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Petar Bojanić, Snežana Vesnić

And

Another repertoire of (dis)connections (in the plural) between architecture and philosophy (could we say between architecture and the dis*course* used to thematize architecture?), another model of the space of AND, a *third* space as bearer and protector of the new – could be designated with italics or cursive, that is, as *AND*. *AND* is AND on the run (*cursivus, cursus*), rushing ahead. The nearest possible word in Indo-European languages that could label this protocol of urgent occupying and "holding" space is *χωρεῖν*. When an architect or philosopher writes or draws, their hand is bent and slanted in speed and urgency to faithfully execute and deliver the concept. If a concept is germinating in the architect, and if various conceptions and notions are swirling and churning in the philosopher, their first hand gestures will always lurch and jolt. Thus, the hand that sketches, gives the concept its first contours and shades it, is always sloped, inclined in anticipation of that to which it must be faithful, yet is hidden deep *behind*. When the philosopher establishes and justifies their conception, seeks the correct new concept befitting what the philosopher is trying to demonstrate (which is somewhere *behind*), their manuscript, their hand alternates between the 'uncial' and 'cursive' models. The possibility of separating, underlining, emphasizing, and differentiating notions, the possibility of selecting just the right ones from an abundance of concepts, varies and changes the speed of writing.

What then do the architect and philosopher write and write down? And how do their manuscripts differ and complement each other? Is a new concept the philosopher produces always in *italics* or cursive? What is the cursive of the line, the dash, the angle, and is a concept ever and always demonstrated on the run (in a rush) by the architect who moves it forward, ahead, leaning it... onwards? How does that which was *behind* move forward, or how does the concept create space and course for its manifestation? How is the concept *written*, and must it always be in cursive? Finally, is the concept the author of this bending and sloping of AND into *AND*?

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Catherine Ingraham*

Conjunction Function[1]

ABSTRACT: This essay begins by taking the syntagma "Architecture and Philosophy" at face value. It spends some time working its way into and around various points of view: the role of conjunctions, the differences between architecture and philosophy, the possibility that the *and* we have been asked to consider has become naturalized and, therefore, no longer open to question. The essay is short, too short, due to what seems like a global lack of time. However, the essay starts again, at its end, to look at a somewhat different path.

KEYWORDS: and, syntagma, constitution, ordering, poiesis

[1] Grammar – Schoolhouse Rock, Conjunction Junction, an animated musical video for children about "hooking up words and phrases and clauses" with and, but, or. The leading character is a train conductor who has these words painted on the sides of the train cars." Lyrics by Bob Dorough, lead vocal singer, Jack Sheldon, backing vocal, Terry Morrell.

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In taking on this assignment of thinking/writing about *and* in the syntagma Architecture *and* Philosophy, I took what seemed to be the logical first step of looking up the genealogy of the term *syntagma* in order to leverage questions and theories about how philosophy constitutes architecture and how architecture constitutes philosophy, since *syntagma* refers to both the "constitutive" and the "constitutional," depending on its archaic or modern meaning.[2]

It would be easy enough to immediately note that architecture needs/uses ideas and philosophy knows something about ideas, *and* philosophy needs/uses structures and architecture knows something about structures. Good bedfellows! But I want to attest to a few obvious, yet certainly contestable, differences in how each of these disciplines establish reasoning and ordering systems that underlie these ideas and structures. Architecture's reasoning is projective in its paradoxical allegiance to a design process that is, at first, open but gradually narrows in relation to determinative arrangements of materialized space. Philosophy's reasoning is reflective and vigilant about the management of its arguments (which might qualify as a form of intellectual design) but rarely attempts to represent these arguments graphically or materially. The few cases where philosophy has used political platforms to further its voice have mostly been catastrophic. Which is to say, philosophy, unlike architecture, rarely runs the risk of showing, in a literal and raw sense, what it wishes to convey. This would, in fact, compromise its integrity. However, neither philosophy nor architecture escape ideologies or historical forces that bend their ordering systems to governing systems that are authoritative or traditional.

The constant pressure of limit conditions imposed upon "architectural thinking" – as Jacques Derrida would and would not have it – have always included not only built structures but also, from the beginning, theories of technicity that encourage essentialist and reductive ideas. During periods of empirical (often put forward as "practical") governance of the discipline and practice of architecture, which are far more common than moments of experimentation, the possibilities of being openly aligned with philosophy are jeopardized. In these cases the *and* that holds philosophy and architecture together becomes more difficult to sustain.

I have written, on occasion, that there would be no architecture without philosophy because philosophy sets the stage for plausible theories

[2] Oxford English Dictionary, https://www.oed.com (accessed March 6, 2023, 10:00am).

and theories that guide the intellectual work of design.[3] This might reverse the order of the terms proposed in this assignment to Philosophy *and* Architecture – architecture in the second place, as a receiver. Whether first or second, the relation between architecture *and* philosophy is, if it succeeds, first stitched together by already known and shared concepts – foundation, construction, and spatiality, for example – that are granted various forms of agency, both abstract and materialized. Derrida's critiques of architecture's dependence on foundational concepts, for example, opened a new door for architectural theory. Multiple attempts in historiographic work, inspired by these critiques, have used the expanded field of concepts of space and spatiality to cross boundaries between what architecture habitually seeks as the "strictly architectural" and philosophy, not to mention political, economic, technological and social domains. This is a rather crude confession, on behalf of architectural theorists, that the rendering of architectural nomenclature as analogies or homologies that afford consideration in these other domains has been a crucial part of building architectural theory. The main virtue of this expansion rests, I think, in the ingenuity of theorists to both include and transcend buildings (without letting them go) in order to articulate architecture's complex constitutive relations to culture at large.

If we were to translate the "constitutive" into a document or declaration of governance, thus constitutionalizing it, a whole new kind of alliance between architecture *and* philosophy reveals itself. Constitutional ordering adds administrative costs, apparatuses, and laws to the infrastructure beneath the syntagma of Architecture *and* Philosophy. We would immediately find a commonality not in the content but in the necessity for implicit rules that determine what *counts* as architecture and/or what *counts* as philosophy. It might be here, also, that we would see in architecture what amounts to its litigation and management of metaphysical, psychological, ecological, biological, systems and the gaps and paradoxes that define them: Lacan's ontological gaps, autopoietic paradoxes, the dilemmas of Canguilhem's milieu, bio-modern technologies, various genealogies. But now it feels as if I am gaming the terms in the original question too freely, although the presence of governance, laws,

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[3] C. Ingraham, *Architecture's Theory,* MIT Press, Cambridge, 2023, p. 2. "Without philosophy, in a general sense, there is no theory, and vice versa. Without theory, also in a general sense, there is no architecture."

and apparatuses in architecture's *and* philosophy's (lower case) operations are rich with possibilities.

It seems appropriate to dwell for a moment on the small pieces of connective tissue between words, of which there are many. *And*, *and/or*, *or*, etc. Conjunctions. In isolation, *and* can tell us nothing about the duration or importance of its connectivity. It does not let us know where to enter or what scale of inquiry we should pursue in our search for elements that support the assigned syntagma. The spacing between words might also be a small but significant factor. Apparently the separation of words in texts developed in western contexts in the 7th century A.D. to "aerate" the text. This would seem to give the conjunction *and* autonomy and a place to breathe, but it also gives it a job.[4] It must point, and link, the two sides of the syntagma and thus form a relatively smooth and comfortable relation between architecture and philosophy.[5] A big job for such a little word. If this syntagma had been governed by *or* – Architecture *or* Philosophy – the job would have been to place this relation in question. It would signal that a choice must be made by fostering something like a "take it or leave it" attitude. A very different set of problems would be posed. As for *and/or* – which prevaricates and places us in the uncertain and suspicious position of "who is to decide?" – the syntagma Architecture *and/or* Philosophy releases the tension that otherwise, rather naturally one might say, lies between these terms and leaves us in a speculative "why not both?" state of mind.

The question of how connective words work in language has been studied by numerous scholars throughout history. Much of this research has concerned itself with the pedagogy of explaining how and why conjunctions are central to the conveyance of knowledge and information. My remarks about these connective words has been quite short and somewhat whimsical. Although whimsy, surprisingly, is lurking in this assignment. Architecture *and* Philosophy. Capital A architecture and capital P philosophy. Two pillars of knowledge, in other words, each with its time-honored flourishes and methods of gesturing. The grandeur of an

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[4] P. Saenger, *Space Between Words: The Origins of Silent Reading,* Stanford University Press, Stanford, 1997. Spacing of words in western contexts is related to how texts were read: aloud or silently; "the separation of words [...] originated in manuscripts copies by Irish scribes in the seventh and eighth centuries but spread to the European continent only in the late tenth century when scholars first attempted to master a newly recovered corpus of technical philosophical, and scientific classical texts." *Ibid*., p. 13.

[5] See M. Foucault, *The Order of Things: An Archaeology of the Human Sciences,* Pantheon, New York, 1970, p. xv.

alliance between these two complex fields of inquiry and practices is always exciting and, to some degree, familiar. Have we not been pursuing this alliance in a probative way for centuries? My question now, according, might be "Where do we go now if *and* has been naturalized into this syntagma?" At the same time, however, the hubris of the capitalized words in this syntagma somehow prompts us to find new evidence and justifications for their conjunctive relation.

In Achille Mbembe's *Critique of Black Reason*, he makes an obvious, yet shocking, observation regarding the compulsion of capitalism in relation to the quotidian ordering systems that surround us: mathematics, buildings, perspectival representation, grids, horticultural and agricultural systems, pedagogical systems, city streets, property systems, transit, language, history, and so forth.[6] These systems, Mbembe observes, which we normally treat as neutral systems that we inhabit and teach to our children, have been and still are crucial players in the commodification of peoples and the ontologizing of differences, racial and otherwise. Ordering, which is seminal to life itself, thus enters our discourse about architecture and philosophy, as it has before in different epochs. I mention Mbembe's observation here to amend my question about what we should do now with a naturalized Philosophy *and* Architecture. Isn't a syntagma, as "a chain of signs that together create meaning" (as the *Oxford English Dictionary* has it), itself a naturalizing apparatus? A far too general question to end with. But it suggests that we need to pass beyond the syntagma's passive connectivity and pick up, instead, its creative intentions. Philosophy *and* Architecture has been syntagmatized, with the help of the *and*, to create something. That something might be something new. My impulse here was initially to resort to poststructural tactics by identifying well-known constitutive factors in each of these fields and unpacking the differences. But now I see that what this assignment might have wished to reveal were *new* meanings in the syntagma of "Architecture *and* Philosophy?" Since this syntagma was first thought, time has passed. Much has happened. How has this chain of creation changed? A much more interesting question that, alas, time will not allow me to address here. Fortunately others, having discerned this possibility earlier, will enlighten us.

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[6] A. Mbembe, *Critique of Black Reason,* Duke University Press, Durham, NC, 2017.

