133</sup> It seems that here begins a “refocusing” of the entire analysis, hereafter the exclusive question of the immanence of the work will always lead to a discovery of a being-created or a being-worked on, so the questioning has to start over again on another plane, this time interrogating the creation of the work itself.<sup>134</sup>

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133. Ibid., p. 55

134. See *ibid.*, p. 56.

However, in the paragraphs that follow this transition (from an analysis of the work to an analysis of creation, from the second to the third part of “The Origin of the Work of Art”) we read a kind of programmatic warning, “In turning away now from the work to examine the nature of the creative process, we should like nevertheless to keep in mind what was said first of the picture of the peasant shoes and later of the Greek temple.”<sup>135</sup> But in everything that follows far from exposing what was “mentioned only now” will instead repeat and confirm for creation what was said earlier about the work. At the point where we expected Heidegger to begin again, since he seemed to make this his project, by “turning away now from the work to examine the nature of the creative process”, we find the following statement that guides everything that will follow, “Although it becomes actual only as the creative act is performed, and thus depends for its reality (*Wirklichkeit*) upon this act, *the nature of creation is determined by the nature of the work (wird das Wesen des Schaffens vom Wesen des Werkes bestimmt)*. Even though the work's createdness has a relation to creation, nevertheless both createdness and creation must be defined in terms of the work-being of the work.”<sup>136</sup> These sentences are quite indicative of what here constitutes Heidegger’s philosophical gesture – we will comment only on its principle orientation.

One of the essential – and at first surprising – decisions made by this analysis of creation is to relegate the creator (the artist) to a non-determining role. Who actually produces such a work, under what conditions, and for what purposes, Heidegger says are matters of no concern to us whatsoever! “Neither in the creation mentioned before nor in the willing mentioned now do we think of the performance or act of a subject striving toward himself as his self-set goal.”<sup>137</sup> In other words, we don’t want to think about them because we’re trying to think only about the creation itself. Furthermore, “Precisely where the artist and the process and the circumstances of the genesis of the work remain unknown, this thrust ... of createdness, emerges into view most purely from the work.”<sup>138</sup> So the less that the creator is taken into consideration, the greater the chances are of discovering what creation is! Because if the creator does indeed act on what will become the reality (*Wirklichkeit*) of the work, they cannot determine what constitutes its essence (*Wesen*), “It is precisely in great art – and only

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135. Ibid.

136. Ibid., p. 58. Emphasis added.

137. Ibid., p. 65.

138. Ibid., p. 63.

such art is under consideration here – that the artist remains inconsequential as compared with the work, almost like a passageway that destroys itself in the creative process for the work to emerge.”<sup>139</sup>

This relegation of the artist can be explained from what we noted earlier: because if the human subject as creator determined the essence of the work, how could we still argue that the work is the happening of truth when the subject is made the determinant of truth and the work is simply the result or effect of this determination? How could we appreciate this work other than by referring to it as a product of its creator’s intentions, “what the artist wanted to say (or do)”, by evaluating it as a consequence according to the criterion of greater or lesser conformity with a creative plan? And don’t we then fall back into the field and the logic of an interpretation of truth as *adaequatio*? It would be best therefore to “mention only” what emerged from the painting and the Greek temple since this won’t let us forget that the work of art is the happening of truth.

Therefore this statement has another meaning, the artist is not the determining instance of this happening, even though he is the factual (*wirklich*) agent of production he is not its essential (*wesentlich*) agent. But what is? The answer is obvious, “It all rests on the nature of truth”<sup>140</sup>, it is truth itself that, “wills to be established in the work”<sup>141</sup>, which has “an impulse toward”, and is “brought forth” in the work.<sup>142</sup> It is this truth and not a person or anything else that is originally and essentially the “subject” of creation.<sup>143</sup>

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139. Ibid., p. 39.

140. Ibid., p. 58.

141. Ibid., p. 60. Emphasis added.

142. See *ibid.* pp. 58 and 60.

143. We are well aware of the ambiguity of this chosen term. Has the relegation of the artist not been in fact due to the need to avoid of the entire problem of representation and therefore the subject as well? However, we keep it because it corresponds with the vocabulary used by Heidegger, especially his use of the verb to will (*wollen*), which, as we have just emphasized, is for Heidegger what precisely designates the efficacy of the subject of modern metaphysics. Perhaps the ambiguity of our chosen term only continues the “essential ambiguity” noted by Heidegger himself in the *Addendum* of 1956, see his commentary on (*ibid.*) page 85, which refers to pages 69 and 75 of the essay.

To think production is therefore to be – exclusively – attentive to the movement (impulse, attraction, desire?) by which truth brings *itself* forth in a being (in a work) in which it happens – and “Truth happens only by establishing itself in the conflict and sphere opened up by truth itself”<sup>144</sup>, therefore by means of a “spontaneous institution.”<sup>145</sup> For truth to be instituted it must therefore take a “stand” and have “constancy”<sup>146</sup> – it must welcome and sustain, and it must “establishes itself within its Open.”<sup>147</sup> This being open, being the place of the facility or establishment (*thesis*) of truth is what we call a work, and “The establishing of truth in the work is the bringing forth (*das Hervorbringen*) of a being ... The bringing forth places this being in the Open ... Where this bringing forth expressly brings the openness of beings, or truth, that which is brought forth is a work. Creation (*das Schaffen*) is such a bringing forth.”<sup>148</sup>

And that’s it. That is how refocusing on the question of creation, the examination of which would seem to turn us away from the analysis of the work – that is to say the happening of truth – on the contrary brings us back to the work and even gives us access to the depths of its essence and its constitution.

But have we fully answered why it is precisely the Greek temple that constitutes the privileged example of a work of art? Are we not “mentioning only” what was described earlier, that is to say its duplicity? And the “two essential traits” of the conflict that determined its happening, have we not just made what was essential into an economy? In other words, what is the relationship between the institution of truth in the work and the effectiveness of this work, that is the conflict? The answer Heidegger proposes is simple, these two formulations designate exactly the same reality, the same movement. For truth in essence is conflict,<sup>149</sup> a primal conflict (between clearing and concealing), and it is this conflict that “wills to be established”<sup>150</sup> in being, and “This being must therefore contain

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144. Ibid., p. 59.

145. Ibid.

146. Ibid.

147. Ibid.

148. Ibid., p. 60.

149. See *ibid.*, p. 59.

150. *Ibid.*, p. 60.

within itself the essential traits of the conflict.”<sup>151</sup> It does this by uniting this being with a “sketch” (*Auf-riss*) and a “basic design” (*Grundriss*), and a “rift-design” (*Riss*)<sup>152</sup>; with its production, which is thus to say with its original coming (*bringen*), with the inauguration of truth as conflict. So if production is the establishment of truth itself in being, and if truth itself is the primal conflict, then the word “production” (*Hervorbringen*) names the institution or establishment of this primal conflict in a being that must therefore “contain within itself the essential traits of the conflict”, which must therefore take the “form” or the “figure” (*Gestalt*) of truth –only then is it a work of art. Heidegger sums it up like this, “Createdness of the work means: truth's being fixed in place in the figure.... What is here called figure, *Gestalt*, is always to be thought in terms of the particular placing (*Stellen*) and framing or framework (*Ge-stell*) as which the work occurs.”<sup>153</sup> Or in other terms the production of the work, whose essence we are seeking, is the establishment or enframing of truth in the work, which is *Ge-stell*.

We have baptized the object of our search, but where does this baptism take us, and all the other analyses that it seems to christen? Has it allowed us to completely overcome the difficulty that troubled us earlier? We can now see more clearly how the work – the Greek temple for example – is the place where truth is established, is the figure of truth, since we now know what originally produced it: it was constituted according to the traits of a conflict. But have we found an answer to the specific question we asked, which seemed likely to jeopardize any previous development on inauguration of the work? Have we discovered why this particular work, the Greek temple, ought to be governed by “naming”, and be “reduced to poetry”?

Not yet. To find the answer we probably should examine the word that has just been imposed on the analysis of production: *Ge-stell*. Heidegger returns to this word in the “Addendum” added in 1956 to “The Origin of the Work of Art.”<sup>154</sup> And here he gives us, besides being what binds together the terms *Ge-Stell* (enframing), *Gestalt* (figure) and *Hervorbringen* (bringing forth), besides a general definition of *Ge-stell* as “gathering of

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151. Ibid., p. 61.

152. See *ibid.*, p. 61.

153. Ibid., p. 62.

154. See *ibid.*, pp. 81 to 86.



bringing-forth” (*die Versammlung des Her-vorbringens*) as we recall from the analyses just summarized, the word *Ge-stell* thought according to the “later writings” will designate the essence of modern technology, and as such will be understood according what the Greeks called *logos*, *poiesis* and *thesis*, that is to say finally a “word” that “speaks to us” (*Anspruch, sprechen*) and that we perceive by “listening” (*vernehmen*).

These suggestions will quite likely remain cryptic to us if we don’t follow up the text they are referring to: “The Question Concerning Technology.”<sup>155</sup>

There *Ge-stell* is actually clearly defined as being the essence of modern technology. But this definition will not tell us anything if we do not specify in just what capacity it may be such an essence in the occurrence as a modality of “unveiling.”

The word refers to the movement by which a being that was not, comes from out of its occultation to appear to be. As such, unveiling is that from which all bringing forth originates, truth as bursting forth: “Bringing-forth (*Her-vor-bringen*) comes to pass only insofar as something concealed comes into unconcealment. This coming rests and moves freely within what we call revealing (*das Entbergen*). The Greeks have the word *alētheia* for revealing. The Romans translate this with *veritas*.”<sup>156</sup>

But it turns out that Heidegger often uses another term for the unveiling bringing-forth in this lecture: *poiesis*. Therefore the question has to be asked: what is the relationship between what is named *Ge-stell* and what is named *poiesis*? By referring to the many places these terms appear in the text we can start to provide an answer to this question, when truth is unveiled in the mode of technical production the unveiling is named *Ge-stell*, and when it is unveiled in another mode (as in art or poetry for example) we are speaking of *poiesis*. Although this initial answer is quite justified it can only be superficial because it leads to a formidable problem – how is it that truth sometimes appears in one way and sometimes in another way? How to explain the existence of these alternatives for truth? Can it choose

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155. “The Question Concerning Technology”, in Martin Heidegger, *The Question Concerning Technology and Other Essays*, trans. William Lovitt (New York: Garland Publishing, 1977), pp. 3 - 35.

156. *Ibid.*, pp. 11 - 12.

among several possibilities for its establishment? But shouldn't we then ask if these possibilities do not pre-exist truth – and what about its originality then?

In reality, in regards to “The Question Concerning Technology” we must continue to make the distinction between *Ge-stell* and *poiesis*. But they must be distinguished only from the point of view of man – the human producer. They are the “two possibilities” between which man is placed<sup>157</sup>, and he alone must “choose” between a mode of production that “arrests” being, forcing it into submission and into something to be used, and another mode which more originally will lead him to unveiling and to truth at work in its being. But truth does not choose, in both cases it simply and undividedly unveils, and that is why even “in danger” – in the arrest or “provocation” of technology – there can also “grow the saving power” – this unique and originally rewarding unveiling of the truth.<sup>158</sup> In other words *Ge-stell* and *poiesis*, which are to man two different possibilities, are essentially united from the point of view of unveiling itself. The *Ge-stell* is nothing other than *poiesis*.

But what is it then? And where is this unity we are talking about? What is the simplicity of the unveiling? It is what might be called – by linking up the various answers given by Heidegger – the e-vocation. *Ge-stell* and *poiesis* are equally modalities by which truth is addressed to man, who by being addressed is required to be called, “Where and how does this revealing happen...? We need not look far. We need only apprehend in an unbiased way that which has already claimed man and has done so (*was den Menschen immer schon in Anspruch genommen hat*), so decisively that he can only be man at any given time as the one so claimed (*als der so Angesprochene*).”<sup>159</sup>

The entire paragraph from which we extract these sentences is built on the different possibilities offered by the German verb *sprechen* (to speak), *Anspruch* (to claim, to require), *angesprochen* (to whom a speech is addressed), *Zuspruch* (words of exhortation, appeal), *widersprechen* (contradict), *beanspruchen* (to lay claim) and so on. And up to the e-vocation that we spoke of – “The unconcealment ... calls man forth (e-vocates, *hervorruft*) into the

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157. See *ibid.*, p. 35.

158. See *ibid.*, pp. 28 - 34.

159. See *ibid.*, p. 18.

modes of revealing allotted to him” – so we must hear this cry or appeal (*der Ruf*) that truth sets out or is made the destiny of man.

In this call lies the unity of *Ge-stell* and *poiesis*, the basis from where they originate together, in them truth *speaks* (to man), according to the giving of the voice (*logos*). Originally they are the same thing, the address, the exhortation, and the voice of the truth being heard (*vernehmen*) whenever a being “arrives in the unconcealed”, that is to say every time that truth is set to work, and once again this is to say, every time something *happens*.

If *Ge-stell* and *poiesis* have to remain distinguishable then it must be in the sense that man will respond to the enunciation of a unique speech according to different modes of “hearing”: he will hear it according to his original destiny (then it will be a “listening”, *ein Hörer*), or else he will cease being attentive to its originality and will only hear it in a scattered, superficial, and misguided way, he will only be a *Höriger*: a serf enslaved by technological domination.<sup>160</sup>

We who belong to modern humanity are *Höriger* because for us the unveiling has only the accent or the tonality of the provocation of *Ge-stell*. This is why the question arises whether we are still capable of an authentic production, of being accorded originality, can we still hear and create in the sense of *poiesis*, are we still at a high point of a creation and a “poetic” listening, asking once again: are we still capable of producing according to the ways of “high art”?

This question was already asked at the end of “The Origin of the Work of Art.”<sup>161</sup> We can understand it better now thanks to our detour through “The Question Concerning Technology”, so we can now see it according to its proper formulation.

The text of “The Origin of the Work of Art” could not yet distinguish between *Ge-stell* and *poiesis*. It assigns a unique name *Ge-stell* to the unveiling understood as an original speech addressed to man, appearing simply as the unity and the essence of these two

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160. See *ibid.*, p. 25 and note 2 above.

161. See *The Origin of the Work of Art*, *op. cit.*, p. 76, and the “Epilogue”, where allusion is made to what is sometimes called, in reference to Hegel’s *Aesthetics*, the “death of art.”

modalities of production. Is it any surprise then that Heidegger determines the *Ge-stell* – in the sense of the essence of the unveiling production – as coming from the voice and from naming, from language (*die Sprache*)? As “the fable of the bursting forth of being” (*die Sage der Unverborgenheit of Seienden*), as “the outlining legends” (*das entwerfende Sagen*), and finally as “poetry” (*Dichtung*)? The *Ge-stell*, the movement by which the word is pronounced, addressed to man by taking “form” or “figure” (*Gestalt*) is *Dichtung*, poetry, the establishment and constitution of truth in and through language, in and through speech and its being set to work.<sup>162</sup>

Originally truth is revealed as “naming”, as language, and as such it is what opens itself to the space of play and conflict in which it happens. If the production of a work of art is therefore essentially a listening to such an unveiling, as the establishment of a being in such an opening, then “the nature of art is the poem”, and “Art, as the setting-into-work of truth, is poetry.”<sup>163</sup>

All art is a poem; any work of art from the start, in its origin or emergence (*Ursprung*), is poetry. So we can now return to what had just previously seemed to be an unavoidable difficulty for the analysis: that even though the plastic work was characterized as being thoroughly original and inaugural, it was nevertheless said to be “reduced to poetry”, that sculpture and architecture were interpreted as being “governed and guided” by naming.

It now seems that there is no contradiction arising from these determinations, on the contrary, a work of art can only be original to the extent that, by an authentic production (*zurückgeführt*) of the “poetic” inauguration of unveiling, it unifies these two formulations; the work is inaugurating and in the work it is the language, *aletheia* as speech, that calls for what is original, and they turn out to be strictly equivalent. Consequently it is only in as much as it is “governed and led by the name” (*von dem Offenen der Sage und des Nennens durchwaltet und geleitet*) that for a people whose establishment happens in the open by its art, the work of art will become that which grounds history.

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162. For this development, see. *ibid.*, pp. 69 - 72.

163. *Ibid.*, p. 72.

To ask some final questions: what is therefore, precisely and specifically, a work of art, for example a Greek temple? What relationship does it establish between the reality (*Wirklichkeit*) of this work and the speech that unveils what it announces? Actually, we have essentially answered these questions already when we repeatedly stressed that the work should be *governed* and *led* by naming. From this we will seek further confirmation from the pages of “The Question Concerning Technology” where Heidegger, when he was still considering art according to its original destiny, tells us what art was: it was “pious” (*fromm*), “yielding” (*fügsam*) and it still bore the “modest” (*schlicht*) name *technē*.<sup>164</sup> The work that saves the power and the preservation of truth, piously and modestly meditates on what lets truth speak, as the obedient and attentive response to its vocation. It did not erect and impose itself – rather it was strong and foundational only in this declaration of obedience.

Truth speaks in the happening (*Dastehen*) of the temple, the temple transmits its voice, amplifies and distributes it for the entire world to listen, it has the power to open. Language resonates in it and is original – it is *Ursprung* because it knows how to make it bounce off its walls. The temple is the echo chamber for the originary diction.

To formulate from these propositions three remarks:

– It is certainly an advantage that this example is Greek – as such it participates in Greekness of the “Hellenic world” – because the temple is a Greek temple it is inaugurating. If it can “open up a world” it is because it already inhabits the world that the Greek language has already opened up and established. But can it truly be described and interpreted, as it is in “The Origin of the Work of Art”, as being precisely the work that will reveal the essence of *all* works of art? And if this is so, is it not only because Heidegger has decided, has presupposed, that there is no authentic art that is not Greek, according to what has been determined by Greece – by Greek language – as being the essence of art?

– A phrase often quoted in the “Letter on ‘Humanism’” declares that, “Language is the house of Being (*die Sprache ist das Haus des Seins*).”<sup>165</sup> We must now add to this: a house will never originally be anything other than a building of language. The temple is the echo of

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164. See “The Question Concerning Technology”, op. cit., p. 34.

165. “Letter on ‘Humanism’”, in *Pathmarks*, ed. William McNeill (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), p. 239.

*logos*, furthermore the temple is the pavilion of being, the place where one stands, sits and meditates in the open, the bright interval or clearing as the opening up of truth as the thought of *aletheia*, but also the ear, the organ of hearing, the receptacle of listening, which the unveiling voice touches and fills its walls, and in addition, a signboard, a standard, a flag that is hoisted up high (and is also painfully lowered in times of distress or decline) to mark a territory – a world – that belongs to a certain people. To build a temple is a preparation for the ear, it is originally for listening, to let the voice resonate and spread out, making a future for it. And thus we see how according to Heidegger what we have named “tecture” is determined: thought by means of the terms *tichto* and *technē*, conceived as the establishment and consolidation of the echo, “has been concealed in the tectonics of architecture since ancient times.”<sup>166</sup> It is home to the “acting” or “making” by which man obediently agrees and responds to the truth that calls to him and that alone is the origin and the generator of all production.

## The Temple and the Crypt

The above discussion will, it is hoped, reveal two decisive points on which the Heideggerian analysis of the architectural work seems to be based and on which it depends: the inauguration of speech or language and, regarding “tecture” itself, the relegation of the human subject-producer to a non-determining role. Starting from these two points we will now try to situate this analysis in the movement of our entire study. This movement, let us recall one more time, has been drawn up and constituted by a reading of Hegel’s pages on architecture. There is however an explicit reference to Hegel and his *Aesthetics* in the “Epilogue” to “The Origin of the Work of Art.”

It concerns what is sometimes called the “death of art”: it is, in Heidegger’s terminology, the historical dimension of art and the question of whether, for contemporary Westerners, art is “still an essential and necessary way in which truth happens.”<sup>167</sup> Heidegger therefore reaffirms the question that was already raised by Hegel’s reflection on aesthetics, and in their

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166. “Building Dwelling Thinking” in *Poetry, Language, Thought*, op. cit., p. 157.

167. “The Origin of the Work of Art”, op. cit., p. 78.

common desire to think the relationship we now have with the essence of art, the two enquirers are closely related.

However, it seems that this proximity does not only apply to what has been mentioned above, because it is equally evident – for Hegel just as clearly as for Heidegger – that for modern humanity the situation regarding art another epoch is determined to be absolutely decisive for the field of art and for humanity in general, and this is Greece. Because for Hegel as well Greece is a place where the “setting to work of truth” can happen, a moment when art is fully reconciled with itself since here there is at last a production that conforms to “spirit.” Spirit can put itself to work in the work of art because it now determines and carries out the creation through its incarnation in the human figure of the creator. In Greece the history of art is inaugurated essentially as the dawn of the history of Spirit.

This general outline can be given more detail, as shown in our opening chapters; if the Greeks are the premiere artists in the full and essential meaning of the word it is because, according Hegel as well, they “know the clear and distinct language of spirit”<sup>168</sup>, art (production) and the truth are assembled and harmonised by a voice, a speech or language, by the language of a spirit, that is originally Greek.

So we can legitimately ask whether this kinship in matters concerning the modern epoch that Heidegger establishes with Hegel is not in fact a consequence of a proximity that we now find in their determination of art as essentially Greek, and in the setting to work of truth in a language that is also essentially Greek.

Nevertheless for Hegel the essence of architecture is specifically foreign to the Hellenic world since it is not yet truly or properly the place or the occasion of the “setting to work” of spirit, and building is not yet the successful reconciliation of work or human production with the productive truth. Therefore in the *Aesthetics* the symbolic monument is defined as being an obscure interior (it is not yet touched by what calls for the clearing of truth, it is essentially a crypt) and mute (language does not speak through it). This is why it is also true that it is not really spirit itself that builds, and why Hegel focuses on its human builders, on the childish

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168. Hegel, *Aesthetics*, op. cit., p.354.

Egyptians who are courageous but stuttering, because building is a blind activity for them since they have not yet received the enlightenment nor the clear word of truth. If we return here to the Heidegger's analysis it will now seem as an attempt to place building in the open, in the clearing of truth, to restore its enlightenment; to relocate the echo of *logos* in the milieu of language, to let it speak; a complete reassignment or reattribution, now belonging entirely to a movement of the "setting to work" of truth. Hence despite the kinship just mentioned there are two philosophical decisions that separate Heidegger from Hegel: the building (architecture) is essentially thought of as being in the world opened up by Greek language, and, the question of the human builder, the subject as a producer, being non-determinant is explicitly challenged.

The Heideggerian enterprise therefore seems like some kind of re-lodging of building and the built work, as their reassignment entirely to truth.

What is at stake in this reattribution, as alluded to earlier, is the passage from an interpretation of truth as *adaequatio* or *homoiosis* (which governs all metaphysics including Hegel's) to a determination of truth as *aletheia*, from truth considered as being a conformity to truth considered as an unveiling. However this passage does not consist in the invention of a new concept. The Heideggerian gesture determines *aletheia* to be *more originary* than *adaequatio*, because truth was first and essentially unveiled as a conflict between revealing and concealment, and only after this unveiling could metaphysics then think of self-presence or *homoiosis*. The re-lodgement or the restoration of building in Heidegger should be understood within the general horizon of an attempt to return to the more originary by a step backwards (*Schritt zurück*). Only then can we understand the reasons why, when it comes to "tecture", Heidegger is not content to simply repeat the Hegelian analysis since it belongs fundamentally to that belated determination of metaphysics and truth that is precisely what needs to be "surpassed." And this affiliation reveals itself at least twice at decisive moments when Hegel considers the essence of architecture and the non-presence of truth within it in terms of an inadequacy – that is to say, exclusively from and within a conception of truth as adequation (*homoiosis*, the yard stick for evaluating the distance of building from truth is conformity to truth, which we here note simply – provisionally anyway – as its non-effectiveness) and for this reason he is interested in a certain group of human-subject producers (the Egyptians) as an instance that conforms to a greater or lesser degree (more or



less present to itself, that is to say more or less governed by truth as *adaequatio*) and as a result will produce works that have a greater or lesser degree of conformity, that will represent the truth to a greater or lesser degree.

This shows, despite the validity of his questioning, just how deeply rooted Hegel is in a mode of thinking that does not yet reach what is most originary, and that is why we cannot simply repeat what he said about building, about architecture, or about Egypt, and why also we cannot confirm the conception of the monument as an obscure and silent crypt – nor the description of the Egyptians as those who cannot yet properly speak or listen, as those who essentially and primarily remain builders.

And yet one cannot help thinking that the “step backward” that motivates Heidegger’s entire endeavour has the effect of restoring and consolidating what Hegel in the pages on the (symbolic) essence of architecture manifested as its essential anxiety. After all, when it appears that the first hesitant steps of building remain distant from meaning due to the lack of awareness or immaturity of its producers, was this not fundamentally a distance opened up by truth itself, by its very manifestation – to the point that it could only speak or engage with itself in its distorted and alienated form? Was it not a separation *within* the same *adaequatio*? And the question that these pages finally posed is: what happens when *homoiosis* becomes (or remains) foreign to itself? What allows us to simply decide it is no longer relevant?

Nevertheless by rejecting the determination of truth as *adaequatio* and *homoiosis* as being outdated Heidegger also rejects this question. And it is legitimate to continue rejecting this question so long as it is exclusively and specifically affiliated to an outdated mode of thinking that must be overcome in order to reach a more originary questioning.

But is it certain that this question can be avoided? Is it so obvious that the path of thinking toward the origin can by itself, at all times and in all situations, avoid this encounter? Let us recall those passages where Heidegger exposes production as being essentially, according to him, truth setting *itself* to work, establishing *itself* in being, opening by *itself* the space of play and conflict in which truth happens.... But what exactly is the “itself” of truth? An identity, a conformity with itself, an adequation of truth to itself? But how can this be possible if truth is not *homoiosis* but *aletheia*?

And certainly truth “itself”, considered as an originary unveiling, is not in the order of identity or homology: *aletheia* is not *homoiosis* – but instead a conflict between revealing and concealment, hiddenness or dissimulation, bursting forth and kept secret, etc. And yet, in the process of production, in this *will* to be set to work, doesn’t truth repeat itself, speak according to a unity – a unity that implies its prior duality? Its emergence (*Ursprung*) is “spontaneous” and im-mediate because it confronts nothing but its proper and integral effectiveness? Doesn’t truth-*aletheia* ultimately maintain a trusting relationship with itself – and isn’t this trust then the only guarantee of an originally peaceful community of art and truth (their original agreement, being the same conflict, as one conflict), and the relationship between the work and *logos* ultimately one of obedience, fidelity, piety or guardianship?

We should attend to these questions with all the caution they deserve, they are only provisional, and the reading attempted here of “The Origin of the Work of Art” and “The Question Concerning Technology” is too specific, too limited to the specific object of our study to dare build an interpretation “of Heidegger.” And above all we do not pretend – it would in fact be stupid to do so – that these questions are likely to turn against their source and create difficulties for the trial of thought conducted by Heidegger in these lectures, or even to critique his use of a certain word or his choice of a particular notion.<sup>169</sup> We just want to reach the point in Heidegger's text where the question of *homoiosis*, especially concerning *aletheia*, cannot avoid asking – if only in the interrogative form, why – and why essentially – *aletheia* has always been interpreted by metaphysics (that is to say now, belatedly, but also already in Greece) as *homoiosis*, was this translation “inevitable” – and if so, should we not also think this “fatality” (this destiny) when we try to think truth-*aletheia* according to its original providence?

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169. That is to say that here we will attempt to keep in mind, “Heidegger's extreme caution and not overlook the hesitations or regrets, the more or less explicit disavowals which punctuate his *text*”, and therefore not repeat, “the (most) simple determination of *aletheia*”, which, according to the analysis of Jean-Luc Nancy and Philippe Lacoue-Labarthe is the basis for the coherency and overall structure of Lacan's *Ecrits*. See Nancy and Lacoue-Labarthe, *The Title of the Letter, A Reading of Lacan*, trans. François Raffoul and David Pettigrew (New York: State University of New York Press, 1992), pp. 143 and 143. See in particular Chapter 3: “Truth ‘Homologated’”, pp. 133 - 148.

These questions can certainly be located, at times even explicitly, within the very work of Heidegger, in any case we cannot maintain that they have been entirely avoided or forgotten.

What concerns us here is the fact that these questions still make demands on Heidegger's endeavour despite the "step back" that occurs within it, and since we can anticipate or foresee this it would certainly be naive – or at least imprudent – to think that Heidegger's analysis of production and the built work have resulted in a simple, clear, comprehensive and definitive rejection of what would be the force of the Hegelian text.

But then it is this force that perhaps remains at the very place where Heidegger speaks of the *Ursprung*, of unveiling, of the originary bursting forth, it may well be that we rediscover – and perhaps only in the form of the "ambiguity" that the 1956 Addendum locates within the "The Origin of the Work of Art", perhaps even more simply in the inevitable ambiguity of certain terms and certain phrases – the trace of this question that pervades and governs the Hegelian interpretation of architecture, a question not only of *homoiosis*, but the distinction within *homoiosis*, the alteration within the heart of identity, "becoming to itself a stranger" to (and in) truth.

This question – one that already arose with the impossible "Babelism" of Kant, of what we called in general terms the "modern deterioration" – thus survives within the imposing and now essential Heideggerian endeavour. The mere possibility of such a survival encourages us to continue with our line of questioning, with the examination of this endeavour, but also with other aspects concerning "tecture" and its relationship to truth.

Note the general orientation of this examination, it is still a question of knowing what is it that occurs with "tecture": if it is truth, as Heidegger revealed, and this was already (but not explicitly) a requirement for Kant and Hegel, we can no longer simply interpret it as being the adequate effect of a subject present to itself, nor of any other "arche";

– If it appears that the re-lodgement that Heidegger effected does not exhaust the question that opened this impossibility;

– If it is finally true – as Heidegger shows with unprecedented force – that the question of “tecture” is, and always has been, a question of truth.

For now the chapter will close with a remark that, if not resolving the specified question, will perhaps permit us to see one aspect of it, because it appeared that the building could not be interpreted as an original and assured process of foundation by which some arche, hereafter considered to be thought itself, no longer constructs buildings. No palace nor any pyramid can piece together and celebrate the texts of Heidegger. The philosophical “tecture” here is only the opening up of paths, paths of thought that lead nowhere, that no longer direct, self nullifying on the threshold of any monument. Paths which are for Heidegger in particular the traces of listening, what we sometimes hear in the clearings as they pass through or draw out the echo of our provenance – and sometimes a voice, a recollection linked to memory, speaks to us of origin and essential emergence. The question remains whether despite this attempt and the Heideggerian decision for a re-lodgement in listening, the now proven impossibility of philosophical archi-tecture does not destine these paths to be traced out in the form of a labyrinth.

## A Joyful Building?<sup>170</sup>

Letter to Elizabeth:

Now that I have built the portico to my philosophy, I must start working tirelessly until the main edifice also stands finished before me.... Thus the scaffolding for my main edifice must be erected this summer; or, in other words, during the coming months I mean to draw up the outline of my philosophy and the plan for the next six years. May my health last out for this!

One could be forgiven here for thinking that they were reading Descartes – the same insistent metaphor and the project is so resolute! It is even for an Elizabeth that these lines were written.<sup>171</sup> But it dates from 1884 and it is Nietzsche writing to his sister.<sup>172</sup>

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170. [T. N. Chapter 9 of Daniel Payot, *Le philosophe et l'architecte: Sur quelques déterminations philosophiques de l'idée d'architecture* (Paris: Aubier Montaigne, 1982)., pp. 185 - 183.]

171. [T. N. Descartes famously corresponded with Princess Elizabeth of Bohemia from 1643 to 1649.]

About this “portrait of the philosopher as an architect” that almost literally repeats the one inaugurated by modern philosophy there wouldn’t be much more to add if the plan drawn up had been kept to and if we could now gaze upon the “main building” that had been promised.

However, for book upon book and all the other books of fragmented aphorisms that followed, the construction of the monument was in fact deferred and the portico only ever increased in its number of columns while the building itself was only ever sketched out, never rising far from the ground.

Our intention is not to recall all the circumstances that rendered this project impossible, nor to elaborate upon those for whom, contrary to Nietzsche himself, the absence of a “main building” seemed unbearable and so they therefore attempted to remedy this perceived shortcoming by collecting his work together without the slightest delicacy under the title *The Will to Power* – as if it was inadmissible for a philosopher not leave any “real” architecture.

The only question asked will be this: wasn’t it inevitable that this Nietzschean philosophical monument never happened? Or more precisely, was this outcome not planned, even programmed by Nietzsche, by Nietzsche's texts, long before this letter of 1884?

In what follows we hope to show that this question, which at first seems only to refer to specific episodes in Nietzsche's philosophy, is however an essential – and terminal – link for the consideration of what was stated above under the terms “tecture and truth.”

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172. See Nietzsche, “Letter 125 To Elisabeth Nietzsche”, in *Selected Letters of Friedrich Nietzsche*, ed. and trans. Christopher Middleton (Indianapolis, Hackett Publishing Company, 1996), p. 226. This letter is also quoted in the notes to *Lettres à Peter Gast* (Paris: Christian Bourgois, 1981), p. 642. [T. N. It is now quite certain that this letter is in fact one of Elizabeth Nietzsche’s many forgeries, in this case made by reassembling a genuine letter written by her brother to Malwida von Meysenbug in order to make it seem that Elizabeth was his trusted confidant when this was far from the case. See Christopher Middleton’s comments in *Selected Letters*, op cit. pp. 226 - 228.]

## “We No Longer Understand Architecture”

To get the analysis underway, let us cite the following paragraph titled, “The stone is more stony than it used to be”, from *Human, All Too Human*, published 1878, in its entirety:

In general we no longer understand architecture; at least we do not do so nearly as well as we understand music. We have grown out of the symbolism of lines and figures, just as we have weaned ourselves from the sound-effects of rhetoric, and no longer imbibe this kind of cultural mother's milk from the first moment of our lives. Everything in a Greek or Christian building originally signified something, and indeed something of a higher order of things, this feeling of inexhaustible significance lay about the building like a magical veil. Beauty entered this system only incidentally, without essentially encroaching upon the fundamental sense of the uncanny and exalted, of consecration by magic and the proximity of the divine; at most beauty *mitigated* the *dread* – but this dread was everywhere the presupposition. – What is the beauty of a building to us today? The same thing as the beautiful face of a mindless woman, something mask-like.<sup>173</sup>

We are no longer contemporaries of architecture; its time has passed. But which time was this? The imprecise indication of “a Greek or Christian building” suggests that Nietzsche is not thinking of a particular period in the history of architecture but rather a long epoch in history that is no longer ours.

Here this specific epoch is expressly called: “symbolism”, “cultural mother's milk”, “a higher order of things”, “this feeling of inexhaustible significance”, “the fundamental sense of the uncanny and exalted” and “the proximity of the divine.” This is a time when truth is given to us, religiously or metaphysically proven, read into every detail of the world, evident throughout in its tangible presence; imposing itself at the beginning of any production and so orientating the produced work towards the origin of all things, towards the transcendent reality that makes them be and governs them.

Therefore in architecture the building requires that this exchange takes place, this lived experience of conversation with truth, at once both fearful and confident; a kind of

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173. Friedrich Nietzsche, *Human, All Too Human*, trans. R. J. Hollingdale (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1996), § 218, p. 101.

knowledge, or at the very least a belief, that no great architectural work is outside this feeling of participation, of reciprocal possession.<sup>174</sup>

But, to be precise, “The novelty of our philosophical position is a conviction unknown to all previous centuries, that of *not possessing the truth*.”<sup>175</sup> It is a matter of concern for modern Europeans for whom, “the stone is more stony than it used to be”, and who build cities where nothing grand can be felt, “I go along the new streets of our cities and think how, of all these gruesome houses which the generation of public opinion has built for itself, not one will be standing in a hundred years' time, and how the opinions of these house-builders will no doubt by then likewise have collapsed.”<sup>176</sup>

But it also concerns modern philosophers who can no longer find in knowledge or belief the strength of a firm building. Because the truth (the *arche*) has ceased to move us, because we no longer favour it, we are also removed from the will and understanding of a philosophical archi-tecture.

## A Library of Babel

What then is there left to construct? Are we thereafter condemned to insignificant and sterile invention without rigor? Should Nietzsche the philosopher in his writings have committed himself to creating a bland “neo-metaphysics”, just as the architects of his day designed buildings in neo-Gothic and neoclassical styles?

But let's take a closer look, if we “do not possess the truth” it may mean that any exchange, any relationship with “truth” is now impossible. This does not mean that the need to *build* such a relationship no longer makes sense anymore. The truth is no longer *given* but it perhaps renders the need to build a manifestation of truth even more urgent.

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174. See *ibid.*, § 220, *Daybreak*, § 169, *The Gay Science*, § 291, § 356, etc.

175. Quoted by Jean Granier in *Le problème de la vérité dans la Philosophie de Nietzsche* (Paris: Seuil, 1966), p. 312, note 4.

176. “Schopenhauer as Educator”, in *Untimely Meditations*, trans. R. J. Hollingdale (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1927), p. 128.

“No more willing and no more esteeming and no more creating! Oh, if only this great weariness would always keep away from me!” “And what you called world, that should first be created by you.” “Creating – that is the great redemption from suffering, and life’s becoming light. But in order for the creator to be, suffering is needed and much transformation” – since it is true that, “the service of truth is the hardest service.”<sup>177</sup>

However, for this creation and this service truth may longer be understood in the same way that it was during the previous centuries. It no longer indicates an achievable and reconciliatory dispensation nor does it name a unified origin from which its adequate representation in stone could be formed.

This new creative conversation with “the truth”, for which Nietzsche is sometimes the high priest, is established by a term which in the end is still part of the baggage of the architect: “perspectivism”, the construction of perspectives.

How far the perspectival character of existence (*der perspektivische Charakter of Daseins*) extends, or indeed whether it has any other character; whether an existence without interpretation, without 'sense' (*Auslegung ohne, ohne “Sinn”*), doesn't become 'nonsense' (*Umsinn*); whether, on the other hand, all existence isn't essentially an *interpreting* existence (*Dasein essentiell alles ist ein auslegendes Dasein*) - that cannot, as would be fair, be decided even by the most industrious and extremely conscientious analysis and self examination of the intellect; for in the course of this analysis, the human intellect cannot avoid seeing itself under its perspectival forms (*unter seinen perspektivischen Formen*), and *solely* in these. We cannot look around our corner, it is a hopeless curiosity to want to know what other kinds of intellects and perspectives there *might* be.... But I think that today we are at least far away from the ridiculous immodesty of decreeing from our angle that perspectives are *permitted* only from this angle. Rather, the world has once again become infinite (*unendlich*) to us, insofar as we cannot reject the possibility *that it includes infinite interpretations* (*unendliche Interpretationen*). Once again the great shudder seizes us - but who again would want immediately to deify in the old manner *this* monster of an unknown world? And to worship from this time on the unknown (*das Unbekannte*) as 'the Unknown One' (*den Unbekannten*)? Alas, too many *ungodly* possibilities of interpretation are included in this unknown;

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177. Friedrich Nietzsche, *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*, Book II - 2. “Upon the Blessed Isles,” trans. Adrian Del Caro (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), pp. 65 and 66 and *The Anti-Christ*, § 50 in Keith Ansell Pearson and Duncan Large (ed.) *The Nietzsche Reader* (Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, 2006), p. 496.



too much devilry, stupidity, foolishness of interpretation - our own human, all too human one, even, which we know...<sup>178</sup>

The most suggestive commentary on this paragraph from *The Gay Science* is perhaps provided by Jorge Luis Borges' text, *The Library of Babel*: "The universe (which others call the Library) is composed of an indefinite, perhaps infinite number of hexagonal galleries."<sup>179</sup> This labyrinth, which in addition is multiplied by mirrors to infinity, brings together an infinite number of books whose text is formless and chaotic – each one is in itself a labyrinth; no two books are identical and all together they contain everything that can ever be said in every language, and from the point of view of "all", and so that anything, even the most manifestly incoherent, is not complete nonsense. Men dedicate their lives to attempting to decipher it, trying to find the book that would be the key and the summary of all the others, and worshipping a cult of the "men of the library" who would, it is said, discover this volume, and generally confronting the competing interpretations for which there is no lack of idealistic, mystical or blasphemous sects, travelling decipherers and even inquisitors and destroyers of books....

This work of fiction is fundamentally just as systematic as any of Leibniz's works that have already established the concept of infinite perspectives – but should we connect it to the "perspectivism" and the "labyrinth of philosophy" mentioned earlier? In any case it seems as if *Dasein* is "perspective", as if man himself can only be seen "from his own perspective," for him the world can be nothing other than a multiplicity of interpretations, never arriving at a final instance or the possession of an absolute and original truth, and so an *arche* will never be anything other than an illusion caused by the pretentious and absurd decision to follow one interpretation only, one perspective as the exclusive and privileged point of view. So therefore it is impossible to write the book that would contain or summarize all the other books.

But can we still build the monument that would present "the truth"? And if the philosopher considers himself to be the inhabitant of such a library, can they build the "main

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178. Friedrich Nietzsche, *The Gay Science*, trans. Josafine Nauckhoff (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001), § 374, pp. 239 - 240.

179. Jorge Luis Borges, "The Library of Babel" in *Collected Fictions*, trans. Andrew Hurley (New York: Penguin, 1998). p. 112.

building” that would enclose this thought? Because he thinks *Dasein* as “perspective”, and because the world is therefore “still infinite,” Nietzsche does not build *an* architecture – but a plurality of “columns”, and so there can be no Nietzschean architecture.

## Building, Translating, Writing

But we cannot hold to the belief that this defect is the effect of some fatal sterility. Certainly it can be confirmed that “we do not possess the truth.” But the infinite number of perspectives does not condemn all “architecture”, it instead provokes and encourages it – and as we shall see, has always provoked and encouraged it.

To show this in those texts written long before the letter to Elizabeth, which perhaps “respond” in advance to the plan presented there, we will refer to the writings that Nietzsche wrote during the years 1872-1875, unpublished during his lifetime but contemporaneous with *The Birth of Tragedy* and *Untimely Meditations*, the fragments of text with the following titles: “The Philosopher: Reflections on the Struggle between Art and Knowledge”, “The Philosopher as Cultural Physician”, “On the Truth and Lies in the Nonmoral Sense”, and “The Struggle between Science and Wisdom”<sup>180</sup>, and we will try and see if we can draw an image of the figure which Nietzsche sometimes called the philosopher-artist or the tragic philosopher.

Although the term “perspectivism” does not yet feature in these writings, it is just such a finitude or relativity of *Dasein*’s apprehension that constitutes their most constant motif; that any outlook on the world is always dependant on the situation that the viewer occupies within it, and there is always the denunciation of the fact that, “for the plant the world is thus and

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180. These texts are collected under the title *Philosophy and Truth: Selections from Nietzsche's Notebooks of the Early 1870's*, trans. Daniel Breazeale (New Jersey, Humanities Press, 1994). [T. N. These early fragments of Nietzsche’s unfinished works are sometimes referred to as “The Philosopher’s Book” in reference to the title given to their German publication, see “Das Philosophenbuch. Theoretische Studien (1872-1875)”, in Ernst Holzer and August Horneffer (eds.) *Nietzsches Werke*, vol. 10 (Leipzig: Alfred Kröner Verlag, 1907).]

such; for us the world is thus and such”, “if we could communicate with the gnat, we would learn... that he feels the flying center of the universe within himself.”<sup>181</sup>

The first consequence of this relativity is that “we only live by means of illusions”<sup>182</sup>, we believe we apprehend coherencies or totalities whereas we in fact only seeing differences, we have need to unify what engages us in the dispersion of the multiplicity of our perceptual senses. The second consequence is that since we always claim to think for entities, most of these illusions are what we call “knowledge.” In these texts it is mainly on the genealogy of this illusion of knowledge that Nietzsche focuses his attention. He does this by borrowing theses and concepts of doctrines formulated long before him; showing a certain relativism, sensualism or materialism at work here and there, which seems neither very original nor even always very relevant. But it doesn’t matter, the point is that here in this sometimes “classical” vocabulary (very “eighteenth century” if you will) he will draft an analysis of what the decisive stakes are in what no longer exists. Thus the effect of a formula such as, “knowledge came to man only incidentally and not as an original endowment (*Original begabung*)”<sup>183</sup> will be the affirmation that at the origin of any knowledge there is always already established a complex work of metaphorization. In the very place of what has always been thought to be the origin of knowledge, the separating of the determinate from the indeterminate (undoubtedly for sensualism and materialism), Nietzsche situates an already imitative<sup>184</sup>, and already transformative<sup>185</sup> activity. From the very outset we are always speaking through the language of symbols and images,<sup>186</sup> “All *rhetorical figures* (i.e. the essence of language) are *logically invalid inferences*. This is the way that reason begins...” and “*Knowing* is nothing but working with the favorite metaphors, an imitating which is no longer felt to be an imitation.”<sup>187</sup>

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181. *Philosophy and Truth*, op. cit. § 102, pp. 37 and 79.

182. *Philosophy and Truth*, § 50, p. 18.

183. *Ibid.*, § 136, pp. 45 - 46.

184. See *ibid.*, §§ 148 and 149, pp. 50 - 51.

185. See *ibid.*, § 152, pp. 52 - 53.

186. See § 55, p. 20.

187. *Ibid.*, § 142, p. 48 and § 149, p. 51 (see also § 144, “Our sense perceptions are based, not upon unconscious inferences, but upon tropes.”)

To know is firstly to trans-fer or to trans-port, to continuously circulate, to pass incessantly from one image to another without this passage ever fixing on one figure that would be the non-mimetic generator for all the others. Any beginning is already the result of a comparison, is already a reflection or an analogy<sup>188</sup>, the same way that any object is only comprehended on the basis of the multiple relationships that have become worn out through over use. We live in an explosion of differences, which can be only responded to with a “glitter of metaphorical intuitions”<sup>189</sup>; to comprehend the world is therefore to endlessly displace the production of equivalence, we live with the differences by becoming embroiled in an outburst or exasperation of approximations.<sup>190</sup>

What therefore is knowledge? ”The hardening and congealing of a metaphor”, a petrification or mummification<sup>191</sup>, the “forgetting” of the movement of the initial appearance, and the violent (but necessary) decision to stop the displacement of metaphors for the sake of a unified end. Knowledge draws its strength from this violence, concepts “arise from the identification of the non-identical”<sup>192</sup>, each is only “the residue of a metaphor”<sup>193</sup> isolated from the chain of its transfers, that is to say turned against itself. Or if you prefer, knowledge is always a *construction*, it is a bridge solidly thrown over the stream of images, an edifice whose immobility constrains their movement. The savant, or more generally the man who has knowledge, is above all a constructor, an architect who by his power of “dissolving an image into a concept” is able to make:

The construction of a pyramidal order according to castes and degrees, the creation of a new world of laws, privileges, subordinations, and clearly marked boundaries – a new world, one which now confronts that other vivid world of first impressions as more solid, more universal, better known, and more human than the immediately perceived world, and thus as the regulative and imperative world. Whereas each perceptual metaphor is individual and without equals and is therefore able to elude all classification, the great edifice of concepts displays the rigid regularity of a Roman columbarium and exhales in logic that strength and coolness which is characteristic of mathematics.... Just as the Romans and Etruscans cut up the heavens with rigid mathematical lines

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188. See §§ 102, 131 and 147.

189. See “On the Truth and Lies ...”, in *Philosophy and Truth* op. cit., p. 91.

190. See *ibid.*, § 109, p. 39

191. *Ibid.*, p. 87 and § 149, p. 50.

192. *Ibid.*, p. 51 [Translation modified].

193. *Ibid.*, p. 85.

and confined a god within each of the spaces thereby delimited, as within a *templum*, so every people has a similarly mathematically divided conceptual heaven above themselves and henceforth thinks that truth demands that each conceptual god be sought only within *his own* sphere. Here one may certainly admire man as a mighty genius of construction, who succeeds in piling up an infinitely complicated dome of concepts upon an unstable foundation, and, as it were, on running water. Of course, in order to be supported by such a foundation, his construction must be like one constructed of spiders' webs, delicate enough to be carried along by the waves, strong enough not to be blown apart by every wind. As a genius of construction man raises himself far above the bee in the following way, whereas the bee builds with wax that he gathers from nature, man builds with the far more delicate conceptual material which he first has to manufacture from himself.<sup>194</sup>

Therefore the complex constitution of the monument of whatever is known becomes evident, it is an illusion pretending to account for a world that it can only betray with the same lie, but it is also the only thing that can assure existence, giving it security and a place to rest, protected from the madness of images; this violence that edifies is therefore necessary, it is “vital.”<sup>195</sup> Man is an animal architect, he can only grow and immortalize in illusions, lies or concealment. To name “the truth” is nothing other than the fruit of his power of creation, which is at the same time his power of disguise, “What then is truth? A movable host of metaphors, metonymies, and anthropomorphisms, in short, a sum of human relations which have been poetically and rhetorically intensified, transferred, and embellished, and which, after long usage, seem to a people to be fixed, canonical, and binding. Truths are illusions which we have forgotten are illusions; they are metaphors that have become worn out and have been drained of sensuous force.”<sup>196</sup>

We now know that this “genius for architecture” is another name for the “drive for truth” and is the privileged fate of the philosopher. As a master in the formation of concepts, a chief constructor of the “spider webs” that are their systems, the philosopher is always an architect who has a better sense than others of the scattering of metaphors, and in this dissolution, in this “vacant space”<sup>197</sup>, he constructs a world “as rigid as a castle.”<sup>198</sup> He is an ambiguous figure who, having a subtle affinity for the formless fabric of differences, can find the strength

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194. Ibid, p.84 - 85.

195. See *ibid.*, § 47, p. 16, “life requires illusions.”

196. *Ibid.*, p.84.

197. *Ibid.*, § 27.

198. *Ibid.*, p. 89.

to build a work that, like that of Plato, “attains its summit as the founder of a metaphysically organized state (*eines Staatengründerin metaphysich geordneten Staates*).”<sup>199</sup> Thus the philosophical construction is understood to contribute both to an “artistic” capacity for creation and invention, and its retrieval, its repression in the name of “truth”, the stability of values, universality and regularity, the philosopher practices – and succeeds – in an act of denial, as the most skilful illusionist or rhetorician he puts his talents to work in a fierce struggle against the image and against metaphor, what he now calls an “error”, but is basically his proper material and his proper weapon. What is constructed therefore is a masterpiece of illusion that envelops in a veil “reality”, “necessity”, and “truth.” Philosophy is a masterpiece of dissimulation (*Verstellung*).

And despite this the architecture collapses, which is undoubtedly one of the essential innovations made by Nietzsche in these writings (more so perhaps than the philosophy of Schopenhauer or any other “Wagnerian”). If we can believe what is repeated in several of these fragments<sup>200</sup>, after Kant and the *Critique of Reason*, “the ground of metaphysics has been withdrawn” from philosophy.<sup>201</sup> This event – evidenced by a laconic note, “Philosophy after Kant died”<sup>202</sup> – is not only the last episode of a particular discipline, with this death it is also the very status of knowledge: its construction being a work of concealment and violence, is finally revealed and can no longer remain hidden.

One can say that Nietzsche thinks the end of metaphysics by way of a dialectical resolution, what was veiled and covered up is now revealed and exposed, the negativity upon which the monument was built at last becomes, by its very ruin, edifying in itself. Thus despite the precautions, despite even the explicit intentions – is dialectical logic not still the ultimate expression, the highest achievement of a “state constitution” of knowledge – and hasn’t Nietzsche in these texts reactivated a kind of Hegelian tragedy turned upside down? In fact several of his formulas take the death of philosophy to be the liberation of creation, life, and art in order to build, and seem therefore to describe what one could name by a simple inversion of Hegel, a supersession of knowledge through art: “We now oppose knowledge

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199. Ibid., p. 203. [T. N. Translation modified.]

200. See, for example §§ 32, 44, 73 and § 165 [T. N. Not included in the English translation].

201. Ibid., § 37, p. 11.

202. Ibid., § 165 [T. N. This section is not included in the English translation].

with *art*,” “Our salvation lies not in *knowing*, but in *creating*!”, “Tragic resignation, the end of philosophy. Only art has the capacity to save us.”<sup>203</sup>

Whichever way you venture into these writings, if you do not arbitrarily subvert its logic, one is highly unlikely to avoid a dialectical way of thinking. It is even possible that what we have not yet read will also confirm this general movement of the same problematic – even when it is a matter of “tragic” knowledge. And so therefore our intention is, against a reading that would emphasize that he still belongs to the metaphysical tradition, to invent a Nietzsche who would make a *tabula rasa* and begin again from zero. More originally and more precisely, we will only try to record, on a ground that is itself still metaphysically circumscribed and marked, the emergence of a trait that cannot repeat or confirm the same disposition, the same economy. This trait will better inform us about happens to the “texture” that we are investigating under the motif of “art.”

One would expect that for art after the ruin of metaphysics Nietzsche would attribute only those characteristics or properties that are contrary to those of this collapsed edifice. And he sometimes does this, for example at the end of “On the Truth and Lies...” where he (dialectically) contrasts point-by-point the “rational man” (the philosopher) with the “intuitive man” (the artist). If the latter has the power to form a “civilization” (*Kultur*) it is only because he can destroy or dismantle the “castle” built by the former, “That immense framework and planking of concepts to which the needy man clings his whole life long in order to preserve himself is nothing but a scaffolding and toy for the most audacious feats of the liberated intellect.... when it smashes this framework to pieces, throws it into confusion, and puts it back together in an ironic fashion, pairing the most alien things and separating the closest.”<sup>204</sup>

Nonetheless there are two series of affirmations that show the relationship between art and philosophy is not only, nor even primarily, determined by opposition and conflict. The first relates to art itself, art is portrayed in the same terms used earlier to define conceptual edification as a misleading construction and a masterpiece of dissimulation and disguise. Because he now listens to what art has to say, “Man has an invincible inclination to allow

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203. *Ibid.*, §§ 43, 84, 165. See also § 175, “With Plato begins ... the negation.”

204. *Ibid.*, p. 90.

himself to be deceived.”<sup>205</sup> Certainly art does not “want” him to be deceived<sup>206</sup>, since it arises from illusion and doesn’t pretend to be anything else; it remains self-edifying in the very way that knowledge is formed, art congeals metaphors, stops the profusion of images, and so is at the same time both constructive and constraining.

One is therefore astonished to find – this is the second point – that when Nietzsche considers the type or figure that will succeed the metaphysician and the moribund clergyman he introduces the reunion or alliance between two builders, between the philosopher and the artist – that we have just encountered, “In order to create a religion one would have to *awaken belief* in a mythical construction which one had erected in the vacuum – which would mean that this construction corresponds to an extraordinary need. It is *unlikely* that this will ever happen again after the *Critique of Pure Reason*. On the other hand, I can imagine a totally new type of *philosopher-artist* who fills the empty space with a *work of art*, possessing aesthetic value (*ein Kunstwerk ... mit ästhetischem Werte*).”<sup>207</sup>

We can imagine an affinity, perhaps even complicity, between art and philosophy, art is a kind of knowledge – a joyful wisdom, a happy disguise made by “overjoyed heroes”<sup>208</sup> – and philosophy as a kind of art that must deny itself and yet exist only in the act of creation. Instead of being in opposition, knowledge and creation now join together. For these two words mean basically the same kind of work, art is not the “opposite” of philosophy, a discipline with its own laws, nor is philosophy a learning that is “distinct, separate”<sup>209</sup> from other constructions; “art” is already in the process of building and “firmness” constitutes all wisdom, all knowledge, all philosophy, in the transposition of images which is their primary act.<sup>210</sup>

In fact, criticizing metaphysics for being taken as true knowledge – “the adequate expression of an object in the subject” (what we called in Chapter VIII the determination of

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205. Ibid., p. 89. See also ibid. p. 90 and §§ 183 and 184.

206. Ibid., § 184.

207. Ibid., § 44, p. 14

208. Ibid., p. 90.

209. See ibid., § 61.

210. See § 116. On the “complicity” between art and philosophy, see also ibid., § 193.



truth as *homoiosis* or *adaequatio*) – Nietzsche writes, “For between two absolutely different spheres, as between subject and object, there is no causality, no correctness, and no expression; there is, at most, an *aesthetic* relation (*ein ästhetisches Verhalten*), I mean, a suggestive transference (*eine andeutende Übertragung*), a stammering translation (*eine nachstammelnde Übersetzung*) into a completely foreign tongue (*eine ganz fremde Sprache*) – for which there is required, in any case, a freely inventive intermediate sphere and mediating force (*frei dichtenden und frei erfindenden Mittelsphäre und Mittelkraft*).”<sup>211</sup>

This quotation seems in many ways to be the culmination of the philosophical gesture attempted by Nietzsche in these early texts. In the first place it clarifies what was previously designated under the general heading of “art”, it is a force for fables, invention, or even fiction (the same meaning in the active sense of “fictioning”), a production or construction of illusions, “lies”; and it is from this “fictioning” that a specific work of knowledge can be built, not by appropriation or submission but as a work of displacement, transposition and translation.

To know is always to trans-fer or to trans-form, which is to say it is from the beginning an artistic work, locating itself in an “aesthetic” relationship to the world or to “realities.”

We now comprehend that whatever is of this world, of this reality, cannot be understood as “phenomena”, as empirical appearances or the essence of things<sup>212</sup>, the world is never given, it is never “already there” in a way that one could grasp it intuitively or conceptually. “The world” is nothing but the limited and relative meeting of perspectival projections that we open up. Yet what Nietzsche affirms in terms that we have just highlighted, and in many other very explicit pages of “On the Truth and Lies...”, is precisely that the opening up of perspectives always takes place within *language*, it is words that first project in front of us what we then believe to discover to be “things” or “realities.”<sup>213</sup> The “aesthetic” transposition from which all knowledge begins is of an essentially linguistic nature, this is why in order to account for the operation by which the chaotic profusion of metaphors and images is fixed, bounded, and deceptively and violently ordered – and becomes therefore a “world” –

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211. Ibid., p. 86.

212. Ibid. p. 86.

213. See *ibid.*, pp. 81 - 84 and §§ 150 and 152.

Nietzsche speaks of the transfer (*andeutende Übertragung*) and the translation (*Übersetzung*) imposed on sense.

Being-in-the-world is therefore having to deal with a kind of “text”, but one that remains perpetually foreign, always traversed by uncontrollable metaphorical displacements, always changing and plural, and because of this it always remains obscure or incomplete, it is constantly trying out new translations of the “text” even though its “language” is unknown to us and its rules of syntax and grammar are never given. In other words we need to construct – if we don’t want to sink into madness, into the outpouring of images – a text even when no benevolent and universal voice, no audible truth can ensure a proper language, we need to construct a building near to and even within the abyss of irreducible differences. That is why for this edification there is a necessary “intermediate” sphere (an “artistic” force) that “invents” and puts this language to the test, that proposes or risks a grammar, that allows a particular syntax to be “experienced” and thus “fictionalizes” and lays the first stone of the construction – understanding construction to be by necessity “illusory”, which Nietzsche labels, when he knows and accepts it as such, a “tragic knowledge.”

What then in fact does to build mean? It means to always engage in a perilous and risky effort of translation; to work on the radical foreignness of the “text” without this ever resulting in a finished work or a definitely established “truth”, to work on its displacements, its ever-changing perspectives and its disguises. We therefore construct, and one always starts by constructing, because we are not before the world as a complete book whose contents can be easily read without loss, and this is what every miraculously discovered volume in the Library of Babel tells us and makes obvious to us. The building is necessary, always returned to and tried again, because self-evidence is not our lot, because the “text” we inhabit – the metaphorical effervescence – is always scrambled, encrypted, erased, and traversed by the shocks of its own formation and deformation, by meetings and separations, by accidents that are woven into it. At the heart of this foreignness there is no foundation to help us or direct the necessary vital cohesive effort, no “rock” of certainty upon which to build and give assurance, the rock itself is already a construction, a “fiction”, the result of a perspectival intention. Because truth is “missing”, because it no longer appears by default but only in silent or stammering words that are both excessive and deficient, all “tecture” is “tragic”, an expenditure, a “basically lost” activity (always lost from the beginning) – which may well

take the form of “scepticism” or “despair” (but a creative despair)<sup>214</sup>, which is that of lightness, laughter, and the joy of a production without imperative.<sup>215</sup>

Perhaps this tragic “tecture” is already that of the Egyptians, as emphasized by Hegel, since they knew no “clear and unambiguous” language and so they spent their efforts tirelessly on a gigantic work of construction with no other purpose than expenditure itself, led by no rules, no *arche*, no *telos*, and so when we are confronted with the eternally unreadable “text” of death we can only add to it with more building, more invented images, or just simply laugh.

And like these indefatigable builders who can only build “hieroglyphics”, the philosopher is also “caught in the nets of language”<sup>216</sup>, in inextricable networks, in the labyrinth of metaphors that he can only try to transpose and transcribe. He is an artist when he “translates” into signs and coherencies that are by nature always in despair of any meaning. In summary this is to say that the philosopher also *writes*, which now seems obvious but perhaps this had been forgotten.

The philosophical “tecture” is always a risky and stammering transcription that is disguised as the firm production of systems and the “discovery of truth.” But when the ground of metaphysics has been “withdrawn”, when belief in the “possession of truth” becomes impossible, the disguise is removed. And what remains, if not “tecture” and the power of disguise, is it then the artistic force by which they were able to impose the form of a beautiful illusion on the “infinite” displacement of images? This shows that the death of philosophy is not only the death of all philosophy but also all “tecture”, they were both only ever transcriptions. We understand in this sense the affirmation repeated several times in these fragments according to which philosophy is in the end only a work of art: “The reason why *indemonstrable* philosophizing retains some value, and for the most part a higher value than a scientific proposition, lies in the *aesthetic* value of such philosophizing, in its beauty and sublimity. Even when it cannot prove itself as a scientific construction, it continues to exist as a *work of art*.” “The beauty and grandeur of an interpretation of the world construction

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214. Ibid., § 37.

215. See *ibid.*, p. 91.

216. Ibid., § 118, p. 42.

[*Weltkonstruktion*] (*alias* philosophy) is what is now decisive for its value, i.e. it is judged as *art*.”<sup>217</sup>

Philosophy should be seen as “a form of poetry (*Dichtkunst*)”<sup>218</sup>; which does not mean that the interest in philosophy should be replaced or “raised” to another interest, this time poetry or art. But it undoubtedly means that philosophy must now be read and practiced otherwise, no longer as a summa or monument of “truths” but as work of building and “translation”, always facing the unreadability of the “world” as text, as writing. This is the task that Nietzsche assigned to the “tragic philosopher” – and to himself – in the writings of the “early period”: “We no longer permit the poetry of concepts (*Begriffsdichtung*). Only in the work of art.”<sup>219</sup>

## The Last Archi-itect and the New Philosophers

At the beginning of this chapter we asked a very specific question: how is it that in Nietzsche’s text there is decisively a non-construction of the “main building” of his philosophy that he was still proposing in 1884 to build? To investigate this question we chose to read a body of writings or fragments belonging to the “youngest” of his texts, Nietzsche attempting a “typology” (or “physiology”) of the figure of the “philosopher,” which determines what he will become (which he names the “new philosopher”, the “philosopher of the future”, or the “tragic philosopher”) in the epoch which reveals the end or death of metaphysics, and in so doing it is above all in himself and in his work to come that he assigns a philosophical “place”, a “program” of analysis and creation.

This reading will hopefully permit an answer to the proposed question, because philosophy is an “artistic” activity, because it is written, because this writing is always a transcription, a construction traversed by metaphoricity, by the work of differences and

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217. *Ibid.*, § 61, p. 23 and §49, pp. 17 - 18, see also §§ 38 and 48.

218. *Ibid.*, § 53.

219. *Ibid.*, § 165, p. 153.

displacements, and finally because Nietzsche's text begins at the historical moment when “writability” can no longer masquerade as the construction of “the world”, or the “possession of the truth”, there is no Nietzschean archi-tecture in the sense of a finished building capable of immobilising the transfers of its own production and enclosing its own space. If we dare to propose a construction for such an ordeal, then writing is making a “portico.” But all the porticos together do not designate the definitive monument, which they can only surround, circumscribe, or adorn, but rather a “place” that is always vacant, always desired or projected but never habitable.

However the question we asked ourselves in the course of a particular analysis of “tecture” can be made more specific by the following three points, the “deterioration” of the very idea of archi-tecture principally following Kant; the affiliation of the question of “tecture” to that of truth; and finally the questions emerging from the Heideggerian determination of production as listening. It is now a matter of making the affirmations proposed in Nietzsche’s writings explicit from the point of view these three points.

We will begin with the third one, which will have a bearing on the entire problem – by avoiding any “comparison” which in any case would be quite arbitrary, and by simply drafting a proposal for such a reading.

The Heideggerian analysis of the “tecture” was assembled from the determination of truth as *aletheia* in the decisive affirmation of unveiling as a call, address or speech as *logos*. Perhaps the Nietzschean texts can now appear to us as opening the possibility (or they expressed its necessity in advance?) of a displacement or a “diversion” of this affirmation. For what we have just discovered in Nietzsche, constantly repeated in his tightly intertwined enunciations, in his infinite figures, is that in a way *logos* always speaks “in foreign languages”, languages that are never our “mother tongue” nor even familiar to us, not essentially because we do not (yet) have the time or opportunity to learn them, but because this word deviates or departs from itself, is constituted by becoming other, by incessant border crossings. It would be therefore a poem that has exploded, only readable or audible in dispersed fragments, never whole – or else in the form of a fiction that would certainly require multiple Babelisms. Perhaps the truth only ever speaks from elsewhere in strange words even when it “opens up a world.” That is why in this world built in the vacancy of full speech, you

find phrases of text that are endlessly incorporating, endlessly risking dis-lodgement. To summarise, because not everything has been said already, a “tecture” that knows how to use “artistic” force to install a relevant transcription in the absence of the “total”, by playfully constructing with shortcomings, incompleteness and weaknesses, with the strangeness of an incomplete language.

In retrospect the various philosophical or theoretical constructions we encountered throughout this study now appear to be just such transcriptions. The endeavours that sought to fulfil (*comble*) the beginning, to enclose (*enciendre*) the truth, to found “tecture” by isonomy, mediation or liaison, we now approach them no longer according to their explicit ambitions but as experiments in “translation.”

Those who tried hard to immobilise “tecture” with assured foundations, we now read them as “artistically” opening up perspectives in the attempt to reduce or domesticate the strangeness of their own language, by “firming” the shattering and “stammering” of their own textuality. Their tendency to build – and this was their “beauty” and their “aesthetic” value – a familiar and given instance under the name of origin or *arch*, to identify and seize metaphoricity was already an imitative activity, the work was always constructive and always “rhetorical.”

The “idea of architecture” that we studied was seen to also designate the need for foundation, or the principle whereby the theoretical edifice tries to appropriate its own constitution, we can say then that it formulates the will to write the origin. And perhaps after Nietzsche we now know that to write the origin, having already been lost, is to lose it again and again, and that the attempt to build “castles” with differences, images, or concepts, reveals above all the “fictioning” force and nonoriginality of all construction – and all writing.

One final remark to bring the course of this study to a close – because the Hegelian text considered architecture to be essentially “symbolic” and to build essentially an “expenditure”, this articulates two dimensions that we found in Nietzsche, the “vital” necessity of “tecture” is related to the failure to find a full origin or a familiar language. Hegel frees the building from the presence of truth and the efficacy of the voice or speech, and links it to death, to the beyond of all language, the ineffable upon which however there must be an interminable

writing, the buildings that are raised up are therefore covered with engraved inscriptions recording what cannot speak, traces that are undecipherable because they “translate” a “text” whose origin will never be established, read or heard. Made from the architectural moment which is that of death in the beginning, thus making it clear that the philosophical idea of architecture disguises with all the artistic force of illusion, that any venture for foundation, any desire for origin, always “knows” from the start that truth is not given and that putting it to work means to work “tragically” or “perspectively” as the transposition of a silence. And since Hegel has been our guide throughout this essay he must also have the final word, it is the archi-tect *par excellence* who claims to build and complete the dialectical monument of thought; and in Hegel’s pages on architecture, which we have seen in agreement with Denis Hollier constitute a “mise en abyme” of Hegel’s entire system, Hegel has already sketched the “heroic” gesture that Nietzsche expects from those he calls the “new philosophers.”

## Conclusion<sup>220</sup>

### Oedipus and “Archaism”

On several occasions the progression of this work was compared to a journey, perhaps more precisely it should be considered a periplus<sup>221</sup>, territories were visited, explored, and then revisited several times along the way. We still need to list the places that were discovered by such an itinerary, lightly retracing our steps.

“Eupalinos, or The Architect” set us on our way. The fiction of Socrates in the afterlife desiring to be both the philosopher he was and the artist-builder that he never became opened up a perspective on an entire philosophical tradition that merited closer examination. If so many great philosophers have played the role of Socrates in Valéry’s dialogue, what does this

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220. [T. N. Conclusion of Daniel Payot, *Le philosophe et l’architecte: Sur quelques déterminations philosophiques de l’idée d’architecture* (Paris: Aubier Montaigne, 1982)., pp. 205 -209.]

221. [T. N. In Greek *peri*: around and *pleō*: I sail, so a periplus is a manuscript listing in order the ports and coastal features visited along a voyage, as in “The Periplus of Hanno” mentioned by Pliny the Elder in *Natural History*, trans. H. Rackham (London: Heinemann, 1938), 2:169.]

tell us about what it is about architecture that makes it so frequently and so easily the source of such an important fascination and desire for Western thought?

Our first clue was that the majority of philosophical texts referring to the art of building made consistent use of architectural metaphors. Then we asked what do these parallels, these desires and these images mean, what is the source of the identity or the resemblance that justifies this?

While responding to these questions a recurrent theme kept returning to our investigation, the philosophical idea of architecture concerns production, and so long as we acknowledge its diversity, it corresponds with or centres around what can be generally specified by four terms: the origin (or *arche*), truth, *logos* (or full speech) and presence. Architecture therefore comes to designate that which is erected or imposed immediately, that which begins or inaugurates, and finally, that which signifies or reveals more purely than the transmission or sending of words and meaning since it is closer to presence, in other words as the art of presence and origin rather than the art of representation and effect. In this way architecture came to constitute one of the “models” of philosophical presentation used to establish the truth of speech and the order of discourse. Archi-tecture unifies the two dimensions that philosophers desire to have a governing role: the agreement or sympathy with the first instance – without which their approach would remain derivative and the self-establishment of presence in relation to the self – without which their signifying would always appear foreign to or derived from the self.

We discovered that this general determination attributes the idea of architecture to “Greece”, thought by the West in modern times to be the country of beginnings, essences, self belonging and the transparency of *language*; as the place of origin for speculation and organicity, of *homoiosis* and *arche*. The unity of *arche* and “tecture”, the very thing that architecture enunciates, therefore seems to relate back to the beginnings of conceptual thought, rediscovers it, perpetuates it, and gives order to its possible renewals.

It is here that we find – to use one of the myths or figures from the Hegelian text for the opening of Spirit and truth to their Western realization – the “Apollonian” dimension that most philosophical and theoretical texts have granted to architecture since the time of



Vitruvius; or further, the heroic gesture of Oedipus that these texts grant to all contemporary will to build. Architecture belongs to what the West itself inaugurates: the putting to death of the sphinx and the solving of the riddles posed by the divinities during its period of childhood. The idea of architecture serves as an aid to thinking the foundation of this tradition, its opening up of a world, its finally knowing how to prove its coherency, its unity, its order, and its capability for self-discovery and self-possession, with a clarity of language, an adequacy of thought, and a mastery of its own image and its own effects by means of speculation.

This could have been the end of our journey, once the philosophical references to architecture as being what enables the will to build itself as architecture by means of philosophy were shown to belong to this conception of order as speculative and as a self-establishing organization, as a disposition governed by identity. In which case we would have approached the idea of architecture from the simple understanding of metaphysics, where the visionary indication or revelation of a discourse has foundation, self-assurance and reason as its essential dimension and end goal.

In fact we were strongly drawn towards such a conclusion. But there in fact seemed to be something quite different at work that proves to be equally important, the fact that philosophical discourse in search of its own foundations and its own assurances lands several times on an entirely different shore – one that, thinking of Hegel again, was sometimes called “Egypt.”

Indeed we rediscovered on several occasions, but principally in the modern history the idea of architecture, echoes of what the *Aesthetics, Lectures on Fine Art* defines as “symbolism properly speaking”: the impossibility of ordering discourse to sufficiently assure itself of its own principle of construction. Due to the many difficulties confronting the construction of a world of identifiable essences and the unravelling network of pathways towards the origin, it becomes clearly evident that “tecture” is a failing of the knowable *arche* as the source of truth, so that what was intended to be an inaugural instance can only be presented as the impregnable object of an always disappointed desire. It now seems to be an effect of an artistic illusion, a labyrinth, a crypt, the inorganicity of architecture, and the infantilism of building that Hegel linked to the pre-speculative, to the still incomplete presence to self, the still disrupted or uncertain habitation in the world, and the unsettling of

thought essentially obsessed by the death that it cannot master, resisting any kind of metaphysical recovery whatsoever. The edifice suddenly came to show that the power to build above all reiterates the ineffectiveness of the builder to sustain their proper provenance in their own world.

In the end, the Oedipal power of building rediscovers not an affirmed *arche* but rather its own “archaism.” In other words the beginning but also the uninhabitable “place” where the word is lost or dispersed rather than reassembled, where the origin at the beginning is already clouded over and truth remains estranged from itself – and from us; not in some very distant past that could then be revived or even regretted – but the continuous rediscovery in the present of a striving for order that cannot be achieved.

And it seemed remarkable that the philosophical idea of architecture places us in front of this sort of “double beginning” that thought undergoes when faced with the question of its own construction, as if architecture equally testifies to our Hellenism and our “Oedipism” – both constructed on this extreme edge that nonetheless marks the limits of their power of identification and homologation, resistant to the overall aim of self-establishment and forever returning to haunt or to worry its exercise with the enigmas that Oedipus undoubtedly left unsolved. The idea of architecture perhaps brings us back to this gap and this distance between “Egypt” and “Greece” – between the pyramid and the temple, between the labyrinth and the theatre that constitutes and orders Western space.

These formulations are neither strictly speaking geographical nor historical. Our objective was not to form propositions concerning the history or the sources of Western civilisation. Rather we found in the chosen texts instances where questions were dressed in the names of symbolic countries and edifices. We grouped these questions into two sets of interrogations – the first constituting the constant and fundamental framework of our work was around the issue of truth, its necessity and sometimes its absence or unreality; the second was around the word, its reception and its hypothesized modalities, often made risky by several of the texts due to a silencing or dispersion of the voice.

To speak of a region that is always reassembled and reworked by the “double beginning” of its own tradition as we have just done, clearly this doesn’t answer the questions that were

asked. Our only intention was to show that the philosophical idea of architecture is one of the places where the questions arise even if it does not constitute their solution; but are they solvable in fact? And due to the frequency of architectural metaphors and the desire of theoretical and philosophical discourse to order themselves on the model of architecture, throughout the Western tradition a constant problem is how and why to make an exodus from “Egypt”?

From the same perspective we also noticed that when philosophical thought confronts essential questions it often assigns them a vocabulary belonging to art. The common emphasis on terms to do with order, constitution, foundation, and the work of construction and consolidation, attempt to metaphorically turn thought into one of the arts. And this is certainly no surprise given that the Latin world translates *techne* (or “tecture”) as *ars* and thus returns to the same theme of production, that which is self-assured, competent, suited to its own end, and to the order that it contributes to or expresses, and to the joint, that which connects, creates solidarity, and socializes.

Architecture is placed in various ways as an art, and even as a privileged artistic figure of a complete and coherent presence – and therefore can become a mirror for speculative liaisons. But architecture can no longer be just one *ars* among others when speculation uses it to rediscover its own image because it will also come up against the trace or the “hieroglyph” of a de-liaison, of a misidentification, an expenditure that no longer lends itself to the mastery of the speculative. Doesn’t this then require a reconsideration of the body of artistic metaphors (and architectural metaphors in particular) that the philosophical text uses to think its own exposition – and then perhaps designate what it is in this exposition that is always beyond its control but nevertheless always inhabits it from the beginning? From this perspective the current work, which simply aimed to uncover some of the philosophical determinations of the idea of architecture, may appear perhaps to be a first step towards the clarification of a double question: what is the relation between what we call “art” and what was named in chapter VIII the gap in (and of) *homioiosis* (in and of the “truth”)? And how should we reconsider the reference to art, so frequently discovered in philosophical texts when they try to identify their own essence, once this becomes questionable?

Let us finish then by imagining that these questions are being asked by a peripatetic Socrates who is inquiring into what motivates an absent yet exemplary artist called Eupalinos, while he wonders through Elysian fields that are becoming ever more labyrinthine and more like the library of Babel (since it also concerns the tradition of writing and the book). By chance he finds an object in one of its innumerable galleries that remains for him an enigma, a trace without an owner, its origin unknown – and yet he chooses to see it as a sign and a promise left by Ariadne.



# 1.4

## Philosophy and Architecture<sup>1</sup>

by José Ferrater Mora

translated by Tim Adams

### The Problem

The title of this essay is ambiguous, it can be interpreted as leading either to architecture as philosophy, or to philosophy as architecture, and I don't think it is necessary to specify which one. As a reader and a writer I have observed that titles of essays are often ambiguous, yet among them there is a difference, some have authors who ignore the ambiguity of their titles and others have authors who are aware of it. The author of this article belongs to the second category, not only does he know his title is ambiguous; he wants it to be.

However, the ambiguity plaguing the phrase "philosophy and architecture" will only be fully felt when after having read this essay the art historians will reproach the author for

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1. [T. N. The source for this translation is José Ferrater Mora, "Philosophie et architecture", *Revue de Métaphysique et de Morale*: 3 (July-September 1955), pp. 251 - 263.]

having only spoken of philosophy and leaving architecture aside, while the philosophers will reproach him for doing exactly the opposite. Incidentally, both groups in this case will be too generous to the author because what we are talking about here is perhaps in fact neither philosophy nor architecture. I admit my intention is somewhat unclear. Then perhaps one can say that it would have been better to choose another title or even not to have written the essay at all. The idea was attractive. Nevertheless, I think philosophers should never let themselves be intimidated by the lack of clarity of their conceptions. If they resolved to only ever speak on a subject after having achieved perfect clarity in their thoughts, there would be no philosophy on this planet of philosophers. To make an attempt, even when the chances of achieving what they set out to do are slim, is the mission of the philosopher. Indeed, philosophy came into the world not to offer solutions but above all to pose problems. A solution is always clear but such clarity implies banality. However, the problems are not necessarily always clearly posited because a problem clearly stated is already itself a solution.

Our subject can be approached in several ways, two of them being particularly suitable. The first is likely to arouse the interest of art historians and the second that of philosophers, or more accurately, historians of philosophy. Not wanting to increase the inevitable level of ambiguity, I will say right from the start that this last way of broaching the subject is the one that will be preferred here. By no means does this mean my intention is to abandon the other way, on these pages I will take it into account, sufficiently I hope to hold the attention of those art historians who have not already decided not to proceed.

## Architecture as Philosophy

The first of these ways is to examine whether the production of philosophical ideas is related to the creation of architectural styles. Of course the relation in question is not necessarily a causal one. In fact it would be absurd to suppose that a certain “style of thinking” adopted by philosophers is what leads architects to decide whether or not to adopt a certain style in their constructions. And it would hardly be any more valid to try and establish the causal link in the opposite direction. The relation discussed here is rather a mysterious similarity that can be found between the cultural productions of a human community at a

certain moment in history. From this point of view it is clearly evident that philosophy and architecture sometimes form relationships of similarity analogous to those found, for example, between philosophy and literary, political and social institutions. To confirm this assertion with examples we will briefly examine five historical periods: Hellenic classicism, the Gothic Middle Ages, Humanism of the fifteenth century, the Baroque of the seventeenth century and the Contemporary era. The art historian, especially if they happen to double as historians of philosophy, can complement these with any examples they please and even replace them all if they so desire.

It has been said that the Greek philosophy of Forms that is found in Plato and Aristotle – with its very clear sculptural qualities – is closely related to the architecture of the classical era. The tendency of philosophers to consider forms as models, to represent ideas in the form of concrete visual images, to identify the real with what is perfect, the perfect with what is complete, and the complete with what is circumscribed, all this can be compared to the propensity of Greek architects to produce self-sufficient works of art, which provide their own space and therefore have a place instead of being simply located in space. It is quite possible that these two tendencies developed independently of each other, because what we want to show here is simply that they were simultaneous.

In the same way, and for even stronger reasons, we can observe that there is a relationship between the Gothic cathedrals and the scholastic systems of the middle ages. The art historian Erwin Panofsky has studied this relation in way that was both penetrating and passionate. In fact, Panofsky demonstrates that in the period between about 1130-40 and 1270 the relationship between Gothic architecture and scholastic philosophy was closer and more concrete than a mere parallelism. A same “way of thinking” seems to determine the formation of Gothic architecture – both Early and High – and the production of the series of philosophical systems which lead from Saint Bonaventure and Alexander of Hales to Saint Albert the Great and Saint Thomas Aquinas. According to Panofsky the single word *manifestatio*, in other words elucidation and clarification, can describe the deep kinship that exists between the two orders. One can object that although it is easy to find this *manifestatio* in the division and subdivision of scholastic systems, the same does not apply for Gothic



architecture. Nevertheless, Panofsky avoids this problem. The reconciliations that this art historian provides in this regard are too numerous to present them all here but some are particularly pertinent and so are worth mentioning. For example, the characteristics of totality (sufficient enumeration), the arrangement according to a system of homologous parts and parts of parts (sufficient articulation), and finally logical distinctness and deductive cogency (sufficient interrelation), all these characteristics typical the *Summa* are also found in the architecture of the era, certainly not because the builders of the Gothic cathedrals had read Gilbert de la Porrée or Thomas Aquinas but because they were influenced by the scholastic world view.