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Ludger Schwarte*

Prospects for the Philosophy of Architecture

ABSTRACT: Philosophy deals with aspects of architecture that cannot be grasped by the established methods of history of art and theory of architecture, and proposes approaches which can help elucidate the key concepts of architecture, including aesthetic, ethical or social dimensions. My paper tries to sketch the scope of the questions architectural philosophy asks and give a short genealogy of its emergence. Furthermore, it argues for a specifically materialist understanding of the way in which architecture and philosophy correlate.

KEYWORDS: *arkhe*, architectural philosophy, infrastructure, critical theory, body politics

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Architectural Ensembles

What is the significance of architecture for our daily lives, for the possibility of communal living, for the future of human life on the planet? How can we determine the architectural context on which human life, action, thought is based, beyond and below the built space, the houses, the cities, the regions? How can we define the ensemble of interior and exterior spaces that shapes and structures our possibilities to live together with other people and to communicate? What do we mean when we say we live in this or that village or city?

These questions are obviously not aimed at a sociological analysis of the population, institutions and social structure, although these too are of course relevant to our lives. For in principle, another architectural ensemble could have exactly the same numbers, structures and institutions. The coherence of such an ensemble stems neither from a uniform plan nor from planning that would be owed to studio of architecture. Even where there have been regulations, aesthetic norms and unified interventions in an urban design, the concrete form usually stems from a multitude of very different works, buildings, architectural acts and urban practices.

What constitutes architectural ensembles cannot be grasped within the framework of standard art historical methods. The art historical approach to architecture usually consists of telling the story of individual buildings with a special focus on the underlying intention (of the client and the architect) and with reference to the style through which a building is an expression of its time.

An approach led by architectural theory or urbanism also misses some essential qualities of architecture, insofar as it only focuses on the analysis of the building tasks, building types, construction methods and solutions of the individual architectural interventions, but in principle does not take into account the diverse urban practices that take place in and between the buildings and their spatial and historical interaction.

Both procedures are particularly unsuitable for appreciating the ensemble, insofar as it was neither planned as such nor consists essentially of buildings. This is because the experience of most ensembles leads across open spaces, intersections, wastelands, dysfunctional elements and thus through that which only delimits the built, and is shaped by a specific atmosphere and environment. Architectural space is therefore neither simply space (as some have thought since the "spatial turn"), nor "built

space", because a) non-built things (light, climate, open spaces) play an essential role for architectural realities; whereby walking through a city is experienced quite differently from walking through a shopping mall or a gigantic skyscraper; b) because temporal-processual aspects also play an important role for the experience of architecture, and c) because it provides or deprives us of living conditions. On this elementary level, we experience architecture as shaping our living environment, and not as showcases for masterly planning or artistic expression.

Thus, any approach is inappropriate that

a) describes architecture only in its significance within the framework of an art or cultural history;
b) considers architecture considered only as the aesthetics of the built space;
c) reduces architecture to a symbol system of intended meanings.

This applies, by the way, not only to the architecture of the city, but to every child's room.

Architecture forms our living environment, where our resources and our places of retreat are located. We might ask ourselves what the difference is between our artificial living environment and the cave system a mole digs, an anthill, a spider's web and a bird's nest. Humans are not the only animals that build. But it could be that a significant difference separates the building of animals or even the mere building of humans (cultivating fields, erecting huts) from architecture and whether architecture thus determines precisely what one could call *basic anthropological equipment.* Following this thought, we would next ask ourselves which necessities and which natural laws lead people to build such a living world for themselves, and which artificial necessities such a living world generates. This would be a possible architectural-philosophical approach. But there are quite a few others.

The most important task of architectural philosophy is to think through and clarify the concept of architecture.

The word history already gives illuminating clues. If we follow the etymology to the Greek roots of the word components, we can say: architecture means the building (*τεκταίνομαι*) of a beginning, a ground or a principle (*ἀρχή*).

"*Ἀρχή*" in Greek means beginning, origin or source; then also cause, reason, principle and finally leading, ruling, governing. It derives from

the verb *ἄρχω*, which denotes starting, causing, proceeding and trying. Ever since the first philosophical use of the word "*ἀρχή*" by Anaximander (c. 610 - 545 BC), this beginning has been understood as a grounding, as a starting point at once physical and political. And this junction of the physical and the political is what makes architecture an unavoidable topic for contemporary philosophy.

In *On Nature* Anaximander defines the beginning, *ἀρχή*, as *τὸ ἄπειρον*. Apeiron can be translated as "the unlimited," the "indeterminate infinite" or as the "infinitely indeterminate." With this double meaning, Anaximander conceives the premise of natural (ontological) and logical development as one and the same. The apeiron, the infinite, Anaximander explains, is that which embraces and controls everything (becoming and passing).[1] In its main meaning, this apeiron can be understood as an analogue to time; the time in which becoming and passing away take place and become calculable. It is present and valid even for that which is outside our boundaries and with which we have nothing in common. The arché determines the boundary towards the indeterminate.

Diogenes Laertius reports that Anaximander not only coined the term *ἀρχή*, but at the same time invented an apparatus to measure time and predict events (*γνώμων*) and thus built its beginning: a model of the cosmos about which very little is known, but whose various parts apparently contained a celestial sphere, a world map and a sundial (D. L. II, 1–2). The ability to predict goes hand in hand with the transformation of the human sphere into a great clockwork.[2]

This model was both an instrument of knowledge, since it allowed the prediction of celestial movements, and theatre, since it demonstrated to the viewer the order of the world in whose midst he found himself. The interlocking of model and milieu, of prediction and realisation, therefore depends not only on the exact construction of the model, but also on the movements of the planets and on the observer. Humans

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[1] Following Theophrastus, Simplikios refers to Anaximander as the inventor of the term arché, in H. Diels, W. Kranz, *Die Fragmente der Vorsokratiker,* vol. I–III, Weidmannsche Verlagsbuchhandlung, Berlin, 1956, Fragment 12 (A9) B1, B2, B3.

[2] Cf. I. Kagis McEwen, *Socrates' Ancestor: An Essay on Architectural Beginnings,* MIT Press, Cambridge, Mass., 1994, pp. 19f.; R. Hahn, *Anaximander and the Architects: The Contributions of Egyptian and Greek Architectural Technologies to the Origins of Greek Philosophy,* SUNY Press, New York ,2001, pp. 6, 13; on the importance of the gnomon for mathematics, see: M. Serres, "Gnomon: Die Anfänge der Geometrie in Griechenland," in M. Serres (ed.), *Elemente einer Geschichte der Wissenschaften,* Suhrkamp, Frankfurt am Main, 1994, pp. 109–175.

live in a model, in a theory-building, the more they align their form of life with the measurement of time obtained from an architectural spatial design.

In political terms, the *ἀρχή* is the establishment of a civil order, a constitution. Because the *ἀρχή* is the beginning that creates something where there was nothing before, it emphasizes the groundlessness of the ordered manifold, in contrast to that thinking that tries to understand itself from its origins.[3] The *ἀρχή* is no longer based on a myth, but on reciprocal contexts of justification.[4] The political context to which Anaximander assigns his concept of *ἀρχή* is not focused on a singular personality at the top of the social organisation. His *ἀρχή* focuses on relations, revealing the conditions of interplay. In the political dimension, the *ἀρχή* means the distribution of public life in a common space whose measure is the centre of the polis, its "meson," and whose symmetry connects all as equals. The *ἀρχή* is thus the enforcement of a common measure, the "isonomia." With this conception of *ἀρχή* as a measure that grants equality, Anaximander transfers his model of the world to the level of city construction.

Anaximander's gnomon was in fact the instrument used in city planning to design regularly gridded chessboard-like street networks, depending on the position of the sun. Greek and Roman city-founding ceremonies established the central street intersection with the help of such a gnomon. This crossroads marked the intersection of the cardinal points and assigned the social to the cosmic events. Pliny gives an exact description of this ritual (Pl. *Nat. Hist.* XVIII). In every Hippodamian or Roman city there is the intersection of the Cardo (north-south axis) and the Decumanus (east-west axis). The street is therefore always already oriented towards a movement that lies outside the social order.

Because of the street lines drawn in this way, people move in a model of the cosmos. But the performative power of architecture also works in the other direction: only the arrangement of the world according to this model gives the ideas and calculations of the cosmos their evidence. The architecture of the living world can demonstrate the regularity of the natural order and the rule of time.

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[3] See on this: M. Cacciari, *Dell'inizio*, Adelphi, Milano, 1990; E. Angehrn, *Die Überwindung des Chaos: Zur Philosophie des Mythos*, Suhrkamp, Frankfurt am Main, 1996, p. 101.
[4] J.-P. Vernant, *Les origines de la pensée grecque*, Presses Universitaires de France, Paris, 1975, pp. 23ff., pp. 112ff.; D. Payot, *Le philosophe et l'architecte: sur quelques déterminations philosophiques de l'idée d'architecture*, Aubier, Paris 1982, p. 54.

Thus, we begin to understand how philosophy and architecture have interpenetrated each other since the very beginning. But it is still an open research task to follow the trace of architectural thought in the history of philosophy.

Philosophy of Architecture: A Discipline in the Making

The philosophy of architecture is not to be confused with the theory of architecture. The former has only been emerging within philosophy for a few decades, while the latter can look back on a millennia-old tradition that perhaps begins with Vitruvius. In general, however, one can say: architectural theory answers the question "How should we build?," while architectural philosophy asks the question "What does architecture mean?" Architectural theory usually presupposes that architecture consists in planning and skilful building; and that it is what professional architects do.

The philosophy of architecture, on the other hand, will ask whether and why this is so and how it could be different. It does not readily assume that the essence of architecture is the planning and execution of buildings.

In 2009, I proposed to define architecture as the *construction of possibilities*, or more precisely, to emphasise the performative aspect, as "*Ermöglichung*" (*possibilizing*).[5] In distinction to architectural theory, the philosophy of architecture would thus have the function of discussing how possibilities come about and change, and thence the foundations of how to interact and build as well as the negation of building and negative architecture, in order to be able to understand the shaping of the living world through architecture on this basis.

Initially, however, reflections on the philosophy of architecture emerged where systematic studies on architectural questions were presented from the perspective of philosophy, which emphasized the specificity of architecture in relation to other arts and techniques, as well as the comprehensive significance of its questions. This was certainly already true of Paul Valéry's *Eupalinos ou l'architecte* (1921) and Martin Heidegger's *Bauen Wohnen Denken* (1951).

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[5] Cf. L. Schwarte, *Philosophie der Architektur*, Fink, München, 2009, p. 20.

For the philosophy of architecture in the narrower sense, a formative phase can be identified. In this phase, fundamental philosophical studies devoted exclusively to architectural questions appear.[6]

To my knowledge, the first philosophical study in book form devoted to architecture was written by the Greek architect and philosopher Panagiotis A. Michelis in 1940. His definition of architecture is: "The art of building erects monuments that symbolize ideas and in this way idealizes the form of the city and of living."[7]

In 1968, Henri Lefebvre published his *Le Droit à la ville*, a book still intensely discussed today, which is the basis for many contemporary architectural theories, but also all "Reclaim the Streets" and "Occupy" movements.

Right up to Benoît Goetz (*La dislocation, architecture et philosophie*) and Gernot Böhme (*Architektur und Atmosphäre*), there were books that explored different aspects of architecture. It is a phase in which almost every one of these publications spells out the urgency of addressing architecture within philosophy and approaches the subject in an original way without referring to the other publications that had previously appeared. The authors seem unconcerned with what has already been said about architecture in philosophy, as they do not make any effort to demonstrate the relevance of their pronouncements to the architectural profession.

In the meantime, there are a number of associations and networks in which research is conducted from different intellectual perspectives on the interrelationship of architecture and philosophy. In most cases, architecture is treated as a special application of highly specialised philosophical disciplines such as aesthetics or ethics.[8] Moreover, now, there is

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[6] Cf. H. Lefèbvre, *Droit à la ville*, Anthropos, Paris, 1968; P. A. Michelis, *Esthétique de l'architecture du béton armé*, Dunod, Paris, 1963; P. A. Michelis, *Esthétique de l'architecture,* Klincksieck, Paris, 1974; R. Scruton, *Aesthetics of Architecture,* Princeton University Press, Princeton, 1979; D. Payot, *Le philosophe et l'architecte*; Sylviane Agacinski: *Volume: philosophies et politiques de l'architecture*, Galilée, Paris, 1992; K. Harries, *The Ethical Function of Architecture,* MIT Press, Cambridge, Mass., 1997; J. Attali, *Le plan et le détail: une philosophie de l'architecture et de la ville*, Chambon, Nîmes, 2001; B. Goetz, *La dislocation: architecture et philosophie,* Éditions de la Passion, Paris, 2002.

[7] P. A. Michelis: *L'esthétique de l'architecture*, p. 41. In the original Greek the book appeared under the title *Η Αρχιτεκτονική ως τέχνη* (1940). However, I have not yet been able to consult this edition.

[8] Cf. R. Hill, *Designs and their Consequences: Architecture and Aesthetics,* Yale University Press, New Haven, 1999; A. Carlson, *Aesthetics and the Environment: The Appreciation of Nature, Art and Architecture,* Routledge, London / New York, 2000; E. Führ (ed.), *Bauen und Wohnen: Martin Heideggers Grundlegung einer Phänomenologie der Architektur = Building and Dwelling: Martin Heidegger's Foundation of a Phenomenology of Architecture,*

no lack of stocktaking of the existing approaches.[9] An awareness of the fact that the philosophy of architecture, perhaps similar to phenomenology or media theory in its time, also radiates methodologically into the most diverse philosophical fields, is just as noticeable in systematizing approaches[10] as in works in which general philosophical questions are dealt with on the basis of architecture.[11]

Tasks of the Philosophy of Architecture

It is only in the last few years that attention has begun to be drawn to the special problems of architecture in different areas of philosophy (aesthetics, ethics, philosophy of technology, economics) and that the various approaches have been sifted through and systematized. Nonetheless, the research desiderata of a philosophy of architecture include:

- History: As outlined in the examples above, it would be necessary to follow the trail of architecture in the history of philosophy.

Waxmann, Münster et al., 2000; H. Böhringer, *Harte Bank: Philosophie, Kunst, Architektur,* Merve, Berlin, 2003; D. Vesely, *Architecture in the Age of Divided Representation: The Question of Creativity in the Shadow of Production,* MIT Press, Cambridge, Mass., 2004; G. Böhme, *Architektur und Atmosphäre,* Fink, München, 2006; P. Fewings, *Ethics for the Built Environment,* Taylor & Francis, London / New York, 2009; C. Baumberger, *Gebaute Zeichen: Eine Symboltheorie der Architektur*, Ontos, Frankfurt am Main, 2010; M. Düchs, *Architektur für ein gutes Leben: Über Verantwortung, Ethik und Moral des Architekten,* Waxmann, Münster et al, 2011. M. Labbé, *Reprendre place: contre l'architecture du mépris,* Payot, Paris, 2019. M. Kingwell, The Ethics of Architecture, Oxford University Press, Oxford, 2021.

[9] Cf. N. Leach (ed.), *Rethinking Architecture: A Reader in Cultural Theory*, Routledge, London / New York, 1997; E. Winters, *Aesthetics and Architecture*, Continuum, London, 2007; C. Illies, N. Ray, "Philosophy of Architecture," in A. Meijers (ed.), *Philosophy of Technology and Engineering Sciences*, North Holland, Amsterdam, 2009, pp. 1199–1256; S. Hauser, C. Kamleithner, R. Meyer (eds.), *Architekturwissen: Grundlagentexte der Kulturwissenschaften*, vol. 1–2, Transcript, Bielefeld, 2011, 2013; C. Baumberger (ed.), *Architekturphilosophie: Grundlagentexte,* Mentis, Münster, 2013; J. Gleiter, L. Schwarte (eds.), *Architektur und Philosophie: Grundlagen, Standpunkte, Perspektiven,* Transcript, Bielefeld, 2015; M. Labbé (ed.), *Textes-clés de la philosophie de l'architecture,* Vrin, Paris, 2019. C. Illies (ed.), *Bauen mit Sinn: Schritte zu einer Philosophie der Architektur,* Springer, Wiesbaden, 2019.

[10] Cf. M. H. Mitias, *Philosophy and Architecture,* Rodopi, Amsterdam / Atlanta, 1994; A. Benjamin, *Architectural Philosophy,* Continuum, London, 2000; C. Kremer, *Architekturphilosophie: Eine Einführung in ein architekturphilosophisches Verständnis*, VdM, Saarbrücken, 2011.

[11] Cf. E. Grosz, *Architecture from the Outside: Essays on Virtual and Real Space,* MIT Press, Cambridge, 2001; S. Kwinter, *Architectures of Time: Toward a Theory of the Event in Modernist Culture*, MIT Press, Cambridge, Mass. 2001; P. Sloterdijk, *Sphären*, vol. 3, *Schäume*, Suhrkamp, Frankfurt am Main, 2004.

However, it would be completely inadequate to scan all the texts of history only for the appearance of the terms architecture and building. A philosophically informed approach would instead probe various relevant thematic fields, differentiating between what is said in the tradition about agriculture, cosmic orientation, house building, planning, action (as demiurge [*δημιουργός*], or *ἀρχιτέκτων*), the design of ideal cities and environmental relations.

- Relationships between architecture and philosophy: Architecture and philosophy have often touched and cross-fertilized each other over the course of time. Plato and Hippodamos, Fichte and Schinkel, the Bauhaus and the Viennese Circle are all linked with each other in many complex ways. A number of important works on such interconnections and historical constellations are already available, including those by Peter Bernhard and Petra Lohmann.[12]
- Happy dabbling: Again and again, there have been "architecting" philosophers (such as Ludwig Wittgenstein) and "philosophizing" architects (such as Peter Eisenman or Rem Koolhaas) for whom the transition to the other discipline, to the other system of thought, to other ways of working was an important liberation and inspiration. It would be necessary to examine more generally what the authors' previous education has brought about in each case and what interactions and repercussions can be ascertained.[13]
- Interweaving practical and symbolic dimensions of building: In order to reflect on the mutual influence of practical and symbolic dimensions in architecture, it would be necessary, as exemplified in the relevant works of Indra Kagis McEwen[14] or, in a completely

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[12] Cf. P. Bernhard, "Die Einflüsse der Philosophie am Weimarer Bauhaus," in C. Wagner (ed.), *Das Bauhaus und die Esoterik: Johannes Itten - Wassily Kandinsky - Paul Klee,* Kerber, Bielefeld, 2005, pp. 29–34; P. Lohmann, *Architektur als Symbol des Lebens: Zur Wirkung der Philosophie Johann Gottlieb Fichtes auf die Architekturtheorie Karl Friedrich Schinkel von 1803 bis 1815*, Deutscher Kunstverlag, München / Berlin, 2010; P. Galison, "Aufbau/Bauhaus: Logical Positivism and Architectural Modernism," *Critical Inquiry*, XVI, 4, 1990, pp. 709–752; T. Schabert, *Die Architektur der Welt: Eine kosmologische Lektüre architektonischer Formen*, Fink, München, 1997.

[13] The work of Sabine Ammon also points the way in this direction. Cf. S. Ammon, E. M. Froschauer (eds.), *Wissenschaft entwerfen: Vom forschenden Entwerfen zur Entwurfsforschung der Architektur*, Fink, München, 2013; S. Ammon, "ANT im Architekturbüro: Eine philosophische Metaanalyse," *Zeitschrift für Ästhetik und Allgemeine Kunstwissenschaft*, LVII, 1, 2012, pp. 127–149.

[14] Cf. I. K. McEwen, *Socrates' Ancestor*.

different way, by Pierre Bourdieu,[15] to conduct investigations beyond texts and discourses and to record the material culture, the history of technology and culture, the political and religious practices of a place and a time.

- Systematics: In my view, architectural philosophy is a transversal discipline that not only enriches the traditional fields of philosophy with a completely new line of inquiry, but also links them in new ways. Moreover, it is to be expected that investigations in the philosophy of architecture that refer to a single philosophical sub-discipline with a systematic view will be of great intellectual gain both for this sub-discipline and for the philosophy of architecture as a whole. This has already been demonstrated within practical philosophy through work on the aesthetics and ethics of architecture; complemented by positions that focus more on the realm of politics or the theory of action. Something similar can be expected when research sets itself the goal of systematically examining the fields of theoretical philosophy under the magnifying glass of architectural philosophy – above all, ontology, epistemology or the theory of perception will appear in a new light. Think only of Kant's use of the term "architectonics."

However, open questions immediately give rise to doubts about attempts such as these to systematically delineate the field of tasks to be worked on. For efforts to define the relationships between philosophy of technology and environmental philosophy or between physics and metaphysics or to regard them as architectural will, on the one hand, immediately lead to conceptual difficulties. On the other hand, theories belonging to epistemology in the broader sense have developed that seem to manage without an architectural-philosophical vocabulary and yet are essentially based on a similar approach; for example, research on experimental systems in the philosophy of science or those on artefacts in social ontology and constructivism.[16]

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[15] Cf. P. Bourdieu: *Esquisse d'une théorie de la pratique: précédé de trois études d'ethnologie kabyle,* Droz, Geneva / Paris, 1972.

[16] Examples include the works of Peter Galison, Hans-Jörg Rheinberger and Bruno Latour.

Fundamental Importance

Philosophy of architecture is of fundamental importance if only because it helps to understand the genesis of something like "fundamental meaning," that is, the common root ground of forms of life and linguistic orders.