The philosophical tendency to create clarity for the sake of clarity, although it appears in all cultural productions of the time, reveals itself in a particularly clear way in reality, in architecture. The *manifestatio* inspires what Abbot Suger called the “principle of transparency.” Gothic architecture has realized this principle thanks to the delineation – which is not just any kind of separation – of the internal volume and the exterior space. The tendency towards totality appears in the overall structure of the Gothic cathedral – which expresses the entirety of Christian knowledge – and at the same time in the delicate balance between the basilica and the central plan. Everything that could have ruptured this balance was ultimately removed: the crypt, the galleries and the towers, all except the façade. This harmonic arrangement is revealed in the uniform division of the whole structure, very different indeed from the diversity permitted by the previous Romanesque style. Finally, the unified consistency of distinct parts is expressed in the deductive visibility of the basilica, which is comparable to the visual logic of Saint Thomas. In short, the method of the *Summa* according to Panofsky: *videtur quod – sed contra – respondeo dicendum*,<sup>2</sup> was observed in a strictly parallel way in this architecture, which managed to combine, so to speak, “all possible *Sics* with all possible *Nons*.”<sup>3</sup>

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2. [T. N. Latin for “the alignment of one set of authorities – against the other – proceeds to the solution”, see Erwin Panofsky, *Gothic Architecture and Scholasticism* (Cleveland: The World Publishing Company, 1957), pp. 68, 70, and 87.]

3. [T. N. All possible “it is thus” with all possible “not so”. Ibid. p. 87.]

Moving on to Humanism in the fifteenth century, the thesis of a parallelism – and even according to some historians, a causal relationship – between philosophy and architecture relies on givens that are no less numerous than those we listed for the Gothic. This at least is what the highly respected historian Rudolf Wittkower declares. Some of his sources given as proof are Alberti, Filarete and Francesco di Giorgio among others, who conceived the plan of a church so as to represent a cosmic concept, for example in a drawing by Francesco di Giorgio the plan of the church corresponds to the outline of a human body (a microcosm) and Leonardo drew analogous conceptions. According to Wittkower these are expressions of a Pythagorean pan-mathematism that was passed on to the artists of the Renaissance through a long line of theologians who possessed Platonic and Neoplatonist tendencies. Philosophers such as Nicolas de Cusa and Marsilio Ficino developed the idea of this correlation to its logical consequences, which was not only mystical but above all mathematical, a correlation between the invisible world and the visible world and the macrocosm and microcosm. The churches of the Renaissance are a plastic testimony to this idea.

But is it also possible to find relationships between art and philosophy of the 17<sup>th</sup> century? It has often been remarked that a metaphysics like Leibniz's presents itself in a way quite analogous way to the literary – and plastic – work of Baroque artists. Indeed, just as every monad – and each proposition conceived by the philosopher – is a reflection of the entire universe, each of the elements composing a Baroque structure reproduce the whole of this structure like a series of mirrors reflecting each other to infinity. Furthermore, the formal qualities of the Baroque style – the tendency to make displacement a necessary element and to highlight what is potential (and even what is infinitely potential), the ideal of a reserve that paradoxically produces the largest return – all that is visible in philosophical thought can also be found in the arts, especially architecture.

Finally in our own era it's not difficult to show that architects and philosophers could, if they wanted, express their aspirations in similar terms. In the final analysis it is no coincidence that functionalism in architecture can without too much difficulty be traced back to the increasingly accentuated philosophical tendency to abandon all substantialism. Just as concepts – or if one prefers, expressions – can have different functions depending on their

position in a deductive system, so the elements of a building can have no fixed or definitive place in the architectural structure. Furthermore, many philosophers today are inclined to agree that philosophy lacks its own proper object and must constantly create the point of view from which an object can be taken as a theme for philosophical reflection, and at the same time contemporary architecture tends to consider that the construction must not only enrich a space, but must also create the space that allows a building to become architecture. We will not continue down this path already explored by several others, including Giedeon. What we have seen is sufficient evidence to show that, even if the concrete relationships mentioned are questionable, some type of relation cannot be ruled out. That is why in our time it has become a *vérité de la Palisse*<sup>4</sup>: namely, that architecture and philosophy are, in at least one of their essential dimensions, cultural productions, but more than that, they are the cultural productions of the same *determined era* to which they belong.

## Philosophy as Architecture

We have said a few words about architecture as philosophy, now it is time to address our principle concern, philosophy as architecture. We are not the first to do so. Some thinkers are already leaning towards this topic. To our knowledge there are eight of them: Aristotle, Leibniz, Lambert, Kant, Peirce, Wroński, Warrain and Bornstein.<sup>5</sup>

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4. [T. N. a truth so self-evident as to be ridiculous, after La Palisse, a marshal who features in a song written by his soldiers that says, “a quarter of an hour before his death, he was still alive.”]

5. For those readers who are fans of bibliographies I will list below the principle texts used and referred to in this essay in order of appearance: Erwin Panofsky, *Gothic Architecture and Scholasticism* (Cleveland: The World Publishing Company, 1957); Rudolf Wittkower, *Architectural Principles in the Age of Humanism* (London: Warburg Institute, University of London, 1949); Siegfried Giedeon, *Space, Time and Architecture*, (London: Oxford University Press, 1946) (It is interesting to compare some of its theses with the recent “Manifesto of Granada” signed by a group of Spanish architects); Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics*: Book I, 1, 1094a 14, 25; Book VI, 8, 1141b 22, 25; Book VII, 11, 1152b 2; Leibniz, ‘*Tentamen Anagoricum*: An Anagorical Essay in the Investigation of Causes’ 1696, in *Philosophical Papers and Letters. A Selection Translated and Edited with an Introduction by L. E. Loemker* (Dordrecht: D. Reidel, 1969) vol. 1, pp. 477 - 485; Johann Heinrich Lambert, *Anlage zur Architektonik oder Theorie des Einfachen und Ersten in der philosophischen und mathematischen Erkenntnis*, 2 vols., 1771; Józef Maria Hoene-Wroński, *Architectonique de l’Univers*, II, 1936, Francis Warrain, *L’Armature métaphysique établie d’après la loi de creation de Hoëné-*

However the majority of them merely scratch the surface, or, in their elucidation followed a path entirely divergent from the one proposed here. Aristotle uses the term “architectonic” in a sense that is very close to meaning “dominant” and consequently he used the expression “architectonic knowledge” in almost the same way as the phrase “principle or dominant knowledge.” Leibniz connected the architectonic to his doctrine of final causes. From this point of view Lambert can be considered as a link between Leibniz and Kant, his work on the architectonic following his *Neues Organon* addresses the problem with a certain energy, but he leaves it in a state that is too vague to be useful here. Certainly Wroński and Warrain wanted to say something important in their architectonic speculations, but we confess our inability to make anything clear from their works. And Bornstein’s idea of logical architectonic could be interesting if it had succeeded in being something more than a program. This leaves only two philosophers who will be significant for our purposes: Kant and Peirce. We will analyse their doctrines to find out to what extent they can help us here.

As everyone who reads Kant will know, the philosopher introduced his concept of architectonic – the architectonic of pure reason – as the doctrine of the transcendental method, in other words when he decided to attempt to make a rational justification for metaphysics. The philosopher defined architectonic as “the art of systems” because he did not consider any knowledge *as science* unless it possessed a systematic unity. Indeed, according to Kant knowledge cannot remain in a rhapsodic phase because if it did so it would not be able to satisfy to the goals of reason. This is why system was defined as “the unity of the manifold cognitions under one idea.”<sup>6</sup> Thanks to this idea the system ceases to be a mere aggregate and becomes an organism, in other words it can grow “from within” without changing its configuration so to speak. This being the aim, it is necessary then to provide a schema, and

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Wroński (Paris: F. Alcan, 1925), B. Bornstein, cited in *Studia Philosophica*, vol. 1 (1935) pp. 445 - 447, Immanuel Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason*, A 832 - A 851, B 860 - B 879, Charles Sanders Peirce, *Collected Papers*: 1.1, 1.2, 1.3, 1.7, 1.13, 1.14, 1.40, 1.41, 1.42, 1.44, 1.126, 1.127, 1.129, 1.130, 1.135, 1.141, 1.176, 1.177, 1.178, 1.179, 1.232, 1.234, 1.368, 4.27, 4.28, 4.29, 4.353, 5.343, 5.382 (note), 5.392 (note), 5.51, 6.7, 6.8, 6.9. One can find more complete references to the texts of the eight philosophers cited in the article “Arquitectónico” in my *Diccionario de filosofía*, 5th edition, in press. For this essay I have used a few pages from my article, “Peirce’s Conception of Architectonic and Related Views,” *Philosophy and Phenomenological Research*, XV (1955), 351 - 359.

6. [T. N. Immanuel Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason*: A832.]

even a schema drawn up in agreement with an idea, in other words, to establish the point of view of the *supreme purpose of reason*, the failure to do so will mean that the unity achieved will only be a simple *technical* unity and not an *architectonic* unity. This is the result of the observation of similarities, the consequence being that one idea configures all of science. While such an idea cannot be the result of an arbitrary decision taken by any one individual, it is nevertheless true that in the *concrete* development of a science a rhapsodic phase may be inevitable, and if considered from the point of view of the overall structure of science it won't seem useless since it will appear to be expressed according to a perfectly defined plan even if only in embryonic form. According to Kant this is due to the fact that the schema or germ of all things has its basis in reason, but also because reason is not something superimposed on the human mind but is the basis of this mind and the source of human legislation. The essential aims of science coincide with those of reason because they are different aspects of the same reality – that of man, or, if you want, of the transcendental subject – as the legislator of the universe. It doesn't matter that the legislator does not exist.

According to the well-known Kantian idea of science as an infinite process, the prototype of the legislator – the philosopher – is a being that is not an already completed entity. The legislative power is therefore an *idea* that resides in the mind of every man. This is why the idea of legislation, which is what philosophy ultimately comes down to, is a cosmic conception, or, as it has also been called, a “world.” Scholastic conceptions are always partial – only a cosmic conception of philosophy is complete. The philosophical architectonic is therefore the expression of the final destiny of man so that what at first seemed a bold theoretical speculation eventually comes to be a postulate of practical reason. This shouldn't surprise us. The well-known Kantian bond between theoretical reason and practical reason is not strictly speaking a bond, because the pre-eminence of the second was implicitly contained within the first. Perhaps one should notice that we don't say there is nothing new, since everyone knows that moral philosophy occupies a privileged place in the Kantian system, but the fact that this privileged place has *already* been proclaimed by Kant, at a time when he seemed to be concerned that the analysis of speculative theoretical reason deserves to be better known than it is.

If we pass from Kant's conception of the philosophical architectonic to Peirce's our first impulse is to declare them so similar that it's hardly necessary to compare them at all. "The universally and justly lauded parallel which Kant draws between a philosophical doctrine and a piece of architecture," writes Peirce, "has excellencies which the beginner in philosophy might easily overlook; and not the least of these is its recognition of the cosmic character of philosophy. I use the word "cosmic" because *cosmicus* is Kant's own choice; but I must say I think *secular* or *public* would have approached nearer to the expression of his meaning.... If anybody can doubt whether this be equally true of philosophy, I can but recommend to him that splendid third chapter of the Methodology, in the *Critic of the Pure Reason*."<sup>7</sup> It seems therefore that the ideas of both philosophers overlap to the point of confusion. However, a more precise examination of Peirce's conceptions on this issue reveals that the two philosophers are in disagreement, and most strongly where they find agreement. This disagreement certainly does not mean there is between them a reciprocal incompatibility. I think instead the two conceptions, as different they may be, are nevertheless complementary on certain important points, but if this is to be productive it must not be forced. Therefore it is necessary to make a preliminary analysis of the most striking differences that exist on this point between Kant and Peirce, if we want to emphasize the contributions that the two philosophers make to the attempt to conceive philosophy as architecture.

It is indisputable that Peirce would be – or more accurately, in fact *was* – in agreement with Kant on the importance of postulating that a plan must preside over the philosophical construction, and on the elaboration of this plan by analogy with the work of the architect. It is equally certain that both thinkers have willingly praised the idea that "lucky finds" are sometimes made by philosophers who do not value the development of a truly comprehensive philosophy. As Peirce said, these kinds of works can be inserted into easy and pleasant to read volumes. However, unless their authors have carefully followed a plan established in advance they will never engender a conception that encompasses the whole of reality. There are some other points on which the two philosophers are in total agreement. For example: scientific activity must be deliberate and, whenever possible, highly conscious – arbitrary and strictly individual activities are harmful – philosophy should be like a building capable of housing all men and not only a few academic philosophers. But if we analyse in depth the underlying

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7. [T. N. Charles Sanders Peirce, *Collected Papers*, 1. 176.]

reasons for these coincidences we will discover that they exist only because the language used by the two thinkers is sometimes based on similar vague analogies and metaphors. Peirce in particular shows himself to be an enthusiastic partisan of the metaphorical mode. He even seems to consider philosophy to be something almost tangible, made of solid blocks of stone that over countless centuries have been polished, combined, and dispersed by philosophers according to a certain plan forged by some genius – like Aristotle or Hegel perhaps. He tells us of the architect's soul, of the messages that the epochs have piled up and the architect's mission to deliver them to posterity. He writes on the problems posed by “composition”, and contrasts the “easy problems” raised by painting with the irritating puzzles posed by the distribution of elements within the framework of an architectonic construction. He describes houses made of paper mache, built from an interesting idea but quite unstable and compares these to others made of granite that can withstand the storms of time because they are based on ideas that are not only attractive and subtle but strong and robust. He even refers to the synchronism between periods of medieval architecture and the periods of logic. If Kant had ever tended to use this dialogical way of expressing himself, which is often used by Peirce to such a pleasing effect, he probably would have borrowed these charming descriptions of architecture with enthusiasm. Unfortunately, his approval would have been short lived. As soon as the metaphorical phase is abandoned serious disagreements would have arisen between the two philosophers.

The first disagreement is so radical that it can remove all traces of Kantianism from Peirce's philosophy. It arises with the problem of which faculty is able to outline the whole system of science, in other words that which gives to it an *a priori* plan. Although Kant does not cite any particular faculty if we take into account the other presuppositions of his philosophy there is only one that can play this role: it is the imagination. The word *imagination* has several meanings. Two of them are particularly important. On one hand we can talk about imitative imagination, and on the other productive imagination. The first type merely reproduces, sometimes by combining already existing concrete images; the second creates general images that can be “filled in” by effective perceptions. To take up the Kantian vocabulary, imitative imagination is a *phantasia* while the productive imagination is a

*facultas imaginandi* in the strictest sense of the term, an *Einbildungskraft*.<sup>8</sup> The role that this *facultas imaginandi* plays in Kant's theory of the schematism of the categories is well known. In fact the productive imagination eventually becomes an *a priori* condition for the possibility of the unification of diversity in the sphere of knowledge. We won't dwell on this, suffice to say that this somewhat obscure doctrine of the imagination is based on an hypothesis that supports the entire Kantian epistemology: the hypothesis that understanding is a spontaneous activity able to carry out the tasks that all philosophers tinged with idealism were criticized for – that of transcendental synthesis. The traces of epistemological realism that were still found in the transcendental aesthetic were soon destroyed under the irresistible pressure of a complete idealism. Thus to build the architectonic unity of science Kant gave free rein to the creative imagination to the point that the philosopher – the supreme architect of reason – turned into a creator, not of the universe of course, but of the structure of the universe. The fact that according to Kant the philosopher *is not* an artist should not mislead us because of the special meaning the German philosopher gives to the word artist. Because the “artist” is only the man who is *responsible* for conceptions, while the philosopher is one who *legislates* them. It is true that reaching this stage of his analysis Kant had to admit that the title of philosopher cannot be given to anybody, because the perfection of philosophy lies in its idea and not in its concrete realization. However, according to Kant a philosopher is such only insofar as he is able to act in accordance with this prototype of knowledge, which makes him a living image of God himself.

It is hardly necessary to emphasize that such speculation is quite foreign to Peirce's thought, even if we emphasize all its metaphysical tendencies at the same time as reducing all its naturalistic and empiricist tendencies. Between Kant and Peirce there remains only one – although this is considerable – basis for agreement: philosophy has, at least sometimes, the characteristics of a program, and producing outlines and tables of contents is an activity that is not unworthy of a true philosophy. Beyond this point the similarities are so scarce as to disappear entirely. But to better understand the different paths that the two philosophers follow within the limits of an often shared horizon, we will need to add a few words about the problem that causes their greatest confrontation: the meaning of the term “system.”

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8. [T. N. imagination, but literally “faculty/power of the formation of inner pictures.”]



The foregoing discussion already clarified what idea Kant had about system: a system is something complete *in itself*, without need to take into account the time necessary for humanity to complete it. One can say perhaps that Peirce was sometimes very close to this postulation. When he proposed to “erect a philosophical edifice that shall outlast the vicissitudes of time,” and when he announced his intention, “to make a philosophy like that of Aristotle, that is to say, to outline a theory so comprehensive that, for a long time to come, the entire work of human reason, in philosophy of every school and kind, in mathematics, in psychology, in physical science, in history, in sociology, and in whatever other department there may be, shall appear as the filling up of its details”<sup>9</sup>, he seemed very faithful to the ideal of a complete system. However, even in this passage – without doubt the most unrestrained of those Peirce ever wrote on the architectonic – there are some restrictions that eliminate any hope – if there ever was any – of seeing Peirce submitting to speculative idealism. On one hand Peirce emphasizes the temporal condition of the enterprise. Then he speaks of an *immense* outline, solid enough so as to not be easily undermined but sufficiently vague and imprecise so as to allow for future developments and, if necessary, corrections. In case all this is not enough to persuade the reader that the architectonic of Peirce is definitely not a universal legislation, the philosopher adds other very convincing lines about the impermanent character of his thought: including the concept of fallibilism. To *discover* and not *prescribe*, this is without doubt the essential purpose of Peirce’s philosophy, not only when he uses the empiricist and naturalist language but *also* when he “lapses” back into the transcendentalist language. Thus to provide a philosophical outline for which the centuries will fill in the details is not to postulate a system that can be complete, it is to propose a system that is not and never will be complete. In Peirce’s philosophy “system” means a set of propositions that should be constantly verified with diligence. Never, as the philosopher himself says, shall we consider a system from an “inactive point of view.”

There are several reasons why Peirce’s conception of an architectonic philosophy is an open and not a closed conception. For the sake of completing this analysis we will mention just two of them. In the first place a system applies to all the sciences. But the sciences are not rigid schemas – they are living historical entities. That is why it is never possible to give a definitive abstract definition of a science. In this regard we must in fact take quite seriously

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9. [T. N. Peirce, *Collected Papers*, 1.1.]

the well-known distinction proposed by Peirce between the philosophy of the laboratory and the philosophy of the seminar. Science in the laboratory is an object of research; in a seminar it is mostly an object of dissection. Science in the laboratory is a living organism; in a seminar it is a dead problem. Like the universe, science is dominated by a permanent instinct for growth. So if architectonics is an outline of the sciences, it should not be a schematic program but a framework able to adapt to the twists and turns of scientific research. If Aristotle had unparalleled success it was precisely because of his fidelity to the postulate of suppleness. And the “secret of Hegel” can be reduced to the idea of continuity in constant development. It is necessary therefore to interpret Peirce’s phrase: “My whole method will be found to be in profound contrast with that of Hegel; I reject his philosophy *in toto*” [1.368] as a manifestation of his naturalism, and the declaration: “My philosophy resuscitates Hegel, though in a strange costume” [1.40] – as a profession of his faith in transcendentalism. Because the “strange costume” means the disguise adopted by a philosopher, who without ceasing to believe in development and continuity proclaimed several times that these two conditions must be verified in a laboratory and not in a seminar.

In the second place Peirce did not accept that the elements of a philosophical architecture must occupy a fixed and definitive place in the totality. In the same way that a sign can be seen as being primitive in one logical system, and as well defined in another, the conceptions that make up a philosophical architecture may seem either primitive or well defined. If the mathematical axioms themselves were discredited *as axioms as such*, in other words as self-evident truths, and were transformed into assumptions or conditions for the development of hypothetico-deductive systems, there is no reason that the alleged metaphysical axioms would continue to occupy a privileged place. But to affirm that there are no metaphysical axioms is to assume that the elements of any philosophical architecture are interchangeable. So Peirce’s philosophical architectonic may very well find a place in a philosophy of the laboratory and therefore remain faithful to the “first rule of reason”: to not create obstacles to research.

## Conclusion

We have accomplished one part of our program. The problem of the relationship between philosophy and architecture was examined: 1. in a concrete way, relatively pleasant but very questionable; 2. in an abstract way, rather thankless but a little less questionable; and 3. as a form of comparison between the two contributions to the philosophical architectonic which, in our opinion, are the most important up to now. The time has come to put the reader's mind at ease by promising a brief and almost abrupt conclusion.

We first stated that the tendency to integrate philosophical thought with an architectural construction has always been the ideal – whether consciously or unacknowledged – of many philosophers. Philosophical thought lends itself very docilely – it should be added, too docilely – to being arranged in an almost infinite number of combinations, each one may give rise to a philosophical system, to the extent that it is possible to demonstrate the plasticity of these thoughts with the sheer quantity of systems produced in the West from the time of the Greeks up to the present day. From this point of view the possibility of considering philosophy as architecture, although extremely attractive to the artistic spirit, constitutes a veritable catastrophe for the scientific mind. We do not mean that the philosophical systems *as such* are *entirely* sterile, because in that case we should conclude – and we do not want to conclude – that artistic productions are completely sterile. I do not know if a work of art tells us about the world or is simply about ourselves but I am certain that it is not a simple game – in Kantian terms: a simple technique of construction. However, it seems evident that a philosopher should not be confined to combining thoughts only to make an appealing and impressive result. In order to overcome his architectonic passion, the philosopher must look at the ideal of philosophy as architecture with a certain amount of mistrust. Unfortunately this will not solve all the problems either because if he pushes this mistrust to the limit he will be threatened by the opposite danger: the tendency to engage in a minute and almost infinitesimal analysis of every philosophical problem. We sometimes praise this effort as a great improvement on the tendency for unbridled speculation.

Must we therefore reject *all* architectonic constructions and change into what Berkeley called the “minute philosopher”? No. When we push our liking for analysis to the extreme we

will discover that the obstacles hindering our philosophical path on the anti-constructive side are no less obstructive than those we encountered on the constructive side. From the analysis of the things we effectively turn to the analysis of concepts that denote these things; and from the analysis of concepts that denote these things we turn to the analysis of the terms which express the concepts that denote these things, and then from the analysis of terms that express concepts that denote these things we turn to the analysis of the physical inscriptions by which means we designate the terms that express the concepts that denote these things... A day comes when we have so scrupulously polished up the instruments that we use to talk about reality that there is longer any reality left to speak of. Because the orgies of construction may be compared to another type of orgy: that of destruction. Should we therefore avoid both, and be committed to the central path equidistant from both sterile “grandiosity” and the ridiculous minutiae? Should we distance ourselves equally from the art of the architect and the art of the goldsmith? Apparently so, it seems a reasonable enough solution to attract the interest of those philosophers drawn to common sense. The annoying thing in this case is that no philosopher attracted to common sense has ever created the slightest fertile idea in the history of philosophy, which retains only the names of the great constructors and the great destructors. Consequently the history of philosophy must follow the movement of the pendulum, swinging from analysis to synthesis and from synthesis back to analysis. And that is why we must conclude that philosophy *as* architecture is *one* of the unavoidable aspects in this controversial discipline. We cannot escape it. But we must *not* consider a philosophical building, if it can be constructed, as a faithful image or as a definitive scaffolding of reality. In this regard Kant and Peirce still have much to teach us, the first with his acute perception of the fact that there is a good part of human legislation in any philosophical architectonic, the second with his ceaseless recommendations that no philosophical system, no matter how grandiose or subjugating, must be allowed to hinder our research.

Thus we can compare the philosophical architectonic to logic: it says nothing or almost nothing about reality, but we can say nothing about reality without it. It wouldn't be so surprising after all if philosophy as architecture is in the end equivalent to logic and that there are alternative architectonics in exactly the same way that there are alternative logics. But this raises another problem, about which we may speak another time.



# 1.5

## Architecture, Today<sup>1</sup>

by Hubert Damisch

translation by Tim Adams

### The Eclipse

What can we learn from architecture today? Or, what can we learn from this discipline (already this is not quite the same question) that has, at least in the West, never stopped informing – in every sense of the word – the work of thinking, but which at the end of the millennium seems to have suddenly lost much of its didactic and heuristic virtue, if not all its theoretical relevance? And even within its own field of activity the assurances that were once there are now few in number, architects seem to be out of fashion, and if some still try, if not to construct a doctrine then at least to think about, give foundation, and justify their practice, then this will most often be supported by other branches of knowledge such as history, geography, anthropology, demography, sociology, or linguistics, semiotics, and even psychoanalysis, not to mention mathematics in the case of topology and computer science –

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1. [T.N. The source for this translation is Hubert Damisch, “Aujourd'hui, l'architecture”, *Le temps de la réflexion*: 2 (October 1981), pp. 463 - 480.]

which they expect, rightly or wrongly, will provide them with the methodological and conceptual apparatus they lack, and by deliberately forgetting that each one of these sciences in its own way and according to its own genealogy appropriates architectonic metaphors and even the utopia of an *architecture*.

That contemporary texts, whether critical or speculative, give hardly any thought to architecture is a good indication of the loss of meaning that this practice has suffered within the cultural field that is for the moment ours. One need only consider the favourable treatment that philosophers reserve for painting to gage by comparison the change in the rules of reflection that has occurred since Valéry – but who today reads his *Eupalinos*? – who not so long ago recognized that “to build” (*construire*) was an operation similar to that of language, an act comparable with “to know” (*connaître*). That such indifference continues is certain even if we deplore it, and a similar discrediting applies, at least in France, to the present state of architecture. Does the fault lie, as is continuously repeated, in modernist ideology that under cover of functionalism and abstraction has successfully robbed this art of any semantic potential so that its current productions are void of meaning, if not deprived of the very possibility of signification? Yet it is clear that to assimilate architecture with the phenomenon of communication does nothing more than reduce it to a system of functions. And besides, if one too hastily judges that architecture is no longer interesting it is not because it has nothing to say (or to show) or has nothing to teach because architecture will be judged very differently when it is considered to be essentially the unflattering image of our own condition within the society we have to live, an architecture that would have been missed if it wasn't by virtue of its *dissimulation* with the phenomenon of communication.

The paradox is that despite the best of intentions, “modern” architecture becomes untenable to the extent that it breaks with the recurring fantasy of an “*architecture parlante*,” an aesthetic that corresponds to the order of signs, and in fact seems to return to what in Hegel's terms corresponds to the symbolic phase of art, and as such conforms to the principle of an art that cannot function as an arbitrary or exterior sign without form or concrete sensible

presence of its own<sup>2</sup>, but has to present de-significations since the symbol, in contrast to the sign, is precisely that which surrenders to a natural alliance between the signifier and signified. Because of this difference “whole nations have been able to express their religion and their deepest needs no otherwise than by building”,<sup>3</sup> the representations that carry architecture today, the ideas and values that it makes perceptible, that it brings to our attention, are far from striking a chord with the public, they are high-rise offices, commercial centres and low-income housing blocks. This is not however what the masters of the Modern Movement would have wanted, who like the gods of the ancients wanted the created environment to be a medium that is well suited to man. The disappointment is proportional to the avant-garde dream that sees architecture involved in the construction of a new world (architecture *and* revolution), when they don’t see this happening, in the words of Le Corbusier, it is then merely an antidote to revolution (architecture *or* revolution). As a measure of this disappointment, when searching for an insult Estragon can do no better than utter the word, “. . . architect!”<sup>4</sup>

At a time when critics peremptorily pin the label “postmodern” on architecture, claiming to have left modernist ideology behind and to have restored the link with history that the Modern Movement in its desire to break with the past chose to ignore, the moment has probably come to untangle the complicated skein of relationships that Western thought has continued to maintain for so long with the art of building. Or at least to see if the idea or the suspicion that the “crisis” that effects architecture today could well obey other determinations that are short-term and ideological, determinations of a more secret if not profound order, and affecting, beyond the scope of artistic practices, the history and very economy of thought. Not that many philosophers in the past have been bothered with architecture as such: with a few recent exceptions, the first and foremost being Hegel whose lessons on the column are among the most amazing documents ever devoted to this art. The problem lies elsewhere. The page

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2. G. W. F. Hegel, *Aesthetics, Lectures on Fine Art*, trans. T. M. Knox (London: The Oxford Press, 1975), Part III, Section I. Architecture, Introduction, pp. 632 - 633.

3. *Ibid.*, p. 636.

4. Samuel Beckett, *En attendant Godot*, (the exchange of insults). [T. N. In the original French version of *Waiting for Godot* Estragen silences the escalating exchange of insults with Vladimir by exclaiming the word “*architecte*.” In the later English version, also written by Becket, this is replaced with the word “critic.”]



of *Discourse on Method* where Descartes opposes “buildings undertaken and completed by a single architect” to those “which many architects have tried to patch up by using old walls that had been built for other purposes”, or opposes “those well-ordered places that an engineer traces out on a vacant plain as it suits his fancy” to ancient cities that from simple villages have become “over the course of time” large cities “so poorly laid out”<sup>5</sup>, this development may well have only a rhetorical function since it introduces the stated design of the philosopher in the work of reforming, if not the world, then at least his own thoughts built on a base which is entirely of his own making.<sup>6</sup> It nevertheless demonstrates, as do the descriptions of prehistoric Athens in the *Critias* and the ideal city in Book VI of the *Laws*, a remarkable attention to the specific genius of the built place and the concrete conditions for its operation together with the salience of, historical as much as epistemological, a *topos* which reveals the properly architectural dimension of the work of thought, so necessary even in utopia.

But this would still mean nothing if the philosopher only ever consented to the art of building taking place within the domain of productive activities, whether human or divine. The metaphor of God the architect, who in the classical age takes the form of the founder of paradoxes (we shall return to this later), is already at work in Plato. As an architect, the demiurge of the *Timaeus* is presented as the archetype par excellence, is he not the one who is given the job of constructing the world in the image of the ideal model, following calculations that aim to produce “a piece of work that would be as excellent and supreme as its nature

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5. *Discourse on Method*, Part Two, in René Descartes, *Philosophical Essays and Correspondence*, (ed.) Roger Ariew (Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing, 2000), p. 51.

6. “It is true that we never see anyone pulling down all the houses in a city for the sole purpose of rebuilding them in a different style and of making the streets more attractive; but one does see very well that many people tear down their own houses in order to rebuild them, and that in some cases they are even forced to do so when their houses are in danger of collapsing and when the foundations are not very secure. This example persuaded me that it would not really be at all reasonable for a single individual to plan to reform a state by changing everything in it from the foundations up and by toppling it in order to set it up again; nor even also to reform the body of the sciences or the order established in the schools for teaching them... And if I thought there were in this writing the slightest thing by means of which one might suspect me of such folly, I would be very sorry to permit its publication. My plan has never gone beyond trying to reform my own thoughts and building upon a foundation which is completely my own.” *Ibid.*, p. 52.

would allow”<sup>7</sup>? But the architecture of men is itself involved, although to a lesser degree, in this singular form of *mimesis* that owes nothing to imitation in the sense of the figurative arts<sup>8</sup>, and claims to be equal to *mathesis*, if not actually confused with it: while the other arts, including music, are essentially reduced to conjectures and the exercise of the senses (of the “eye” and the “ear”) based on experience and practice, while the work of the constructor was for Plato based on a superior order of knowledge that required not only the use of precision instruments but also the systematic recourse to number and measure.<sup>9</sup> In the final analysis it remains the *topos* with the greatest force since the work of architecture, while forming an example in the register of the project, is the most subtle conjunction between *mimesis* and *mathesis*, appearing to appeal to the effects, by its regularity if not its symmetry, to what Hegel considered according to his account to be “a purely external reflection of spirit.”<sup>10</sup>

From the perspective of a genetic epistemology it is certain that many of our most familiar concepts today still refer to the art of building. At a higher level of elaboration the fact that the strictly technical analysis of Viollet-le-Duc has paved the way for Structuralism clearly demonstrates the power with which the architectural model has affected our culture up until recent times.<sup>11</sup> It can only be symptomatic to observe that when new if not entirely unpredictable structures appeared in the built environment (I am thinking here of so-called “self-supporting” structures, reticulated walls or continuous concrete pours) seem to contradict one of the assumptions upon which it was based (precisely neither method nor thought but a structuralist ideology) when the structures are finite in number and a table (*tableau*) can be drawn *a priori* from premises that define any field whatsoever - at a time when architectural theory (or whatever replaces it) is marked by the massive and often uncontrolled importation of concepts borrowed from other disciplines that are included under various titles in the previously mentioned structuralist movement, the architectural paradigm seems to have lost all critical and heuristic virulence and is reduced to a mere figure of

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7. *Timaeus*, 29a - 30b.

8. *Philibus*, 55d - 56c.

9. See the *The Statesman* 299d, where Plato contrasts the art of painting and the imitative arts in general to carpentry as well as all kinds of fabrication of objects.

10. “Zu einem bloss ausseren Reflex des Geistes”, Hegel, *op. cit.*, III, Introduction; p. 624.

11. See Viollet-le-Duc, *L'architecture raisonnée*, extracts from the *Dictionnaire de l'architecture française*, gathered and submitted by Hubert Damisch, Paris, 1964.

speech. This happens at a time when it is claimed there exists within culture, according to Levi-Strauss, and even within the unconscious, according to Lacan, “an architecture similar to that of language”<sup>12</sup> and then with Derrida the task of philosophy is to *deconstruct* the network of conceptual oppositions that have constructed the most constant framework of Western metaphysics. But to deconstruct, is that not at the very least to say that it concerns, taking the philosopher literally, bringing down the old building in order to rebuild it anew, as Descartes said, which reverses the constructive process and thwarts the economy? Even if it means discovering in the end the vanity of the very idea of being literal? So if the practice known as “architecture” now seems to lack its place in our culture, this defection is not so much an indication of a “crisis” - or what is perceived as such - that would be limited to the domain of art, it is rather the symptom of a long-lasting and profound eclipse of the work of architecture as a model of coherence, for which it was for a long time the archetype, even down to what is presumed to be the foundations.

## The Fate of a Metaphor

Science has chosen to have no other objective than to define and constitute its operations. It does not want to know anything through the detour of formal or experimental models that could reveal its structure or the possible results of all its variations and transformations, or to know whether the scientist conceives something from scratch or whether the scheme he uses is borrowed by analogy from other areas of research or activity, and even when the scientist claims to have eliminated all references to concrete imagination, the devices (*dispositifs*) they resort to will nevertheless satisfy by the mere fact that they took them to *construct* something for the sake of order, balance, composition, harmony or symmetry, and even perhaps for considerations of elegance, whose architectural connotations may or may not be obvious. Similarly, the models used would not function so effectively and would not have use or operational value if the economy of their use was not rigorous and systematic enough to make any modification of their parts effect the whole according to a predictable sequence, just as the substitution of the rib vault in place of the groin vault in the twelfth century is supposed to have led, step by step according to an implacable logic, to the complete overhaul of the

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12. Claude Levi-Strauss, *Structural Anthropology*, Paris, 1958, p. 76.

structure of the medieval buildings. Furthermore, an epistemological model will not be able to account for all the aspects of the phenomenon considered: the *parti*, which is a response to the so-called “functional” construction, requires that a choice be made among empirical data and that a number of parameters be eliminated (as by example the experimental model of falling bodies in a vacuum constructed by Galileo), the same applies for an architectural project that implies an order has been introduced into the elements of the program, in any case architectural form cannot manifest the totality of functions that the building must respond to.

If science still manipulates things it nevertheless renounces the need to *inhabit* them, as Merleau-Ponty said, who cannot here avoid using a word often associated with architecture.<sup>13</sup> The world in which man has his place, if not his home, even before it gives rise to any systematic representation, is sufficient to be the object *x* required by the scientist for his operations. Without doubt contemporary science only pays attention to their constructions when they are a repetition of the “real” plane of the universe on which they work in order to form a coherent model. It is thus most significant to see this at work without it being acknowledged, for example when science claims to account for the functioning of the brain by simply borrowing the terms used by computer science, forming a circle analogous to the one deliberately established by the creators of theoretical physics who borrow from mathematics. There can be no question of studying here the wealth of architectural metaphors in philosophy and the natural sciences from Plato up until Leibniz and beyond. But the crucial reversal of God the architect that has taken place in modern cosmology merits our attention. Indeed, while for Plato human art was reduced to *simulation*, the use of the instruments of *mathesis* and the operation of *mimesis* were divine, glorified in the classical age by work of architecture, so that Kepler had no hesitation in referring to the art of building in order to reinforce, by way of a retrospective projection, the image of God the creator.

“I will not say what decisive testimony my subject brings to the fact of Creation, which some philosophers have denied. Because here we see how God, like a human architect, undertook to form the world according to the order and regulations and all measures in such a way that one might think that this is not so much art that takes nature as a model, but that God

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13. See Maurice Merleau-Ponty, *The Eye and Mind*, Paris, 1964, p. 9.

himself was inspired the architecture of future men to create the world.”<sup>14</sup> Not that Kepler had intended to reduce divine thoughts to human thoughts because the “clarity” of the “divine temple” of the enlightened dispenses with the architecture of men: it is as futile to try to match the Creator to creatures, and God to man, as it is the curve to the right angle, and the circle to the square.<sup>15</sup> The metaphor at work in the *Mysterium cosmographicum* from the Dedication onwards revives an argument already made by Plato: that the works of so-called “nature” could not come into existence (*apu tinōs artias autometer*) under the effect of a spontaneous cause, “automatically” by an action unaccompanied by thought, rather they were produced with reason (*meta logon*) and bear the mark of a divine science (*kai episteme theias*).<sup>16</sup> But the progress of modern science, and the very project set down by Kepler, will grant a new status to the figure of God as architect. What the Platonists had only ever glimpsed at, the existence of a harmonic order of the world – “this hidden harmony that holds the discordant elements in agreement” as Philibert de l’Orme had already written at the head of the first volume of his *Architecture*<sup>17</sup> – confirms taking a dynamic approach to celestial phenomena and researching into the causes of planetary motion: the quantitative relationships the astronomer assigns himself to uncover are like so many “signatures” that the Creator has left on his work.<sup>18</sup>

But more than this: the reversal that is sketched out like a fiction (“you would think that...”) in the Dedication of the *Mysterium* reflects the outline of what is in fact its hypothesis, at the same time it makes an appeal to *mimesis* in the strict sense, which puts two productive subjects into play rather than the simple resemblance between two things: it may seem that God in creating the world was inspired by the architecture of future men, and that science itself can only be known through the detour of a *construction*. A construction – if one keeps to the model proposed by the earlier work which would make Kepler well known to the

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14. Kepler, Dedication of the first edition of *Mysterium cosmographicum* (1596), quoted by Werner Heisenberg, *La nature dans la physique contemporaine*, French. trans., Paris, 1962, p. 85.

15. *Mysterium cosmographicum*, chap.II t. 1, p. 23, quoted by Gérard Simon, *Kepler astronome astrologue*, Paris, 1979, p. 133.

16. *Sophist*, 265 c.

17. Philibert de l’Orme, *Le premier tome de l’Architecture*, 2<sup>nd</sup> edition, Paris, 1569 (Épître aux lecteurs), fol. 2 v.

18. Simon, op. cit., pp. 283 - 284 and 403 - 404.

scientific world – is essentially static, and known according to the norms of a spatial geometry based on the five regular polyhedra. The issue is then to know what will happen to the architectonic metaphor when Kepler moves from a static view to a dynamic vision of the cosmic order and focuses his investigations not only on the metric proportions governing the spatial distribution of the planets but also on the chronological relationships between their movements: “Since the world appears less as a monument built according to the plans of an architect, and more a ballet danced or choral music sung according to the score of a composer. It appears that the divine geometer was also and primarily a composer of sacred music.”<sup>19</sup>

But if that is the case then there wasn't a contradiction for the classical mind. To put it briefly and to further illustrate, even if somewhat anachronistically, I will recall the legend of Amphion as recounted by Valéry: “Amphion, man, receives the lyre from Apollo. Music is born under his fingers. To the sounds of emanating music, the stones move, they unite, and architecture is created.” Architecture, which requires the mind for “the very idea of *construction*, which is the passage from disorder to order and the use of the arbitrary to attend to necessity”<sup>20</sup>: an *operation* whose effects are allowed to be located indifferently in both synchrony and diachrony, and in this case it is both a simultaneous order of parts and a moving towards architecture due to their successive arrangements, just as it is in the case of music and speech. Architecture, the legend has it, proceeds from music and then reflects on and is made aware of its musical means. At this point one might think that when God, according to Kepler, created the world he had followed the model that would be set by a future Amphion: while everything depends on God's will (this will be Descartes' thesis), however nothing is willed without a reason (which will be Leibniz's thesis), as evidenced by “the structure of artistic movements” and “amazing metric and kinematic relations that make the world a beautifully organized work of art.”<sup>21</sup>

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19. Simon, op. cit., p. 406.