In his work *Ten Books on Architecture*, Vitruvius writes that architecture brings ideas into a perceptible relation to things.[17] In this sense, one can say that architecture shows what philosophy means. *Architecture realizes philosophy. It is about ways of realization. It sets up the world in a meaningful way by aligning the living world according to (cosmic or philosophical) models. Arrangements of houses and street networks create possibilities for orientation and classification, for measuring movements, for mapping distances, for aligning actions with purposes.*

Time is only measurable when the world is redesigned and arranged according to a cosmic model. It governs us to the extent that we move in a constructed perceptual model of time, in a clockwork that enables us to estimate lengths, sizes and movements and to aim for goals still absent. In this way, the movements of bodies become measurable, consequences become assessable. This facility is the prerequisite for us to be able to act in a planned manner.

Moreover, the task of architectural philosophy would be, as a first step, to make visible the infrastructures, the options and contingencies on which the lifeworld is based – as well as the possibilities that this architecture causes to disappear. Because it determines:

- what counts as an effect, a disposition or a property,
- which are the parameters of appearance and existence,
- what coordinates do we use for orientation: for example, space, time and colours?
- how the connection of the senses to each other and to the dimensions of sense and experience is organized,
- what possibilities we have for action.

Some assume that the philosophy of architecture is a subdivision of environmental ethics, aesthetics or the philosophy of technology. Such attributions, however, overlook the pressing contemporary questions to which philosophical work on architecture responds. Architecture, it

[17] Cf. Vitruvius, *Zehn Bücher über Architektur,* Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, Darmstadt, 1964, pp. 22, 45, 143.

seems to me, is not just an indifferent subject for philosophy, but requires a certain attitude.

The philosophy of architecture in this sense, as I understand it, is more of a transdiscipline, as media philosophy once was, but is interested in infrastructures and environments, in foundations and dispositions, in the preconditions and material justifications of imaginations, symbols and media. It studies the ways in which matter is condensed, aligned and unfolds certain forces and effects. With a view trained in architectural philosophy, we see that the milieus, the conditions of perception and action are dependent and contingent on infrastructures. These in turn emerge in interactions that can be called architectural acts. Architectures create infrastructures, invent affordances and thus determine the reality in which forces, bodies, affects, perceptions, movements, cognitions develop. Philosophy of architecture not only enriches the traditional fields of philosophy with another topic, but with a completely new line of enquiry, that links a bunch of other topics (philosophy of physics, politics, aesthetics, ethics, history, technology, environment, life…) together in a new way.

For a Different Architecture

Thinking philosophically about architecture may then also lead to a new way of doing architecture.

The architecture in which we live organizes the rationality of everyday life; it proves the validity of purposes through the possibility of planning, through the evidence of architectural indices and through the efficacy of declarations of intent. It organizes a relation between aims and functions. Compliance with this claim to plan, shape and guide, that is, the fact that people accept rules, directions and institutions, relies on architecturally generated power, that is, on a world in which we encounter things as statements, if not commands, and in which we conceive of action as a certain making, a production of effects, obeying a temporal order, in which we learn to dwell in habits, as voluntary submission to the rule of reason (understood as agreement to being governed).

This *architectonics as a technical fixation of power and ability in* the horizon of everyday experience is the historically dominant way of beginning. It is a technology of power that trains individuals, produces them as a mass and makes them controllable by a few. It enforces a controlled behaviour, a certain feeling and thinking.

However, there could also be other architectures, for example a foundation that frees and does not fix or force. An architecture that releases the anarchic impulses inherent in all action as a spontaneous, free, uncontrolled act and makes them answerable instead of preventing or conditioning them. This presupposes open spaces. A possibility would then no longer be a purpose, a programme to be realised, a structure guiding ability, but a resource, conceived from interaction, confrontation and affection. It would be a matter of no longer thinking of architecture as the epitome of skill, planned execution and the manifestation of order, but as an enabler and resource of emancipation.

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Architecture and Philosophy and Wages of Obfuscation

ABSTRACT: The paper analyses possible contributions of philosophy and philosophers to architecture and architects' work. During the twentieth century, a number of dominant positions in philosophy, such as the view that all thinking is verbal or that conceptual thinking determines the contents of perception, significantly limited the ground for productive intellectual interaction between architects and philosophers. With the demise of such positions in recent decades, one can hope that philosophy and philosophers could make genuine contributions to architectural theory.

KEYWORDS: architecture, philosophy, phenomenology, deconstruction, architectural education

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Some years ago, four architecture students came individually to talk with me about phenomenology within a single week. Each of them was enrolled in the same final year architecture studio; in the previous year they all took the architectural theory course that I teach and read Martin Heidegger's "Building, Dwelling, Thinking." However, they did not come to talk about Heidegger. They wanted to learn how to design a "phenomenological building". When I asked what a "phenomenological building" was, each of them stated the same example: that is when you put glass on the façade, so you get the phenomenon of light reflexion. As I inquired about the origin of this definition of phenomenology, I discovered that it came from a visiting professor who taught them studio and who derived this understanding from a recently published essay by Steven Holl.[1] When I checked the essay, I could see how the misconception came about. In the essay, Holl indeed talks about phenomenology, and mentions "attention to phenomenal properties of the transformation of light through material."[2] My colleague simply identified "attention to phenomenal properties" as "phenomenology." Steven Holl was thus not guilty for the misunderstanding.

What Architects Do with Philosophy?

What is the role of philosophical material in contemporary architectural thinking and education? Few architectural academics would argue that this is irrelevant. In fact, there exists widespread hunger for philosophical texts among architectural academics. Such texts are widely used in studio as well as in theory courses. *The way* they are used, however, is likely to exasperate a philosopher. From a philosopher's perspective, architects do not engage in arguments, but mine philosophical texts for the material that will make the narratives they fabricate about their designs appear more intellectual. Engagement with philosophy often does not go beyond the misappropriation of philosophical terminology, which is used randomly and with limited understanding of its meaning.

At the same time, it is true that the question of the role of logical arguments in architecture as a discipline is a difficult one. Should logical arguments matter in architectural design in a way that is not reducible to

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[1] S. Holl, "Questions of Perception – Phenomenology of Architecture," in S. Holl, J. Pallasmaa, A. Pérez-Gómez, *Questions of Perception: Phenomenology of Architecture,* William Stout Publishers, San Francisco, 2007, pp. 40–61.

[2] *Ibid*., p. 83.

their role in the fabrication of the narratives concocted in order to promote these designs? Can architectural designs have *any* properties that have some *other* purpose besides the promotion of the design and its author? In the 1990s, it was not uncommon to argue that architects are public intellectuals, that *everything* architects do counts as architecture and that the only relevant thing architects do is self-promotion. In other words, architects' self-promotion is the *only* content of architecture as a discipline and the use of philosophically sounding combination of words counts a high-ranking strategy in such efforts. It then follows that all architecture schools can teach their students is to behave like architects, since there are no skills or knowledge specific to architecture that other professions (engineers, planners) can do better.[3] The use of incomprehensible philosophical jargon to bamboozle one's clients and colleagues is consequently one of the most valuable skills that architecture students are meant to imbibe during their architectural education.

Philosophers' perspectives on such abuse of their discipline are bound to be negative. Nevertheless, it is also fair to say that philosophers have made very little effort to engage with architects. The few times I have heard philosophers mention the "philosophy of architecture," it was mainly to add that "little work has been done in that field." One would expect to find some articles on architecture at least in the journals that specialise in aesthetics, but this happens rarely. What is even worse, when philosophers actually engage with architecture, they sound naïve and have limited number of examples (buildings) to cite. Sometimes, one gets the impression that they cannot read a building's plan. Occasionally, they make serious blunders based on elementary mistakes, such as Nelson Goodman's erroneous attempt to prove geometrically that perspectival projection does not represent the disposition of light rays that reach the eyes.[4]

I argue in this paper that poor communication between the two disciplines is largely the philosophers' fault, and that it results from a set of systematic commitments that has dominated philosophical thinking during the twentieth century. But I also want to point out that times have changed, and express the hope that we may be looking towards times marked by more fruitful collaboration between the two disciplines.

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[3] See G. Stevens, *The Favored Circle: The Social Foundations of Architectural Distinction,* MIT Press, Cambridge, Mass., 2002.

[4] See B. Mitrović, "Nelson Goodman's Arguments against Perspective," *Nexus Network Journal,* 15, 2013, pp. 51–62.

Deconstruction, Phenomenology and Analytic Philosophy

Obviously, I can mainly talk on the basis of my own experiences within English-speaking scholarship. They began in 1992 when I arrived in Philadelphia for my doctoral studies in architectural history at University of Pennsylvania. I was lucky to have gone to Penn in those years, where – unlike some other doctoral programmes in architecture at that time – we were expected to read the fundamentals of the discipline: Vitruvius, Alberti, Barbaro. We were trained, and trained well, to become scholars in architectural history and theory, while contemporary fads were mainly seen as a waste of time. However, outside Penn's Furness Library, the intellectual world of architecture was deeply divided between two dominant and colliding ideologies – deconstruction and phenomenology. Deconstructivists were noisier and stood for a definite, recognizable architectural style; long-term, however, the influence of the position called "phenomenology" has been more persistent. Whatever their differences, in many ways, both sides worked with the same assumptions that I found difficult to accept. There are at least five fundamental points they shared:

a) Both were programmatically anti-visual.
b) Both insisted on the primacy of language in human thinking or reduced human mental activities to verbal behaviour.
c) Both "explained" the creativity of individuals (including architects) by their membership in collectives such as culture or tradition; the 1990s were the heyday of cultural constructionism.
d) In the form these positions were often articulated in architectural history and theory, they both implied the rejection of free will (for instance, in the form of the rejection of the possibility that architects can make design decisions independently of their social or cultural environment).
e) Both systematically rejected, or made no effort to be compatible with, the materialist understanding of the world and the modern scientific worldview.

By the time I faced these positions I already had pre-doctoral degrees in architecture and philosophy, and this made me cautious about wider implications of the theoretical claims that I encountered. Both positions were hard to square with any reasonable conception of architectural

history I could think of. Architects are certainly concerned with the visual aspects of their designs, while the programmatic rejection of visuality that both positions preached reduced the discipline of architectural history to the enumeration of architects' acts of verbal behaviour. Renaissance architects, for instance, certainly cared much about the way their Ionic volutes looked; replicating the narrative ("meaning") that they produced in relation to the volutes (e.g., that they "represent female hairs") tells us nothing about the reasons that motivated the choice of one type of the geometric construction of the volute over another. Our visual interaction with the world is infinitely more fine-grained than language can account for; the visual is simply not reducible to the verbal. Further, cultural constructionism (including the claim that individual view emerges from the tradition they belong to) unavoidably results in the reflexive argument: if all truths are culture-relative, then this must also be the case with the claim that all truths are culture-relative. Applied to architectural history, cultural constructionism reduced the discipline into a mindless classificatory exercise: all an architectural historian needed to do was to classify architectural works according to the cultures and traditions they belonged to. Since individual architects were meant to be deprived of independent reasoning powers or free will and their intellectual lives and creativity were seen as mere manifestations of their cultures or traditions, classification according to culture or tradition was meant to explain everything.