20. “The History of Amphion” in Paul Valéry, *Plays, Volume 3 of Collected Works*, (Indiana: Pantheon Books, 1960).

21. Simon, op. cit., pp. 425 and 436.

The world is not silent: it speaks, and it even *sings*, as Eupalinos says of the rarest works of human architecture. This implies that one cannot treat it as a system at rest but it must be considered in its regular functioning. The reference to art here is decisive; there is no access to sense other than in the moment of its production, in the movement of its enunciation. With the proviso that divine art is radically different from the art of men, Kepler seems inspired when he says there is no place here for contingency, the arbitrary, or convention, the very conditions for human art and language (and, be that as it may, for the value of *signs* which may affect certain celestial phenomena which seem to escape the regular course of things). And how could it be otherwise if “geometry before the birth of things, being co-eternal with the divine spirit, is God who serves as the model for himself to create the world (because what is in God that is not God?) and his own image is passed into the human. So it is only with eyes that are internalized!”<sup>22</sup> For Kepler, such is the definitive order of the world whose structure seems to obey the condition of sense itself, through a paradoxical *mimesis*, a symbolic determination. The revelation that announces itself in the spectacle that is accessible only to the mind’s eye. It does not lend itself to interpretation, nor can it be translated in terms of human language. The sense of the world that is full, no one can hear it other than to borrow the ways and the language of God, the (sacred) mathematics that is the principle of things, since only it can reveal necessity.<sup>23</sup>

It is undoubtedly with Leibniz that this sliding makes its strongest mark, giving a new meaning to the idea of an architectural rationality at the same time making a more pronounced and problematic cleavage between constructive functional order and semantic order. Leibniz in his classifications will consistently associate architecture with mechanics and astronomy with strategy, under his system all are disciplines that have in common that they are based on a calculation of *effects* where the considerations of order became allied to those of harmony and finality, as was already the case with Kepler.<sup>24</sup> But the project for a universal characteristic that would make use of symbols that can be used for both judgment and invention (according to Leibniz new concepts can only be made from the recombination of previously

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22. Kepler. *The Harmony of the World*, Book IV, chapter 1, quoted by Simon, op. cit., p. 441.

23. Simon, loc. cit.

24. Cf. “Une ‘Drôle de pensée’ de Leibniz”, introduction and notes by Yvon Belaval, *Nouvelle Revue Française*, no. 70 (1 October 1958, pp. 754 - 768).

acquired concepts), the project which occupied his whole life is itself an echo of work accomplished long ago by architects. Didn't the architecture of his day provide him with the model of an *art of invention* that appears in essence to be the recombination of pre-existing elements: columns, pilasters, entablatures, niches, pediments, etc.? The institution of a *universal* language such as architecture<sup>25</sup> assumes the prior development of a lexicon, if not an alphabet, of a repertoire of signs that are simple and "motivated": having some trait or property of the signified (such as in the Vitruvian interpretation, the column is first made to imitate the trunks of a tree used as supports in primitive architecture, and proportioned according to the canons of the human body); and making the object of a definition *real* by enunciating it - in this respect a vault or an arch being made from a circle or a series - is the generative principle, the law of *construction*.

The dream of a universal language that reflects the logic innate to the human mind may have ceased to haunt philosophers and linguists. But an architecture that excludes to the utmost any idiomatic differences has, for better or worse, become a reality in a world where the same body of construction techniques and functional principles is imposed everywhere as the common substance of architectural expression, a substance which in the end lacks subtlety and can even be quite crude. Therefore it is no wonder that the architectonic metaphor has essentially ceased to inform a thought that is now working on constructions infinitely more complex, supple and unstable than those built structures that were once offered as models. Except for those mathematicians who remain attached to the notion of an "architecture of mathematics" appealing less to the economy of a complete building than to the extensions, arrangements, and revisions of the incessant transformations of urban space, to say nothing of the innovations in construction that have shown the repertoire of built structures is neither set in stone nor a closed set, and gives evidence, even in the absence of any explicit reference to

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25. *Dell'idea dell'architettura universale* is the title of the treatise by Vincenzo Scamozzi, whose first edition appeared in Venice in 1615, and which sits at the apex of two ages of theory: the Renaissance which it appears as the conclusion, and the Classical age it inaugurates. The novelty of the title does not reside in the reference to the idea of an architecture (the term already appears in Zuccaro and in Lomazzo) rather in affirming its universality.



the problem of “foundations”, of a way to move forward from the time of Descartes in this domain.<sup>26</sup>

Constructive figures nevertheless continue on surreptitiously here and there since it is true that science, even in its most sophisticated form, cannot avoid maintaining some contact if not with sense at least with common language. To stay with the scientific field known as the “human sciences” and especially to the one that makes claims for some “exactness”, namely linguistics, one will note that following Saussure, linguists employ the words “structure” and “construction” to refer to the formation of words and, among other things, the slow “cementing” of elements that succeeds by agglutination to a synthesis in which the original units disappear<sup>27</sup>; this is a concept of structure similar to the one found in Vitruvius, who regularly associates the word to the continuity of bricks or stone masonry embedded in a mortar that ensured their cohesion.<sup>28</sup> But the comparison works at the level of systems themselves when in order to illustrate the “diacritical” concept of the sign developed in the *Course in General Linguistics* Merleau-Ponty defines the unity of a language as a “unity of coexistence”, comparable to a “vault ... which has actual existence only in the weight and

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26. “The structures are not immutable in number or essence, it is quite likely that the latest developments in mathematics will augment the number of fundamental structures, revealing a fecundity of new axioms or new combinations of axioms, and one can expect decisive breakthroughs in these *inventions* of structures, if judging from the basis of those structures already known. On the other hand recent structures are by no means completed edifices, and it would be very surprising that the ability to extract new wine from old barrels was ever fully exhausted. So with these critical correctives we can gain a better understanding of the internal life of mathematics both its unity and its diversity; it is like a great city whose suburbs continue to spread out in a haphazard way into the surrounding countryside, while the center is periodically reconstructed, every law following an ever more clear plan and an ever more majestic ordnance, replacing old neighborhoods and their labyrinthine alleyways with avenues stretching out toward the periphery that are increasingly more direct, wider and more convenient.” Nicolas Bourbaki, “L’architecture des mathématiques”, in *Les grands courants de la pensée mathématique*, edited by François le Lyonnais, 1948, p. 45. Note that after thirty years the language of Bourbaki how seems quite *dated*, and in its use of metaphor is in complete harmony with a concept of urbanism that has to date not made any progress.

27. Ferdinand de Saussure, *Course in General Linguistics*, ed. critical T. di Mauro, Paris, 1973, p. 244.

28. Vitruvius, *De architectura*, 1. II, ch.VIII, cf. Hubert Damisch, “The Column, The Wall”, *Architectural Design*, no. 21 (special issue on Alberti), p. 18.

counterweight of stones.”<sup>29</sup> The metaphor used in this case implies not a static but a dynamic constructive order, the model for which the philosopher was able to find in Viollet-le-Duc.

No doubt this exaggerates the significance of such metaphors given the context in which they intervene. Nevertheless, concepts such as *structure* and *system* must owe something, genealogically speaking, to the consideration of a constructive if not architectural fact. For it is wrong to say, in view of developments in structural anthropology, that these concepts have an exclusively linguistic origin. Pierre Francastel has appealed with just cause to their constructive sources.<sup>30</sup> It is in the art of building that the concept of structure finds not only its etymology but also its natural iconography since it passed down through the architectural treatises - especially in James Leoni’s English translation of Alberti’s *De re aedificatoria*<sup>31</sup> – so the word has had its semantic field progressively expanded. Structure, *struere*, to construct: Littré does not fail to register the affiliation justifying the term’s use from two different perspectives, both technical and epistemological. When one says “structure” they are in effect thinking “construction” in terms of building a house, but also the construction of a model. And it would be useless to try to distinguish absolutely between the two meanings of the word, since it may be that a building is valued as a model both for architects working to reproduce or vary an ordinance, and for the theorist who recognizes it as the product of a *reasoned* construction.

All considerations of number and harmony aside (although they are unlikely to be removed in the last resort), the work of architecture simultaneously imposes the ideas of *order*, *necessity*, and *purpose*: an *order* that can read in the overall composition, the distribution of parts, the combination of elements; a *necessity* derived from the laws of solid mechanics and the resistance of materials; and a *purpose* in terms of finality, whether related

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29. Maurice Merleau-Ponty, *Signs*, trans. Richard C. McCleary (Evanston, Illinois: Northwestern University Press, 1964), p. 20.

30. Pierre Francastel, “Note sur l’emploi du mot ‘structure’ en Histoire de l’art”, in *Sens et usage du terme structure dans les sciences humaines et sociales*, ed. R. Bastide, La Haye, 1962, pp. 46-51.

31. Leone Battista Alberti, *Ten Books on Architecture*, trans. James Leoni (1726), ed. by Joseph Rykwert, London, 1953.

to an ideal principle or understood in a strictly utilitarian sense. No one idea excludes the other: doesn't Kant define architecture as the "art of presenting concepts of things which are possible *only through art*, and the determining ground of whose form is not nature but an arbitrary end", while stressing that what is essential in a work of architecture is its conformity to a certain use?<sup>32</sup> In fact, the distinction is not always obvious between buildings designed in principle for purely utilitarian ends, in technical terms, and buildings that perform symbolic or representative functions, for example the "temple mountains" of Angkor are situated within a hydraulic system that irrigates the surrounding rice fields, ensuring that their operation is, in terms of the symbolic economy, regulated by that system, and in the reverse direction, Gropius and Le Corbusier were able to argue for the unquestionable beauty of gigantic wheat silos in North America to justify their project of a strictly functional architecture, but which produced no less an effect. The point being that it is never easy, using any building whatsoever, to make *theory* decide upon; the nature of the principles that govern it, the framework of a given system, the assemblage of structures and forms according to the *calculus* that Leibniz spoke of, the way to define it, the way to *characterize* it, and whose "reason" would the architecture of men obey, if the technical and functional registers never cease interfering with the symbolic register, and even with semantics, but without being permitted to confuse them?

But it is precisely as an example of an ordered device (*dispositif*) that the work of architecture seems to offer something that would be allowed to, simultaneously or alternately, aim at being both a system of functions and a system of signs, that it has kept a semblance of relevance for a thinking that is now massively informed by the linguistic model. Saussure himself needs to compare, when illustrating the mechanism of language and his two fundamental types of relations, syntagmatic and associative (today known as paradigmatic), the linguistic units of a composition in discourse to parts of a building, specifically to the column. Since a column, whether Doric or not, exists simultaneously on two levels of coordination, one real (or syntagmatic) corresponding to the axis of combinations, and the other virtual (or paradigmatic) corresponding to the axis of substitutions. Around it "float" two sets of forms: on the one hand it maintains itself with the elements that precede or

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32. Kant, *Critique of Judgement*, trans. James Creed Meredith (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1988), section 51, "The division of fine arts", p. 186.

succeed it in space - the base or the stylobate upon which it rests, the architrave or arch that it supports - a relation comparable to that of the unit in the framework of discourse, the consecutive elements of the spoken line; and on the other hand it summons in the mind by a play of mental associations, (which is the case for any term taken from the lexicon), the group of forms to which it is allied, to columns of different orders, but also piles, pillars and supports of all kinds, and up against the wall where, as we shall see, it represents negation.<sup>33</sup>

The reconciliation between the order of discourse and the orders of architecture (often deployed, as we know, but rarely with any critical attention) is at work in what Saussure says about the mechanism of language: that is a fully rational mechanism that one could study in and for itself, but which is in fact reduced to a partial correction made to a naturally chaotic system<sup>34</sup>, so that one is tempted to say it is the very opposite of architecture. But for the comparison to be really convincing it should be able to work both ways. Therefore one is inevitably led – once again under the condition of not looking too closely - to assimilate architecture into a system of signs or, *which comes down to the same thing*, to a system of functions, provided that one admits like Roland Barthes that a function necessarily enters into meaning, and that the same element, the same *sign function* can be deployed simultaneously or alternately for its use value and its sign value<sup>35</sup>: a system of functions that can only *function* as a system of signs. And in fact it seems that by treating architecture as a language everything in the end comes down to this: the choice of any unite of meaning will establish a double mental opposition, the idea (the function) moving not towards a definite form but an entire latent system able to provide the oppositions necessary for the constitution of the sign.<sup>36</sup> The column, if it has (or can take on) the value of a sign this will be less due to the relation that the unit has in the vertical direction, to the elements with which it is combined with, than by the lateral and differential relations that it has with other forms that represent the many different modulations of the idea of support.

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33. Saussure, op. cit. p. 170 ff.

34. Cf. Roland Barthes, “Éléments de sémiologie”, *Communications*, No. 4 (1964), p. 106.

35. Saussure, op. cit., pp. 182 - 183.

36. Ibid, p. 179.

Unless we are deceived, this kind of discourse is unlikely to return architecture to its rightful place in the cultural and theoretical field, and can no longer stimulate thinking or desire (it remains to evaluate the responsibility incumbent on architects in this regard, for the architecture itself, if there are any who not trapped in the current rationalist and functionalist modernity). But how could it be otherwise that neither history nor theory has anything obvious to gain from a comparison that puts into play an element that tradition has consecrated as one of the privileged elements of architecture, if not - in the words of Alberti - “its principle ornament”<sup>37</sup>, and without being able to decide whether the obstinate recurrence of this form throughout history is due to the universality of its function, or due to a semantic determination, what is still not understood is how it was able to play a role that transcended the diversity of cultures and periods making the column the most *classical* emblem of architecture?

At the point where we are now (at the point where architecture is now) a useful exercise would be to revisit the previously mentioned Hegel’s *Aesthetics* where the column is discussed, there being in my opinion no better introduction to the work of thought that assumes and authorises architecture. I shall only go so far as to say that it is useful for my purposes (nevertheless this text ought to be consulted in its entirety). Born of a form borrowed from vegetable nature, the column in classical architecture becomes a support for rational and regular forms. By means of the column architecture leaves the purely organic world to subject itself to an end that has two aspects – as clearly seen by Kant: one aspect is the need to satisfy, the other aspect is its autonomy; *Selbstständigkeit* (autonomy) exercised without precise end.<sup>38</sup> But as a sign the column provides evidence by its very appearance for the work it is asked to do: a work where arbitrariness and necessity exchange their masks and give pleasure to all the “motivations” whose form should appear to be the result. The column has no other purpose than to bear a load but whose independence in relation to its context is indicated from the start by its circular section, proving beyond doubt that it cannot function other than as a support on its own account, unlike a square pillar it does not lend itself to form

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37. “*In tota re aedificatoria primum certe ornamentum in columnis est*”, L. B. Alberti, *De re aedificatoria*, book.VI, ch.XIII - Cf. Hubert Damisch, article “Ornamento” in *Enciclopedia Einaudi*, I. X, Turin, 1980, p. 227 ff.

38. Hegel, *op. cit.*, p. 659.

a continuous wall by agglutination. Contrary to Alberti's definition, which does not account for this decisive trait, the column cannot be regarded as a fragment of a wall<sup>39</sup>, but on the contrary draws its value from the fact that it is irreducible to it. But this independence is made evident even in the top and bottom ends, as moments that belong exclusively to it in the case of the base and the capital. Where organic formations are provided with an immanent reason that defines the form of the interior, "For the column and its shape, however, architecture has nothing but the mechanical determinant of load-bearing and the spatial distance from the ground to the point where the load to be carried terminates the column. But the particular aspects implicit in this determinant belong to the column, and art must bring them out and give shape to them."<sup>40</sup>

But this would still be nothing if the work of art did not fundamentally respond to a determination that ought to be called logic, since it refers to what is the condition of exercising an architectural thought. "Columns are indeed load-carrying and they do form a boundary, but they do not enclose anything; on the contrary, they are the precise opposite of an interior closed on all sides by walls."<sup>41</sup> It could not be said any better or more concisely. But it is hard not to see here that Hegel was passing from a definition of architecture to nothing less than a *logical system* of architecture, the philosophical resonances of this being obvious. The operation of construction has not only structural but also topological implications. If the column plays an essential role in the classical system, it is to the extent that it requires a distinction to be made between the two functions that the wall confuses, that of *closure*, and that of *limit*, at the same time it contradicts the too simple opposition that may be tempted between *inside* and *outside*, as well as between two modalities of space, one being definitive in its finitude if not its closure, as *interior*, and the other being an indefinite openness, as *exterior*. Faced with such an example of a "deconstruction" as it were, internal to the work of construction and forming an integral part so that we cannot help but think that, really, thought still has something to learn from architecture providing that it lends itself to its game rather than mimic its operations, and takes up residence so that it *inhabits* and allows itself to be taught by architecture (but I already hear fine minds pointing out to me that modern architecture has repudiated the column just as it has repudiated the wall...).

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39. "Et perpetuam muri partem ..." Alberti, *op.cit.*, Book I, ch.X. Cf. Damisch, "Column, Wall", *op. cit.*

40. Hegel, *op. cit.*, p. 668.

41. *Ibid.* p. 671.



# 1.6

## The Myth of Man behind Technology<sup>1</sup>

by José Ortega y Gasset

translation by Tim Adams

Ladies and gentlemen, I cannot authentically be a part of this conference since I lack what is most important. For this conference what I lack is precisely a language that would sound something like Heideggerian, because I want to be like our great Heidegger, who unlike other men does not stop with things but above all – and this is very peculiar to him – looks at words. But even by speaking in monologue I am forced to ask you for your forgiveness for the crimes I necessarily commit against German grammar.

Man and life are internal events and nothing else; this is evident. So one can only speak of man and life if it comes from within. If we want to talk seriously about man it can only be

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1. [T. N. The source for this translation is Jose Ortega y Gasset, “El Mito del Hombre Allende la Técnica” in José Ortega y Gasset, *Obras Completas*, Tomo IX, 1960-1962 (Madrid: Revista de Occidente, 1965), pp. 617 - 644.] Conference at the “Darmstadter Gespräch” 1951. Published in the volume *Mensch und Raum*, Darmstadt, 1952. The text edited for German release appears in the corresponding original papers of the author.



done from the inside, from within *himself* and therefore we can only talk about ourselves. Everything that we can say of *other* men, of other lives, or men in general must as such be regarded as abstract and *secondarily derived* statements, therefore not simply statements of fact but rather statements built on the basis of assumptions about what is presented as evidence. Thus we have two different images of man: the *internal image*, which is true to its origin but relates to man *himself*, and the *external image*, which how we form man as the *other*, as an individual or as a man in general. To construct a theory about man it will be extremely fruitful to let these two aspects or intuitions collide with each other. But in doing so we must never forget that one of them is primary and obvious while the other is secondary and contrived. If man is considered from the outside; as the other, the best method is behaviourist – it is behavioural research. But if now we want to know whether this method makes sense, we need only recognize what is certain, which is to consider man from the exterior, observing and analyzing their outward behaviour is a fertile intellectual gymnastic exercise, especially if we do not stop there but start from their bodily movements and build a hypothesis on this about what it should be like to be inside a being that when seen from outside their *being* is well established.

Among the movements of other men we can observe there is a group of interesting *technical movements*. This is man's behaviour when making manufactured objects. One of the clearest laws of universal history is the fact that the technical movements of man have continually risen in number and in intensity, that is to say the man's occupation with technology in this strict sense has developed with an undeniable progress, or that man to an increasing extent is a technological being. And there are no specific reasons not to believe that it will remain so for eternity. As long as man lives we must consider technology as one of his essential constituent features, and so we have to state the following proposition: man is technological. In this brief statement I would like remain, provisionally for now, a behaviourist, though of course a "transcendental" researcher of behaviour, in any event this is not too different from the round table discussion, to the proposition "man is technological." While I strive to be like a behaviourist, I have no idea about what subjectivity means. My only encounter is with an "X" that moves and leads towards something technological. It therefore raises the question of how on earth the subject in itself can be a being that is dedicated to technology.

From my current position this does not necessarily leads us to specific problems of technical activity. I simply note that this capricious “X” that determines what happens, transforms and metamorphosizes both physical and biological objects of the corporeal world in such a way that they more or less, and perhaps in the end completely, become a world different from the primitive and spontaneous one. It seems evident that this “X” which is technological aims to create a new world. Technology is therefore creation, *creatio*. Not a *creatio ex nihilo* – from nothing – but a *creatio ex aliquo*.<sup>2</sup>

Why and for what reason is there this aspiration to create another world? Why and for whom? It is not so easy to construct an answer because these questions are separated into two different meanings. Besides the construction of machines, the cultivation of fields and so on there is the creation of tables, columns, musical instruments, beautiful qualities, and what belongs to architecture, art, and construction precisely. We find then both technical utensils and artistic properties. I cannot now differentiate between these two types of instruments and I will only say that there is a notable difference between what man does with technological devices and how he relates to artistic qualities, when he creates them. Man wears and uses up technical instruments that is once they have been manufactured they are put into operation, made to *function*. This is an authentic activity of man. But when faced with art objects man’s actions do not appear so simple. They do not expend them, much less *wear* them out. They have a being, even in the case of reading a poem for example. Reading is certainly an activity, but materially this has nothing to do with the poem itself.

Let’s dispense with the contrast between the attitudes of man in each case. We will deal only with the making of technological tools. The first thing that comes to our attention is the following: the technical activity of man highlights this purely quantitative aspect; the preoccupation with technology is taking up most of the time of most of mankind, at least in America and the West. No other occupation can compare to it. When this thing “X” exists, that it will be a technological work in some sense seems the most important aspect. Now to

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2. [T. N. Creation *ex aliquo* (from something) is the belief that there was a primordial matter that had no shape or form that was the raw material that God used to create everything. This idea first emerged with the Greek philosopher Plato.]

continue to ask: What kind of being is it that must be constituted in such a way that the creation of a new world is so important to it? The answer is simple: a being that *does not* belong to this world spontaneously and originally, but this world is made to accommodate it by force. Therefore it is not easily included among the things in the world like animals, plants and minerals are. The original world is what we call in a traditional way “nature.” Of course strictly speaking there is no nature as such; it is an *idea*, an *interpretation* of the genuine world. But this “idea” is fertile for us. We see that being “X” is placed into nature, but is *not simply in nature*; this is quite strange. How can a being that is a part of nature not belong to it? We consider that which belongs to nature is everything that has a positive relation to it; I mean we could say a little jokingly that the natural is whatever accords with the idea of a homogenous structure. But it seems that being “X” floats around like an unnatural being, because even when embedded in nature it is a stranger to it.

This double situation, being a part of nature and yet being man alone against nature can only occur by *estrangement*. So this human being is precisely not only foreign to nature but is fated to an estrangement. From the point of view of nature estrangement can only mean a negative anomaly in the behaviourist sense, which is a disease, the destruction of the rules of nature as such. Such destruction is very common in nature but it usually happens that the sick beings are deregulated, die and then disappear. They cannot continue being a reality because they are now impossible, and traditional ontology thinks – and this is an opinion that is never questioned, rightly or wrongly, as we shall later see – that reality has to be possible. In proposing this we have fallen into the most profound depths of philosophy, because as the immortal Leibniz has shown us the deepest mystery of philosophy is perhaps the relationship between possibility and reality.

We now have before us the task of how to deal with the problem of a being, which considered from the point of view of nature is sickened but has not died, tries to continue living by being sick, and which has achieved this for quite some time; this “some time” meaning one million years because man has survived so far it seems. Being sick, since according to nature it is impossible, while as it is nevertheless there as a real being, although at the same time it is an unnatural being. We would have the marvellous phenomenon of

something that being impossible is still independently real, which violently goes against the entire philosophical tradition. The issue has become so acute that we already feel we are at the limit of conceptual thinking (on the other hand, there are enough facts known about the origin of man). Therefore we cannot rely on what is called pure reason, the reason of mathematicians and physicists, but on what I now consider important to the man of today, what I call *historical* reason. This is precisely what has so far been considered unreasonable. Plato confronted with a similar case, with a profound sense of needing to make sense of it, felt the need to delve into the realms of myth.

Please excuse me because I have just given an exhausting series of lectures in Munich and this did not leave me any time to properly prepare the present intervention.

Up to this point is all that I had planned for the conference. From here on I will have to swim freely and I will make you responsible for the eventual shipwreck and my possible drowning.

Let's talk about the myth we face of there being something *beyond technology*. The animal that became the first man apparently lived in the trees, this is well known – it was an arboreal dweller. Therefore its foot was not formed for walking on the ground but rather for climbing in trees. Compared to living in trees, epidemic diseases abound when living on the savannah. Let's imagine – I'm just myth making – that this species became ill from malaria, or something else, but did not die. The species was intoxicated and this intoxication brought a hypertrophy of the cerebral organs. This hypertrophy in turn led to a hyper-functioning brain, and therein lies everything that follows. As you know, the animals preceding man, as already demonstrated, have know how but do not have memory or have very little of it; or what amounts to the same thing, they do not have fantasy, which like memory is sometimes productive and sometimes unproductive. For example, small chimpanzees although quite intelligent quickly forget what has just past, more or less like what happens to many men when they do not have any material to aid their understanding and therefore cannot continue to develop an issue further. But this animal that became the first man suddenly found a wealth

of imaginary figures. He was of course crazy, full of fantasy, unlike any beast before him, and this means that compared to the surrounding world they were the only ones who discovered an *inner* world. They had an interior, an inside that other animals absolutely cannot have. And this brought the most wonderful phenomenon, which is impossible to explain from a purely zoological view because it is the opposite to what can be imagined about the natural orientation of attention in animals. Animals turn their attention – this becomes obvious when we approach the monkey’s cage in a zoo – fully to the world *outside*, the environment, because for them this world around is a horizon full of dangers and risks. But this animal who became the first man discovered such wealth of internal imagery when they turned their attention inward and made the greatest and most empathic turn away from the outside. By starting to pay attention to their interior, that is *entered themselves* by being the first animal to be within itself, this animal that entered itself became man.

But let us continue the story along the lines of this empathic narrative. Thus was found two different repertoires of projects or purposes. Other animals had no difficulty because they found within themselves only *instinctive* assumptions and schemas that operated in a mechanical way. But having found for the first time projects that were totally different from the instincts they were further encouraged to move in the direction of the fantastic, so they had *to choose* and *to select*.

And there we have this animal! Man must be from the beginning an essentially *elective* animal. In Latin the act of choosing, to choose, to select is *eligere*, and those who do it are called *eligens*, *elegens*, or *elegans*. The *elegans* or the elegant is none other than he who chooses and chooses well. Thus man advanced an elegant determination, to be elegant. But there’s more. Latin warns us, as is common in almost all languages, that after a certain time the word *elegans* and the fact of the “elegant” – the *elegantia* – had faded into something else, it was necessary to enlarge the meaning and start saying *intellegans*, *intellegentia*: intelligence. I do not know if linguists will find reasons to oppose this latest etymological deduction and only attribute the fact that the word *intellegantia* has not been used in Latin while *intelligentia* has to mere coincidence. Thus if man is intelligent it is because he has to choose, to elect [*eligir* in Spanish]. And because he has to choose it *must* be done freely.

Hence we find the famous *freedom of man*, this terrible freedom of man, which is also the highest privilege. He was free only because he was forced to choose and this occurred because he had such rich fantasies, because he found in himself such crazy imaginary visions.

We, ladies and gentlemen, are without doubt all children of fantasy. Therefore everything that is called thinking from the psychological point of view, from the extremes of psychology, is pure fantasy. Is there anything more fantastic than the point and the straight line in mathematics? No poet ever said anything that was more fantastic. All thinking is fantasy, and universal history is the attempt to tame the fantasy in various ways.

The result however is that the desires of man in total cannot be entirely separate from instincts, from nature, and be purely fantastic wishes. Our example to be fair is only but a small approximation. We have wanted to *know*, however after many millennia man has worked for but has gained only a small amount of knowledge. This is our privilege and our dramatic determination. Therefore in front of everything that is perceived by man there is precisely the most fundamental desire to know everything, and to the extent that this is impossible man is unhappy. Animals do not know this unhappiness but man always acts against his strongest desire, which is to become happy. Man is essentially dissatisfied and this – *the dissatisfaction* – is the most precious thing that man possesses precisely because it is a dissatisfaction, because he wants to have things that he can never have. So it is often said that this dissatisfaction is like a love without the beloved or a pain I feel in some limb that I never had.

Man appears to us therefore as a miserable animal insofar he is a man. He is therefore not adequate to the world, does not belong to the world, so we need a new world, one that the people around us will want to build, and thus strive to get there little by little. But as you know the first major new theory of biological development after Darwin comes from

Goldschmidt.<sup>3</sup> His doctrine consists in assuming that development has been gradual because certain individuals of a species have had faults or shortcomings, and are not adapted to the environment of the time but one day this environment is transformed – and this is precisely why these individuals with faults are immediately well adapted to the new environment. From the point of view of the previous period these animals, as individuals of a species, are monsters. But as Goldschmidt says, in the end they were hopeful monsters. What does this narrative, this fable ultimately tell us? This myth demonstrates the victory of technology, the will to create a new world for ourselves, because the original world does not suit us, because in it we have become sick. The new world of technology is therefore like a giant orthopaedic device that we technicians will to create, and all technology has this wonderful and, like everything in man, dramatic tendency and quality to be a fabulous and great orthopaedics.

## On the “Darmstadt Conference, 1951”<sup>4</sup>

### On Style in Architecture

A catastrophe can be so radical that the people affected by it will all die. While this extreme possibility can happen it has been exceedingly rare in history. The death of most people is usually due to “natural causes.” They die because they become old. They die because they have finished living; they die because they have nothing left to do. This means there is no appreciable likelihood that young people will die without something drastic occurring. For these reasons, in a certain way *a priori* – almost half a century ago when I came to study in Germany the scholastic term “*a priori*” was widely in use, now it has fallen into disuse – having returned to Germany I was now almost certain that the recent and gigantic catastrophe had not succeeded in killing Germany, that it was, despite having undergone such ruin, misery, demoralization and disorientation, still alive with underground strength to the extent that the current situation allows, like someone who has received a blow

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3. [T. N. Richard Goldschmidt (1878 - 1958), a German-born American geneticist. In his book *The Material Basis of Evolution* (1940) he theorized a model of large-scale evolution of new species by macromutation, known as the "Hopeful Monster" hypothesis.]

4. Articles published in the journal *España*, Tangier: 7, 14 and 21 January, 1953.

to the head and is in a state of trauma. But what was believed only in an *a priori* way may now be almost certain. It is now necessary to check the facts.

Well, the spectacle that was the *Darmstadter Gespräch 1951* has given me the experimental proof that I had, *a priori*, only assumed. As we know, the conference dealt with architecture and almost every major German architect young and old was there. It was a touching witness to the brio and the desire to work shared by those men who live among ruins when they spoke of its possible actuation. One could say that the ruins have for them been something like an injection of hormones into the body and have triggered a frantic desire to build. I do not think the levels of enthusiasm among those men, both individually and collectively, can be witnessed in any other Western country today. What I saw and heard there inspired in me the intention to write an essay with the title “Ruin as Aphrodisiac.” Here then is the typical reaction of young people when faced with a catastrophe. Youth is precisely the attitude of the soul that transmutes a quite negative emergency into a possibility. In regard to what is strictly speaking “young people”, whose precise attributes consist of a condition we are in the habit of taking as merely an irresponsible phase, something that should be avoided when these columns talk about the United States, where furthermore they are even younger than they are in Germany.

I could not attend all of the conference so I cannot make a comment on its entire content. But I have the impression that little or nearly nothing was said about the problem most closely connected to architecture, namely that of style.

Indeed style in architecture takes a very peculiar role that it does not have in the other more pure arts. This is somewhat paradoxical but it is nevertheless true. In the other arts style is simply a matter for the artist: they decide – certainly with all their being and in a most profound way of deciding so that what they want takes on an aspect of inevitability, so that it seems as if discretion decides for itself and by itself. But neither can their style depend on anybody else but themselves. But the same thing does not happen in architecture. If an



architect does a project that shows an admirable personal style – they are not strictly speaking *good* architects.

The architect has a relationship to his craft, to his art, that is very different from the form of relationship that takes place between other artists and their respective arts. The reason is obvious: architecture is not, cannot, and should not be an exclusively personal art. It is a collective art. The genuine architect is an entire people. This gives him the means, purpose, and solidarity to build. Imagine a city entirely built by “genius” architects with each project built according to each architect’s unique personal style. Each one of their buildings might be great nevertheless the assemblage would be bizarre and intolerable. Such an assemblage would be accused of having too much emphasis on just one element of this total art at the expense of all its other elements that have therefore been treated capriciously. Such capriciousness is manifestly naked, cynical, indecent and intolerable. We would not see such buildings as made with the sovereign objectivity of a grandiose mineral body, but in their contours we would see the impertinent projection of a man who had “given free rein to his desire” by doing such a thing.

I think that every artist – and of course every thinker – is an organ of the collective life, but now I cannot be so sure. They are organs of collective life but more more besides just that. But in the case of the architect this aspect is raised to its ultimate power. Others may be such an organ but the architect must be, hence certain requirements that the architect must be subject to. And just as for the technological part of their work they may be at liberty to use whatever means are available in order to achieve the proposed outcome, so it is with style to act according to certain stylistic principles that cannot nor should be followed exclusively.

This is the key issue I would like to have spoken about at Darmstadt. Can architects who ignore *all the other problems* of their art by focusing only on technology, no matter how seriously and thoroughly, be sure of avoiding the problem – which today is exacerbated – of architectural style? This problem could be posed by imitating the famous study of Wilhelm

von Humboldt: *Über die Fähigkeit unseres Zeitalters, einen echten architektonischen Stil zu ersinnen.* (On the ability of our time to invent a genuine architectural style.)

With this question we discover what architecture is in truth: it is not an expression of personal feelings and preferences as in the other arts, but an expression of precisely collective intentions and states of mind. Buildings are huge social gestures. The whole community *speaks* through them. It is a general confession of the so-called “collective spirit”, the latter expression is usually a *flatus vocis*<sup>5</sup> whose strict but interesting meaning would require us to recount its long development.

Because architecture is so evidently not like other works or gestures, in effect happening at the scale of the nation, and since in the West all nations have this fundamentally commonality – that after the Romanesque there were many architectural styles – meant Europe has not enjoyed *unity*. The fact that from the early nineteenth-century no country in Europe has had a single common style, is the most formal declaration that in no European city has there been a “union of minds” – what that writers on politics in Greece called *homonoia*.<sup>6</sup>

There should be a public barometer constantly marking the degree of harmony among the citizens of a nation. This would avoid the sudden outbreak of a radical tumultuous disharmony. Burckhardt once spoke of some Sicilian city where there existed a magistrate with the title: “inspector of *homonoia*.”

The last common European style was the Rococo. The French Revolution, because it was the first great disharmony, brought it to an end and since then many other disharmonies have

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5. [T. N. Literally the “breath of the voice”, the emission of sound, a mere name without corresponding objective reality, referred to by medieval nominalists such as Roscellinus, following Boethius, universals are in “mere words” and not in things.]

6. [T. N. The concept of order and unity, *being of one mind together* or *union of hearts* used by the Greeks to create unity in the politics of classical Greece.]

followed until in recent years we have been living with the most atrocious of all. So ever since then, following the French Revolution there has been *no properly architectural style*. There is, if you want, only tectonics.

When contemplated from this point of view, it reminds us that perfection in architecture must consist of treating a common stylistic form, just as poetry has to deal with a language we have in common, just as elegance must consist of the right modulation of a given fashion. There can be no elegance in dress if it does not create a melody on the “common language” of a set of forms of apparel that fashion has determined for each period, just as no musical melody can arise other than from a given system of sounds.

Emerging from out of the sea of architectural discussions that took place at Darmstadt were two philosophical eruptions: Heidegger’s discussion in the morning, and my lecture later on in the same day. On these two discussions I would like to add something that does not strictly relate to the doctrines they enunciated but to their non-doctrinal aspects. This task remains for the following articles.

## The Specialist and the Philosopher

Now it happens that there were two philosophical eruptions emerging from the sea of discussions on architecture that took place at Darmstadt: Heidegger’s discussion *Bauen Wohnen Denken* (Building Dwelling Thinking), and my own discussion, with the title of “The Myth of Man beyond Technology.”

The truth is that strictly speaking the ground on which man always exists is not the earth or any other element, but is a philosophy. Man lives *from and in* a philosophy. This philosophy can be scholarly or amateur, personal or borrowed, old or new, intelligent or stupid, but the fact remains that our being always affirms that it is a plant that lives in a philosophy. Most men are unaware that this philosophy for living is the result of intellectual

effort and is therefore something that they or others *have made*, so it seems instead to be “the pure truth’, in other words “reality itself.” They do not see “reality itself” rigorously as Ideas or a system of Ideas but start out from the “things themselves” that the Idea or system of ideas have already allowed us to see. And the curious thing is that this occurs not only among the so-called “uncultured” people but also among many of the cultured ones, for example among many architects, especially the older ones. Younger people are more awake to the perception that there is an underlying base in which they “live, and move, and are.” Because it seemed to me that at least some of the older architects there, with one exception, tried to keep the anger they felt when confronted with the eruption of philosophy politely concealed, in what outwardly seemed to be a convivial conversation on architecture.

This reactionary antipathy is quite curious. For if what I said is true, everyone, especially every professional person, although it may not be apparent has a philosophy – or rather, the philosophy they hold on to also has a hold of them – they are irritated when a specialist dedicated to philosophizing takes the floor to say something that has to do with their trade. If the citizen in question is coincidentally also a politician, their irritation is even greater. It is quite clear that for several generations throughout this century, politicians get nervous whenever a philosopher is allowed an audience to say what needs to be said about political issues. There are in effect two modes of man that are opposite to the greatest extent imaginable. The philosopher, the thinker, strives as much as possible to try to clarify things, in the same way that the politician is determined to confuse everything as much as possible. Because of this the intellectual and the politician are the cat and the dog of the human fauna.

In the end there is an extreme hostility among all the angry fauna opposed to the “professional” of philosophy (“professional” is accompanied by the two policemen of the quotation marks because clearly the philosopher, the thinker cannot be a professional). The pure intellectual cannot become a tradesman, a professional, a magistrate. The cause of this is very interesting and not without profundity. It would make a good topic for another article. And so it was that a great architect protested that in terms of the tasks of the architect, whenever the *Denker* (the thinker) is introduced they are often a *Zerdenker* [an un-thinker, a

destroyer of rational thought]<sup>7</sup> and should instead leave alone the good Lord's other creatures in peace. Although I could not consider myself alluded to because I had not yet opened my mouth, I took to the microphone to say only this: "The good Lord needed the "*Zerdenker*" to make sure all the other creatures were not always sleeping." The new generation represented there, perhaps the first Germans – long overdue – ever to be confident enough to appreciate satire, laughed.

How to explain this hostile "first reaction" of the specialist to all effective and expert philosophizing? Probably if we were to hazard a very brief answer it would be for the two following reasons. First, the specialist is forced to perceive that their discipline is partial, that they suffer from hemiplegia<sup>8</sup> or some other disease that reduces men to being only one part of themselves. From the moment the philosopher speaks it is obvious their speech comes from the horizon; their voice reaches out to the full extent of reality that it is not a local clamour but rather something that is universal. What happens in the intellectual order can also happen in terms of sound: there are three sounds that can be briefly located and assigned a place but travel beyond what is heard because they are "voices on the horizon." These three sounds are the roar of the lion, the roar of cannon and the toll of bells. It is surprising how in these three cases the volume – as it were – the sound exactly matches the imaginary circular line of the horizon, which does not happen with the thunder, because, as has been said very well, it "surrounds" us, and this means that you must move through a broad space that you certainly could not fill. Secondly a man who assumes in the end the title of a specialist when confronted with the words of the philosopher discovers that he is also a philosopher at heart, that he was unknowingly a philosopher like the *bourgeois gentilhomme* who is also writer, but this philosophy then stumbles over a more profound one planted in the subsoil, from which everything, even their specialist discipline and their own self, comes from a deeper place. This feeling of something coming from "a deeper place" is something that lifts the veil from

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7. [T. N. The German prefix "zer-" indicates "apart", "separating", "disassembling", "destroying", so for example at the Darmstadt Conference attended by Ortega, the conservative architect Paul Bonatz dismissed Hans Scharoun as a *zerdenker*, a destroyer of rational thought, because he considered Scharoun's departure from the right-angle to be a sin against rational architecture.]

8. [T. N. The paralysis of one side of the body.]

all things and this makes him frantic and it seems to him indecent, not perhaps without justification.

Heidegger's lecture, like all his lectures and his writings, was magnificent – full of profundity; quite a paradoxical phenomenon which I call “being full” of profundity, isn't this true? And furthermore full of sensuality. The reader will find it slightly bizarre that I propose to present an intensive relationship between Heidegger and sensuality. Later we shall see that his work always has a sensual dimension.

I'm not going to discuss the main doctrines defended by Heidegger here, because I did not hear well enough everything that he said. I was like the other attendees of the conference, sitting far away from Heidegger so Heidegger did not face me directly.

Heidegger takes a word, in this case *bauen* (to build) – and then chips away at it. From this tiny torso of a word little by little humanity and all the human joys and sorrows emerges, and finally the entire universe. Heidegger, like every great philosopher impregnates words so they emerge as the most marvellous landscapes complete with flora and fauna. Heidegger is always profound, and this means he is one of the greatest philosophers there has ever been.