Turning to analytic philosophy to resolve these problems was hardly an option. Willard van Orman Quine, Michael Dummett, or Donald Davidson in various forms also reduced human thinking to a verbal activity.[5]

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[5] For a general history of the view that all thinking is verbal, see M. Losonsky, *Linguistic Turns in Modern Philosophy,* Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 2006. Willard van Orman Quine's view was that only material, physical token-sentences could be properly regarded as truth-bearers, so he was consequently obliged to argue that only such sentences can be believed to be true or false – in other words, that there can be no non-verbal thought-contents that can be true or false. In his article "Meaning in Linguistics" (in W. van Orman Quine, *From a Logical Point of View: Nine Logico-Philosophical Essays,* Harper and Row, New York, 1961, p. 61, he stated that "there is in principle no separating language from the rest of the world. [...] It is not clear even in principle that it makes sense to think of words and syntax as varying from language to language while the content stays fixed..." For Dummett, see, for instance, his essay "Language and Communication," in his book *The Seas of Language,* Clarendon Press, Oxford, 1993, pp. 166–187 and especially the essay "What Do I Know When I Know a Language," also in *The Seas of Language,* p. 97. Donald Davidson tried to argue that neither language nor thought have conceptual priority over each other, but ultimately the way he phrased his arguments suggests that he assumed the priority of language. D. Davidson, "Thought and Talk," in his *Inquiries into Truth and Interpretation,* Clarendon Press, Oxford, 2001, pp. 155–170. The article was

The rejection of visuality was part of Quine's behaviourist programme. An architectural historian who reads in Quine's influential article "On What There Is" that it is impossible to imagine the Parthenon visually (that "the idea of the Parthenon is invisible") must think that something has gone very wrong indeed.[6] Hard-core behaviourism, it should be mentioned, died off much slower among philosophers than among psychologists. Mental rotation, the human capacity to imagine spatial objects from different sides and rotate them in imagination was firmly established and well-studied in experimental psychology as early as the 1970s.[7] An architect's daily work largely depends on this ability that modern CAD programmes merely imitate. However, when I tried to discuss visual imagination and mental rotation with some analytic philosophers in the late 1990s, I was asked whether I was "also hearing voices."

Philosophy and Architectural Theory

For a large part of the twentieth century both analytic and continental philosophy were dominated by the assumptions that are very difficult to square with standard architectural practice, architectural profession, scholarship in architectural history or architectural creativity in general. The point is not merely that these assumptions contradict some important aspects of architects' understanding of their own work. More significantly, architects' standard procedures are often perfect counter-examples to these philosophical assumptions. A good example is the claim that human thinking is always verbal and linguistic, defended by remarkable tenacity by both analytic and continental philosophers throughout the twentieth century. If it were true, no building could ever have been planned, described or surveyed using drawings. The widespread tendency of twentieth-century philosophers to denigrate or even deny

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indeed interpreted by Searle that way; see J. Searle, "Animal Minds," *Midwest Studies in Philosophy,* 19, 1994, pp. 206–219.

[6] "The Parthenon is visible; the Parthenon-idea is invisible. We cannot imagine two things more unlike, and less liable to confusion, than the Parthenon and the Parthenon idea." W. van Orman Quine, "On What There Is," *From a Logical Point of View: Nine Logico-Philosophical Essays,* p. 2.

[7] This pertains to the experiments about mental rotation by Roger Shepard and Jacqueline Ann Metzler that examined mental rotation, the ability of the human mind to imagine an object from different sides. Obviously, for architects, mental rotation is a vitally important thinking process simulated today by various CAD-type programmes. See R. Shepard J. Metzler, "Mental Rotation of Three-Dimensional Objects," *Science,* 141, 1971, pp. 701–703.

the human capacity to think visually is probably enough to make any meaningful interaction with architecture as a discipline impossible: in their creative process as well as in the technical execution of their works, architects vitally depend on visual thinking. Visual means of communication (drawings, models) are unavoidable when one wants to discuss and define spatial properties of architectural works. The claim that "there is no innocent eye," understood in the strong form as this was the case in the 1970s (for instance by Nelson Goodman or Marx Wartofsky) made human visuality a social convention, completely unrelated to the human capacity to think about the spatial properties of spatial objects. It is utterly unclear what architectural practice could look like once visuality is separated from spatiality.

It is in fact a remarkable phenomenon that architects persisted with attempts to communicate with philosophers through an era in which philosophers' contribution could have been hardly of any use to architecture. The phenomenon is encouraging because it indicates a high level of trust that philosophers enjoy in many architects' eyes. It is also a worry because it illustrates architects' lack of interest in meaningful engagement with philosophical material. The impression is that architects love and seek to imitate philosophers' verbal behaviour, but care little about the meaning of what philosophers are saying.[8] If architects are prepared to repeat and cheerfully advocate philosophers' statements, while these statements contradict architects' daily professional practice and everything they do, then they either do not understand these statements or do not really care what they mean and use them as mere self-promotion tools. How seriously can one take an architect who preaches (as many did in the 1990s) that everything is a text and then uses drawings in his or her work? (I actually know of an architecture school where, during the 1990s, students would pin up pages of printed text on the wall in their crits because they were taught in the theory class that "everything is a text.")

Introducing philosophical culture into architecture as a discipline, its theory, creative and professional work, is thus likely to be a harder task than it may appear at the first sight. What architects need to learn from philosophers is to analyse and think critically, and not merely repeat, outside the context and for the purposes of self-promotion, the specific statements uttered by individual philosophers. The introduction of critical

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[8] For a systematic analysis of architects' use of philosophical texts see B. Mitrović, *Architectural Principles in the Age of Fraud,* Oro Books, San Francisco, 2022.

thinking into architectural profession and education means that the philosophical culture of making arguments needs to penetrate beyond verbal communication about architectural works into the actual creative process and practice. For this to happen, one needs to engage with architects in the realm of their work and show that the philosophical ways of making arguments (rather than replicating philosophers' statements) can contribute to the design process. The point I would like to make here is that (after decades) we live again in an era when meaningful and useful exchange between philosophers and architects has become possible.

The Current Situation

The philosophical landscape has changed tremendously in the past twenty or thirty years.[9] The point is not merely that deconstruction, anti-realism, cultural constructionism and similar fashions of the late twentieth century have lost their influence. More fundamentally, the positions that used to block fruitful exchange between architects and philosophers have lost their credibility one after another. The ground-breaking moment for the rejection of the view that all thinking is verbal was the publication of John Searle's highly influential 1983 book *Intentionality*. Searle's important thesis was that the study of the contents of human thoughts cannot be equated to the study of human verbal behaviour. In the subsequent decades extensive psychological research on the mental processes of animals and pre-linguistic infants came to support this position: if animals or pre-linguistic infants can think, it is hard to say that language is necessary for thought.[10] The idea that perception and visual thinking are inseparable from conceptualisation came under attack as early as 1969 in the book *Seeing and Knowing* by Fred Dretske.[11] Dretske formulated the idea of non-conceptual content in the philosophy of perception, and opened an important field of philosophical research that has flourished since the late 1980s. Since the late 1990s, this position has been supported by extensive experimental psychological research about the impenetrability of visual perception, especially following an influential

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[9] For an elaboration of the implications of these changes for architecture as a discipline, see B. Mitrović, *Visuality for Architects: Architectural Creativity and Modern Theories of Perception and Imagination,* University of Virginia Press, Charlottesville, 2013.

[10] For a summary of these works see J. L. Bermúdez, *Thinking without Words,* Oxford University Press, Oxford, 2003.

[11] F. Dretske, *Seeing and Knowing,* The Chicago University Press, Chicago, 1969.

paper by Zenon Pylyshin published in 1999.[12] By the late 1990s these positions started to affect positions in other fields of philosophy; Nick Zangwill's revival of formalist aesthetics is particularly relevant for architects and it correlates with discussions about formal architectural properties in the context of the use of digital media in architecture.[13]

The 1960s produced a huge wave of cultural-constructionism and anti-realism that swept over the humanities and came to dominate architectural academia and theoretical thinking about architecture in the 1990s. Looking back after more than twenty years it is fair to say that it produced more smoke than light; few architectural writings of that era, motivated by then-contemporary philosophical positions, are more than historical documents of self-promotion strategies believed to be fruitful during the era. This should not be surprising: it must have been excruciatingly hard to defend seriously, in the realm of architecture as a discipline, the suppression of visuality or the view that all thinking is verbal. In the meantime, as mentioned, concentrated and systematic realist and empiricist attacks have made such positions obsolete in modern philosophical thought.

Concluding Rumination

Where do we stand now? There are good reasons for optimism, since the opportunities for productive exchange between architecture and philosophy are better than they have ever been in the past century. Architectural thinking can significantly profit from more philosophical treatment of the problems it faces. By this I mean, for instance, the complex theoretical problems that arise when one considers the use of visual methods in architectural communication, ethical problems in architecture, or the problems of conservation of heritage architecture. One may also hope that in the future research in aesthetics will be less hampered when considering the visual and spatial nature of architectural works. In architectural history, research on philosophical influences in architectural theory is a field in which little work has been done.

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[12] Z. Pylyshyn, "Is vision continuous with cognition? The case for cognitive impenetrability of visual perception," *Behavioural and Brain Sciences,* 22, 1999, pp. 341–423. For the relation between the research on the impenetrability of vision and non-conceptual content see A. Raftopoulos, *Cognition and Perception: How Do Psychology and Neural Science Inform Philosophy?,* MIT Press, Cambridge, Mass., 2009.

[13] N. Zangwill, *The Metaphysics of Beauty,* Cornell University Press, Ithaca, NY, 2001.

There is, however, a more profound influence that one hopes philosophy will exercise on architecture and its theory. This pertains to the ability to form arguments and develop their logical implications. One should avoid the form of interaction between philosophers and architects which enables the latter to conclude that they can pick and choose from the views of philosophers as it suits them. Architectural theorists of the past were able to structure their positions in accordance with the arguments they wanted to make – such as Leon Battista Alberti or Geoffrey Scott. Introducing standards of intellectual rigour in architectural theory – a discipline so marked today by remarkably relaxed attitudes – is going to be a formidable task. But at least, for the first time in many years, philosophy is again an ally.

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$[A \wedge P ; P \wedge A]$ [*A* AND *P* ; *P* AND *A*]: Architecture and Philosophy, Philosophy and Architecture

ABSTRACT: This reflection is an attempt to bridge Architecture < and > Philosophy, supported by two main drives: a Wittgensteinian form and a Nietzschean intempestiveness. This means that the final result, besides being fragile, fragmentary, and slightly unorthodox, will only make sense if the reader abandons himself to the proposals to think with the text, accompanying the challenges that each proposition entails, like a peripatetic dialog in a philosophical garden.