Philosophy is always an invitation to a vertical excursion into the depths. Philosophy always goes behind everything that exists and under everything there is. The scientific process is progressive and forward moving. But philosophy is a famous *anabasis*, a strategic retreat of a man, a perpetual stepping back. The philosopher walks backwards. Because of this it is a joy to have the opportunity to listen to Heidegger speaking. Other men talk about the principles of science or civilization. There are established truths; truth is well settled. The goal of the philosopher is to go behind and below these so-called “principles” and to see them from behind and below. Thus seen the “principles” that are reassuring to the good bourgeois man, which fill them with confidence and comfort them, are now not sufficient, they are false or secondary and derivative truths and they must find others behind them that are more solid and

better “principles.” Hence also the concern of those who desire a quiet life, to feel secure, when they see that the philosopher blocks the escape and puts them on the back foot. They fear that someone is holding a knife to their backs. So always, if the philosopher is careless, he runs the risk that he will be sent to prison as a corrupter, as a dangerous element, and forced to drink hemlock or undergo some operation of lethal surgery.

Heidegger is profound when he speaks about *bauen* or anything else. But this does not say what we want know, it only says what *almost* everyone thinks, it is necessary to add that he is not only profound, but he actually wants to be, and this does not seem to be the same thing. Heidegger, who is great, suffers from a mania for profundity. But philosophy is not just a voyage to the depths. It is a return trip, and therefore it also brings the depths to the surface and makes them into a clear and patent truism. Husserl in a famous article of 1911 said that he believed that an imperfection of philosophy, for which it has always been praised, was namely profundity. He tries precisely to make clear the latent shallowness of profundity, to make concepts “clear and distinct” like Descartes does. We are no longer Cartesian but it does not change this destiny; to philosophize is to simultaneously deepen and reveal, it is the frantic effort to turn reality inside out, bringing what is deep to the surface.

(German thinkers have always tended to be difficult, and to be understood they have made everyone work hard, including myself. The reason for this is of great interest and I can only try to give a general outline of it in these columns. It forms part of a very broad and serious topic, which concerns the relationship of a German to his neighbour. This relationship is deficient and such a deficiency has caused major harm to the German people. It is on this point that the Germans, who have taught us so much, have something to learn from the Latin peoples. I remember saying more than thirty years ago that clarity is courtesy of the philosopher.)

But don't misunderstand all this. I said that Heidegger is always profound while at times he is overworked and manifests an excessive desire for wallowing in the abyss, but I have said that he is a thinker who is particularly “difficult.” Over the past weeks I have heard many

Germans complain about his hermeticism. Is that opinion not fair? Heidegger in my opinion is no more or less difficult than any other privileged thinker who has been fortunate enough to *see for the first time* hitherto unseen landscapes and who has sailed, “By oceans where none had ventured”<sup>9</sup>, as Camões said of Vasco de Gama and the other Portuguese explorers. To pretend that a discoverer of unknown horizons is as easy to read as a writer of newspaper editorials is too pretentious a claim. Kant, Fichte, Hegel are difficult, really difficult, and unjustifiably difficult in that order. Why are they so difficult for us? Because none of these three ever *saw* with perfect clarity what they claimed to have seen. This affirmation seems insolent, but those who have studied these three great thinkers, although they do not dare say so, know it is true.

No, Heidegger is not “difficult”, rather, Heidegger is a great writer. The above will sound like a new paradox to the ears of quite a few Germans. Even at Darmstadt to my surprise I heard many people say that Heidegger tortures the German language and is a terrible writer, as if it was an agreed upon and established fact. I am sorry but I have to radically disagree with this opinion, and this will force me to defend my own view with some brief and simple considerations in the next article where we will stumble over Heidegger and his voluptuousness.

## On Philosophical Style

Both Heidegger’s lecture and my own were on the same topic: technology. Only Heidegger preferred to question a particular form of it – construction, building, and even concentrated on two particular buildings: the house and the bridge. If I had known that this was a meeting of architects and no one else, certainly I would have tailored my argument as well. But I knew nothing precise about this Darmstadt conference. I have noticed that, much to my surprise, in Germany today nothing is explained to you, so when one has the good

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9. [T. N. Luís Vas de Camões, *The Lusíads*, Oxford World’s Classics, trans. Landeg White (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), p. 3, Canto One, Verse 1: “Arms are my theme, and those matchless heroes/ Who from Portugal’s far western shores/ *By oceans where none had ventured/* Voyaged to Taprobana and beyond./ Enduring hazards and assaults/ Such as drew on more than human prowess/ Among far distant peoples, to proclaim/ A New Age and win undying fame.”]



fortune to be invited to something you never know in advance what that “something” is, and going there you never know just what you are going to. It’s is a symptom of a constant feature of German life today: its “parochialism.” Germany has become a little “village”, an infinite “village”, that is a series of endless villages. The villager lives in a very small world consisting of extremely concrete objects which to them are a matter of habit and over familiarity. Now the villager believes that everyone is from his village and so therefore the things they speak of are “widely known” to the whole world. I do not know with sufficient accuracy where this German relapse into a village mentality comes from, but clearly it must try to get rid of it as soon as possible and ... rejoin the wider world.

But, to repeat, the substantive theme was the same for Heidegger and for me. And now comes what is perhaps of some interest. Here: in the same place, a few hours apart and on the same subject, Heidegger and I said things that were almost completely the opposite. However, if there lies behind this obvious opposition a more radical coincidence, that is something that may come to light one day.

But for now we must attend to the apparent discrepancies. This is not the time or the place to declare what our contrasting interpretations of the human condition are. If someone is curious to find out they can read what I say about it elsewhere.

I want rather to depart from an opinion that I heard expressed repeatedly at Darmstadt. Apparently there are many Germans who think Heidegger is a terrible writer who tortures the German language. I respect this opinion but all the same I do not share it. I think that Heidegger has a marvellous style. However, I do understand very well why many people might think otherwise because they have not taken into account an important distinction. There are various kinds of good styles in writing but there are two in particular that should be opposed here. There is indeed a good literary style, and those who write it are properly called writers, and then there is a good philosophical style. Heidegger is predominantly the second kind of writer, but nevertheless he has an admirable philosophical style.

The thinker is not a “writer.” “Written” words can by themselves be something quite stupid for at least one third of the dictionary in any language. The same language that reveals profound and delicate truths can also contain almost as much dense stupidities. The reason why this level of idiocy is a constitutive feature of every language can be found in my courses collected under the title *Man and People*.

The thinker certainly writes or speaks, but they use language to express their thoughts in the most direct manner. For them to speak about something is to nominate it. They do not stop with words; they do not stay there. The writer on the other hand does not come into this world to think clearly but to *speak* correctly, or as the Greeks said, *eu legein*, “to speak well.”

This “good or beautiful speech” is also something great, but at the end of the ancient civilization when all else had failed and given way, the only lively thing that survived floating on that giant sea of ruins was the “good speech” of rhetoric.

Language and thought are in both cases – for the thinker and the writer – in an inverse relationship. For the writer language occupies the first place, as that which corresponds to the essential. Thoughts remain in the background, just like *humus* is the background and support for the essential grace of vegetal blooming. The mission of the writer is not to think but to say, so it would be a mistake to believe that this saying is just a medium and nothing else. Far from it, poetry is really substantiated by the “saying for saying’s sake,” it is the “desire to say.”

For thinking, language is transformed into a pure support for ideas, so that only they are – or should be – visible, while language is destined to disappear to the greatest possible extent. And it is clear that in both cases there is an inverse relationship. The poet, the writer does not, should not and cannot feel solidarity with what he says, that is, with the thoughts that are expressed. When the Catalan poet López Picó says, “*que es el espectro de una llama muerta*” (it is the spectre of the dead calling to us), his person is radically detached from his words and

he does not consider that the statement something you could turn into a thesis. On the other hand what the thinker says automatically becomes a thesis and he feels solidarity with what is said. The marvellous, the divine in poetry is such precisely because it makes no compromises. Poetry is the liberating power, with it we give freedom to everything and this can happen because it grants us the same freedom. That two and two are four is always a little sad because it does not let us escape into three or into five.

The thinker faces language in a rather dramatic situation. Because the thinker is the one who discovers, reveals realities never seen before by anyone. However, language is made of signs that designate things already seen and known by all. It is an organ of the community, and the so-called “collective spirit” contains no more than platitudes, “readymade” ideas. How can the thinker say what he has seen and say it not to only to others but to himself as well? A vision that is not yet formulated even to himself and enjoyed for its incompleteness is only an inner vision. The thinker has no choice but to create a language so he can understand it himself. He cannot always use language that is in common usage. He cannot, like the poet can and must, start from a pre-established vocabulary and syntax of everyday citizens. If he invents entirely new words he will not be understood by anyone. If he keeps to the usual words he will not do justice to his new truth. The most perilous thing to do – and this is what is most often done – is to resort to the words used by ancient thinkers that still persist in crystallized form as a mere terminology.

We forget too that the thinker – and there is no thinker who is not also a creator of thoughts – needs to possess, besides their genius for analysis, a peculiar talent for naming their findings. This talent is a talent for words and therefore for the poetic. I call it a “talent for denomination.” Great thinkers who have lacked this talent have been afflicted with a lamentable muteness. A clear case of this is Dilthey; he never knew how to say with enough meaning what he saw and therefore failed to influence the philosophy of his day. On the other hand Husserl was a powerful and denominative inspiration.

If this is the case then what makes a good philosophical style? In my view the thinker avoids the currently used terminologies and immerses themselves in the common language

but does not use it as it stands, they reform both the vocabulary and the syntax by using their own linguistic roots. The specific case presented by the style of Heidegger, although extreme, can be regarded as what is normally followed by all great philosophers with good style. It consists of the following:

All words usually have a multiplicity of meanings on many stratified levels, some more superficial and everyday and others more esoteric and profound. Heidegger penetrates and overrides the vulgar and obvious sense of a word and forces a fundamental meaning to stand out from its background, from where the more superficial meanings that usually conceal them come from. So the word *Endlichkeit* (finitude) for example will not be merely a limitation attached to man – that is to man himself without limit – rather it will be completely the opposite, *Seiender Ende* or *Sein als Ende* (Being as an end), the *Ende* (end) for man does not remain a usual limit but comes to constitute his very essence. Man in effect is from birth already dying, as Calderon said; therefore he begins by ending and lives for his death.

This descending into the profound recesses, into the esoteric viscera of a word – as I have been doing since my first book, *The Meditations of Quixote* from 1914 – is diving inside the word to find its etymology, or equivalently, its oldest sense. Everyone who reads Heidegger must feel the delight of finding the vulgar word transfigured so that its oldest significance becomes revived. Delight because we seem as if surprised that the word in its *statu nascendi* is still warm from the vital situation that gave it birth. And at the same time we gain the impression that in its present sense the word just means something trivial and empty. But in Heidegger vulgar words suddenly become full, full to the brim with meaning. Moreover, we now believe that we were betrayed by the daily use of the word that was degrading it, now that its true meaning has returned. The true meaning is what the ancients called the *etymon* of the word.

Positivist linguistics at the beginning of the century, without giving adequate reason, would not admit that we could say words have a “true” meaning compared to other meanings that are not. Positivism levelled the universe, equalizing everything, and emptying it of

meaning. But it is certain that words have an unquestionably privileged, maximum or authentic meaning, namely what they meant at the time they were created. The difficulty is arriving at this, how to go back and rediscover it. Our information about words usually leaves us only half way there, but it is certain that every word is originally a linguistic or verbal response to a *typical* vital situation, not anecdotal nor accidental, but constitutive of our way of life. Then the mechanisms of metonymy, which are for the most part stupid, change its signification by suppressing the original and vivacious meaning and replacing it with random significations that are for the most part irrational accidents have been bestowed on the term. There would have been a marvellous sense that the word “leo”<sup>10</sup> had when in its day when it was first used to name a magnificent animal, but today it is stupid enough to serve as the name for quite a few Popes. That the great Shepherd of Souls should turn out to be a lion it is quite baroque.

Whether in the arts or in life, style is always something that has to do with voluptuousness, it is a sublimated form of sexuality. It has its genesis in the stylist himself and is meant for those who enjoy style. Hence for example when the poet or the writer reaches old age and his virility dries up, his style vanishes and all that is left in his writings are a trembling old man and a lifeless schema. This is seen most clearly in Goethe. It has been noted without giving the reason why, that from a certain date Goethe begins to repeatedly use tired adjectives such as “benign.” Only by comparing a being to a thing can we think of using such aseptic and ethereal words... *malum signum*<sup>11</sup>: all manliness is now gone. The writer stylized as the peacock opens his iridescent tail.

Heidegger’s philosophical style, so egregiously achieved, consists above all in etymologizing, in cherishing the word for its arcane root. Hence the resulting pleasure has a nationalist character, immediately putting the reader in touch with the roots of the German language, which are also the roots of the German “collective spirit.”

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10. [T. N. Latin for “lion.”]

11. [T. N. Latin for “a bad sign.”]

How can there be German readers who fail to feel and recognize this delight that engenders the so delectable prose of Heidegger? It is precisely the Germans who can enjoy with the greatest exuberance the pleasure of being intimate with the roots of their language. Fichte, who had the need to exaggerate like we have the need to breathe, once said that the language of the German people is opposite to the dead languages of the Latin peoples, because the Romance languages contain roots that can surprise the men who speak them. The Latin peoples today cannot understand their roots, are not intimate with them, and can only reach them through the science of linguistics. Perhaps Fichte has some justification for saying this, although he does not see that this defect of the Romance languages makes them in a certain way “learned” languages, and provides certain virtues and graces missing in the German language.

A good philosophical style was something quite rare in the past. This theme has not been elaborated. No one to my knowledge has ever addressed “philosophical style” and its history. If they did they would find many surprises. Aristotle in his esoteric works had a wonderful philosophical style. (Whoever wants to see how the style of Aristotle is done should observe the prose of Brentano, since it is imbued with Aristotle and is an excellent example of good philosophical writing.) In his exoteric works he imitated Plato. But the fact is, and it is not my fault if it sounds so obviously paradoxical – that Plato did not have a good philosophical style. He was too much of a writer to have it. There is indeed in his vast output some places of good intellectual style, but the great majority of his writings, in its manner of speech, is often literary and not philosophical. Moreover, despite having more than a few pieces where the quality is prodigious, the Greeks never considered Plato to be a “good writer”, that is to say as an “Attic” writer. This fact will not upset us unless we are willing to be upset by trivialities, but it is undeniable that the Greeks saw Plato as what we would call a “baroque” writer, which the Greeks called “Asianism”, a style full of scrolls and ornamentation. They accused Plato of “Asianism.”

All this is directly related to a much wider and more surprising matter, although the most surprising thing is that it has not yet been observed or discussed. It happens in fact that despite philosophy being such an important intellectual occupation it has never possessed a unique

*genus dicendi*<sup>12</sup> its own suitable and normative literary genre. I refer of course to philosophy as an act of creation. Every great thinker has had to improvise his genre. Hence all the extravagant literary fauna of the history of philosophy that serves as demonstration. Parmenides drafts a poem while Heraclitus fulminates aphorisms, Socrates chats, Plato floods us with the great river of dialogue, Aristotle writes tight chapters of *pragmateias*<sup>13</sup>, Descartes begins by insinuating doctrines into his autobiography, Leibniz gets lost in the innumerable eighteenth-century charms of his short treatises, Kant frightens us with his *Critiques*, which is an enormous literary machine as complicated as the clock of Strasbourg Cathedral, and so on. Only when philosophy ceased to be creative and became a “discipline”, a form of teaching and propaganda, namely with the Stoics, were “genres” invented by popularisers, the “introduction”, the “manual”, and the “guide” – *eisagogé*, *enchiridion*, and *exegetis*.

This incapacity of philosophy to find a normative “genre” to adequately describe its vision undoubtedly has deep reasons that I am not going to investigate here. So any extravagance in the production of philosophy should not surprise us, nor the fact that Heidegger wanted to become a ventriloquist for Hölderlin.

## Pragmatic Fields<sup>14</sup>

Heidegger affirms that “to build” – *bauen* – is “to dwell” – *wohnen*. Something is built *for* dwelling as a means to an end, but the end purpose that is dwelling pre-exists building. Because man already dwells, that is in the universe, on the earth, under heaven, among mortals and towards the gods – he builds so that his dwelling becomes a contemplation – *schönen* – a care of that universe, to be opened to it and make it what it is so that the earth is earth, the sky is sky, mortals are mortals, and divinities are divinities. Now all of these tasks dedicated to the universe are ultimately “to think”, to contemplate, *dichten*. Hence the title of the conference paper *Bauen Wohnen Denken*.

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12. [T. N. Latin for “style of speaking.”],

13. [T. N. Greek for “investigations.”]

14. The text that is presented here as the fourth article in the series was an unpublished work found among the author’s papers.

But I find that before we can accept such a doctrine a few obstacles have to be overcome, to which I gave expression in a public discussion with Heidegger as well as one I had with him in Buhlerhöha near Baden–Baden. Firstly, yes man is originally on earth, but he does not live – *wohnt* – in it. This is precisely what differentiates him from other beings – mineral, vegetable and animal. The basic relationship between man and earth is quite paradoxical. We know that it is not anatomical or physiological differences that separate man from higher animals in any form that is evident. However, Father Teilhard de Chardin, a French Jesuit priest, had the happy idea of discovering a purely zoological feature that in fact distinguishes one from the others: the unquestionable fact that while all other animals inhabit particular regions of the globe only man lives in them all. This radically ecumenical character of man is very strange. It is a fact but like any fact it is misleading and needs to be challenged by further analysis. And then we discover something that surprisingly Father Teilhard de Chardin did not notice. Every zoological or botanical species finds for itself a space on Earth with certain conditions that are sufficient for them to live there. Biologists call it their “habitat.” The fact that man dwells wherever he wants, his global ubiquity, means of course that he lacks a proper “habitat”, a space where he can dwell *sufficiently*. And in effect for man the Earth is originally uninhabitable – *unbewohnbar*. To be able subsist everywhere, between terrestrial places and their personal technical creations, constructions they use to deform, reform and conform the Earth so that it becomes more or less habitable for them. Dwelling, *wohnen*, therefore does not precede man having to build, *bauen*. Certainly dwelling is not given but he makes it, because in the world, on Earth, man is not predestined, and this is the clearest symptom of this animal that does not belong to this world. Man is an intruder in nature so-called. He comes out of it, incompatible with it, essentially a misfit in any *milieu*. Because of this he builds, *baut*. And he can build at any place on the planet– for each place a different type of building – and is capable, *a posteriori*, of dwelling everywhere. Soon there will be great maritime cities. There is no reason why the expanse of the oceans should not be inhabited by man, if only ever as a transient dweller. And there will be floating cities in the air, there will be interstellar cities. Man is not attached to any determinate space and is, in fact, heterogeneous to any space. Only technology, only building – *bauen* – assimilates space to man, humanises it. But all this is relatively well understood. Although strictly speaking, not all technological progress can be described as man’s “dwelling” – *wohnet*. Technology so–



called is deficient, approximate and like everything in man, utopian.<sup>15</sup> Therefore in my judgment, neither does man build because he already dwells, nor is man's mode of existence and his being on earth dwelling. It seems to me instead that it is entirely the opposite, his being on earth is discontented and therefore there is a radical desire for well being. The basic being of man is unhappy subsistence. He is the only being constitutively unhappy and this is because he *is* in a realm of existence, the world, in which he is foreign and ultimately hostile. On the Mediterranean coast of Spain there are certain molluscs that break up the hard rock of the coast like a hammer. Inside them, in their hard and dark shells, those animals manage to give birth, love and endure. They are as "happy" as any animal can be. Whereas Lope de Vega, man of the street, who unlike Calderón<sup>16</sup> felt only contempt for the Court, even though Philip IV, who was also a poet, says in a private letter: "In the Palace everything yawns, down to the figures on tapestries."

Heidegger, it seems to me, was seduced into this way of thinking by focusing on a false etymology without giving it due caution. *Bauen* – *buau* and *wohnen* both mean "being", that is to say, existence. They share the same Indo-Germanic root that gives Latin one of its forms for the verb *to be* – *fui* – that appears to refer mainly to the being of plants with the sense of organic *growth* and more generally that of the normal course of existence, which in Greek is *physis*. In Latin, perhaps to avoid being a conjugation of the verb *to be*, its meaning was transferred to another root – *nascor*, *natura*. But it is exceedingly unlikely that the real *etymon* of those two words *bauen* and *wohnen* meant "being." *Being* is too much of an abstract idea to begin with and did not originally refer to man but precisely to the other things around him. So much so that in almost all languages the verb *to be* has contrived a curious character of artificial development, so it is no longer obvious that its character is actually a recent invention. It was fabricated from words of different roots that had meanings that were much less abstract. In this way *ser* (to be) in Spanish, comes from *sedere* = to be sitting.

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15. See my book, which will appear in a few weeks, *Man as a Utopian Being. (Vom menschen als utopisches Wesen, Stuttgart, 1951.)*

16. [T. N. Félix Arturo Lope de Vega y Carpio (1562 - 1635) and Pedro Calderón de la Barca (1600 - 1681) were Spanish playwrights and poets, key figures in the Spanish Golden Age of Baroque literature.]

Perhaps here we have a good example of the semantic process involved when looking at the etymological sense of a word; we have to redo it in reverse by moving backwards. Because it is very likely that *sedere* did not simply mean to be sitting or seated, but this concrete sense was understood simultaneously with the totally abstract sense of being, I mean that man at that time would think that one is fully *being* only when sitting or seated, and that all other situations represent only deficient ways of being. Such a case would make Heidegger seem right when he identifies dwelling – *Wohnen* – with being. But what this implies is precisely the opposite, namely that man becoming aware of his “being or existence on Earth” is not always nor constitutively dwelling – *Wohnen* – but that dwelling is a privileged and desired situation that is sometimes more or less approximately reached and that once achieved is the fullest way of being.

But it would be a mistake to believe that this resort to etymology is only a charming exercise, a *folie*, or a game that is added to pure philosophical analysis. When looking for some clarity on the essential structure of human life it turns out, as incredible as it may seem that philosophers help us very little here. It is this radical reality that is for the philosopher himself his radical life – because it must appear in him, or at least, he must announce all the other realities – but this has never been the topic of philosophy. Philosophers have skipped over it, have left it behind unnoticed. But any man, that is anyone who creates with language, has realized this reality. By the force of his own mind he has been guided by its oblique vision and what he has seen he puts down in writing, and if we can penetrate its deeper meanings, which are always the most ancient, then we are suddenly shaken by a sharp and deep vision of some aspect of our existence that survives within them. The etymology becomes therefore a method of investigation.

But it is difficult to manage and I believe that in Heidegger there is surprisingly a wrong way of dealing with etymologies. Indeed when looking for the oldest and essential meaning of a word it is not enough to attend to that alone in isolation. Words do not exist; do not work in isolation, but form sets consisting of all the words referring to a certain region of vital reality. Because our life consists of the articulation of many small worlds or regions: there is the world of religion and the world of knowledge, the world of business and art, of love and so

on. In these regions are distributed and located all the things that we deal with. And our life is nothing more than the inexorable dealings with things because in actual life there are no “things.” Only in scientific abstraction do things exist, that is to say, realities that have nothing to do with us, but being there, per se, are independent of us. But for us the whole thing is something that we must have some dealings with or occupation with and which we necessarily have to deal with sooner or later. They are “matters”, that is to say, something that one has to do – *faciendum*. For this reason the Greek word for things was *pragmata* (matters) – from *prattein* – to do, to act.

We must therefore consider our life as an articulation of pragmatic fields. However, to each pragmatic field there is a corresponding linguistic field, a galaxy or Milky Way of words that have something to say, especially matters of great human importance. Within this galaxy they are closely linked and their meanings are influenced by each other so that the most important sense is, as it were, diffused across the set. We can clearly see this by giving an example. But certainly what makes it possible to formulate the methodical result of this brief consideration is what is missing in Heidegger: namely that the true etymological sense of a word cannot be discovered if we consider the word in isolation. It is necessary to immerse it in the galaxy to which it belongs and pay attention to the general meaning, sometimes very subtle, which pervades the galaxy as an atmosphere.

Heidegger has only attended to *bauen* and *wohnen* and has found that both are etymologically linked to the word *buan* – *ich bin* (I am). Thus it turns out that the being of man on Earth is calmly dwelling – *wohnen*. Not so much as building in order to dwell as dwelling in order to build.

A very different idea will come to us if we broaden the verbal horizon and be warned that *Bauen*, *wohnen* and *buan* are not isolated, but the same root unites the words – *gewinnen*, striving for something – *wunsch* – also aspire to something we lack, that we do not have yet, and *wahn*. If you consult Kluge-Golze, you will find that *wahn* means “the insecure thing, the

awaited thing, so therefore something still not there”, and furthermore: “hope and striving,” exactly like *gewinnen*.

This reveals to us that *wohnen* – to dwell – and *Sein* – to be – that is to say, *bauen*, cannot have the sense of something calmly and positively accomplished, but on the contrary carries at its foundation the idea that the being of man is striving, dissatisfaction, longing for something that he does not have, pining for something essential that is missing, hoping that it will be achieved. Now my preceding formula acquires more precision; that the earth is uninhabitable to humans. And now we glimpse that when man says *wohnt* it is understood with an approximate and deficient value. The authentic and full *wohnen* is an illusion, a wish, a *Bedürfnis* – a need – and not an achievement, reality, or affection. Man has always aspired to *wohnen* but has never quite got there. Without dwelling he does not manage to be. For this reason he strives to produce buildings, paths, bridges and utensils.



# 1.7

## The Heideggerian Words: *Bauen, Wohnen, Denken*<sup>1</sup>

by Filippo Costa

translation by Tim Adams

The work under consideration is interpreted here as being a set of thoughts susceptible to developments that are irreducible to a closed system, instead the complex of BWD is treated as the nucleus of an open system of existential thoughts in which the reader must look for integrations and developments in light of a never definitive interpretation of Dasein, assumed to be the basis of all phenomenological descriptions ranging from the ordinary *Lebenswelt* to the transcendental reflection on the sciences. By phenomenology we mean here the revealing of the meaning of “things-themselves” which are now taken to be BWD, both in their internal

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1. [T. N. The source for this translation is Filippo Costa, “Parole Heideggeriane: *Bauen, Wohnen, Denken*”, *Giornale di Metafisica*: 30.1 (January-April 2008), pp. 95 - 118. Throughout this essay Costa uses the letters ‘BWD’ as shorthand for *Bauen, Wohnen, Denken* (building, dwelling, thinking), the key terms and the title of the famous essay by Martin Heidegger first delivered at the Darmstadt Conference in 1951. For a discussion of Heidegger’s contribution as well as his own contribution to the same conference, see the translation of José Ortage y Gasset, “The Myth of Man Behind the Machine” and “On the ‘Darmstadt Conference’, 1951” above. Costa has left many of Heidegger’s terms untranslated in their original German. Here I have added the standard English translations in square brackets.]

polysemy and in the most open sense produced by their reciprocal agreements. This double aspect of phenomenology is a model of *complex thought*. BWD is a paradigm of complexity in so far as each of the three elements not only belongs (or implies) the others but also conditions them and interprets them. In this way B determines the D processes and the W processes, there is not in fact one pure and simple thought, but the thought that *builds* complexities and systems, objective truth and theoretical truth. Similarly B extends into W, since dwelling builds in exterior-space the own-self-space of a subject that draws from these activities the sense of its *own-being*. On one hand dwelling (W) extends into thinking (D) and into building (B) to the extent that it works to create circumscribed spaces in which the subject can make a “home” for itself: if I am to the extent that I think, it is because I find myself in a *dwelling* that is formed by my thoughts about my thinking-being. On the other hand B, in both the narrow sense and the broad sense, is what creates the “home” (for *dwelling*). The same applies to the extension of thinking (D) into dwelling (W) and building (B): you are thinking-dwelling and thinking-building. In the first approximation, by notating the extension of the three elements as “ $\Rightarrow$ ”, we can write:

$$B \Rightarrow \{W, D\}$$

$$W \Rightarrow \{B, D\},$$

$$D \Rightarrow \{B, W\}.$$

The three relations give rise to additional complexities when each element is substituted with its development according to the extension “ $\Rightarrow$ .” These formulas, both the simple ones and their complex developments, apply to different domains of everyday life, the sciences, and especially biology. Bearing in mind the set of interrelationships Heidegger can now write:

1. *Bauen ist eigentlich Wohnen.*
2. *Das Wohnen ist die Weise, wie die Sterblichen auf der Erde sind.*
3. *Das Bauen Wohnen entfaltet als sich zum Bauen, das pflegt, nämlich das Wachstum, - um zu Bauen, das Bauten errichtet.<sup>2</sup>*

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2. Heidegger, “Building Dwelling Thinking”, *Poetry, Language, Thought*, trans. Albert Hofstadter (New York: HarperCollins, 2001), p. 146: “1. Building is really dwelling; 2. Dwelling is the manner in which mortals are on the earth; 3. Building as dwelling unfolds into the building that cultivates growing things and the building that erects buildings.”

It cannot be known, comments Heidegger, whether a particular construction-building is “*eigentlich*” [authentic] if we do not keep in mind that it is “in itself” dwelling: “*wir bauen und haben gebaut, insofern wir wohnen, d. h. als die Wohnenden sind*” [we build and have built because we dwell, that is, because we are *dwellers*].<sup>3</sup>

Let us first consider the theme of B with its connotative complexity that indicates W in the first instance and D in the second instance. Ordinarily, the activity of building is described in terms of architectural technology, that is in terms of structures, building science, and finally art (architecture). The experience or “lived experience” of B destined to W is hidden by *technological* practice, that is in work that ends in a product and extinguishes itself there; this experience is resuscitated by reversing the relationship, as Heidegger does, so that dwelling is not completed by building, something that is entirely obvious, but one is made to belong to the other and vice versa (the “*ist*” in the first of Heidegger’s three points). There is therefore a fundamental activity or way of being that has two aspects, building and dwelling, which implies that one and the other are taken as modes of existence and not as mere technological activities.

To have a place for B is a way for Dasein to make the world as a this-in-which there can be Dasein itself. The world is not a set of connected things however, but a *totum of partes* determined by the “partition” that Dasein makes in determining the *partes* as constructions of it: it replaces the *constitutive* activity of the Kantian transcendental with the *constructive* activity according to B. This opens up the world of *architecture* in which B operates in reciprocal determination with W. The analysis of B therefore gives rise to the digression on architecture that we here take as our example.

For this we need concepts that are not found in the Heideggerian text but are in a certain way implied by it. We first fix onto the concept of building or “urban construction.” With this aim in mind we read from Arnheim:

The varying shapes of buildings in a cityscape add up to a kind of visual language, which provides a different “word” for each kind of structure.... The distinctiveness of appearance derives in part is

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3. Ibid.



from the differences in practical function.... As a useful contribution to the semantics of architecture one could investigate the range of variation among particular types of buildings.<sup>4</sup>

These notes must be developed according to a logic that connects language, referable to D, with B whose domain is comprised of buildings. Using an axiomatic that develops in terms of a mereology<sup>5</sup>; the city serves here as a *totum* that has architectural types as principle *partes* and buildings as secondary *partes* (*partes of partes*). Furthermore, to the extent that it is visible, a building possesses the characteristics of an image that connects it with other images within the same *totum*. The system is essentially open and governed by a *visibility* that takes the place of linguistic *intentionality* assuming therefore a symbolic *value* in which vision and language converge. As Arnheim continues:

Architectural symbolism begins to come into play when a building's design uses shapes that carry a conventional meaning. The medieval mind, in particular, was inclined to see such a message in every shape.<sup>6</sup>

We must at this point distinguish between an external artificial symbolism and an internal symbolism inherent to the very essence of symbolizing, or rather to architectural elements. The artificial symbol does not reach the level of symbolic essence drawn from the power of vision (the *Sehen* [look, seeing] of the broader paradigm).

Conventional symbols [here we say constructions] ... are not the prototype but only a limited application. The artist, the architect, is concerned first of all with the broad metaphoric quality of perceptual expression.... The most powerful symbols derive from the most elementary perceptual sensations.... The symbolism of the arts, of which architecture is the most important, could not be so effective ... were it not rooted in the strongest, most universal human experiences.<sup>7</sup>

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4. Rudolf Arnheim, *The Dynamics Of Architectural Form* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1977), p. 206.

5. [T. N. From Wikipedia entry for mereology: "In philosophy and mathematical logic, mereology (from the Greek meros, root: mere(s)-, "part" and the suffix -logy "study, discussion, science") treats parts and the wholes they form."]

6. Arnheim, *The Dynamics of Architectural Form*, p. 207.

7. *Ibid.*, pp. 209 - 210.

Experiences are *contracted* into the visual forms of the architectural construction. “Architectural shape” is therefore symbolic in nature, so Arnheim can talk about the “spontaneous symbolism [that] derives from the expression inherent in perceived objects.”<sup>8</sup>

Symbolism intervenes at this point in connection to the existential *Sehen* [look] of the space: the space of B (and of W) is in fact the surrounding-space; the *Um-welt* that alludes to the world as this-in-which it *takes place* emerging “from” Dasein that constitutes its centre. The being-at-the-centre comes to assume a transcendental value in virtue of which all bodies-in-the-world are constituted by a centred-subject to which determinations of every kind and type refer. But the way in which the Dasein-itself becomes the centre of the being-of/from-the-world is constituted by W in the broadest sense is understood as *movement*: man does not live, so to speak, by putting himself in a place (*topos*) almost like a statue, but by *passing* through the habitat in every direction. He thus takes possession of the natural or constructed place by conferring on it a quality of being passable – in German: *Betretbar* [walkable]. Travelling, the primary mode of W, recalls the visioning-projecting, the *Sehen* that was added to the original paradigm. But only to the extent the project of *Gesehnes* [viewing/looking] belongs to D, by thinking-projecting; finally the realization of the project belongs to the work of B.

The opening (of a systemic type) of this complexity also establishes the *transcendence of the sacred* as the temple in which “mortals” access their original way of *Versammlung* [gathering]. The existential sense of the temple as a *monument* connotes the historical memory, which is also a way of *Denken-Andenken* [thinking-remembrance], since the monument itself is called *Denk-mal*. It exists by welcoming and gathering mortals from out of their profane *Wohnung*. We can therefore see how the world of B (of architecture) belongs to what is called the *Umwelt of Dawesen*<sup>9</sup>, constituting its *own existence*.

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8. Ibid., pp. 210.

9. [T. N. *Wesen* is usually translated as “essence” but Heidegger finds the root of this word means “presence” and the word *Anwesen* still means “presence.” So he takes *Wesen* to mean “coming to presence.” See Martin Heidegger, *An Introduction to Metaphysics*, trans. Ralph Manheim (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1959), p. 61. Heidegger doesn’t use the term *Dawesen*, “the coming to presence there” but Oskar Becker brought the word into philosophy with his book *Dasein und Dawesen* (Pfullingen: Neske, 1963) where it means the

The analysis of W reveals its connection to B. Heidegger asks, “*Inwiefern gehört das Bauen in das Wohnen?*” [In what way does building belong to dwelling?<sup>10</sup>] presupposing that building belongs to dwelling and that dwelling implies building. We say that “home” is where we dwell by taking “dwelling” in *the active sense* that also admits the intransitive form. It also makes-a-dwelling of the home to the extent that you dwell (there) or that it makes you into a dweller. Dwelling is what man does as man: the essence of man belongs to the activity/existence of dwelling so that by dwelling there/in the house man realises a kind of essence. There was also a time when men wandered homelessly and did not have a home, or something in/with which to dwell, nevertheless man was a potential inhabitant. This fundamental aspect of human essence is realized in the transition from a nomadic to a sedentary status, which is not simply to assume a fixed abode but to produce various regions of cumulative actions that define man as “civil” (from *civis - polis*, a complex structure of dwellings, an ordered construction). All this implies, an activity, which is the work of formation and transformation of the habitat in relation to the being-inhabitant of the subject.

Instead of a generic W we must however recognize a complexity of different ways of dwelling according to its *object*: for example, the ways of dwelling in the home-object (dwelling-inside) is one thing, in a temple-object (dwelling-higher during a time set by ritual) is another, and on an earth-object (dwelling-on) is still another. The first way involves the society-family with its various subsystems and which therefore place W at the centre of an arc of relationships that transcends dwelling in the narrow sense of the word. The same is true of the temple-object, the earth-object and so on, because each has its own horizon of ownership, relationships, and ways of being. “Dwelling on the earth” in a particular way means at the same time to render Dasein *earth* bound. In the “age of technology” W, along with the B and the D that it implies, perishes in the *habitual*, in vain we try to re-build building, from inside to outside – in every case the original experience lapses into a technological product, the *novum* in the style of the existential *historicity* is delivered to the *historiography* of art and technology.

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ahistorical essence of nature beyond and before the historical human existence of Dasein. *Dawesen* therefore can only be divined mathematically.]

10. “Building Dwelling Thinking”, p. 149.

Dwelling therefore has different forms and values that constitute its history and historicity. To dwell “naturally” happens in fact to be a constructed dwelling, or rather, the reciprocal relationship of B and the history of W. It is therefore the complexity of B-W enriched by the project that properly belongs to D that is inscribed in human existence, but while for B history is enough, for W it is necessary to take into account the *historicity* nearest to the sense of Dasein. For Dasein the existential value of W is extinguished in the *Alltäglichkeit* [the commonplace, ordinariness] in which dwelling will perish in timeless *habit*; the complexity of Dasein surrenders to the simplicity of “Cartesian” being-in, or rather the reduction of the of/in to the numerical value of the coordinates in space, time, and quantity etc. Such a fall of the existential analytic promises a resurgence when W is conferred the *movement* of Dasein as *Da-wesen*. The being-itself, the equalization of the ego with itself is achieved in the return-to-self-in-itself as a *return-to-self-of-the-other-to-self*, from *Selbstaneignung* [self-appropriation] to *Selbstenteignung* [self-expropriation]. The relationship with the being-other, *alterum*-world or *alter-ego* of the subject is the source of all objectivity in general (transcendental *Selbstenteignung*). The more independent is the subject, the more the subject is identical to itself; objectification, thus understood opens up the world of science, technology, and the arts.

Based on this, architecture is interpreted in its various forms and styles, by making reference to an “existential dialectic”: dwelling implies a return to the place-proper (re-appropriated) from which Dasein continually departs from and returns to. The connection that is particularly important, in the extent that B and W imply existence is to *Sehen*, which is not taken into account by Heidegger. The *practice* of dwelling articulates a seeing in systems of perspective of a “cinematographic” rather than a “photographic” type that connect perspectives to the project, and therefore W to B. The architectural project is not extinguished by artificiality but it remains a perspectival *intentionality*.

As was mentioned in the connection of W with B, it is expressed through the *itinerant* acquisition of space for dwelling: place properly-own is not one in which we find ourselves dwelling – but one in which *you will return to* and that therefore becomes the proper place-construction. On the other hand W creates place as a space of Dasein (or *Dawesen*) as the subject of D. In this regard it is worth quoting Arnheim further, who at the conclusion of his essay states:

When the human mind organizes a body of thought, it does so almost inevitably in terms of spatial imagery.... The design of a building is the spatial organization of thoughts about its functions. Conversely, any organization of thoughts assumes the form of an architectural structure.<sup>11</sup>

This results therefore in finding W in the *reflection* of the *return* and indeed to the specific form of *Heimkehr* [home-coming]. In the first instance such a modality of W belongs to a boundless field of literary works. This fundamental existential is a work of reflection that is never complete. It is worth quoting here, by way of an example, a singular literary experience contained by a fragment written by Kafka.<sup>12</sup>

All intra-categorical opening, and therefore all historicization of each term of the complexity of BWD, is matched by an inter-categorical opening<sup>13</sup>, starting with the B-W connection already mentioned that reopens the sense of one or the other term; they build not only bridges and other things that are not really dwellings, as Heidegger noted, but they are also build for dwelling in the ordinary (*alltäglich*) sense of responding to the need to create a

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11. R. Arnheim, *op. cit.*, p. 272.

12. By way of example of the boundless literariness of *Heimkehr* [home-coming], we report a fragment [with the same name] by Franz Kafka leaving any comments and reflection on the relation to the theme of the essay entirely to the reader: "I have returned, I have passed under the arch and am looking around. It's my father's old yard. The puddle in the middle. Old, useless tools, jumbled together, block the way to the attic stairs. The cat lurks on the banister. A torn piece of cloth, once wound around a stick in a game, flutters in the breeze. I have arrived. Who is going to receive me? Who is waiting behind the kitchen door? Smoke is rising from the chimney, coffee is being made for supper. Do you feel you belong, do you feel at home? I don't know, I feel most uncertain. My father's house it is, but each object stands cold beside the next, as though preoccupied with its own affairs, which I have partly forgotten, partly never known. What use can I be to them, what do I mean to them, even though I am the son of my father, the old farmer? And I don't dare knock at the kitchen door, I only listen from a distance, I only listen from a distance, standing up, in such a way that I cannot be taken by surprise as an eavesdropper. And since I am listening from a distance, I hear nothing but a faint striking of the clock passing over from childhood days, but perhaps I only think I hear it. Whatever else is going on in the kitchen is the secret of those sitting there, a secret they are keeping from me. The longer one hesitates before the door, the more estranged one becomes. What would happen if someone were to open the door now and ask me a question? Would not I myself then behave like one who wants to keep his secret?" Franz Kafka, "Home-Coming" trans. Tania and James Stern, in *Franz Kafka: The Complete Stories* (New York: Schocken Books Inc., 1995)

13. The complexity of the two openings constitutes the proper sense of a really *concrete* (or "dialectical") *infinity* beyond human existence.

surrounding-space (*Umwelt* or space-world) populated by entities that are not simple objects designated by accusatives but “subjects” designated as “nominative” that make the space the place of presence-copresence, both inter-objective and inter-subjective. On the other hand, the space that it constructs or “localizes” through the action of presence-and-copresence exercised by men and by things: it becomes the historical space of a past presence, memorable and rememberable. Thus we see the link between B, W and D as the work of *Da-sein* insofar as *Da-wesen* prepares the realization of itself by way of the *Mit/Zusammen-wesen* [together/with presence]. The step from *sein* to *wesen* and therefore to the intersubjectivity of *Mit/Zusammen* [together/with] is accomplished in the localizing activity that “builds” the co-presence of humans (sociality) in historical (*geschichtlich*) institutions; intersubjectivity and constructive spatiality are conditional upon each other in building the history of the human-world.

The relationship between the three elements does not end in a synthesis but remains problematic and such a problematic becomes more complex when we consider the under-current of seeing. A remarkable example is given by the relation between the interior and exterior in sacred Roman architecture: the exterior is made in such a way that the perspectival and partial views are already a view of the interior.

This fundamental law of space is that W creates the special value of *internal transcendence* on which is founded the (transcendent) identity of the subject. Transcendence according to the point-of-view that cannot be unified connects with the inner transcendence as an infinite opening to the complexity of the body. In each case one or the other ways belong to the complexity of space as an existential space.

The B-W link must find a middle term, and as such we recall the transcendental sense of space developed in our *transcendental Truth*, intending at the same time to connect the technological work implied by B to the *Wesen* of Dasein. The way generally followed by the philosophical tradition has been to search for “what is” (the) space; our phenomenological point of view brackets the idea of a space-in-itself and develops descriptions which instead name underground adjectives, verbs or adverbs. The work of phenomenological reduction in fact eliminates pseudo-problems of the *essence* of space, time, causality etc. Kant would respond that these entities are not something real but are forms that make experience possible: space continues to exist therefore not as a reality in itself or an attribute of things but as a form-intuition. Phenomenology for its part does not simply deny the reality of what is called

“space” but denies the description of something like space as a proper object. It must therefore describe the situations in which terms such as “distance”, “extension”, “length”, “depth” and all that is collected under whatever the word “space” appears to signify. We observe that to describe, for example, the distance from one point to another we do not use the term “space”; a particularly important case then is the depth that passes from Cartesian space (the technical terms of analytic geometry) to complex situations and human activities for which the qualification of depth is particularly significant, as well as the metaphorical use which this term is susceptible (reducible in any case to an adjectival syntagm).

Thus we find the “spatiality” (*das Räumliche*) of Dasein in movement, or rather, the creation of *topoi* thereafter occupied (W) in localizing activities. We understand that to occupy a place by dwelling (*Da-wesend*) Dasein cannot be reduced to a simple location in Cartesian space; this activity is expressed by the Heideggerian W, whose complex connection with B is not however fully developed by the author. To say that it is “*die Weise, wie die Sterblichen auf der Erde sind*” [the manner in which mortals are on the earth]<sup>14</sup> only serves to establish a need for phenomenological research into the complex *Selbstdarstellung* [self-representation] of Dasein, was only ever indicated by Heidegger: how does man dwell as a mortal *in the place* called “earth”? What is earth as something humanly-habitable according to the complexity of BWD? Heidegger gives an oracular reply: the earth names the habitable as that which is constructible so that the intention to dwell is satisfied by human constructions such as buildings, cities, roads, ploughing of fields, mining etc. that tie “earth” to human destiny. Man dwells – working and inhabiting the earth by means of technology, so that dwelling is not, as I said from the beginning, a simple, passive thing within the tectonic elements acting to satisfy vital needs such as basic shelter from the elements, protection, defence etc., but a fundamental way of humanizing the earth. The actual description of this phenomenological complexity, due to the interferences and the multi-centeredness of the forms of existence related to the tectonic moment as the specific implementation of B, is accomplished in archaeology, in the arts known as architecture, sculpture, painting, and in the economy (from *oikia*), politics (from *polis* as a system of *oikia*) and all the way up to the complexity of existential historicity.

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14. “Building Dwelling Thinking”, p. 146.

What phenomenology and Heideggerian language have in common is a never-ending work of the un-making of nouns<sup>15</sup>, despite the residual hypostasis of the “three terms”, we alluded to the “*ist*” [in Heidegger’s first point quoted above] that is the polysemic (*Mehrdeutigkeit*) characteristic of phenomenology translating a metaphysical discourse into a different realization, as mentioned above, translating nouns into adjectives, verbs, adverbs (the authentic phenomenological *epoche*). So even “spatiality” in the place of “space” is only a countersign for the phenomenological determinations that have selected certain expressions from ordinary language. An important term is *space-occupying* as taking possession of a bounded earth that is the prototype of an existential HAVING: the “earthly” existence belonging to occupation and permanent settlement, which does not take place in regard to spaces in the air and sea.

Another point that deserves our attention, also only ever implicit in Heidegger, is the connection of the “three words” not only to Dasein but to “the mortals” (*oi brotoi*). If the BWD connections do not point to *theoi* but are the privilege of *brotoi*, a sign that the *Sein-zum-Tode* [being towards death, see *Being and Time*, p. 277] is implicit in the (archi)tectonic work; all of this leads to a phenomenology of death for which every act of life implies the *entelekheia*<sup>16</sup> of human activity whose proper structure is to bring-to-completion and therefore to the end. BWD are therefore not pure acts (“*agieren*” according to Fichte) but set out to make constructions that fulfil an existential mode of operation. There is therefore a return of *uti et frui* in phenomenology<sup>17</sup> which confers the sense of *experience* on existence. Therefore, if B is an activity towards an end and therefore a form of *uti*, while W is the *frui* of this B that it is destined to, once again the phenomenology of W refers to the architecture of B.

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15. [T. N. The “un-making of nouns” translates Costas’s *de-sostantivazione*, the negation of *sostantivare* (Grammar) “to use as a noun”.]

16. [T. N. entelechy Gk. *en-telos*, completion, in the philosophy of Aristotle, the condition of a thing whose essence is fully realized, realization of actuality as opposed to potentiality, in Vitalism, a vital agent or force directing growth and life.]

17. [T.N. For the Latin *uti et frui*: “used and enjoyed” see St. Augustine: *On Christian Doctrine*, Book One: some things are to be enjoyed (in Latin, *frui*, fruition), while others are to be used (*uti*). Things we enjoy are those we find good in themselves, and things we use are those that are good for the sake of something else. The only thing that is to be enjoyed is God. All other things, including other human beings, are to be used in relation to the proper end of enjoyment. Source: Wikipedia].



Despite the intended unsystematic character of Heidegger's work, important phenomenological traits appear to explain the connection of the three terms expressed by the metaphysical "ist." Through the pretext of an etymological *excursus* Heidegger arrives at the following emphasized words: "Der ist Grundzug des Wohnens [das] Schonen." [The fundamental character of dwelling is this sparing and preserving]. By way of commentary he adds:

Er durchzieht das Wohnen in seiner ganzen Weite. Sie zeigt sich uns, sobald wir daran denken, daß im Wohnen das Menschsein beruht und zwar im Sinne des Aufenthalts der Sterblichen auf der Erde.<sup>18</sup>

The whole set of utilitarian purposes of the building-dwelling is therefore transposed into the terms of religious worship, for which you do not need special buildings such as temples and churches but the *Urtempel*, so to speak, consisting of the *house*, its synthesis, which is to say B and W (and not as it was for Hölderlin, "die Natur"). The religiosity of *Schonen* [sparing and preserving] is hardly a marginal moment of existence but coincides with Dasein in so far as it officiates the rite intended for existential death. The task of the phenomenology of BWD therefore remains connected to the mortality of Dasein.

Being-towards-death invests and is in turn signified by the complexity. Once the earth has been consolidated by the constructions at work in B they are constituted as what survives Dasein's destiny to die: to die is not simply death on the earth but the end of the human *Mundus* produced by the joint work of BWD. To die is certainly the most painful death of the *other-mortal* for which the *Zusammen-leben* [life-together] is associated with a *Zusammen-sterben* [death-together] that yearns for the mythical *Überleben* [after life], as a way of being in which *encroaches on the Eigenleib* or *Eigen-leben* [own-body or own-life]: the other is now always a thing, so to speak, *sun-brotoi* [together with-mortals] that in the *in-der-Welt-sein* [being in the world] cannot bring to conclusion the *Mit zusammen-sein* [being together

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18. "It pervades dwelling in its whole range. That range reveals itself to us as soon as we reflect that human being consists in dwelling and, indeed, dwelling in the sense of the stay of mortals on the earth." "Building Dwelling Thinking", p. 147. The two English words "sparing and preserving" translate the single German word "Schonen" [to look after, to take care of, to protect, to conserve].

with] inscribed in the destiny of Dasein. But the works achieved by way of BWD already allude to this kind of existential transcendence. In fact, they converge in the “religious” implications of “*Aufenthalt bei den Dingen*” [“dwelling itself is always a staying with things”<sup>19</sup>] that designates a way of being transcendent compared to what the “technological” is in the end the *Alltäglichkeit* [the everyday]. Each of the three moments facilitates this transcendence: the religious *Bauen* (the temple) is not intended in fact to be a settlement (bringing W to ordinary *Wohnung-Gebäude* [residence-building]); *Denken*, in the end assumes the character of religious *Andenken* [give thoughts to, remembrance], or rather, to what Heidegger expressed in the question “*Was heißt Denken?*” [What Calls for Thinking] what calls to man from the “fourfold” that surrounds Dasein.

BWD always alludes to the human in an implicit way. But beyond Heidegger it is necessary to clarify what is implicit and transcribe the “three infinitives” articulated as indicative of the historical self-determination of Dasein. Man here-and-now is in fact what he is according to the way in which an environment is created, which arises in historical correlation with BWD: B constitutes the history of architecture (as a general subject), W the anthropological history of man, and D the history of knowledge. Beyond that Dasein passes, so to speak, along its own historicity in its relationship to the three terms mentioned, availing itself of the complexity of intended references we have detected in other works. Limiting ourselves to B, we can see that human historicity depends on what the building itself, generally built according to a dwelling finally, determines as the mode of being-human as well as B and W strictly understood; if man builds a building by means of the thought of dwelling (W and D in relation to B), the construction produces a complexity of essential *feedbacks* through W and D.

The mentioned *Geschichtlichkeit* [historicity] erodes, so to speak, the constructions of BWD that are essentially subject to the wear of time as no longer responding to the original D that remains as a *lost* origin (for example, as told in the myths of the fall). When a construction extends over time, as happens to all churches, the historical phases overlap compromising the unity of the work. It seems that the historical authenticity of the work begins with a loss of value the moment the project (existence in D) passes into execution

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19. “Building Dwelling Thinking”, p.149.

(existence in B). Architecture is destined to be “archaeological”: you can in fact today read the most ancient of poems but you cannot dwell in a direct and authentic way in a building that is technologically and stylistically of the past because your being cannot be the same as a past-being.

The BW relationship in terms of functionality does not take into account that the functions of BW change with time and reduce the original functionality. All of this involves a new dimension beyond those already mentioned: destruction as a secondary consumption. How can we be dwelling-thinking today on the Heidelberg Bridge if it no longer conforms to the metaphysical-functional complexity detected by Heidegger?

The primary way, not detected by Heidegger, in which Dasein appropriates B is *Eigenleib* [one’s own life, independent existence, private life]. It is the *primum-Gebäude* [first building], edifying-edifice, destined to reproduce and represent itself in the world of nature and art. There should therefore be added to BWD the *visual* element of corporeality, to see how the “bodily” activity on one hand implies other modes of bodily existence, and on the other hand, it conditions them: the body is what it is because it is both the seer and the seen, but this is not the body as substance, rather it is internal and external incorporation. Corporeality is being-present in BWD so that their reciprocity gives place to the lived-body: it lives as a properly *human* corporeality in the complexity of built constructions signified by the *primum constructum* which is the organism, living in the continuous “incarnation” of itself and objectifying the subjective *Eigenleib* [one’s own life] in the objective (objectifying) *Fremdkörper* [foreign body] of the outside world. It therefore owes its own-being to the polarity in which bodily activity is expressed as *inputs* and *outputs* crossing between the internal and the external. What we call “body” is therefore the result of a semantic reduction (the basis of the *expression*) of the textual and contextual complexity of corporality; *part objecti* [objects apart] that are essentially open systems of *in-put/out-put* actions familiar to scientific knowledge. Rather than placed in antithesis to the properly-human denoted as animate intellect or intellectual agent, corporeality gives sense and meaning to the whole of subjectivity in terms of an open system. Now the primary mode of the lived body (*Leib*) is the own-body (*Eigenleib*) as the origin of the own/proper-being of the subject. The corporeality (*Körper* in general) for anything that is not human-subjectivity is only quantity, the

determination of a substratum, for man denotes the nucleus of him-self as much as he can only be an economic-subject, he can only possess or have his *own* properties and dispose of them *according to law*. Finally, in so far as existing as a *juridical subject* in the legal system – the relationship of man to the implications of corporality linked to B and W leads to the domain of D.

It is necessary here not to lose sight of the “regime” of the ontology of complexity; in fact the treatments of space and the body are not a fact, but are in principle based on the resulting abstract complexity and allow for a metaphysical flight that obscures the concrete phenomenology of existence. If the subject is therefore defined by means of the “own/proper” (appropriation-and-disappropriation) this is due to the *Eigenleib* that is the point of connection and difference for BWD.

At this point we confront the *problem of the soul*: if the body is not only substance then it is not only soul either, but even here the question is founded on language: as man has corporeality, he also has “animation.” According to the ontology of complexity “animation”, existence-as-soul, is a corporeal mode of existence (existence-as-body) while according to the simple ontology the essential properties of a body-substance are fixed; for which relational (not strictly properties) determinations *unexpectedly arise* from an external source: bodies (*Körper*) are by nature fixed and immovable and if they move there must be a motor-principle that make them move. Thus the body-dwelling (at the biological level) must be *given life* by emerging factors that are named the “soul”: a body can move by itself, or live by itself because only an existing body can allow the soul to enter it.

Returning to the complex ontology that we infer from Heidegger, existing corporeality establishes a creative relationship of reciprocity between the subject and object, you deal with the simple *Körper* or the complex *Leib*. Every building that is constructed *outside* is itself a realisation of the intentionality of corporeal existence: whatever “is” my *Leib (Eigenleib)* I rediscover near the built construction, having from the start the character of a *system* that links together the organic with the inorganic. The constant moment of corporeality between *Eigenleib* and *Fremd-körper* is the life-division: the body as “own” is visible-seeing and the “foreign” body is not only seen in the primary sense but participates in the same way of being-seeing (things that look back at us).

With regard to the visible we now confront the strange situation of having to affirm that only an entity that possesses space is visible while the space itself is not visible; this case is highly instructive for us because it shows how this could give rise to a metaphysics of the invisible on the basis of the visible. Between B and D there is (but not mentioned by Heidegger) *Bilden* in its various meanings [to form, to shape, to educate]; on the other hand to D belongs what is expressed mainly as *seeing* (*Sehen* = S) added as a way of D. This addition also introduces an instance of *succession*. The Kantian time-succession that for being constitutes its own “inner sense” (its existential self-understanding) remains indeterminate if we do not cite the ways in which the succession occurs and it is this demand that can satisfy *Bilden-Sehen* (BS), which to the extent that it is a process has the characteristics of B.

Enriching the original paradigm therefore creates stronger relationships and at the same time further distinctions between the diverse modes of existence. The succession becomes an experience only if it informs in some way the being of Dasein, and one of those ways is the BS that further includes the *imagination*: we know what the succession is if we understand it as the form/forming of a visual experience. *Visa* [L. *visum* pl. *visa*, vision, mental image] are visible to the extent and in the manner in which the eye dwells with love, with hatred, with indifference, on the dwelling (W), the abode (*Aufenthaltung* [from *Aufenthalt*: “stay”, “sojourn”]) made visible because together they are what form their implied existence from out of the flow of *visum*. It is this move that gives the sense of a succession constituting complex “gestalts” through the modalization of primary perception and then linguistic *praesentia/absentia*. To stop, to linger near the *image-visum*, interrupting the succession, is the moment that constitutes the experience of an object, not only in art but also in ordinary experience, such a capacity for being-near is what gives value to existential temporality. So when the *visum* is the face of the beloved person that one lingers on, visually “adhering” to it, it reveals the being-toward-death that is the basis of the existentiality of others. Nothing can be seen and loved without being marked by the fate of death. The domain of the visible extends from life to death: only mortals as such have the privilege of being able to see and being able to be seen. Vision gives life, and vision gives death, as is apparent from the dark background of mythology found in every period and in all places. Once again the broader paradigm leading back to *Sein-zum-Tode* remains largely unexplained.

The proper meaning of the Heideggerian infinitive remains suspended, as it is indeed first and foremost for Heidegger himself. The principle expression would be, however, the present participle: it is like the proper way of idealistic, vitalistic language, that is linked to the privilege of the becoming of being, of the dynamic over the static, of power of substance; the characteristic expression is the *Tathandlung* [act] or pure *Tätigkeit* [pure activity] of Fichte. However, this activity is posited as being itself fixed: what it does is nothing other than to move itself near each other and recover – it does not know the existence of action-as-end as act as the product. Therefore it reverts back to the autological circle of *noesis noeseos* [self-thinking thought]<sup>20</sup> unable to objectify by being consumed in the same object. The same must be said of Heidegger, that is, for BWD with the S that we wanted to add as being implicated by Heideggerian three modes. (This applies primarily and fundamentally to the *Sein*, whose analysis produced in *Einführung zur Metaphysik* [The Introduction to Metaphysics] is stuck in the circle of an eternal infinitive. Similar considerations apply to the “*Dingen des Dinges*.”[the thinging of things])

The zone of the visible that contains the illumination of the *visum* in turn involves three basic modes; the luminosity that simply makes the *visum* seen where light therefore remains athematic, the representation of light in the *visum* itself as a specific theme, and the aesthetic enjoyment of everything related to light and colour. When the theme of light becomes manifest for the perception of nature or the representation of art, it induces the value of a revelation in the object of vision-representation. This sort of “epiphenomenon” constitutes the value of being in the environment. The relationship of S to the three elements of the paradigm alludes to the revelation that is not only a way of thinking or seeing, but fulfils the correlation of B to W: in “constructing” seeing, B and W are modes of the *Wesen* [nature, essence, existence] of Dasein. The phenomenon of clarity in the constructive illumination is like a force that finds resistance near the illuminated body, which does not ordinarily coincide with illumination, while mystical vision resolves itself into this: the illumination and the illuminated coincide in the *unio mystica* [mystical union of individual and God]. Everything derives from noting the difference of the visible from the *visum*, that is, by the fact that the experience of the *visum* transcends itself in the direction of the profound-visibility that subsists as the revealing, the visualisation, of an invisibility extending into the visible. This

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20. [T. N. Aristotle in *Metaphysics* XII concludes the first substance is *noesis noeseos* (self-thinking thought) and equates it with *theos* (God)].

movement is characteristic of building as a *work of art* since in it the visible-aesthetic exists by way of revelation, the coming to light. The light in the work of art has the function of revelation; such a revelation exists in relationship to a hiddenness, so the light makes the work “visible” in a systematic contrast with obscurity. In architecture the contrast is rather between the actual *visum* and the (unseen) visible potential.

The principal way in which the previously mentioned Heideggerian paradigm contrasts with the existential is in general expressed by an infinitive noun. So B [*Bauen*, transitive verb: “to build”] contrasts with *Gebäude* [transitive noun: “building”], W [*Wohnen*, intransitive verb: “to dwell”] with *Wohnung* [noun: “dwelling”] in the ordinary sense, D [*Denken* transitive noun: thinking] with *Gedanke* [noun: thought], S [*Sehen* transitive verb: to see] with *Gesehen* [past participle of *Sehen*: seen]. However, the contrasted terms are not only internal objects but possess in addition the function of being objects with a “materiality” of their own, which is particularly relevant and significant for architectural construction. On this extra-paradigmatic residue is based an ontology of ordinary things-themselves, as well as the world of soul, spirit etc. But the residue is not therefore deprived the existential value that phenomenological analysis can easily make evident. So we are brought to the “thought of the thing” that in Heidegger insofar as he is constrained by a certain re-reading of Kant is unable to grasp the material basis of existence. Besides the Heideggerian texts on the “thing” we can derive what we will now name the same indirect Heideggerian phenomenology of matter, as it relates to the *essence of Dasein*. The thing is in fact what is put near to us and stays a certain distance from us, we speak therefore of *Dasein* as being located at such a distance . . . in relation to use, etc. with contemplation, in comparison to the thing. This is what happens in fact with the *Verdingen des Dinges* [thinging of things], as we can say: we will add the more properly thingish *Vielfalt* [manifold, diversity] versus the analogous set theory, which is a multiplicity that we can define in logical terms, but the sense or experience of a manifold in front of us, or in the midst of which we find ourselves, requires the use of many “things” (not the elements of a set!). Despite its *Unwesen*, it determines *Dasein* in the syntactic decentralization that we have mentioned. The direct intention of the being-thing as such must therefore pass through the decentralization of language that has the effect of a suspension rather than the cancellation of the object, as das *Dinghafte*, or das *Dingen des Dinges* [the thinging of things].

The thing thus understood must be the fulfilment of the existing spatiality thought according to the concept of proximity. The theme of *Nähe* [nearness], also addressed by Heidegger, refers to the spatiality of B and W, or rather the “metric” that is added to the “topology” of building systems, insofar as the products of the B and W are materialized into “external things.” The Heideggerian appeal to the work of art serves as an example of this and essentially says that the discourse on the thing can only be an occasional discourse, like the singularity of the thing itself. The generality falls on ordinary language (which is no longer the *Sprechen der Sprache*) in which the term “thing” is generalized to such an extent so as to lose the original meaning due to, as has been mentioned, the complexity of BWD.

Therefore we had to wait for the question of the essence of the thing; we often use the term “thing” and would like to know what its proper sense is, which equates to asking what is the essence of that which we give this name to. So if we talk about the “animal” we want to know what is properly animal, even abstracting what makes one animal different from another. The same applies to something as “abstract” as truth, value, the good, etc. But in the case of “thing” the sense does not refer to an essence: there is no “thing” that can be determined as the essence-of-thing. It makes sense to ask what a certain thing is but not that it is “the thing.” The way we grasp it when we use “thing” is almost-attributive: a book is (a) thing but a verbal participle is not properly a thing although we can ask what sort of thing it is. The discourse on the thing seems to get so caught up in meaningless tautologies, if we want to save one of them we would do violence to ordinary language and take “thing” as a kind of attributive branding, meaning for example “this book here in front of me is a thing” as a characteristic of the entity called book versus an entity that I name a present participle. But we must avoid saying too much: this book is a thing seems to say, “there in front of me is a book”, which as a statement of information is quite obvious. We know that if you want to distinguish the book that exists from the book that does not exist will only make sense when it can enter into meaningful and truthful statements, you end up admitting the paradoxical non-existent objects of Alexius Meinong. Wishing now to avoid this dead end we can return to the being-thing about this book by describing the implications of this concept. It follows that, assuming that by “book” you designate a book-thing mindless of the question of what sort of thing a book from is (what is the thing!) we moved on to question both the sensible appearance of (this) book as a thing (the kind of ontological determination). Heidegger certainly moves on from the question “*was ist ein Ding?*” [what is a thing?] by making it a



significant instantiating: “*Ein Ding ist der Krug*” [a thing is a jug] implicating the propositional function “*Ein Ding ist das X*” where X designates the name of one thing or another. For example “*ein Ding ist der Buch*” [a thing is a book] but not “*ein Ding ist der Name ‘Buch’*” [a thing is the name “book”]. This means that the attribution of “what” produces a “synthetic proposition”, namely that of *Buch* without this intended to be the pure sense of “*Buch*”, without thereby meaning a *wirckliches* [actual, real] *Buch* or the like.

To express this ontological anomaly Heidegger introduces “*Dingen*” instead of “*Ding*” and instead of “*Das Wesen des Dinges*” [the essence of things] which would be a case of “*Das Wesen des Xs*”, the tautological “*das Dingen des Dinges*” [the thinging of things] or in its strongest expression “*das Ding-haftes des Dinges*” [the thing-character of things]. At this point there are three possible avenues for research: 1. to simply describe their proper ontic characteristics of the relationships that are expected according to the concept of a certain thing, if not, the meaning of *Dinghaftes* will remain forgotten, 2. to seek what belongs to a thing like the book and not to another, and 3. to expound upon the sense of the infinitive “*dingen*” proper to *Ding* and nothing else. The third way of looking at a thing fulfils its being-thing, and if this is so it constitutes the primary sense of being an entity as such. The Heideggerian analysis of the jug, for example, assumes that in the meantime it is a thing without necessity, paradoxically the existential necessity of non-necessity in order to find its essence. The essence of a thing consists in constituting a thing-in-itself, contingent since taking something “metaphysically” in isolation from every other thing, indeed so that something else can not be properly classified as “other” in comparison to it: it deals with “other” in a purely logical sense.

The third point requires elaboration: the *Dingen des Dinges* must be taken in fact as the making-thing of this or that thing (*das Dinghafte*, as a process or model process as such), so it does not remain simply the sense of “thing” but the explication of the *sense* according the consistent *meaning* of its proper becoming-thing of the thing, in the existence that it produces and consumes. It therefore introduces the concept of consumption as explicated by the infinitive in the first sense that belongs to “*dingen*.” A thing realizes its being-thing in its making-thing, in so far as it produces and ends existence.

Until now the meaning of D has remained unexplained; it is surprising how little space – just a few lines – it occupies in Heidegger’s text. At the beginning the author declares he will

“think” (*denken*) about B and W. At the end he declares that the whole essay has attempted to show:

daß das Denken selbst in demselben Sinn wie das Bauen, nur auf eine andere Weise, in das Wohnen gehört... Bauen und Denken sind jeweils nach ihrer Art für das Wohnen unumgänglich. Beide sind aber auch unzulänglich für das Wohnen, solange sie abgesondert das Ihre betreiben, statt aufeinander zu hören. Dies vermögen sie, wenn beide, Bauen und Denken, dem Wohnen gehören, in ihren Grenzen bleiben und wissen, daß eines wie das andere aus Werkstatt einer langen Erfahrung und unablässigen Übung kommt.<sup>21</sup> (pp. 155-156)

The way in which D belongs to B and W (and the other elements of our open paradigm) is anything but a kind of idealistic or metaphysical reduction to the “concept”, rather it is the moment of the mutual ability to listen to where each one includes, in the manner of an essential complexity, the same D. D can however do this while keeping the terms of the connection separate so that each one can be itself and have its own ability to listen to the others. The caring that is the work of D is distinguished through “formal” *reflection*: W has the character of the *return* for which Dasein itself as *Da-wesen* is a continuous return of self to self, *from the other* to the “same.” Hence the “romantic” moment of the existential historicity that is named *Heimkehr*<sup>22</sup> (for example in Heine and the cited fragment of Kafka). It is what gives phenomenological consistency to the substantiality of entities, including *formal* entities and death thought in connection with three elements.

To create complexity, reaffirmed through and beyond the autonomy of the places of Dasein, requires what we theorized as the *regime of complexity* what was only ever implicit in Heidegger’s work. In view of what should be done for D, as for B and for W, a fundamental analytic serves as a “synthesis” of the complexity. Is it therefore quite reasonable to investigate Heidegger’s other works where a discussion of D is announced in the same way as

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21. “that thinking itself belongs to dwelling in the same sense as building, although in a different way ... Building and thinking are, each in its own way, inescapable for dwelling. The two, however, are also insufficient for dwelling so long as each busies itself with its own affairs in separation instead of listening to one another. They are able to listen if both— building and thinking—belong to dwelling, if they remain within their limits and realize that the one as much as the other comes from the workshop of long experience and incessant practice.” “Building Dwelling Thinking” p. 158.

22. Home-coming.

happens in *Was heißt Denken?*<sup>23</sup>, but the enterprise to integrate BWD shows how difficult it may be and how it may be incorrect if it falls into the usual “ontology of the definition.”

The question “What is called thinking?” can never be answered by proposing a definition of concept *thinking*, and then diligently explaining what is contained in that definition.... We shall not think *about* what thinking is. We remain outside that mere reflection which makes thinking its object.<sup>24</sup>

This methodical principle cannot be limited to only the case of D but must extend to every thematic term, including W, B, and “being.” In this way we can restore the imbalance of the textual paucity on the theme of “D” in BWD. We must still ask, “*Was heißt Bauen?*” [what calls to/for building?] and “*Was heißt Wohnen?*” [what calls to/for dwelling?]. If the “*heißen*” in “*Was heißt Denken?*” resolves to the *call* of thinking about thinking, the same must be true of B and W whose epistemological autonomy thus passes to the existential: the call is from one term to another *mediated* by Dasein to which, generally speaking, all calls must be directed. We understand that the answers do not consist of verbal definitions or systematic theories but in that sort of phenomenological description of experience and language that we see practiced for example in “*Was heißt Denken?*” – such a kind of philosophizing not only constitutes a systematic opening but also constitutes a way of being, the “form” of any opening in general. We already expressed this fundamental aspect of Heideggerian thought in *Heidegger e la teologia* back in 1974.<sup>25</sup>

Seen in the final analysis as the of widening of the Heideggerian paradigm (notated as B, W, D,...X,...), whose opening *interprets* Dasein itself, it always remains possible to make and revive new co-existential dimensions that involve objects and “things” of every kind, beginning from the productions according to BWD and up to the unpredictable technological-things that continually regenerate and populate the world.

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23. This is normally translated as “What is called thinking?” But *heißen* is understood by Heidegger to mean, “calls out to/calls for” rather than “is called/named.”

24. Martin Heidegger, *What is Called Thinking*, trans. J. Glenn Gray (New York: Harper and Row, 1968), p. 21.

25. [T. N. See Filippo Costa, *Heidegger e la teologia* (Ravenna: A. Longo, 1974).]

The new paradigm resulting from these reflections is intended to keep its meaning alive by continually renewing an *existential analytic* supported by the faith in a *philosophical truth* that is also in continuous renewal.



# 2

## Introduction to the Published Articles

### Joseph Rykwert's Philosophy of Architecture

The first article reproduced here, “Benoît Goetz: A French Reader of Rykwert’s *On Adam’s House in Paradise*” was written for a presentation made as part of the “On Adam’s House in the Pacific” symposium in honour of Joseph Rykwert at Auckland University in November 2008. Joseph Rykwert was at that time the Distinguished Visitor of the School of Architecture and Planning. Rykwert is undeniably one of the most significant writers and thinkers in the area of the history and theory of architecture. In fact, as the article below explains, he was the pioneer of “history and theory” as a course of study in architectural schools. The intertwined terms of history and theory are so ubiquitous to us today that it seems strange there was actually someone who took a huge personal risk by introducing this new concept and new methodology, and by so doing eventually shifted the curriculum of architecture schools worldwide.<sup>1</sup> He has been named as the 2014 recipient of the RIBA Gold Medal, usually given to practicing architects who have already been highly awarded and only rarely awarded to academics. For example the previous year it was awarded to Peter Zumthor who already has a string of accolades including the Pritzker prize, considered the equivalent of the Nobel Prize in the architectural world. This perhaps represents yet another pioneering shift that Joseph Rykwert has forced on the profession by his dogged determination in trying to raise the intelligence of architecture.

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1. Rykwert recalls that the Education Secretary of the RIBA actually tried to suppress his course; see Rykwert quoted in Helen Thomas, “Invention in the Shadow of History: Joseph Rykwert at the University of Essex.” *Journal of Architectural Education* 58 (2 November 2004), p. 42. This fact must have made the receiving of the Royal Gold Medal – The RIBA’s highest accolade – especially sweet for him, vindicating a life time struggle to make architectural education more intellectually rigorous.

According to the German philosopher Peter Sloterdijk there are two ways to do justice to a thinker.<sup>2</sup> The first way is as an archivist: you can immerse yourself in their complete works so that you experience first hand the flow of their words and the architecture of their chapters, assimilating all their particularities. The second way, which Sloterdijk chooses to follow, is by being a creator of context: you locate the author in a complex web of absorbed influences and lessons passed on to those who may follow, seeing just how universal their work has become. The first way tends towards either hagiography or ad hominem attacks while second way is a call for distance, which is much more likely to produce genuine esteem. It is the second method that was chosen for the following article, firstly by putting Rykwert's work into the historical context of its original setting, and secondly by following the work of someone who had made an intelligent reception of Rykwert's lessons, the French philosopher Benoît Goetz.

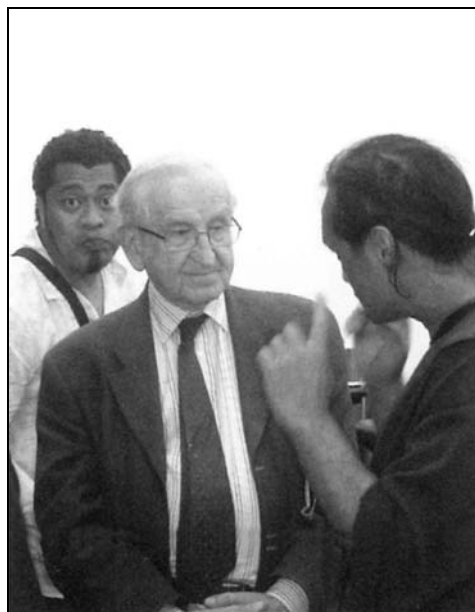


Figure 6. Joseph Rykwert in discussion with Albert Refiti at the “On Adam’s House in the Pacific”, a symposium in honour of Joseph Rykwert at Auckland University in November 2008. Used with the permission of Ross Jenner.

As the theme of the symposium was centred on Rykwert’s early work from 1972, *On Adam’s House in Paradise: The Idea of the Primitive Hut in Architectural History*, it was

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2. See Peter Sloterdijk, *Derrida, an Egyptian: On the Problem of the Jewish Pyramid*, trans. Wieland Hoban (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2009), pp. x - xii.

perhaps a logical choice, given the South Pacific location of the conference, that many of the other symposium delegates chose to deal with the anthropological interpretation of the primitive hut in the context of the Pacific, and Joseph Rykwert was very pleased with these new Pacific connections made to his work.<sup>3</sup> But during some of the many conversations that took place, when the guest speaker was not present, the suggestion was made that the idea of the “primitive” hut was entirely Eurocentric and even colonialist! Are not indigenous structures of the Pacific just as advanced as anything in the West, at least in terms of their relevancy to the cultures they are embedded in, or are they not, in terms of sustainable use of limited resources, even more advanced? But as the paper below will make clear, the anthropological reading is only one of four possible readings of the primitive hut emerging from history of architectural theory, one that was made particularly famous by Gottfried Semper’s work on the Caribbean bamboo hut of the Mesoamerican Indians. This reading in fact misconstrues Rykwert, his central idea being that the primitive hut is a perennial theme throughout the long history of architecture, starting with Vitruvius and continuing up to the present day, passing through Le Corbusier and Walter Gropius. Once having captured the idea of the eternally reoccurring primitive hut as an intrinsic part of the human condition, as allegorized by the Fall from the garden of Eden in the Judeo-Christian tradition, then it becomes possible to see how this properly philosophical idea has in effect been taken up by Peter Sloterdijk in his massive *Spheres* trilogy, one of the largest works and one that has the most relevancy to architecture among contemporary philosophy.<sup>4</sup> In the third yet to be translated volume of *Spheres*, Sloterdijk concentrates the twentieth century apartment living as the model of micro-spherical life in co-isolation. It is not hard to see that this conforms to Rykwert’s definition of the primitive hut and is in fact its latest reiteration.

This paper therefore sits perfectly well in this thesis because it helps to validate the proposition being maintained here – that the philosophy of architecture has a long standing legitimacy within the sphere of philosophy, which until now has been made obscure or invisible to the architectural world because it has not been clearly distinguished from the

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3. See Joseph Rykwert, *On Adam’s House in Paradise: The Idea of the Primitive Hut in Architectural History* (New York: Museum of Modern Art, 1972), and for the refereed papers of the symposium see *Interstices: 10, On Adam’s House in the Pacific* (2009).

4. Due to the lack of an English version I have referred to the French translation, Peter Sloterdijk, *Ecumes: Sphères III*, trans. Olivier Mannoni (Paris: Hachette Literatures, 2006).



philosophy of architects. In the particular case of the reception of Joseph Rykwert's book *On Adam's House in Paradise*, there is the genuine philosophical reading by the French philosopher Benoît Goetz. Goetz says the dislocation from nature, represented by the allegory of the Garden of Eden in the Judeo-Christian tradition, which leads to the necessity of architecture, the first hut, as symbolic, spiritual, and physical shelter after the Fall, is in fact an eternally recurring event. This dislocation of the human from nature and the consequently required "primitive hut" never stops taking place. Goetz is fully aware of the philosophical importance of Rykwert's book for the architecture of philosophers. The philosophy of the architects on the other hand, and many of the other articles in the same edition of *Interstices* that treated the primitive hut as being the anthropological hut in the Pacific, fit into this category, reducing the richness of the concept to the point it became Eurocentric and colonialist. The Samoan *fale*, the *fale* Tonga, the prehistoric Māori house, the spirit houses of Papua New Guinea, the First House of the Group architects in Auckland, all these empirical examples of the primitive hut created an acute anxiety for the concept that emerges from Rykwert's book *Adam's House in Paradise*. Where was paradise? Where was Adam? Where was the first house? Each one of these concrete examples was shown, quite correctly, by these authors to belong to complex hybrid lineages that are embedded in living cultures, which make a mockery of the first or original house that could then be taken as a measure of authenticity for future developments. All these writers mounted implicit and explicit attacks on Rykwert's concept showing that the philosophy of the architects was at odds with the architecture of philosophers. Furthermore, none of them could see the gulf that lies between what was described in Rykwert's book and their own descriptions of empirical anthropological huts.

## Daniel Payot's Philosophy of Cities

The next article was written for the occasion of the 26<sup>th</sup> International Conference of SAHANZ (Society of Architectural Historians, Australia and New Zealand) that took place at the University of Auckland in July of 2009. The conference was convened by Julia Gatley who chose "Cultural Crossroads" as the theme. This was then the catalyst to explore a book by Daniel Payot more deeply; the book was on an ancient concept of the city originating in Hebrew law called cities of refuge. The book is titled *Des villes refuges: témoignage et*

*espacement* (Cities of Refuge: Witnessing and Spacing) and although just a small book of 103 pages it is density packed with many complex ideas from various sources, which makes it both a fascinating read and difficult to digest. Payot revisits some of the most important texts on the city, distilling their lessons along the way to mapping the current global situation of urban agglomerations, where the traditional understanding of the city as having densely-populated open centres and well defined boundaries, is itself fast becoming an object of nostalgia.

To summarise, Payot finds there are two opposing camps when it comes to discussing the city, there are the “urbanophobes” like Rousseau and Heidegger and there are the “urbanophiles” like Hannah Arendt and Jean-Luc Nancy. The city haters, with just reasons, bemoan the negative effects of urban life, in particular the superficial and blasé life that many urbanites lead compared the salt of earth country folk who can usually be relied on to say what they mean. While on the other hand the city lovers recognize, with the Greek polis as their model, that the city enables everyday life to become extraordinary due to the rich networks of writers and thinkers that the city always nurtures, enriching and transforming the lives of city dwellers so they become at once a short story, a novel, and an epic that is being simultaneously written and performed all the time.