KEYWORDS: philosophy, architecture, Wittgenstein, conjunction, bicondicionality

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0.1 P ∧ A

0.1 All the world's problems can be decomposed, recomposed, and re-problematized in various ways, explicit and inexplicit, complex or simple, macro and micro, *ad infinitum*.

0.1.1 All things in the world are related to all other things.

0.1.2 The relationship is multiple, in the orderly variation between chaos and order, but nothing subsists by itself, nothing exists in isolation.

0.1.2.1 Every report, construction, invention, and thought of relationships, connections, and correspondences, is a way of understanding the world and life.

0.1.2.2 Life is the highest value.

0.1.3 It is fair to point out that it is different departing from philosophy towards architecture than from architecture to philosophy.

0.1.3.1 *It is difficult to find the beginning*. But it's a game changer where you start your beginning from. Rawls tried very hard to create a solution for this problem.

0.1.4 The easiest way to start the introduction to our problem is by disjunction: P ∨ A ∴ P

0.1.5 Philosophy is an exercise in curiosity and perplexity. Curiosity is the state of tension to know something, to overcome ignorance, our great enemy. Curiosity is a *sine qua non* condition of knowledge. Perplexity has to do with a mismatch, a short circuit, an injustice in some way, a restlessness.

0.1.5.1 Philosophy is an exercise that springs from negativity, pain, suffering, and scars, from a mismatch with the world.

0.1.5.2 Philosophy is an exercise in radicalism, in abstract and concrete thinking. There is no pure metaphysics just as there is no absolute pragmatics. As in architecture, there is no such thing as pure inspiration or pure function (pure function would be engineering *tout court*).

0.1.5.3 Philosophy is an exercise in Humbleness. There is a demand for smallness, modesty, and relativity. Recognize in Pascal this absolute and concrete distension.

0.1.5.4 Philosophy inhabits a claim of universality, a long illness incapable of resolving the eternal problems that afflict each generation from the beginning. For some, a useless rational, and melancholy disease, for others, an honest way of life, and the courageous challenge of facing the unknown and the mystery of life.

0.15.41 The mystery of life has two main veins: as a miracle or as a condemnation.

0.1.5.5 All of philosophy could be summarized in two concepts: ignorance and desire.

0.1.6 The easiest way to start the introduction to our problem is by disjunction: $A \vee P \therefore A$

0.1.6.1 Architecture is the result of an exercise in idealization and construction.

0.1.6.2 "*Architecture is what architects do*," says the ignorant philosopher, being outside of the problem.

0.1.6.21 There are many ways to occupy your time and spend your life. There are a lot of things one can do. But there is a difference between doing and acting.

0.1.6.3 Architecture is an art based on technique, on the struggle between function and the pursuit of beauty.

0.1.6.4 [*dark (il)logical areas*] Ideological trenches 1: architecture is practical: it concerns use, money, the customer, and the order. The pursuit of beauty is a luxury (useless and unnecessary).

0.1.6.5 [*dark (il)logical areas*] Ideological trenches 2: the disjunction often settles in a fault, in a crack: the realm of prejudice.

0.1.6.6 [*dark (il)logical areas*] Ideological trenches 3: the disjunction can evolve into the affirmation of a contradiction: the kingdom of stereotypes.

0.1.6.7 In order for dialogue to exist there must be a willingness to listen to the other, and to want to know about the other.

0.1.7 The ideal way to start the introduction to our problem is by conjunction: $[A \wedge P ; P \wedge A]$

0.1.7.1 Philosophy and architecture can be linked in conjunction. All notebooks are proof of that. The thought and the drawn line.

0.1.7.2 There are many ways for two things to be related. Start at the beginning: philosophy and architecture are not in contradiction.

0.1.7.21 Philosophy and architecture can be understood through distributivity (and complementarity).

0.1.7.22 Philosophy and architecture can be understood by bi-conditional cumulativeness.

0.1.7.23 Philosophy and architecture can be understood, in their common richness, through associativity. But they can't be talking to themselves with their backs turned, using each other what they want from each other. Associativity as a principle of deepening (in the fight against ignorance). The task of philosophy is to show. More light. The work of philosophy is like a miner. Light and darkness.

0.1.7.23 Philosophy and architecture can be understood through linear biconditionality $(p \leftrightarrow q)$ but a new logical notation should be invented, a new symbol (close to the image of the bridge) that reveals a fragile biconditionality, a voluntary implication *(P <--------->A)*. Which reveals the existence of philosophy in architecture and architecture in philosophy $(P \rightarrow A) \wedge (A \rightarrow P)$.

0.1.7.231 Sometimes everything would be simpler if we substituted the word philosophy for thought.

0.1.7.232 Clarity of thought and language is inestimable. Therefore, there is thought in architecture and an architecture of thought.

0.1.7.233 Philosophy has no place in the world today. It could be eradicated. There is a confusion between Philosophy and thought. Philosophy

closed itself off in the academy, misunderstood and bitter. Thought, on the other hand, can never close in on itself. It is dialogue. Without dialogue, there is no thought. Philosophy has been expelled from the *polis*, and in a sorrowful monologue it laments its heavy fate. Philosophy today is a Greek tragedy that everyone wishes could simply die far away and in silence.

0.1.7.234 Philosophy is today a Greek tragedy that everyone would like to die far away and in silence so that they could feast at ease, and thus look young and fresh. Cosmetic and image operations, fireworks, political economy of thought oriented towards quantification, results, funding, and markets. The voracity of the game is no match for the general barbaric cruelty.

0.1.7.2341 The existential tragedy can be defined as forcing our belonging in a place that rejects us. The tragedy of this tragedy, in addition to its ironic outcome of cancellation, is transvestism. The show must go on. But the abyss is still there, waiting to be filled, to be faced.

0.1.7.235 There is really just one paradigm of philosophical anthropology: *inclusion-belonging-recognition* vs. *exclusion-solitude-abandonment*. Translated to political philosophy in the eternal return of the same: the conquest and maintenance of power.

0.1.8 The hand that draws the line surrenders with the same impulse as the hand that writes the music sheet. In its most radical nudity, the same gesture is rooted in its utmost simplicity: a seeing-listening, a white sheet of paper, a pen or pencil. The virtual root of an invisible process. For this same reason, it revealed the fascination we feel for the unique beauty of notebooks, notepads, small papers, scribbles, and the first attempts that something makes to be born.

0.1.9 The relationship between philosophy and architecture is an invisible bridge, as is the spirit that supports the hand that draws.

0.1.9.1 The task of philosophy with architecture is to bring to the surface of words and concepts, the intuition and inspiration of the hand, and the eye, that imagines the solution, the form, the process.

0.1.10 Words are the crumbs we use to remember processes.

0.2 . R [A ∧ P ; P ∧ A]. Relation.

0.2.1 Relation is the way two or more entities interact.

0.2.11 All ontological propositions are quasi-evident, although necessary.

0.2.111 To think is to establish relationships. Phenomenon and representation. Co-relation.

0.2.2 In doubt, always go back to Kant: quantity, quality, modality, relation.

0.2.2.1 Relationship between the three cognitive faculties as well: sensitivity, understanding, and reason. But it is the imagination, and more properly a trap of the imagination (*focus imaginarius*), that allows progress.

0.2.2.2 Never forget the conditions of possibility of the phenomenon. Simplify and empathize, in short, make an effort. The attempt to understand and explain something is related to a context and in a context.

0.2.2.2.1 Like a philosophical mantra: *Never forget the context*. Even in the pure negation of context, in the absence of context.

0.2.2.3 Kant saw, in his own way, a balance in the architecture of reason. A game. It is that game that we still play and that will be playing for a long time.

0.2.2.4 No matter how much we rationally try to understand the relationships in the world, we are always left with a feeling *of deep mystery and hidden art*.

0.2.2.5 Philosophy builds concepts, architecture builds buildings, but there are systems of thought that are an architecture of ideas, and there are buildings that stand on the basis of concepts. The deeper problem is the explanation. Different from substantiating, explaining a thing is to detail its order of reason, and more profoundly its existence, its reason for being. A sketch of a building can be without reason, without explanation. But that doesn't rule out thinking about it. Difference between knowing and thinking.

0.2.3 In doubt, always go back to Aristotle.

0.2.3.1 Use categories as a mathematical linear schema in order to decompose a problem, *i.e.*, methodological principles: substance, quantity, quality, relation, space, time, position, condition, action, affection, etc.

0.2.3.11 Even if we use all categories in our power to aid us in understanding the world, *thought is surrounded by a halo*, i.e., *the order of possibilities*.

0.2.3.111 Simplicity seems to be the hardest word.

0.2.3.12 When we think about relations we always think about the form that will be filled between two or more entities. That space, devoid of any possible form, will remain blank if the relation is not apprehended. That blank space, whichever form it takes (knowable or unknowable), is by itself a hiatus waiting to be realized. The existential becoming of that interval is an open discovery.

0.2.3.13 Some of us feel that we are lacking a sort of lost organon, that we were deprived of it.

0.2.3.2 The general paradigms we are facing today revolve around two main axes: a) *substance*, unity, and multiplicity: non-fusion / sharing; and b) *geometry*, linearity, and non-linearity: from dependence to freedom.

0.2.3.3 The main danger we all have to face, individually and collectively, now and in the future: relationship and suspicion. This may only be surpassed by the truth and not by the understanding of philosophy as a crutch, prothesis, entertainment, or rhetorical ornament. Philosophy, as an effort and thought, cannot be reduced to a marketing strategy of using words. The relationship only has strength when one commits to it. And surrendering to the other is always a risk. The other can pretend to catch us or leave after catching us. It is the challenge of trust. And therefore, the challenge of building a new organon.

0.2.3.4 Trust is a virtuous relation of mutual benefit. It's a relation beyond selfishness and altruism.

0.2.3.5 Relation and accident (erosion or creation). Facing the hermeneutic depth regarding dehumanization.

0.2.3.51 Facing the other has an intentional density beyond words. Fighters know that. And that is also why some people can't look others in the eye. In ethics, we must never forget small gestures. Our face is an ethical statement. In ethics, we must never forget Levinas.

0.2.4 The dialectical paradigm of identity and difference can be translated according to Aristotle in three figures of relation: utility, pleasure, and good.

0.3 A ∧ P

0.3.1 All ontological or metaphysical propositions are unnecessary, with the exception of the first big question: being or nothingness? Irony of ironies.

0.3.2 There is only one contemporary dilemma: repetition.

0.3.2.1 There is only one contradiction in the contemporary: the very contradictory condition of the contemporary imprisoned in its totalitarian statute, *i.e.*, the infinite imprisonment in the present and the immediate. Sisyphus' dilemma.

0.3.3 Wittgenstein is the great founder of the bridge between philosophy and architecture: *de jure* and *de facto*.

0.3.4 The relationship between architecture and philosophy is rooted in the ancient battle between theory and practice, concept and fact, beauty and usefulness, light and shadow, thought form and crystalized form. But with blind people on both sides of the conflict. *There is no spoon*.