Payot’s ultimate goal in revisiting these various discussions about the city, as indicated by the title of his book, is the concept of the city coming from the Judaic tradition of the city of refuge as introduced and analysed in a text by Emmanuel Levinas.<sup>5</sup> Essentially this extends Levinas’s view of the house as being a way to welcome the Other that was briefly discussed in the introduction to this thesis, so that under the jurisdiction of Hebrew law the city itself must welcome the half innocent-half guilty person from another city, the stated example being someone who accidentally kills another when the head comes off his axe. They must leave their own city to avoid being killed under the law of Moses that takes one life for another, but then other “cities of refuge” must allow them safe haven. It is not hard to see how Levinas, and Payot using this text as a guide, can extend this to formulate a concept of humanitarian urbanism that welcomes foreigners and allows people, who would otherwise be trying to kill each other, to live together in relative peace in the city. In the paper that follows, written for a

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5. See Emmanuel Levinas, “Cities of Refuge” in *Beyond the Verse: Talmudic Readings and Lectures*, trans. Gary D. Mole (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1994), pp.34 - 52.

conference whose theme was cultural exchange in relation to the history of architecture, this concept is tentatively applied to three particular urban projects in three very different cities. The cities are Auckland, Beijing and Los Angeles and the projects are respectively: the Central Connector, the Metro Expo Line, and the venues for the 2008 Summer Olympics. The city of refuge was a useful way to conceptualise the level of humanity and justice that is allowed or denied between particular groups, in particular the relationships between the long-standing residents and those who are newly arrived. The Central Connector was a reconfiguring of the streetscape between the CBD and the shopping precinct of New Market, passing by the University of Auckland, which was under construction at the time of the conference. If the lecture theatres had windows the delegates need have only to look out of them to see what was being talked about. By applying this concept the paper was able to highlight the incredibly conflicted and ambiguous situation of urban growth in cities today, with separate interests groups having quite contrary harms and benefits from these projects. For instance, the massive clearance that took place in Beijing in 2008 benefitted the visiting spectators and athletes while an estimated 1.5 million local inhabitants were displaced from their homes in the inner city, with the lucky few being re-housed in the outskirts where jobs and amenities are scarce.

Nevertheless the city remains a place where, for most of the time, people who would otherwise try to reap vengeance on those they seek to blame live in relative peace under the condition of everyone being half-innocent, half-guilty. Do we not all live under this condition today, benefitting from the exploitation of foreign labour made possible by the unfair distribution of wealth between developed and developing nations? We must be conscious of this fact, yet also we must also go on living our lives to the full in the spirit of the city of refuge. All architecture and all urbanism of the city have a hand in this. The diversity of cultures in the multicultural city must be symbolically represented in the public space and architecture is the best means for this. By tentative applying a philosophy of the city to three concrete projects, it was possible to avoid the usual rhetoric of architect's design philosophies used to bring attention to their splendid projects. So to take the example of the Beijing Olympic venues, if the starting point had been the "Bird's Nest" National Stadium by Herzog & de Meuron and Ai Weiwei or the "Water Cube" National Aquatic Centre by the consortium of PTW Architects of Australia, Arup Engineers, CSCEC (China State Construction Engineering Corporation), and CCDI (China Construction Design International), no amount

of applied philosophy would have detracted from the powerful spectacle of those huge and stunning works of architecture. By concentrating on infrastructural projects, which are still works of architecture with architects engaged to oversee the design the streetscapes, and by concentrating on the collateral destruction of a massive quantity of housing, the spectacle of the triumphant architecture was avoided so that the human aspects could be fore-grounded. The architecture of philosophers always starts and finishes with human existence and looks at architecture as one of a number of agents in the theatre of human actions.



# 2.1

## Benoît Goetz: A French Reader of Rykwert's *On Adam's House in Paradise*<sup>1</sup>

by Tim Adams

### Introduction: The End of Theory

When Joseph Rykwert started teaching his History and Theory of Architecture course for masters students at the University of Essex in 1968 this marked, among other events, the beginnings of a profound shift in the way history was being taught in architecture schools.<sup>2</sup> No longer would history be taught as a study of precedents purely for the sake of guiding future architectural practice (condemned by Manfredo Tafuri as “*critica operativa*” or operative criticism, the ideological use of history to defend current bourgeois practices of architecture), from now on architectural history and theory would be intertwined as a critical engagement with cultural ideas for their own sake. And in place of the iconographic connoisseurship of the Courtauld method, well known to Rykwert since he was taught by Rudolph Wittkower at the Courtauld Institute, he would establish a “socially committed art

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1. This article originally appeared in *Interstices*: 10 (2009) pp. 88 - 96.

2. For the origin of this claim and for an account of Rykwert's early years of teaching at the University of Essex see Helen Thomas, “Invention in the Shadow of History: Joseph Rykwert at the University of Essex.” *Journal of Architectural Education* 58 (2 November 2004), pp. 39 - 45. Rykwert was not the only catalyst for this change because Tafuri published his *Teoria e storia dell'architettura* in the same year, and four years earlier an American Institute of Architecture teacher's seminar, and later book, used the term “history, theory and criticism” in the context of architecture; see Marcus Whiffen (Ed.), *The History, Theory and Criticism of Architecture*. Cambridge, Massachusetts: The M.I.T. Press, 1965. I owe many thanks to my anonymous referee for pointing this out to me.

history in which you start off by looking at objects ... and treat them all as evidence of how they were made in their context.”<sup>3</sup> What historians like Rykwert and Tafuri did, in effect, was to take the history of buildings out of the design studio and expose it to all the cultural and political ideas of the day. Their method was to immerse themselves in the archives and a hitherto impossibly- wide range of texts and intellectual currents in order to create a legitimate role for the architectural historian, independent of architectural practice. If we heed the calls for the end of theory in architecture - and these calls are now too numerous to ignore - then this period of intertwining history *and theory* is itself being eclipsed by another way of teaching history within architecture schools.<sup>4</sup> Theory is being replaced by research, which is once again intended to be directly useful to the practice of architecture, and masters’ theses and PhDs are fast becoming design theses and creative practice PhDs. Whether this is a return to ideologically naive *critica operativa* that predates Rykwert and Tafuri, or whether practice is now itself reflective, is a question that needs to be asked with seriousness and a sophistication that we no longer possess. Whatever the case, it is timely to re-examine the history and theory of architecture through a reading of Rykwert’s early work *On Adam’s House in Paradise*, in particular as it is read by someone well-qualified to appreciate its nuances and far-reaching consequences: the French philosopher Benoît Goetz.

## The Four Kinds of Primitive Hut

Before beginning any discussion of the primitive hut it is helpful to keep in mind that there are in fact four kinds of primitive hut. Firstly, there is the purely historical object treated dispassionately as simply a stage of building left behind in the progress towards today’s house

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3. Joseph Rykwert, quoted from an interview with Helen Thomas, 21 January 2003, in Helen Thomas, “Invention in the Shadow of History: Joseph Rykwert at the University of Essex.” *Journal of Architectural Education* 58 (2 November 2004): 39.

4. For the claim that theory is dead in architectural education see Mark Pasnik, “Who’s Afraid of Architecture Theory?” *Cornell Journal of Architecture* 6 (1999): 108 -121, Kazys Varnelis, “Critical Historiography and the End of Theory.” *Journal of Architectural Education*, 52, no.4 (1999): 195-196, Michael Speaks, “After Theory.” *Architectural Record* (June 2005): 72-75. Jean-Pierre Vallier, “The End of Theory? The Duplicity of the Relationship between Presence and Theoretical Subversion in Architecture.” *Haecceity Papers* 1 (Fall 2005) and David Pavlovits, “The End of Theory? Introduction.” *Haecceity Papers* 1 (Fall 2005). The phrase “end of theory” has become so ubiquitous in recent years it is hard to think of “theory” without thinking “end of”.

forms, by constructing better and better kinds of huts, the *meliora genera casarum* of Vitruvius.<sup>5</sup> Secondly, there is the hut revisited in our imaginations in order to make an unflattering comparison with today's over-sophisticated and overly self-conscious architecture. This is the famous rustic cabin, Marc-Antoine Laugier's *petite cabane rustique*.<sup>6</sup> Thirdly, there is the anthropological hut, an actually existing non-Western pre-industrial dwelling, dissected in order to rediscover the universal elements of architecture, for example the Caribbean bamboo hut of Gottfried Semper's *Bambus-Hütte*.<sup>7</sup> Finally, there is the primitive hut as a continuously inaugurating event, something that reoccurs every time we make a place for ourselves or construct a building that is both unconsciously naïve and self-consciously sophisticated. This is the meaning that Joseph Rykwert gives to the primitive hut in *On Adam's House in Paradise* and, as Benoît Goetz makes clear in his book *Dislocation*, this condition affects all human habitation.<sup>8</sup>

When *On Adam's House* was first published it received a surprisingly hostile reception simply because this new meaning of primitive hut had passed unnoticed. Ernst Gombrich wrote in the *New York Review of Books*, "It is pleasant to think of Adam, the perfect man, living in a perfect house in Paradise .... Alas, like so many other pleasant fantasies this one must be heretical. Adam no more had a house in Paradise than Eve had a dress."<sup>9</sup> Note that this does not in fact invalidate Rykwert's thesis; the house in paradise is indeed heretical because, in Goetz's terms, the house introduces heterogeneity into a field of purity. Once

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5. Vitruvius Pollo. *On Architecture*, Translated by F. S. Granger. London: W. Heinemann Ltd.; New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1931. See page 78 for the Latin version and page 79 for Granger's translation.

6. A. M.-A. Laugier, *Essai sur l'architecture*. (Paris: Duchesne, 1753), p. 12.

7. Gottfried Semper, *Style in the Technical and Tectonic Arts; or, Practical Aesthetics*, trans. H. F. Mallgrave and M. Robinson (Los Angeles: Getty Research, 2004), p. 666.

8. Benoît Goetz, *La Dislocation: Architecture et Philosophie* (Paris: Les Editions de la Passion, 2001).

9. Ernst Gombrich, "Dream Houses", *The New York Review of Books*: 20 (19 November, 1973), not paginated, accessed 31 October, 2008: <http://www.nybooks.com/articles/9669>. Gombrich's review demonstrates that he himself had been researching the topic of the primitive; he points out several references that would have helped Rykwert and even corrects the misspelling of the 14th-century monk's name "Opicimus de Castris" which should have been Opicinus de Canistris. We now know with the posthumous publication of his *The Preference for the Primitive: Episodes in the History of Western Taste and Art* (London: Phaidon, 2002) that Gombrich in fact shared this particular interest in the primitive with Rykwert his entire life but nothing major was published in this area until after his death in 2001.



inside paradise it brings paradise to an end. Strictly speaking, the first house is situated on the threshold of paradise and the Fall of Man. The failure to notice the implications of this new meaning of the primitive hut also led Kenneth Frampton to surmise, “Rykwert’s erudition seems to become gratuitously recondite. The structure becomes diffuse and the reader is projected into an anecdotal morass of facts, the relative relevance of each to the discourse at hand being left inexplicit.”<sup>10</sup> In effect, Frampton admits here that as a reviewer he had failed to grasp this new meaning.

## Rykwert’s French Reader

One who does not fail Rykwert as a reader is Benoît Goetz.<sup>11</sup> In his 2001 book *La Dislocation: Architecture et Philosophie* (Dislocation: Architecture and Philosophy) Goetz makes it very clear that Rykwert does indeed know that the Bible makes no mention of any house in paradise, and he continues:

We should allow this allegory to be subjected to a slight modification of detail: in paradise Adam did not have a house. Or if he had one, it would not have been outside, and consequently would not have constituted an inside either. Paradisiac space is without division, strictly speaking it is nowhere and only the tree of knowledge introduces rupture into the field of immanence such that an anywhere, a “this is paradise” becomes possible. On leaving this place, on leaving Place, the first man and first woman did not only discover suffering and shame, they discovered an outside, and by trying to construct an inside they then, and only then, invented architecture. The meaning of this apologia is that the partition of space that constitutes “the first dislocation” is constitutive of architecture itself.<sup>12</sup>

Goetz extends Rykwert’s theme of the persistent haunting vision of the first house, which concerns everyone involved with building, into the theme of dislocation, which is the precondition of all human contact with the world. In both cases, however, it is something more fundamental than the nostalgia for a lost origin that can never be retrieved, the imagined

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10. Kenneth Frampton, “Review of On Adam’s House in Paradise by Joseph Rykwert”, *Architecture Plus*: 1 (6 July, 1973), p. 9.

11. Benoît Goetz is a senior lecturer in philosophy at the Paul Verlaine University of Metz.

12. Benoît Goetz, *La Dislocation: Architecture et Philosophie* (Paris: Les Editions de la Passion, 2001), p.27. This and all subsequent excerpts are translated by the author.

hut that is used to show up the pretence of our over sophisticated luxury-dwellings, or the anthropological hut as a demonstration of the primal elements of architecture.

Goetz states that there was no Adam's house in the Garden of Eden because, prior to the expulsion from paradise, there could not have been any division of places or any inside or outside. Paradise lacks nothing, so every space in it is equivalent to all other spaces; paradise is, in other words, an indivisible field of immanence without otherness and without limit. The Expulsion, the first dislocation, creates the first division of inside and outside. Adam and Eve have to leave Eden. Now, therefore, the world is fragmented for the first time into Eden and non-Eden. This first division is constitutive of architecture as such, so it is only after the Fall that Adam can build the first house. The Expulsion from Paradise is also the fracturing or singularisation of spaces. Space is "architected", and this architecturality of space is the precondition for architecture.

### Thinking *from* Architecture

So, rather than a single event, dislocation is something that never stops taking place. This is how Goetz thinks *from* architecture rather than reflecting *on* it. Architecture for him is not an object to be encountered in some pre-established philosophical field; rather it is the field of thought itself. So instead of confining architecture to aesthetics and academic problems of form and style, Goetz's strategic shift makes architecture become what he calls an "ethical substance"<sup>13</sup>, a physics of space touching the very heart of existence, because existences cannot be disposed and dislocated without having first an "architecturalisation" of space that makes the world a place of heterogeneous spaces with multiple insides and outsides. "The 'doctrine' that would render architecture worthy of consideration," writes Goetz,

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13. Goetz borrows this term from Michel Foucault. See *The Foucault Reader*, edited by Paul Rabinow (London: Penguin Books, 1991), p. 353, where Foucault gives the following examples of "ethical substances": for the Greeks it was *aphrodisia*, the acts, gestures and contacts that produce pleasure and for Christians it is flesh, the carnal body as a source of sinful temptation. The point being that in both cases; *aphrodisia* for the Greeks, "flesh" for the Christians, the "ethical substance" is the material to be worked over by the practice of ethical living.

would not belong to the technological register or the aesthetic register. It would lie in this affirmation that architecture is a way of setting up a *modus vivendi* between man and the space in which he moves. It would consist of hazarding a proposition that architecture is an “ethical substance”, to borrow one of Michel Foucault’s terms.<sup>14</sup>

Architecture, in Goetz’s view, is the very thought of space, therefore well able to teach us about the art of living or the way of being in the world. So by thinking *from* architecture, Goetz arrives at an architectural physics of space (the theme of the second chapter of his book), an architectural ethics (chapter three), a political theory of places (chapter four), and a noetics or spatial condition of thought (chapter five). Because thought cannot be everywhere and nowhere as if we were still in paradise, thought must be placed somewhere, it therefore depends on certain preconditions of space. Therefore, all great thinkers also invent a singular way of dwelling, they “make the world” in different ways and this is above all, claims Goetz, what makes their thought essentially different. Heidegger makes the world differently from how Levinas makes the world, to use Goetz’s example.

Goetz’s redefinition of architecture as an endlessly recurring event of dislocation at once solves the problem of where architecture sits in relation to the other arts and, curiously, this takes us directly to the heart of the matter of Rykwert’s latest book, *The Judicious Eye: Architecture against the Other Arts*.<sup>15</sup> *The Judicious Eye* chronicles with Rykwert’s typical thoroughness and characteristically digressive style the decline of architecture as the synthesis of the arts or *Gesamtkunstwerk* and revisits the many failed attempts to bring art and architecture together. The implicit yardstick for such a synthesis is of course *disegno* (investigative drawing), the defining concept of the Renaissance. *Disegno* is the art of drawing that uncovers the Platonic *eidos* or ideal form behind appearances that Alberti, Vasari and others saw as the unifying technique underlying architecture, painting and sculpture. This unification through *disegno* however cannot be sustained outside a Platonic worldview. If we no longer believe in the existence of any underlying essence how can the arts be unified by their search for it? So the location of architecture among the arts is once again cast adrift in the Romantic period and we still carry the burden of this legacy today. For example, in a

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14. Benoît Goetz, *La Dislocation: Architecture et Philosophie* (Paris: Les Editions de la Passion, 2001), p.86.

15. Joseph Rykwert, *The Judicious Eye: Architecture Against the Other Arts* (London: Reaktion, 2008).

small sample of the many discussions on architecture taking place after the Renaissance, by two philosophers who have been very influential in the discourse on the arts, we find Kant placing architecture alongside sculpture as a *Kunststoffkunst* or “plastic art.” Kant inherits the French opposition between *beaux-arts*, the fine arts, and *arts mécaniques*, the mechanical or applied arts. He then divides the fine arts into a further three categories consisting of the arts of speech (rhetoric and poetry), the formative arts, and the play of sensations (music and colour). The formative, or form-making, arts are further divided into plastic arts (sculpture and architecture) and painting. The plastic arts use figures in space, the “sensuous truth”, while the non-plastic art of painting relies on “sensuous semblance.” Sculpture differs from architecture in that only sculpture directs our attention to purely aesthetics ends. “In architecture,” Kant explains, “the chief point is a certain use of the artistic object to which, as the condition, the aesthetic ideas are limited.”<sup>16</sup> Then there is Hegel’s well-known placement of architecture on the bottom rung of all the arts, which are now placed in a serial and teleological development towards ever more fluid ways of capturing the human spirit (first architecture, then sculpture, then painting, music, drama, poetry and so on).<sup>17</sup> It is from this lowly position that architecture has struggled to elevate itself ever since. So, for example, in our own time it is hard to imagine architecture holding the attention of the public for long, since they now have such easy access to the faster-moving arts of music and film, and efforts to make architecture more musical or filmic by making it reactive or mobile seem to have their basis in a system of the arts that precludes anything other than failure in advance for architecture. So, once again, when placed alongside the other stronger and less constrained arts, architecture is presented as a frail and overburdened art form.

## The Singularity of Architecture

In place of these regional descriptions of architecture as one (usually quite minor) art or discipline among other arts and disciplines, Goetz gives us, based on his reading of Rykwert in Heideggerian terms, the singularity of architecture. According to this view, architecture

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16. Immanuel Kant, *The Critique of Judgement*, trans. J. C. Meredith (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1988), p. 186.

17. G. W. F. Hegel, *Aesthetics: Lectures on Fine Art*, trans. T. M. Knox (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1975).

need no longer be compared unfavourably to other stronger, more developed and more expressive forms of art. Firstly, because architecture forms the framework for all the arts, and secondly, because it is not itself framed in the same way. Nevertheless architecture is not in a position to judge or control the arts in any way simply because it is the stage, the workshop, the theatre, the studio, the gallery and so on: it only appears with them as part of the same situation or event. Architecture is the framework for the other arts and disciplines but architecture is not itself framed. It passes beyond the boundaries of built form to participate in all human activities, as “a space that surrounds the bodies that inhabit it”, as Goetz so delicately puts it:

A work of architecture is not limited by the envelope of the building, but that it works on the field outside the envelope, that it makes itself *explicit* with the outside. Architecture is, in essence, bordered by the space that surrounds the bodies that inhabit it. Any work of architecture is an opening to that which it is not, to that which it neither relates to nor comprehends. It listens with surprise to what it calls forth and provokes. Above all it makes something happen that is not of the order of art. Thought, actions, attitudes are carried and sustained by it. Thus there is no architecture without a non-architectural assemblage that architecture thereafter contributes to the construction of. Sebastian Marot is not uninspired when he speaks about a “constructed situation” to name a space in the singular (as a synonym for architecture). The difference therefore is this, works of art take place in the world, a work of architecture is one *moment* of this world where we, works of art and other things coexist.<sup>18</sup>

In place of architecture taking a minor place among the arts there is an architectural singularity, a moment of the world in which everything takes place including the other arts, ourselves, our thoughts, our actions and attitudes, a moment in time when everything coexists. Architecture is the condition of our existence says Goetz. Little wonder then that he adds that architecture listens with astonishment (*étonnement*) to what it calls forth, what it frames. This sense of astonishment reflexively leaves its mark on the works of architecture themselves because “*édifices sont de ‘drôles de choses’*” (buildings are ‘droll things’) says Goetz.<sup>19</sup> When one searches in Google for images under the title *drôles de choses* they will find pictures of, among other things, a small car mounting a truck tire, a square of sidewalk splashed in paint that looks like a beautiful abstract painting, and an old tradesman’s boot

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18. Benoît Goetz, *La Dislocation: Architecture et Philosophie* (Paris: Les Editions de la Passion, 2001), pp. 20 - 21.

19. *Ibid.*, p. 23.

with a Nike label attached to it. Invariably these are scenes from everyday life that are unexpectedly funny, beautiful or erotic. Buildings are strangely humorous and beautiful because “our existence resides in and concerns itself with architectural spaces.”

This is why architecture is always, in some way, a hollowed out cast of those beings whose essence resides in and concerns itself with its existence. Architecture is a technology of beings whose essence lies in existing between the walls of architecture.<sup>20</sup>

In brief, buildings are droll because we witness with astonishment what they bring forth as negative imprints of our own selves.

## Dislocation as Factual Dispersion

The dislocation inherent in human existence is an event that has two aspects, the first of which has nothing to do with architecture. The first dislocation is a property of human existence, our essential dispersion, our scattering and distraction towards a multiplicity of spaces. In Heideggerian terms it is Dasein’s *faktische Zersreuung* or factual dispersion/distraction.<sup>21</sup> (Goetz: 30). Heidegger has this to say about it in *Being and Time*:

*Dasein’s* facticity is such that its Being-in-the-world has always dispersed [*zerstreut*] itself or even split itself up into definite ways of Being-in. The multiplicity of these is indicated by the following examples: having to do with something, producing something, attending to something and looking after it, making use of something, giving something up and letting it go, undertaking, accomplishing, evincing, interrogating, considering, discussing, determining.<sup>22</sup>

Heidegger differentiates the “factual” (*tatsächlich*), the fact of being present-to-hand, from the “factual” (*faktisch*), taken up into human existence, but not necessarily proximally

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20. Ibid.

21. Goetz, *La Dislocation*, p. 20.

22. Martin Heidegger, *Being and Time*, trans. J. Macquarrie and E. Robinson (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1990), p. 83.

close.<sup>23</sup> Factual dispersion is, therefore, the human ability to expand the individual's sphere of concern beyond the body's immediate vicinity to ever-increasing numbers of spheres until we are in a state of continuous distraction away from our present location.

To exist is therefore to (self) dis-locate, existence is dis-location. Dislocation is our essential dispersion; we are scattered, expanded, distracted by a spatial multiplicity.... A "factual dispersion" (*faktische Zerstreuung*) belonging properly to *Dasein*. This dispersion is no different from the original spatiality of *Dasein* (from its *Räumlichkeit*).<sup>24</sup>

The second aspect of dislocation does involve architecture: it is "what we do with the first existential dislocation. We dispose of it. We cover over human distraction with compositions that hide the first dislocation. So, where *Dasein's* facticity is dispersed into a multiplicity of ways of being-in, having to do with, producing, attending to, looking after, making use of, and so on, buildings used as structures to house these multiple ways of dwelling pull *Dasein* together and unify its spheres of concern. It is no surprise, then, that Heidegger's list of ways of being-in should sound very much like the necessary steps that an architect must take in designing a human habitat: first they have to *do something with* the existing habitat, then they must *produce something* new which is *attended to*, drawn up, and further *looked after* and improved upon until it is finally *made use of* by others, and then they have to *let it go*, leaving others to inhabit what they have built but also clearing their minds, offices and schedules in order to be able take on new projects. Goetz thoughtfully applies Heidegger's uncovering of *Dasein's* ontological dispersal to architecture and finds that:

Architecture "composes" with this first dislocation of the existents from existence, by dis-posing their places, in other words by distinguishing them, separating them, specifying them. The 'dis-' of dis-location is not therefore, to start with, anything destructive ... not therefore a catastrophe, an

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23. This ontological difference between the simple *factual* occurrence of worldless beings, and the complex *facticity* of *Dasein* as a being-in-the-world that understands its destiny is bound to the entities of its world, in fact originates from Heidegger's doctoral dissertation on Augustine. Augustine opposes, in Latin, the *facticus* (the made) from the *natives* (the natural, coming into being by itself). For Augustine the human soul is factual because it is made by God. *Dasein* is never simply in the world but is a being that is conscious of its participation in making the world in which it finds itself and this is the first moment of philosophy. See Giorgio Agamben, "The Passion of Facticity: Heidegger and the Problem of Love" in, Reginald Lilly (ed.) *The Ancient and the Moderns* (Bloomington, Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 1996), pp. 211 - 229.

24. Goetz, *La Dislocation*, p. 30.

annihilation, an apocalypse ... It is an event, a cascade of events that has always occurred from the beginning, but one that architectural modernity will leave uncovered. Because architecture has also been the activity that most fiercely resists the remembering of the first ontological dispersion, by erecting fortresses against the outside, monuments to tyranny and temples to house the gods.<sup>25</sup>

As the etymological origin of the term archi-ecture indicates an art of control, Goetz adds, “all power is exercised architecturally.” Any power able to give things a location is, in effect, architectural, and this power is synonymous with religious ritual and the sanctification of places. Dislocation, from this point of view, is the moment when a space becomes profane. This is why the primary existential dislocation is left uncovered by modernity and the death of God. Here Goetz’s thinking might fruitfully lead us towards the profound speculations of Jean-Luc Nancy on divine spaces and Massimo Cacciari’s neglected work on architecture and nihilism, both of which well deserve to be re-examined in more detail for their architectural implications.<sup>26</sup> Note that Nancy did in fact contribute an excellent preface to Goetz’s book that deserves to be analysed in its own light.

## Microspherical Architectural Space

Architecture composes, and disposes of, the fundamental human quality of being dispersed among many places and many spheres of interest. It responds to the first dislocation by making many re-locations for human activities: factories for working, libraries for reading, schools for learning, hospitals for convalescing, giving birth and dying in, and so on. Thus, it is part of an effort to cover over the original dislocation with a multiplicity of locations. The relocation of human activities in specific locations however requires great force and is traditionally bound up with religion and the making of sacred places or with the tyrannical building of walls and the necessary policing of movement through their openings this brings.

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25. Ibid.

26. See Jean-Luc Nancy, *The Inoperative Community*, trans. P. Connor et al (Minneapolis and Oxford: University of Minnesota Press, 1991), pp. 110 - 150 and Massimo Cacciari, *Architecture and Nihilism: On the Philosophy of Modern Architecture*, trans. S. Sartarelli (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1993).



The spatiality of human life is split into an ever-increasing multiplicity of places, as is attested by the third volume of Peter Sloterdijk's *Sphären* (Spheres) trilogy, which deals with today's human microsphere in a section headed "Foam Architectures."<sup>27</sup> "One can speak of the presence of an egosphere," Sloterdijk tells us in a translated excerpt from the book,

when its inhabitant has developed elaborate habits of self-pairing and regularly moves within a constant process of differentiation from himself - that is, in *Erleben* (experience). Such a form of life would be misunderstood if one were to fixate only on the attribute of living alone in the sense of being partner-less, or incomplete as a human being. The nonsymbiosis with others that is practiced by the single occupant in the apartment turns out, after closer investigation, to be an *autosymbiosis*. Here, the form of the couple is fulfilled in the individual, who, in constant differentiation from himself, perpetually relates to himself as the inner other, or as a multitude of sub-egos.<sup>28</sup>

According to Sloterdijk's analysis the individual adapts to the contemporary dislocation into multiple microspheres by narcissistically self-pairing. Sloterdijk names some of today's microspheres: that zone close to hand, which is now overflowing with handy and essential appliances; the individualised sound bubble of portable players and cell phones; the zone of auto eroticism in which the individual becomes both the lover and the object of love; the private gym for the trainer-trainee; and the sphere where the autodidact performs cognitive self-care. Reading Rykwert's *On Adam's House* alongside Goetz's *Dislocation*, it appears that Sloterdijk's innovative spherology is, strangely, a continuation of Rykwert's exploration of the primitive hut as a recurring concept as old as architecture itself. The primitive hut is a perennial theme in architecture because it exposes the permanent dislocation of human existence into multiple spheres of interest. The primitive hut is after all where one can be, if one wants to be, an historian, anthropologist, archaeologist, horticulturalist, primitivist and so on, each activity corresponding to unique spheres of concern.<sup>29</sup> The hut promises to locate us

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27. For small translated selections of Sloterdijk's *Sphären III: Schäume* (Frankfurt: Suhrkamp Verlag, 2004) see "Foam City." *Log*: 9 (2007), pp. 63 - 76 and "Cell Block, Egospheres, Self-Container: The Apartment as a Co-Isolated Existence." *Log* 10 (2007), pp. 89 - 108.

28. Peter Sloterdijk, "Cell Block, Egospheres, Self-Container: The Apartment as a Co-Isolated Existence." *Log*: 10 (2007), pp. 96 - 97.

29. For a well-documented argument that the New Zealand bach is a site that provides the time and opportunity to enable its inhabitants to become masters of multiple disciplines, see Nigel Cox, "At the Bach", *New Zealand Geographic* 25 (January-March 1995), pp. 34 - 52.

in nature yet it fails to return us to a state of unknowing nature since it must take place after the Fall from paradise and so therefore after the introduction of the heterogeneity of inside and outside into any field of immanence. It returns us instead to our existential dispersal into multiple spheres of interest hence the incessant attraction of the Japanese tea house in the mountains or the New Zealand bach by the sea; their knowing naivety draws us in by promising to return us to some kind of therapeutic harmony with nature and at once reveals this desire to be the very product of our highly self-conscious and reflective existence.



Figure 7. A New Zealand bach at Buckleton Beach, Matakana. Photographed by the author.



## 2.2

### Cities of Refuge: An Ancient Concept Tentatively Applied to Three Case Studies in Beijing, Los Angeles and Auckland<sup>1</sup>

by Tim Adams

#### Humanitarian Urbanism<sup>2</sup>

When it comes to research on the impact of multiculturalism on the city, despite the great variety of approaches taken and wide range of terminology used, many commentators reach the same conclusion – that it is necessary to move beyond simply celebrating the abstract diversity of cultures evident in the multicultural city and begin dealing with the consequences of real intercultural exchange, both positive and negative.<sup>3</sup> With this desire to move towards

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1. First published in Julia Gatley, J. (ed.) *Cultural Crossroads: Proceedings of the 26th International SAHANZ Conference* (Auckland, NZ: Society of Architectural Historians, Australia and New Zealand, 2009) [CD-Rom].

2. The term “humanitarian urbanism” is used by Emmanuel Levinas in *Beyond the Subject: Talmudic Readings and Lectures*, trans. Gary D. Mole (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1994), p. 42, where it is interchangeable with the term city of refuge. This should not be confused with the well-established concept and practice of humanitarian architecture, see Architecture for Humanity (ed.), *Design Like You Give a Damn: Architectural Responses to Humanitarian Crises* (London: Thames and Hudson, 2006). Humanitarian architecture involves professional designers volunteering their time to communities in need, usually in far-off strife-worn countries in the manner of doctors volunteering for Médecins Sans Frontières, while humanitarian urbanism forces us to look at the ethical distribution of space within our own cities.

3. See for example, Phil Wood and Charles Landry, *The Intercultural City: Planning for Diversity Advantage* (London; Sterling, VA: Earthscan, 2008); Leonie Sandercock, *Cosmopolis II: Mongrel Cities in the 21st Century* (London; New York: Continuum, 2004); Wolfgang Welsch, “Transculturality: The Tasks Facing Design in Tomorrow’s World”, *Domus*, 786 (October 1996), pp. 4 - 6; and more locally see David Beynon,

hybrid urban realities also comes a shift in focus from cultural identities based on the territories of the nation state to emerging cosmopolitan spaces of lived experience without borders, or “cosmopolitanization.”<sup>4</sup> This paper proposes that the best way of ensuring that the hybrid exchanges between living cultures is not overlooked or treated abstractly is to conceive the city through the discourse *and practice* of the city of refuge. The city of refuge is not something that is theorised at a distance then haphazardly applied to various actual cities, it is both an historical fact for asylum cities in Biblical times and a real and existing condition of all cities that allow for the peaceful coexistence of long-term residents with the newly arrived. The best source for this is Daniel Payot’s book *Des villes-refuges* (Refuge Cities) which surveys key “urbanophilic” texts on the city such as Max Weber’s *The City*, Jean-Luc Nancy’s *La ville au loin* (The City in the Distance), Hannah Arendt’s analysis of the Greek *polis* in *The Human Condition* and several “urbanophobic” texts such as Jean-Jacques Rousseau’s novel *Julie, or, The New Heloise* and Martin Heidegger’s short essay “Why Do I Stay in the Provinces?” In this way Payot puts today’s multicultural city into the larger context of the history of cities from the Greek *polis* up until the Los Angeles post-metropolis. Although Payot’s interpretations of these texts are all equally fascinating and insightful, the focus of this paper will be on the central idea in *Des villes-refuges* that comes from a short text on the city by Emmanuel Levinas. In this short text Levinas introduces the concept of the city of refuge by reading an extract from the Talmud, the record of discussions pertaining to Jewish law, ethics, customs and history.<sup>5</sup> Although this concept and practice of the city originates in ancient Judaic law and urban life, it can be a useful tool for addressing what is lacking in much of the literature on the multicultural city by forcing us to remain alert to the

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“Centres on the Edge: Multicultural Built Environments in Melbourne”, in Selvaraj Velayutham and Amanda Wise (ed.), *Everyday Multiculturalism Conference Proceedings, Macquarie University 28-29 September 2006* (Sydney: Centre for Research and Social Inclusion, Macquarie University, 2007), pp. 1 - 10; Ian Woodcock and Jan Smitheram, “No Contest: Reciprocities of Power and Place in a Multicultural Street”, in Elspeth Tilley (ed.), *Power and Place: Refereed Proceedings of the Australian and New Zealand Communication Association Conference, July 9-11 2008* (Wellington: Massey University, 2008) and Alan Lathan, “Sociality and the Cosmopolitan Imagination: National, Cosmopolitan and Local Imaginaries in Auckland, New Zealand”, in Jon Bennie et al (ed.), *Cosmopolitan Urbanism* (London: Routledge, 2006), pp. 89 - 111.

4. See Ulrich Beck, *Cosmopolitan Vision*, trans. Ciaran Cronin (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2005) and for another critique of the notion of stable cultural identity but this time from the point of view of “the third space of enunciation” see Homi K. Bhabha, *The Location of Culture* (London: Routledge, 1994).

5. “Cities of Refuge” in Levinas, *Beyond the Verse*, pp. 34 - 52.

inevitable problems and potential anger, and sometimes even violence, of intercultural exchange.<sup>6</sup>

As Levinas uncovers in his reading of it, the Talmud states that when there has been an objective murder but without intent, and the Talmud gives the example of an axe head coming off its handle and killing a passer-by, the law of Moses designates that there will be certain cities of refuge where the manslayer will be protected from the avenger of blood who would have otherwise automatically taken a life for a life.<sup>7</sup> The manslayer is both exiled and takes refuge in the city of refuge and can only return home after the end of pontificate of whoever was the high priest at the time of the murder. The manslayer is then shielded from vengeance but remains in an ambiguous state of being half innocent, half guilty, punished and protected, in exile and in refuge. Levinas says that if we are awake enough, conscious enough, civilised enough, there must be these cities of refuge for such half-innocent parties, and he continues, making this exceptional condition particular to Jewish history and law into a general condition of everyday life: “In Western society – free and civilized, but without social equality and a rigorous social justice – is it absurd to wonder whether the advantages available to the rich in relation to the poor – and everyone is rich in relation to someone in the West – whether these advantages, one thing leading to another, are not the cause, somewhere, of someone’s agony?” Levinas then asks, “does not the avenger or the redeemer of blood “with heated heart” lurk around us, in the form of people’s anger, in the spirit of revolt or even delinquency in our suburbs, the result of the social imbalance in which we are placed?”<sup>8</sup>

The ambiguity of a crime which is not a crime, and punishment which is not a punishment, cannot by its nature cover up for the ambiguity that is constitutive of the city, its

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6. Peter Sloterdijk reaches a very similar position but starting from a history of Christianity in his essay, “Für eine politische Ethik des Raumes” [For a Political Ethics of Space] in *Europäisches Haus der Stadtkultur* (ed.), *Architektur und Politik - Europa gestalten! Internationaler Architekturkongress 2003 auf Jersey der Architektenkammer Nordrhein-Westfalen* (Gelsenkirchen: Initiative StadtBauKultur NRW, 2004), pp. 18 - 29.

7. The Torah names six cities of refuge: Golan, Ramoth, Bosor, Kedesh, Shechem and Hebron. Since this refuge was an extension of the right of asylum granted to those inside the sanctuary of the tabernacle, it is concluded that these were the cities where the tabernacle and rabbinical teaching were the strongest in Biblical times, see Doug Goins, “Cities of Refuge”, accessed 30 March 2009, <http://www.pbc.org/files/messages/6368/4471.html>.

8. Levinas, “City of Refuge”, p. 40; and Payot, *Des villes-refuges*, p. 70.

spacing and circumscribing of intruders who are included only to the extent they give up their differences from those who were there before them. The circumscription of the irreparable difference between the crime and its restitution that the city of refuge promises is in fact the continuation of the circumscription of spaces, the spacing that is inherent in all cities. The difference is that the demarcation and policing of spaces within the city, between long-standing citizens and newly-arrived visitors for example, is territorial, while the demarcation of spaces in the city of refuge is not located anywhere in particular but is a leaving open of space between two events, the violence and punishment of an unintentional crime and its perfect restitution according to the law. Reality and justice are brought together in a new attentiveness to the other. In other words, a civilised city in which there resides humanity able to surmount the deep contradictions of the city and leave open the possibility that the other will forever be other and that each one of us are in fact exiles in refuge in the city. Payot quoting Levinas: “Our cities are cities of refuge because, writes Emmanuel Levinas, “reality is not transparent to us.” And he concludes:

The gap, the spacing does not arrive like some unfortunate accident, as alienation or enforced acculturation, but it defines us and we ourselves arrive – as events – as spacing. The non-transparency of reality and the non-adequacy of self to self perhaps make the rigour of their circumscription necessary, our cities are defined by their incompleteness.<sup>9</sup>

### Three Case Studies: Beijing, Los Angeles and Auckland

In this second section three case studies are introduced so that the real consequences of intercultural exchange can be observed, keeping in mind that the city of refuge is an historical reality and an existing condition of all multicultural cities. The three case studies are: the preparations for the venue for the Beijing Olympic Games; the Los Angeles Exposition Metro Line; and the Central Connector in Auckland. To begin with the largest of them, most of us watched in awe at the wonderful spectacle choreographed by the Chinese film director Zhang Yimou, the magnificent framing of the opening ceremony performed by Herzog and de Meuron’s “Bird’s Nest” stadium, and the intriguing bubble-geometry that formed the Watercube by PTW Architects of Australia. But behind the spectacle of the Beijing Olympics,

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9. Payot, *Des villes-refuges*, p. 73.

which is estimated to have cost US\$40 billion, the most expensive Olympic Games in history, lies a great injustice.<sup>10</sup> 1.5 million inhabitants of Beijing were displaced from their homes in the *hutongs* to make way the Olympic venues.<sup>11</sup> The *hutongs* are narrow alleyways lined with traditional courtyard houses called *siheyuan* that form the traditional maze-like neighborhoods of Beijing. They date back to the Yuan (1271-1368) and Ming (1368- 1644) dynasties. Since the 1960s there has been a severe housing shortage in China so that a courtyard house that was once home to a single family has had four families living in it. Due to the ongoing gentrification of Chinese cities the *hutongs* have been demolished and their inhabitants moved out to 4- and 5-storey Soviet-style apartment blocks on the outskirts of the city. Property speculators, with government support, can replace any *hutongs* they like, usually with shopping malls and office blocks. In communist China the government is the sole landowner so any protest against this gentrification is strongly repressed by the government. The injustice here is that all the property that was appropriated from their original bourgeois owners during the communist revolution is now sold for the benefit of a small number of developers and paid-off government officials. The preparations for the Olympic Games have been used to greatly accelerate this slum clearance and human displacement. A lifetime of suffering is caused to residents of the city so that foreigners will have a good impression of Beijing for the 16 days of the Olympic Games.

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10. See the article “2008 Summer Olympics” from Wikipedia, accessed 30 March 2009, [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/2008\\_Summer\\_Olympics](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/2008_Summer_Olympics). This source provides two sources for the figure of US\$40 billion, Reuters and The Guardian.

11. Center on Housing Rights and Evictions (COHRE), *One World, Whose Dream? Housing Rights Violations and the Beijing Olympic Games*, July 2008, accessed 30 March 2009, [http://www.cohre.org/store/attachments/One\\_World\\_Whose\\_Dream\\_July08.pdf](http://www.cohre.org/store/attachments/One_World_Whose_Dream_July08.pdf). This is a very thorough and well-researched document and is the source of most of my comments on the Beijing Olympics.





Figure 8. Beijing map with 2008 Summer Olympic Games' locations, by Xander89, licensed under the GNU Free Documentation License. Source: Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia, accessed 30 March, [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Beijing\\_2008\\_olympic\\_venue.svg](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Beijing_2008_olympic_venue.svg).