0.3.5 The ultimate object of philosophy is the affirmation of the individual, of the self, and the ultimate object of architecture is the other, as a self.

0.3.6 Everything that matters in the work of philosophy and architecture is posthumous. It belongs to the future. Philosophical and architectural work is an exercise in solitude. The advantage of architecture is the construction site: a live feed that is still part of the process.

0.3.6.1 There is a risk of philosophy becoming subsidiary of other disciplines, losing its autonomy and radicality, its self-sustainability, and

entering a process of subservience and weakening. Is this statement just a prejudiced prediction or does the existence of applied philosophy in no way affect the prestige of philosophical activity in its millenary path? Applied philosophy was always part of the exercise of philosophy until it was locked in the tower of the campus, becoming sterile and unrelated to the world and the real problems of the living. It became an archaeological discipline. We must rescue philosophical anthropology and restore the bridges of knowing and doing.

0.3.6.12 Philosophy is not a monologue. It's a dialogue. With life.

0.3.7 Loneliness and anonymity: shadow and dust, victory and defeat of what remains.

0.3.7.1 The ultimate fight is against space and time: ruins and memory.

0.3.7.11 The ultimate fight is against laziness. Become your principles, become your actions: embodiment.

0.3.7.12 The ultimate fight is against death.

0.3.8 Architecture, as an aesthetic and anthropological phenomenon, is a permanent challenge, far beyond its basic utilitarian and practical understanding, which is its undeniable origin. Crossing that initial line implies opening a frontier.

0.3.81 Maybe the journey is always more interesting than the finish line. Enjoy the ride.

0.3.9 The founding architectural gesture: *symbol*, victory over nature, or *choice*, and conquest of the unnecessary. Fold over the useless.

0.3.9.1 The architectural gesture rises up and edifies itself between ethics and aesthetics, with ethics and aesthetics, which are after all *one and the same thing*.

0.3.10 If the 21st century will be determined by sensations, emotions, and passions, then the challenge of architecture, and art in general, can be summed up in one word: immersion.

0.3.11 Beauty is the fight against the machine of the world.

0.3.111 Beauty is the fight against the ugliness of the world.

0.3.112 The teleology of beauty in one word: freedom.

0.3.113 Biology and dialectic of beauty: pleasure, agreement, surprise, overtaking, pleasure.

0.3.114 Architecture of beauty: Imagination vs. Reason. (*Cognition, desire, and feeling.*)

0.3.115 Beauty is the transcendence of function, the victory over logic. Expression, emotion, projection, immersion.

0.3.12 Projection of the self and others: the problem of identity. As in solitude or affirmation, in refusal or recognition.

0.3.13 Protection of oneself and others: the problem of nature. As in the scorpion and the toad. As in storm and lightning.

0.314 Architecture deals with need and desire. The desire part is what ties it to philosophy.

0.315 It is said of inspiration: struggle between form and matter, within time, between memory and oblivion, discipline and laziness, routine and anarchy.

There is no architecture without thought. That would be mere execution. Pure technique.

0.316 If the future is thrown on emotions, how will a dispositional architecture come about? An architecture beyond housing, that plays in dialogue with senses and that enhances them?

A power to unfold and discover.

0.317 Architecture is more than a contract, although it is always social, it is a Faustian pact between money and beauty.

0.318 With imagination as the ruling faculty, dreams, utopias, visions, possibilities, coexistences, and compossibility are diluted and melted together. The shadows and light that mix in reconnection with the past, present, or with future ruins, with what has already died and what is

about to be born, everything and everyone trapped in an orgiastic limbo of pure force and creation, of maximum potency, origin, and end. In this vital magma, we look into the fog of the future in search of a familiar face. Architecture is patient waiting. Or a machine to make money and please others. There is a difference between serving and obeying. Dialogue is born out of mutual respect.

0.321 Immersion is a dialogue for diving and housing. Architecture as a service.

0.322 The architectural practice ranges between two extreme borders: on one hand the common good, related to scarcity and poverty, and on the other the privileged, regarding luxury and rarity.

0.323 Will empty and linear architecture succumb to feeling and passion?

0.324 Architecture is an exercise in paradoxical movement because in movement it roots things but also fixes itself. And philosophy is an exercise in stopping, in suspension.

0.325 In architecture, ethics, and aesthetics go hand in hand. Wittgenstein knew of this unbreakable connection.

0.33 When we talk about philosophy and architecture, we should always start with Wittgenstein.

0.34 The search for the new, beyond adventure, is a risk of death.

0.35 At the crossroads of the present, where the real city and the virtual city overlap, complexity settles in and requires an ethical effort, a responsibility that will be increasingly at stake, in the optimistic expectation that technologies of care will replace the technologies of solitude.

In the labyrinth of the future and the present, there is both a clearing and a desert, which pushes some towards the comfort of the ordered past, and others towards the madness of the unpredictable, where we walk like blind people clinging to each other's shoulders.

0.36 One of the greatest beauties of architecture is its work with what does not exist, with what is not yet seen, with what is not there.

0.361 Sometimes you only discover things while doing them. Process is the key word. And eventually the thing that you are building starts to dialogue with you, demanding some gestures and refusing others.

At that precise point of unveiling, in the case of the architect, he unlocks a multi-dimension plateau that fuses architecture, engineering, mason, and voyeur.

0.37 Architecture is a primitive art. Incredibly, it belongs to a restricted set of primary gestures such as eating, dressing, protecting, attacking, and procreating. It belongs to the few arts and techniques from which we were able to return to an original position of survival such as hunting, walking around looking for food and water, painting. Even before telling stories, the great mother of all words in the struggle against silence.

0.371 There is something primitive that remains in the architectural gesture. In the fight against time, in the tearing of the space, Sisyphus celebrates an ancient gesture, similar to that of architecture, between effort and disappearance, habitation and death.

0.372 The essence of the architectural gesture or the problem of the origin in/of architecture.

Two paradigms: a) The menhir as a paradigm, architecture as a change. Exit the cave to the Dolmen, Anta, open air, and open space, facing human vulnerability and essential fragility. And recreating the cave again in plain field; or b) The possibility of overcoming survival. Beat nature or build a second nature, through choice, by preference: the aesthetic. The unnecessary.

0.373 An archeology of the essence of architecture is something too crude and distant for today's taste, too close to the smell, that long forgotten relative disappeared and far from our civilized sight, a futile attempt to find traces that did not yet inhabit the sound of the machines. Architecture is a search, a hunt.

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Architecture as the Housing of Life: Notes on Heidegger and Agamben

ABSTRACT: The paper begins with critical engagement with Agamben's interpretation of the limits inherent in Heidegger's thinking of the relationship between "dwelling" and "building." The overall argument is that while the positions of Agamben and Heidegger differ they are both marked by a resistance to the presence of an original form of relationality. Acknowledging the presence of what is called *anoriginal relationality* necessitates a rethinking of both building and dwelling. That rethinking, while indebted to Agamben and Heidegger, is equally a departure from the restrictions their positions impose.

KEYWORDS: Heidegger, Agamben, architecture, dwelling, uninhabitable

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0.

The initial question, the one that resides with the formulation *philosophy and architecture*, concerns how the "and" is to be understood. In the abstract the "and" can be as much disjunctive as it can be conjunctive. Even in the move from abstraction in which the "and" comes to be located squarely in the formulation *philosophy and architecture*, both separation and connexion are possible. If the "and" is to be retained and thus a relation envisaged, then the basis of any form of relation would need to be established. It cannot be simply posited as though there was philosophy and then architecture (equally as though there was architecture and then philosophy). One cannot be added to the other. Consequently, once it becomes essential to ground any form of relation, then that relation has to occur within a specific set of parameters. The project therefore is to begin to examine how the parameters, thus the setting which might ground and position the "and," are themselves to be understood. It should be noted in advance that there is no one specific set of parameters and as a result the relationship between philosophy and architecture will always be a locus of dispute. Disputes will invariably begin with the specific force to be attributed to the "and."

In more general terms however allowing for the "and" necessitates taking a stand in regards to architecture; a stand that might be understood as always already comprising an opening to the philosophical. It should not be thought that neutrality is possible. To take a stand is already to hold to a specific position. Even if the stand is directly philosophical, then, to reiterate the point noted above, it should not be thought that the philosophical has a singular determination. Even though the consequences of this positioning brings with it inevitable complications, points of departure can still be found. The argument to be developed here necessitates incorporating an analysis of two images that comprise specific instances of architecture's own self-conception. The first image is the famous frontispiece by Charles Eisen from Marc-Antoine Laugier's *Essai sur l'architecture* (2nd ed. 1755), while the second is one of the images that accompanied Cesare di Lorenzo's 1521 translation of Vitruvius. As will be argued, when juxtaposed these images comprise a fundamental either/or. In the first instance, on one side of the either/or, the architectural can be construed uniquely in terms of the object, i.e. the building. From within this perspective the predominating concern is form and its creation. The other side of the either/or starts with a network of relations

in which the building, the object, figures. However, its presence is only ever as an after-effect of the continual effective presence of that network. Viewed historically, that network is originally named as the *polis*, *urbs* or *città*. From within this position, architecture as the building depends upon the priority, in every sense of the word, of the city. While form creation is obviously important, and while it has its own site of philosophical engagement, part of the premise of this paper – the presence of a premise indicating that a stand has already been taken – is that an insistence on form creation and thus the restriction of the philosophical to an understanding of that creation divorces architecture from the priority of the city and thus the priority of the urban. While this may appear to be no more than a formal argument about the priority of the object – i.e. the discreet building – versus the priority of the city, understood as a network of relations, far more is at stake. Moreover, this is not just where the philosophical becomes important; more significantly, that importance resides in the presence of an ineliminable division within the philosophical itself. That division, one that complicates any thinking of the "and," is between an understanding of the origin in terms of the singular, in the first instance, while in the second it pertains to a conception of the origin as a site of plurality. Even though the question to be addressed concerns how that plurality is understood, once plurality is located at the origin then singularities are only ever after-effects.