The second case study takes us to Los Angeles, often regarded as the model multicultural city since it is home to so many different ethnic groups that make their presence evident throughout the city.<sup>12</sup> Here a single urban project, the Exposition Metro Line due for completion in 2010 at a cost of US\$862 million, will be briefly examined for its consequences in terms of a humanitarian urbanism.<sup>13</sup> When finished the Expo Line will be 8.5 miles of

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12. For books that celebrate the heterogeneity of Los Angeles see Charles Jencks, *Heteropolis: Los Angeles, The Riots and the Strange Beauty of Hetero-Architecture* (London: Academy Editions; Ernst & Sohn, 1993); Edward Soja, *Postmetropolis: Critical Studies of Cities and Regions* (Oxford: Blackwell Publishers, 2000); and Mario Gandelsonas, *X-Urbanism: Architecture and the American City* (New York: Princeton Architectural Press, 1999).

13. The following summary of the project and its development is based on the following key sources, the entry "LACMTA Expo Line" on the Wikipedia online encyclopedia at

electrified light-rail line that travels mostly at street level and crossing existing street intersections. Traffic signal priority will give the line the same regularity of service as if it were operating in an all rail corridor. It will operate between the Downtown area (inland from the coast in L.A.) and travel west along Exposition Boulevard ending in Culver City. When phase 2 is complete in 2015 the Expo Line will continue all the way to the coast ending in Santa Monica. Despite L.A.'s reputation as a city gridlocked by freeways it does in fact have an extensive network of public transport in the form of myriad bus routes and light rail lines that have been assembled in a piecemeal fashion over the last century despite periodic setbacks, such as the 1940s streetcar scandal when the motor industry bought the streetcar service and closed it down so that Angelinos would be forced to use cars. The Expo Line will connect important Downtown amenities such as the University of Southern California, the Los Angeles Coliseum and the Natural History Museum with the densely populated Westside suburbs like Palms and Culver City. Since the 1990s there has been a boom in the growth of Santa Monica commercial area with the likes of Yahoo! and MTV located there. With this comes jobs and with jobs comes traffic, both west to Santa Monica and east to Downtown L.A., making the streets and freeways between the two areas the most congested in the city.

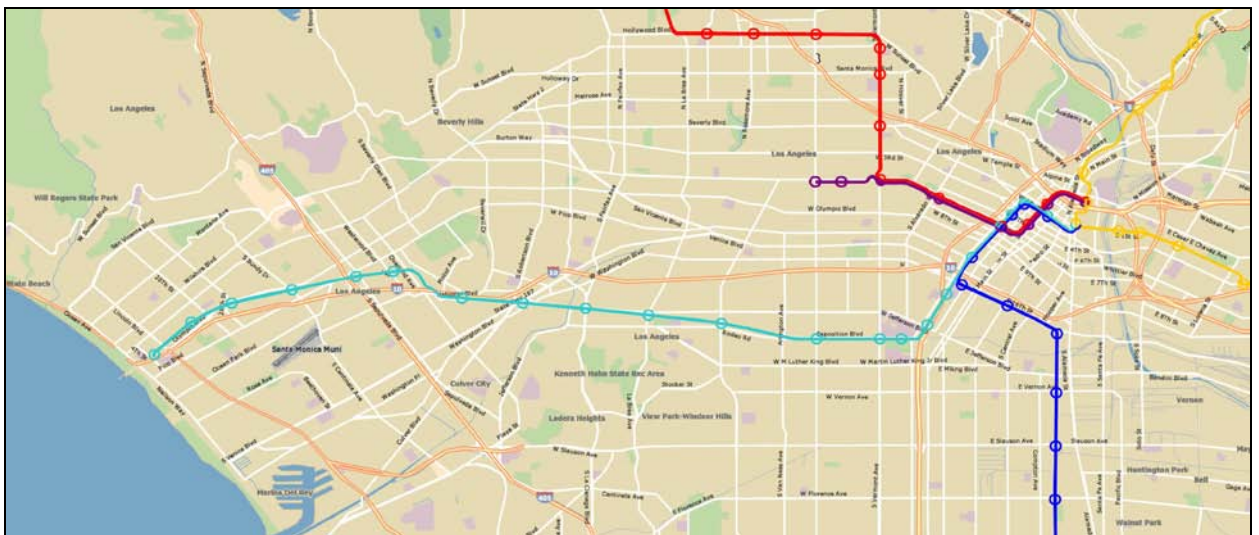


Figure 9. Map of the Metro Expo Line, Los Angeles, (indicated by the aqua coloured line) by Esirgen, licensed under the GNU Free Documentation License. Source: Wikipedia, accessed 30 March 2009, [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Expo\\_map.jpg](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Expo_map.jpg).

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[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/LACMTA\\_Expo\\_Line](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/LACMTA_Expo_Line), the Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority site at <http://www.buildexpo.org/> and Friends 4 Expo Transit site at <http://friends4expo.org>.

In sharp contrast to the situation in Beijing where long-term residents were summarily evicted from their homes without any effective right of reply, in the case of extending corridors of light rail through Los Angeles there is an ongoing legal and civil battle waged on many fronts and involving many parties including the Metro Line Construction Authority that issues contracts for construction, grassroots activists both for and against the project, and the judiciary that can be petitioned at any time to stop it, all the while funding needed from local, state and federal governments is under constant threat of being cancelled by politicians who must undergo periodic re-election.<sup>14</sup> For instance, despite the fact that the Expo Line will run along an abandoned line that was last used in 1987 for freight, the project faces well-organised opposition from the Cheviot Hills Homeowners' Association because the line will pass by the southern edge of this affluent suburb. The citizens of Cheviot Hills are unlikely to ever use public transport and fear that the line will make their suburb accessible to criminals. Also opposed to the line but from the other side of the class divide is the grassroots organisation called Citizens Campaign to Fix the Expo Line who object to it passing by two schools with roles consisting almost entirely of Hispanics and African Americans. This group wants nothing less than an underground tunnel for the train as it passes these schools and the additional cost of tunnelling would scuttle the entire project. Note that there is a well-documented phenomenon in America called "environmental racism" whereby race is a better indicator of placement of hazardous environments than income level and in response to this there is something called environmental justice that groups use to protect the rights of minorities.<sup>15</sup> Then there are the public advocates such as Friends 4 Expo Transit that feed the politicians and authorities with positive information and research about light rail to better enable them to defend the project at periodic public hearings and community information evenings. So in spite of the fact that the Expo Line Construction Authority had passed all the prerequisite steps, such as the analysis of alternative routes, draft environmental impact reports, public scoping meetings and public reviews leading to the final environmental impact report approved by the Federal Transportation Administration and ground-breaking in 2006,

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14. See Alan Mittelstaedt, "Dozing in the Slow Lane: Who are the Leaders who can get Los Angeles Moving Again?", *Los Angeles City Beat*, 225 (27 September, 2007) for the precarious and ever changing relationship between public advocates, government agencies and politicians in the case extending light rail in Los Angeles.

15. See Edwardo Lao Rhodes, *Environmental Justice in America* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2003).

the California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC) made a ruling in 2008 that forced a redesign of the project where it passes the two schools. The CPUC finally accepted a compromise solution in January 2009 whereby the train still passes the schools at grade level but the road outside the school no longer continues over the tracks and a footbridge is added to create grade-separation between trains and school children.

The final case study is the Central Connector in Auckland. This is part of a larger NZ\$157 million project called “Auckland’s CBD into the Future” that began in 2004 and is due for completion in 2014.<sup>16</sup> The Central Connector is the upgrade of the entire streetscape including roads, footpaths, street furniture (new seats and rubbish bins), bus shelters, street lighting with the planting of new trees and the protection of old ones, taking place between Britomart, the waterfront CBD transport hub, and the Newmarket shopping precinct 3.87 km to the south. Most of the route follows Symonds Street on which Auckland University and Auckland University of Technology are located. Included in the upgrade are 24-hour bus lanes running in both directions that also double as cycle lanes, with new mountable curbs and 10 new pedestrian crossings. The primary aim is to provide a quicker bus corridor between the CBD and Newmarket and so all street parking is removed to prevent the manoeuvring of cars holding up traffic and causing a danger to cyclists when car doors are opened. But if the larger project is also examined then many more interesting objectives will be discovered. Besides enhancing the business and commercial activities of the CBD there are the aims of enhancing the visitor experience by making the area as lively by night as it is by day and “supporting and celebrating ethnic and cultural diversity in the CBD.”<sup>17</sup> One of the findings of their research was that people of Asian ethnicity now make up 47 per cent of the residents in the CBD thus outnumbering Europeans at 43 per cent. This is largely due to the proximity of the two tertiary institutions where, for example, at Auckland University more than 30 percent of students are now Asian. With the aim of creating a more welcoming environment for all visitors the project aims to create a more accessible and pedestrian-friendly “24/7 environment.” So more street lighting, widening of footpaths, way-finding signage, new

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16. See the Auckland City Council information on these projects, accessed 30 March 2009, <http://www.aucklandcity.govt.nz/council/projects/cbdproject/default.asp>.

17. Auckland City Council, *Auckland’s CBD into the Future: CBD Action Plan 2008-2011*, February 2008, 3, accessed 30 March, 2009, <http://www.aucklandcity.govt.nz/council/projects/cbdproject/docs/cbdactionplan08to11.pdf>.

seating, bins and so on. There doesn't seem to be any citizen-activists shaping this project other than perhaps the retailers of the CBD who, worried about losing shoppers to the Newmarket shopping precinct have much to gain from better connecting the two precincts, so it is easy to be cynical about this streetscape beautification ever achieving its stated aims of making Auckland a 24/7 environment. But in cities like Paris, architect-urbanists such as Bernard Huet are regularly asked to go to quite extraordinary lengths to "remodel" streetscapes and make them into aesthetically unified and pleasing places to be in. Auckland City Council has engaged the consultants Architecture Brewer- Davidson Ltd. to perform a similar role in Auckland.<sup>18</sup>



Figure 10. The Central Connector, Symonds Street, Auckland, indicated by the green painted on the tarseal. Photographed by the author, 1 April 2009.

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18. For example see Huet's work on the Champs-Élysées, in Giulio De Carli, "Bernard Huet: La risistemazione dell'avenue des Champs-Élysées a Parigi," *Domus*, 754 (November 1993), pp. 38 - 45.

In terms of citizen advocacy Auckland is somewhere between Los Angeles and Beijing. There is an autonomous legal system administered by citizen-elected officials but pressure groups rarely petition the judiciary to force changes to council projects. The usual order of events for urban projects is that city councils and their large bureaucracies of report-writing mandarin consultants work alone with almost no public review that could lead to their modification. There are information kiosks put on site just prior to ground-breaking but this pales in comparison to the regular public scoping hearings and community information evenings that are the norm for urban projects in California. But Auckland is more like Los Angeles because in Los Angeles minority identities are free to form their own neighbourhoods such as Gaytown (for Auckland read Ponsonby), Koreatown (the North Shore) and Chinatown (Howick sometimes referred to as “Chowick”). Also like Los Angeles, Auckland is in dire need of public transport due to motorways that are often close to L.A.-style gridlock (known in Auckland as bumper to bumper), but both cities are too fragmented and too sprawling to be able to easily afford it other than in a piecemeal and ad hoc fashion.

## Conclusion

The city of refuge makes evident all the contradictions and hypocrisies of the Occidental city. In the three case studies some of these contradictions and hypocrisies were, in Beijing the success of an urban spectacle in the eyes of visitors to the Olympic Games and a worldwide TV audience was at the expense of 1.5 million Beijing residents displaced from their homes; in Los Angeles the contradiction was that separate grassroots pressure-groups representing rich and poor residents for very different reasons both were trying to stop light rail being extended through L. A., the former for fear of bringing in criminals to an affluent suburb and the latter trying to protect minority school children from a hazardous environment; and in Auckland the stated intention of the Central Connector dedicated bus-corridor was to make Auckland a visitor-friendly 24/7 city but the only discernible citizens driving the project were the CBD retailers wanting to bring shoppers from the competing Newmarket shopping precinct and today these streets are just as intimidating at night as they ever were. In each case there are those who benefit by unintentionally causing deprivations to people elsewhere. The city of refuge explains how it is we are all half innocent and half guilty in all this but it also allows us to go on living life to the full in exile-refuge in the city, protected from avengers of

blood who represent those deprived by our comforts and who are now around every corner. In each of the case studies the role played by the populace in the decision-making process of these urban projects was uncovered. To grasp this inherently opaque reality we require, in the words of Levinas, a “consciousness more conscious than consciousness” to be awake to the “our brilliant and humanist Graeco-Roman civilization, our wise civilization – a tiny bit hypocritical, too insensitive to the irrational anger of the avenger of blood.” Someone who is awake to this irrational anger is Peter Sloterdijk. In his recent book, *Rage and Time* Sloterdijk reminds us that the Greeks placed *thymos* (anger) above *nous* (intellect) and *epithumia* (appetite).<sup>19</sup> Anger is located in *eros* so our feelings of pride, shame, indignation and revenge are some of the strongest emotions we have. This innately human sense of justice and the need to right a wrong leads us to risk everything for the greater good and helps to explain such irrational violence as the September 11 attacks in New York and Washington DC, the 2005 French riots, the 2005 London Bombings and the effects of racial neglect in the wake of Hurricane Katrina in New Orleans, all of which were attacks on the Occidental city. Architects, planners and urban designers who work in these cities need to be awake to this irrational violence that comes from the anger generated by a sense of injustice that pervades the city when it does not leave open the space between unintentional injustice and its perfect restitution, a space between the vengeance of blood and the wisdom of the law, a space that only the humanitarian urbanism of the city of refuge can provide.

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19. Peter Sloterdijk, *Rage and Time: A Psychopolitical Investigation*, trans. Mario Wenning (New York: Columbia University Press, 2010).

# Conclusion

## What Use is Philosophy to Architecture?

To return once more to the proposition stated in the introduction – that the philosophy of architecture has a long standing and legitimate place within the sphere of philosophy, which until now has been made obscure or invisible to the architectural world because it has not been clearly distinguished from the philosophy of architects.

In the introduction the Chinese architect He Jingtang was provided as one example of the architectural abuse of philosophy. The architect does indeed know philosophy but turns this knowledge to sophistic uses by treating it as merely a training in rhetorical skills. The architect He Jingtang did read Mao's philosophical works in his youth and credited this for his ability to handle the many contradictions of his working life, dialectically resolving man and nature, culture and modernity, and the local and the global into harmonious unities incorporated successfully into his design process. This was shown to be a sophisticated *mélange* of current ideologies that were in fact left unexamined by this architect. By confusing Mao's genuine early philosophical writings with his own design philosophy, He Jingtang had erased their differences and therefore constructed a convenient blindness to any possibility of a genuine philosophy of architecture.



The seven original translations and two published articles included in this thesis, each in their own way stake out a place for a genuine philosophy of architecture and in the case of certain essays by Daniel Charles, José Ferrater Mora and José Ortega y Gasset, this was explicitly contrasted to the philosophy of architects. In every case the philosophy of architects made the “troubling sameness” of thinking and building merge to the point of being indistinct, while the philosophy of architecture always remains conscious that thought as a determination of the concept of architecture is distinct from the architects’ ideas about architecture as a given object. The two published articles in a similar fashion showed how the deployment of the philosophy of architecture is distinct from the philosophy of architects. In the case of the reception of Joseph Rykwert’s book *On Adam’s House in Paradise* there was a marked distinction between the architects’ interpretations that dealt entirely with the anthropological primitive hut and the French philosopher Benoît Goetz who interpreted it as a universal and recurring condition of human existence to be constantly falling from the grace of nature. And the article applying Daniel Payot’s philosophy of cities outlined in his book *Des villes-refuges* to three case studies showed a marked difference between this approach that kept the contradictions and inequalities of human life in the city in view with the more usual spectacular focus on successful and awe-inspiring buildings.

But one further question remains to be asked – why should architects be interested in philosophy in the first place? This was a question that constantly arose during the writing of this thesis and one that seriously threatens its very purpose. Or similarly, in response to the major discovery of this thesis – that philosophers write about and consider architecture with increasing frequency – one could always bluntly exclaim, “so what!”<sup>1</sup> It seems that there is always a pragmatic attitude shared among architects, with good reason because they must build something concrete and not just make idle speculations, and this leads them to constantly ask themselves – do I *really* need to know this stuff? Are not architects already overburdened by the increasingly fragmented and differentiated set of tasks required to get a project delivered on time and under budget? Do their clients *really* want them to be pondering serious questions about human existence, meaning and purpose? Besides which, are there not

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1. This was a constant refrain I heard from my supervisor during the course of this research, to who I am eternally grateful for acting as the bridge between my sometimes myopic obsession with philosophy and the easily-bored general reader. In other words I thank him for forcing me to make this work more relevant to the everyday concerns of architects.

other people better qualified to discuss these issues, that is to say, specialist thinkers who are properly selected, trained and proven to be excellent thinkers, such as those who are already recognised as being philosophers? So wouldn't architects, and by extension all those entrusted to educate them, be better off to keep to their knitting and concentrate only on those skills that lead directly to the production of built projects – construction knowledge, building codes, cost estimates, proficiency with current industry-wide software and so on?<sup>2</sup> A rather trite first response to these questions, which must be taken seriously since philosophy is after all the art of taking questions seriously, is to say ... well, this *is* a PhD, which stands for the Latin title *philosophiae doctor* from the Greek *didktor philosophias*, which means “teacher of philosophy.” So even if all PhDs in architecture need not deal with philosophy per se, then at the very least this subject should not be excluded either. But this is not a strong defence since even the slightest knowledge of modern doctoral research worldwide, which is rarely philosophical outside the discipline of philosophy, and its historical origins in the 19<sup>th</sup> Century German “Humboltian model” of research universities, will show that the title PhD is simply a carryover from the middle ages when “philosophy” meant any form of study outside of law and theology.<sup>3</sup>

An equally trite response would be to say ...well, all human beings inasmuch as they are human, that is to say, thinking animals possessing of a larger brain than is normal for a simian species have a tendency towards abstract conceptualisation, and architects, to the extent that they are human, will also participate in such abstract thinking, which when it becomes

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2. This common sense view of architectural education is clearly formulated by Tony van Raat and Branko Mitrović in “Architectural Education: A Manifesto”, *Architecture New Zealand* (November/December 2000), pp. 88 - 94. Curiously despite co-authoring this manifesto Mitrović who has PhDs in both philosophy and architecture would later publish *Philosophy for Architects* (New York: Princeton Architectural Press, 2011) where on p. 10 he shamelessly mocks his students for asking if they have “to read the whole book” when they are being taught theory, while in the manifesto, p. 90, students are denigrated for being interested in “philosophy, literature, art history, semiotics and so on” because “architecture schools are not able to [and by implication should not even try to] provide their graduates with proper training in the humanities.” It seems Mitrović's students are damned if they do and damned if they don't read philosophy.

3. For the history of the university see Glenys Patterson, *The University, from Ancient Greece to the 20th Century* (Palmerston North: the Dunmore Press, 1997. For an overview of the current status of the PhD in architecture see Theo Van der Voordt and Herman Van Wegen (ed.s), *Doctorates in Design and Architecture Proceedings*, Volume 1, State of the Art and Volume 2, Results and Reflections (Delft: Pubikatieburo Bouwkunde, 1996).

organised into a practice and a body of works can be called “philosophy.” So we are all philosophers, especially at the end of the day, or when we are on in years, or have suffered more than our fair share of misfortune, some of the preconditions for being wise or having the desire to reflect on life’s deeper meanings.<sup>4</sup> But human history reveals just as many acts of stupidity as those of wisdom, which would belie this idea of a universal capacity for the love of wisdom.

So the first two responses will not stand up to scrutiny. Nevertheless the intuition remains that there must be some kind a correlation between greatness in architecture and having the wisdom and luxury of time to ponder life’s deeper questions, something that can be observed in many highly-esteemed architects. Nobody has put this into clearer terms than Markus Breitschmid:

It is a legitimate assertion that most major figures who have shaped the course of architecture can be described as “theoreticians who build.” What distinguishes these architects from their architect colleagues of lesser status is the *philosophical apparatus* they have apprehended and made subject to their disposition. Aldo Rossi, Robert Venturi, Peter Eisenman, Jacques Herzog & Pierre De Meuron, Rem Koolhaas, to name an incomplete list of important architects of the last forty years and fit the description of “theoretician who builds” particularly well, have been weaving philosophical and architectural thought with their built work. Idea and object are two sides of the same coin. In other words, good architects are in full intellectual command of what they are designing.<sup>5</sup>

To Breitschmid’s incomplete list we could also add the highly-acclaimed Swiss architect Peter Zumthor who writes books with titles like *Thinking Architecture*, Wang Shu who demonstrates a thorough knowledge of the philosophies of Chinese landscape artists, and two early-twentieth-century philosophers who were also renowned architects, firstly Rudolf Steiner who studied with Franz Brentano and wrote extensively on philosophy, and who also designed 17 buildings including the highly-regarded Goetheanum at Dornach in Switzerland, and secondly Ludwig Wittgenstein, one of the most influential philosophers of the twentieth-

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4. On wisdom scientifically defined see Michel Ferrari and Nic M. Westrate (eds.) *The Scientific Study of Personal Wisdom: From Contemplative Traditions to Neuroscience* (Dordrecht: Springer, 2013).

5. Markus Breitschmid, “Architecture and Philosophy: Thoughts on Building”, unpublished paper, accessed 8 October 2013, <http://architoday.com/wp-content/uploads/2011/04/ARCHITECTURE-PHILOSOPHY.pdf>, p. 2. Emphasis added.

century also designed the now-famous Wittgenstein House for his sister on the Kundmannngasse in Vienna. They are all so obviously highly philosophically capable as well as being recognised as creators of architecture of the highest order, but what of mere mortals, the average architects, what advantages might high-level thinking have for them?

Branco Mitrović who holds PhDs in both architecture and philosophy claims, “The problems that an architect must resolve in design practice ... have, more often than not, their wider philosophical articulation”, so therefore, “Many fundamental problems of architectural theory are manifestations of wider philosophical problems.”<sup>6</sup> Naturally Mitrović is in favour of architects having an interest in philosophy, but he shows himself to be extremely biased against Continental philosophy and in favour of Analytic philosophy, assuming the often repeated judgement that clarity of logical thought belongs to Analytic philosophy while rhetorical and literary style is the realm of Continental philosophy, and with prejudice deems the former to be infinitely superior to the later. This is an unfortunate prejudice to try and pass on to his architectural readers because one of the factors that this research has uncovered is the untold riches of Continental philosophy in terms of discussions concerning architecture, in contrast to the undeniable paucity of similar discussions coming from Analytic philosophers.<sup>7</sup> Mitrović cannot in fact give any concrete examples of superior discussions on architecture taking place in Analytic philosophy other than to say, “analytical philosophy being by far the most vigorous force on the market, one should expect its increasing influence in architectural theory as well.”<sup>8</sup> That an intellectual field can be taken, without any further explanation as being synonymous with “the market” says a lot about Mitrović’s personal commitments. Anyone acquainted with Gary Stevens’ book *The Favored Circle*, and who has seen his chart comparing the properties of the Anglo-American (Analytic) field, the French (Continental)

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6. Branco Mitrović, *Philosophy for Architects* (New York: Princeton Architectural Press, 2011), p. 10.

7. One need only compare a richly-researched and well-argued work such as Payot’s *Le Philosophe et l’architecte: Sur quelques déterminations philosophiques de l’idée d’architecture* (Paris: Aubier Montaigne, 1982) with the much weaker work of Roger Scruton’s *The Aesthetics of Architecture* (London: Methuen, 1979) to verify this claim, that is if these two works can be taken as representative of the best architectural discussions from Continental and Analytic philosophy respectively, a claim defended in this thesis. Mitrović demonstrates no knowledge of either work which is convenient given his clear bias.

8. Mitrović, *Philosophy for Architects*, p. 176.

intellectual field, and the architectural intellectual field will know that Mitrović may be waiting for a very long time for his “expected” increase of influence of Analytic philosophy.<sup>9</sup>

To summarise Gary Stevens’ findings, the Anglo-American intellectual field is dominated by the natural sciences, it emphasises clarity and simplicity, and it privileges empiricism and positivism, while the French intellectual field is dominated by philosophy and literature, it emphasises the style of writing as an end in itself, and is anti-empirical and anti-positivist. The architectural intellectual field shows strong similarities to the French one, being dominated by history and theory with an emphasis on individual style and having an orientation that is historical-hermeneutic rather than ahistorical-empirical. Furthermore, the major figures in architecture, like French intellectuals, are seen as cultural heroes who are consulted on many issues, in stark contrast to Anglo-American intellectuals who are unknown outside of their specialist fields. For instance Rem Koolhaas has strong affinities to, and in fact has had public discussions with, the German philosopher and cultural hero Peter Sloterdijk, but Koolhaas is most unlikely to ever be compared to the American Analytic philosopher Willard Van Orman Quine, or associated with the conservative English philosopher Roger Scruton for instance.<sup>10</sup>

But this thesis sets out to prove there is a much deeper correspondence between architecture and philosophy than a mere grouping of selected affinities whose similarities may after all be entirely contingent and coincidental. On the one hand it is in the democratic nature of philosophy that everyone can participate in it, that anyone can potentially refute the philosopher if they possess the power of reason and sufficient verbal skills to do so, since a philosopher cannot by definition be a priest or a king whose word is beyond question and

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9. See Gary Stevens, *The Favored Circle: The Social Foundations of Architectural Distinction* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: The MIT Press, 1998), Table 3.4, p. 118.

10. The Dutch architect Rem Koolhaas and the German philosopher Peter Sloterdijk are both treated as public intellectuals and they came together on 29 November 2011 for “An architectural-philosophical dialogue” at the Dutch embassy in Berlin. Willard Van Orman Quine, who was the leading American analytic philosopher of his generation restricted his writings to technical aspects of logic and epistemology and, as far as this researcher can determine, never had any public discussions with any architect nor showed the slightest interest in architecture. Roger Scruton on the other hand has a deep interest in architecture, writing two books on the subject. Being conservative and from the Analytic end of philosophy, which tend to go together, Scruton’s declared preference is like Mitrović’s for classical architecture and its revival.

taken as a matter of faith or power.<sup>11</sup> But the architect is not just anyone for the philosopher either, since architects are deeply involved in the art of building the human habitat, and one of the philosopher's concerns must be human life which takes on its special qualities in part because it occurs in and around human constructions, some of the largest examples of which are buildings. Humans are domesticated by human constructions and so architecture as an organized body of knowledge about the practice of constructing human habitats is a privileged access for the philosopher into the domestication of the human.

That human beings not only domesticate animals but are themselves a product of a societal domestication, the adjustment to living in and around houses, was formulated by Peter J. Wilson, a New Zealand anthropologist.<sup>12</sup> But his idea is a theme that has been reiterated by many important philosophers, so Martin Heidegger will say that, “the relationship between man and space is none other than dwelling,” and that, “building and thinking ... are inescapable for dwelling.”<sup>13</sup> More directly Peter Sloterdijk will speak of an “anthropogenetic revolution” of self-taming domestication that began with, “the taming of men by their houses.”<sup>14</sup> Bernard Stiegler will talk about how man in the Palaeolithic Era, with the arrival of ethnotechnology that includes, “tools, weapons, baskets and houses”, initiates a

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11. For the most succinct and universal definition of what just philosophy is see Alain Badiou, “Philosophy’s Conditions of Existence”, video of lecture given at the European Graduate School, Saas-Fee, Switzerland, accessed 2 August 2010, <http://www.egs.edu/faculty/alain-badiou/videos/philosophys-conditions-of-existence/>. According to Badiou the five anthropological conditions for the existence of philosophy are, in summary: 1. democracy, because equality is pre-requisite for the open discussion of ideas, 2. a shared concept of logic, because rational debate is not possible without it, 3. universality, because the concept of truth must be accepted as generic rather than particular, 4. the openness to all possible languages from mathematics to poetry to mythology, because to privilege one form of language would be anti-democratic and therefore anti-philosophical, and 5. the physical presence of the philosopher because the goal of philosophy is a subjective transformation of the student and this requires love. When holding these necessary conditions as a measure to the “philosophy” of architects, in every case there will be one or more of these conditions missing. See the discussion on He Jingtang in the introduction for an example.

12. See Peter J. Wilson, *The Domestication of the Human Species* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1988).

13. Martin Heidegger, *Poetry, Language, Thought*, trans. Albert Hofstadter (New York: HarperCollins, 2001), pp. 155 and 158.

14. Peter Sloterdijk, “Rules for the Human Zoo: a response to the Letter on Humanism”, *Environment and Planning D: Society and Space*: 27.1 (2009), pp. 20 and 21.

convergence of the interior milieu with the exterior milieu leading to today's worldwide technical milieu, all the while the human is inseparable from "technical ensembles" which includes buildings.<sup>15</sup> And Giorgio Agamben will write of the "anthropological machine" as the motor driving the continuing attempts to separate the human from the animal. This "anthropogenesis" is at once the separation of the animal world from the human world; an entirely human-constructed difference between what is radically open to the world and what can only respond to environmental stimuli that it has been genetically programmed to respond to. By extension the house as a tool for domestication, is also a line drawn between the human world and the animal world, and as such is an essential element of the becoming human or anthropogenesis.<sup>16</sup>

That philosophers have ample reason to be interested in architecture and have in fact written copiously and thoughtfully on the subject has not been something that is hard to prove. The real problem is the attempt to show that architects have equal reason to reciprocate this serious interest and show they can discover for themselves that they do indeed have a stake in philosophy.

Many architects especially older ones are indeed interested amateurs of philosophy, but of what benefit can this be to them in their capacity as practicing architects or architectural educators? Naturally architects are free to indulge in any interest they might have outside of their chosen profession, quite a few play music for example, more than one would expect on average from a show of hands whenever a group of architecture students are asked, but there is no expectation that such musical competence will have benefits in terms of architectural competence. On the other hand claims have often been made for competence in the philosophical style of forming logical arguments and the philosophical ability for critical thinking to bestow benefits on extra-philosophical activities. It has been regularly proven for instance that philosophy majors out perform all other university majors in GRE (Graduate

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15. Bernard Stiegler, *Technics and Time I: The Fault of Epimetheus*, trans. Richard Beardsworth and George Collins (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1998), Part I, "The Invention of the Human."

16. Giorgio Agamben, *The Open: Man and Animal*, trans. Kevin Attell (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2004), § 9, "Anthropological Machine."

Record Examination) tests for admission into American graduate schools.<sup>17</sup> The GRE tests abilities in verbal skills, analytical writing, and critical thinking regardless of the subject the student is specialised in. So to the extent that architects need to reason, to argue, and to be able to think critically, then the benefits of competence in philosophy for architects would be overwhelming. But the same could be said of almost any subject, this set of skills would equally not be wasted on an artist or a businessman, and this is why the GRE tests for these types of skills.

The argument for the usefulness of philosophy for architects in terms of increased language capabilities is a strong one. Architects need to sell their design concepts to clients and to an increasing number of interested parties or stakeholders. They are often called upon to speak to a general audience about wide-ranging topics in their role as public intellectuals.<sup>18</sup> A convincing argument for adding philosophical capabilities to architects existing set of capabilities could be constructed on the basis of the “capability approach” of Nobel prize-winning economist Amartya Sen.<sup>19</sup> Essentially this approach to economic development shifts the focus away from personal wealth (the usual economics obsession with GDP and personal wealth) and happiness (the economics of happiness is now an established part of economics) towards the quality of life as the capability to achieve valuable functionings, in other words having an expanded “capability set” allows the individual to choose from a larger range of things they can manage to do, which Sen claims will lead to a better quality of life. Sen prefers to keep the functionings fairly abstract because he thinks they will be entirely

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17. See for example David A. Hoekema, “Why Major in Philosophy?” *Proceedings and Addresses of the American Philosophical Association*: 59.4 (March, 1986), pp. 601 - 606.

18. So for instance the American architect Ann Pendleton-Jullian was invited to speak about the future of the university at the The Higher Education Research and Development Society of Australasia (HERDSA) conference at AUT University in Auckland in July 2013, the Swiss architect Peter Zumthor was asked to speak about presence at a public workshop hosted by the ETH at the Cabaret Voltaire in Zurich in February 2013, and the English architect Norman Forster spoke about performance at an RIBA public lecture in London in October 2010. In each one of these cases the architect was expected and was in fact quite capable of showing that they are deep and broad thinkers able to bring new insights to almost any topic, not in fact too dissimilar to what is expected of the philosopher.

19. For a useful short introduction to this economic theory see Amartya Sen, “The Quality of Life” in Amartya Sen and Martha Nussbaum (eds.), *Capability and Well-Being* (New York: Oxford Clarendon Press, 1993), pp. 30 - 53.



dependent on culture, time and place. Martha Nussbaum, a political philosopher who works with Sen, doesn't share these reservations and lists the key capabilities that all democracies should support.<sup>20</sup> Besides the expected ones of being able to live healthily, with integrity, with adequate emotional attachments and so on, she includes being able to use the senses, to imagine, to think and to reason, to be able experience and produce works and events of one's own choice, whether these might be religious, musical, or literary works and events. It would not stretch this economic theory too far, which has already had wide spread application in developing countries, to apply it to the first world and to particular professions. So in our case the architect learning philosophy is clearly adding to their capability set, that will give them more functionings to choose from, leading to an increased quality of life for themselves and more control over their environment, which if they care about their world and the others who may share it, will lead to a better built environment for all. Little wonder then that Markus Breitschmid can make the bold claim that the distinguishing feature of great architects compared to lesser ones is the "philosophical apparatus they have apprehended and made subject to their disposition."<sup>21</sup>

In case any administrator is reading this and feels inspired to change the curriculum of architectural education to include compulsory philosophy lessons, a critical eye should be cast upon the argument for philosophy based on the capabilities approach. A work by the Italian Marxist philosopher Paolo Virno can help us with this task.<sup>22</sup> A recurring theme in Virno's work is that with the shift from Fordist to post-Fordist means of production there is also the emergence of the virtuoso worker. This term is not as benign as it might at first seem. In Fordist production virtuosity belongs only to the culture industry, the virtuoso pianist or dancer for instance. Workers by contrast are not expected to show any signs of individual brilliance, and if they do for example find ways of speeding up production this will only be incorporated by stealth. Now in a post-Fordist world where the service sector is greatly expanded and primary production shrinks in relation to this, since it is now out sourced to

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20. See Nussbaum's ten central capabilities in Martha Nussbaum, *Women and Human Development: The Capabilities Approach* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000).

21. Markus Breitschmid, "Architecture and Philosophy: Thoughts on Building", unpublished, accessed 8 October 2013, <http://architoday.com/wp-content/uploads/2011/04/ARCHITECTURE-PHILOSOPHY.pdf>, p. 2.

22. Paolo Virno, *A Grammar of the Multitude: For an Analysis of Contemporary Forms of Life*, trans. Isabella Bertolotti, James Cacaio and Andrea Casson (New York: Semiotext(e), 2004).

China, “total quality management” of what Virno calls virtuoso workers means the difference between the culture industry and all other industries breaks down. Intellect, perception, and linguistic competence are all now explicitly requested by employers. So applying this theory to post-Fordist architectural production we will find that every architect is now expected to be a starchitect, every architectural academic is expected to be the equivalent of a Rem Koolhaas or a Peter Eisenman, capable of virtuoso architecture and at the same time also capable of brilliant philosophical writing and delivering awe-inspiring lectures. So now any expansion of one’s capability set is immediately added to the list of job requirements and demanded by employers, which seems to negate Amartya Sen’s theory that increases in capability will inevitably lead to increases in personal choice and therefore improved quality of life. Perhaps there is in fact a need for “negative capability”, a withdrawal of virtuosity from the market until structural changes take place that will return more freedom, play and joy to the work place.<sup>23</sup>

The argument in defence of philosophy could rest here with the case being that architecture at the very least should not be denied those competencies that philosophy can provide better than any other subject, namely reason, argument, and critical thinking. But have not many great architects in fact been unreasonable, poor in the art of argument, and entirely uncritical, at least when it comes to their own aesthetic judgements and the particular private interests of their rich and powerful clients? Architects are notoriously uncritical of totalitarian political regimes, especially when they are a potential source of grand projects.<sup>24</sup>

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23. On the potential of negative capability to create revolutionary change, see the section headed, “Negative Capability: The Core Idea” in Roberto Mangabeira Unger, *False Necessity: Anti-Necessitarian Social Theory in the Service of Radical Democracy: From Politics, A Work In Constructive Social Theory* (London: Verso, 2001), pp. 277 - 312. For a discussion of what this concept might mean for architecture, in terms of creating spaces cleared of management and enforcement, see Kim Trogal, Sam Vardy et al, “Resistance and Activist Research: A Workshop with Brian Holmes and Anne Querrien”, *Field Journal*: 3.1 (2009), accessed 10 November 2013, [http://www.fieldjournal.org/uploads/file/2009%20Volume%203/field\\_03\\_5\\_Resistance\\_and\\_Activist\\_Research.pdf](http://www.fieldjournal.org/uploads/file/2009%20Volume%203/field_03_5_Resistance_and_Activist_Research.pdf).

24. See for example how many great architects tried to work for Fascist governments during WWII in Jean-Louis Cohen’s book, *Architecture in Uniform, Designing and Building for the Second World War* (New Haven, Connecticut: Yale University Press, 2011). On how architects willing submit to the rich powerful in the contemporary situation see Deyan Sudjic, *The Edifice Complex: How the Rich and Powerful Shape the World* (New York: Penguin Press, 2005).

And the history of architecture is rich in anecdotes about the stubborn-mindedness of tragic-comedic architects who push on ahead with a project with deaf ears to all criticism no matter how well reasoned, a stubbornness that in the end was in fact considered to be a part of their greatness?

The best defence for architects to be interested in philosophy, at least the one given here after long deliberation, is that it is worthless to them, or it is priceless to them, which means the same thing. With the widely acknowledged spread of free-market ideology into every aspect of our lives, not least of all the university and cultural production, we are all fast being reduced to merely self-interested “animals-in-front-of-the-market” or “animals with interests” to borrow the apt terminology of Alain Badiou.<sup>25</sup> We are all forced to inscribe ourselves into the world-as-it-is, and the world-as-it-is clearly does not care about us, but we must care about it. The perennial existential task of philosophy is to help us find meaning in a meaningless world. The captured thoughts of philosophers on the subject of architecture are priceless gifts for anyone trying to find meaning in architecture and therefore very helpful to any attempt to orientate the lives of those animals with souls that must live their lives within, and in turn be domesticated by, the human-made world. It would be useful here, with the help of the French economist François Perroux, to reconceptualise the importance of the gift as an essential part of every economy.

For any capitalist society to function smoothly there must be certain social factors which are free of the profit motive, or at least the quest for maximum profits. When monetary gain becomes uppermost in the minds of civil servants, soldiers, judges, priests, artists or scientists, the result is social dislocation and a real threat to any form of economic organization. The highest values, the noblest human assets – honor, joy, affection, mutual respect – must not be given a price tag; to do so is to undermine the foundations of the social grouping.<sup>26</sup>

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25. Alain Badiou, “Affirmative Dialectics: from Logic to Anthropology”, *The International Journal of Badiou Studies*: 2.1 (2013). p. 11.

26. François Perroux, *Le capitalism, Que sais-je?* Series no. 315 (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1962), p. 103. The English version is a quotation found in Michel Albert, *Capitalism Vs. Capitalism: How America's Obsession with Individual Achievement and Short-term Profit Has Led it to the Brink of Collapse* (New York: Four Walls Eight Windows, 1993), p. 104. See also Frank Ackerman and Lisa Heinzerling, *Priceless: On Knowing the Price of Everything and the Value of Nothing* (New York: The New Press, 2004).

You cannot buy love, happiness, pleasure, desire, delight, friendship, satisfaction, or thoughts about architecture. They are all priceless things of infinite value. The quality of our everyday lives endlessly produces, and in turn depends on, just such countless and priceless gifts. In the earliest surviving treatise on architecture Vitruvius says the architect must be a, “*philosophos diligenter audieret*” (diligent follower of philosophers) because this is the best way to be, “*facilis, aequus et fidelis*” (courteous, impartial and trust worthy).<sup>27</sup> What Vitruvius is saying is that if the architect has something that is priceless, and philosophy is priceless, then they cannot be bought at any price, that this will make them incorruptible.<sup>28</sup> In short, philosophy teaches the architect to be incorruptible and this is something that is needed by architects in the era of the Empire of global capitalism no less than it was needed in the time of the Roman Empire.

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27. Vitruvius Pollio, *Vitruvius, On Architecture*, trans. Frank Ganger (London: William Heinemann Ltd., 1931), I.1.3 and I.1.7, pp. 8 and 12.

28. I owe the idea that the possession of something infinite and therefore beyond price will render someone incorruptible to the market which reduces everything to price, to Alain Badiou, see “The Ontology of Multiplicity: The Singleton of the Void”, video of a lecture given at the European Graduate School, Saas-Fee, Switzerland, 4 August 2011, accessed 6 June 2013, <http://www.egs.edu/faculty/alain-badiou/videos/the-ontology-of-multiplicity-i/> (at 48’38” in the video). For Badiou’s thoughts on architecture see his video seminar (at 37’57”) “Change, Aesthetics and Politics”, accessed 6 June 2013, <http://www.egs.edu/faculty/alain-badiou/videos/change-aesthetics-and-politics/>.



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