There is a further point that needs to be added. The position underpinning the argument presented here involves the claim that any engagement with the question of the being of being human has to begin with the recognition that being human and being-placed are necessarily interrelated. Once such a position is accepted, it then follows that the city has be to be understood as the place of human life. (That life – human life – involves relations to other forms of life, namely animal life, plant life, etc.) To grasp this setting – the setting of life – philosophy would need, in the language of Donatella di Cesare, "to return to the city."[1] In addition, once this position is assumed then philosophy's continual concern with the "good life" (*εὐδαιμονία*, *vita beata*, etc.), can no longer be automatically equated with the "good life" of the individual. On the contrary, no matter how the concept of the individual is understood, the possibility of the "good life" can only ever be an after-effect of the

[1] D. di Cesare. "It is Time for Philosophy to Return to the City," *Journal of Continental Philosophy*, 1, 2020, pp. 201–218.

individual's location within a network of relations understood, on one level, as the city. Its presence needs to be understood as the actualization of a potentiality.[2] If this mode of argumentation is continued then what counts as architecture opens itself up to the possibility of a fundamental reconfiguration. The assumed centrality of built form and therefore processes of form creation would cede their place to an understanding of architecture as the housing of life. As a result, architecture, while involving form creation, becomes an inherently biopolitical occurrence. The entry of the philosophical into such a configuration would then acquire a different determination. The presence of the philosophical could no longer be explained in terms of the addition of philosophy to architecture as though one merely supplemented or translated the other. The point of connexion – thus one possible understanding of the "and" – would be in terms of "life."[3] In other words, if it can be argued that philosophy's engagement with the question of what comprises the "good life" needs to be understood biopolitically (namely it needs to be understood in terms of the location of the being of being human within the city and thus as already placed), what the "and" that connects *philosophy and architecture* marks is the centrality of life within the both domains. In order to continue this development of the "and," the next move here is to examine the way in which Heidegger's writings on architecture, notably in his text "Building, Dwelling, Thinking" and Giorgio Agamben's recent critical engagement with Heidegger can themselves be reconfigured in terms, not just of the centrality of life, but a presentation of the architectural as the housing of life. The project does not end with either Heidegger or Agamben. Their limitations provide further openings.

The either/or noted above involves a genuine division within how the relationship between philosophy and architecture is understood. (The distinction between, on the one hand, the identification of architecture with the form, form creation and thus with building, or, on the other, an insistence on a relational understanding of the architectural in which while there are objects they are positioned as after-effect of the operative presence of networks of relations.) Even in accepting this distinction, it still needs to be noted that the centrality of a concern with the object and thus with form creation still brings with it an engagement with a form of

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[2] On the point see my "Potentially, Relationality and the Problem of Actualisation," *Teoria: rivista di filosofia*, 1, 2020, pp. 115–124.

[3] See my "Thinking Life: The Force of the Biopolitical," *Crisis and Critique*, 9, 2022, pp. 61–82.

life. However, it has a strict delimitation. It is a form of life that pertains almost uniquely to the individual and thus to the individuated subject. In other words, the continual identification of architecture with both the object and form creation is part of the project of a neoliberal agenda in which objects exist for subjects produced by processes of individuation.[4] Within this specific configuration, the question of life pertains exclusively to the life of the individual. As is clear, what is obviated as a result is any understanding of life as inherently relational.

I.

Moving towards Agamben's engagement with Heidegger involves a preliminary step. As part of his detailed engagement with Heidegger on the complex relationship between *Wohnen* (dwelling) and *Bauen* (building) Giorgio Agamben in a recent text – "Abitare e costruire" – returns to the central question of life.[5] In part this is made possible because of the interplay between living and being-housed that is already at work in the word "*abitare*." While the term "life" has its own determinations within Agamben's philosophical writings, more generally, in the context of this paper, the term "life" will be understood as having an inherently active dimension. (This is a position that is consistent with the continual devolution of life into forms of life.) Conversely, therefore, references to life are not to be understood merely in regards to its biological enactment. From within the space of concerns opened by Heidegger, and thus as part of the departure from the biological, "life" has to be thought, in the first instance, in terms of "ethos" and thus in terms of an originary ethics. This is significant precisely because the link between *ethos* and ethics stages part of the context of Heidegger's own thinking of the relationship between "dwelling" (*Wohnen*) and "building" (*Bauen*). That link is found,

[4] On the relationship between architecture and neoliberalism see D. Spenser, *The Architecture of Neoliberalism*, Bloomsbury, London, 2017. The move to the object and its resultant insistence on a form of autonomy that was defined purely in terms of form creation has been the subject of a sustained analysis and critique by Pedro Fiori Arantes. See his *The Rent of Form: Architecture and Labour in the Digital Age*, University of Minnesota Press, Indianapolis, 2019. While the book is not directly philosophical in orientation it nonetheless demands a response to the question of architecture's possible link to the creation of other possibilities for life, where life is understood biopolitcally. Namely, as a site in which subject positions are located, thus housed by the interplay of the political and the economic.

[5] G. Agamben "Abitare e costruire," https://www.quodlibet.it/giorgio-agamben-abitare-e-costruire (accessed September 27, 2022).

for example, in Heidegger's translation of Heraclitus fragment DK119: *ἦθος ἀνθρώπῳ δαίμων*. Heidegger's translation is as follows:

> *Der (geheure) Aufenthalt ist dem Menschen das Offene für die Anwesung des Gottes (des Un-geheuren).*
>
> [The (familiar) abode for humans is the open region for the presenting of gods (the unfamiliar ones].[6]

Ethos (*ἦθος*) is linked to a sense of place, an abode and thus being-in-place. The latter is identified in this formulation by the term *der Aufenthalt*. Consequently, ethics, ethos and place have to be thought together. And yet, this setting, despite appearances, is not on its own the point of departure. What attends is the related question – Who dwells? The reason for asking this question is straightforward. It has both an interruptive and a productive quality. Once asked, there can be no return to the simple positing of an abstract subject (the subject as no more than an abstraction). Moreover, only once this question is answered is it possible to take up the problem of how the place of dwelling is to be construed. Agamben has a clear answer to the first of these questions, the question – Who dwells? In part it is an answer that is implicit is his partial recalibration of the ethical in terms of what he describes in "Abitare e costruire" as occurring within a certain "monastic vocabulary." Within that "vocabulary" ethics becomes a "*secum habitare*." Namely, dwelling as dwelling with oneself which opens up both a singular dwelling with the divine and a dwelling with others, one forming and informing the other. The other difficulty that attends Agamben's return to the monastic is the reinscription of abstraction. (It is, of course, a conception of abstraction that comes undone the moment it is analysed insofar as its invocation is from the start the inscription of Christianised conception of the subject and subjectivity into a thinking of place, albeit one occurring in the guise of neutrality.)

Starting with the question – Who dwells? – as a description of the ethical is not straightforward. To think there is a single answer – and thus a single definition of the ethical (and ethos) – would be to miss the

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[6] M. Heidegger, "Brief über den 'Humanismus'," *Wegmarken*, *Gesamtausgabe*, vol. 9, Vittorio Klostermann, Frankfurt am Main, 1976, p. 356; M. Heidegger, "Letter on Humanism," *Basic Writings*, HarperSanFrancisco, San Francisco, p. 256. Charles Kahn, in his edition of fragments, translates this fragment as: "Man's character is his fate." See C. Kahn, *The Art and Thought of Heraclitus*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1979, p. 81.

already overdetermined nature of place and thus being-in-place; place as the locus of different modes of occupation and thus territorialization. It is an overdetermination that is captured in the already-noted division between a concern with architecture defined in relation to the building and thus the singular subject on the one hand, and, on the other, a conception of architecture as always already relational and thus linked to the city. As has already been indicated, these two possibilities are already present in the history of architecture. More exactly, they are already present in architecture's imagistic presentation of its own myths of origin. Precisely because images are already the *loci* of informed form – namely sites that are determined by ideational content – once the conflation of the singular and the relational is refused, a radically different set of possibilities then emerge. An integral part of the project of this paper is to show how the recovery of this founding difference allows for a sustained repositioning of both Agamben's critique of Heidegger understanding the connection between dwelling and building, as well as what Agamben describes more generally as architecture's "historical *a priori*."

2.

The first image is from Marc-Antoine Laugier's *Essai sur l'architecture* (2nd ed. 1755). It is the famous frontispiece by Charles Eisen (Figure 1). What is present here is the identification of architecture, not just with "*le petite cabane rustique*," but with the singular building. *Architectura* leaning on classical ruins points to the singularity of architecture (architecture therefore as a set of singularities.) The image is clear. At the origin there is a singular object. While the image identifies both the transformation of nature and the presence of an origin that is predicated on a form of ruination, the overriding concern of the image is the identification of architecture with the building. As Laugier writes:

> The small rustic cabin is the model on which *all* the greatnesses of architecture are imagined.
>
> [*(L)e petite cabane rustique* (...) *est le modele sur lequel on a imaginé* toutes *les magnificences de l'Architecture*.][7] (Emphasis added.)

[7] M-A. Laugier, *Essai sur l'architecture*, Duchesne, Paris, 1755, pp. 9–10.

As a result the meaning of *being-at-home* in the building is left unaddressed. Hence the distinction, or the possibility of the distinction between *domus* and *aedes* is inscribed within the image itself, even if the question of their relation is left unaddressed. In addition, what this image sets in play is the interconnection of architecture and the housing of individual lives. Hence, there is the implicit response to the question – Who dwells? It is within the terms established by this "small rustic cabin" that architecture will not just become the house; it will equally take on the quality of a commodity, thus staging architecture's eventual relation of necessity to real estate. Located therefore in the afterlife of this image is the history of architecture as the history of building, the latter's relationship to the abstract subject – who will of course be the subject within the development of capitalist consumption – and what will become an inevitable link between architecture and the market. *Architectura* is pointing to far more that she could have known.

The other image has a number of sources (Figure 2). All stem from the images that accompanied Cesare di Lorenzo's 1521 translation of Vitruvius.[8] The images were reproduced in a number of subsequent sixteenth-century translations of Vitruvius. In this instance, the image is from Gianbatista Caporali's 1536 translation published in Perugia. The image is entitled: *la edificatione nell'eta de primi huomini del mondo*.

As such, it takes on the quality of an imagistic presentation of another one of architecture's myths of origin. While it is possible to locate elements within the overall image of what will become the 'primitive hut,' what is significant here is that architecture begins neither with the *domus* nor the *aedes* – let alone their complex relation – but with the *urbs*. The latter is understood as involving modes of relationality. While these modes differ on the level of scale – from the village becoming the urban conurbation – it remains the case that relationality is figures within them as an original condition. The nascent city therefore has both originality and priority. While the move to the city as the locus of a more complex urbanism will perhaps only truly emerge once it becomes necessary to provide myths of origin for cities and thus to write into the city an account of its origin such that modes of relationality are also sites of both real and imagined memory, what the image presents is the singular

[8] For a brief discussion of the source of the image, see the note and accompanying bibliographical references in Alessandro Rovetta's edition of Cesariano. C. Cesariano, *Vitruvio De Architectura*, V&P Università, Milano, 2002, p. 21.

Figure 1. Charles Dominique Joseph Eisen, Frontispiece of Marc-Antoine Laugier, *Essai sur l'architecture*, second edition, Duchesne, Paris, 1755.

Figure 2. "La edificatione nell'eta de primi huomini del mondo," *Architettura con il suo comento et figure Vetruvio in volgar lingua raporato per M. Gianbatista Caporali di Perugia*, Giano Bigazzini, Perugia, 1536, p. 46.

object as an after-effect of the network of relations that defines the city. At the origin there is an important inversion. The origin of architecture – as Aldo Rossi will later observe – lies in the city.[9]

Any description of the scene within this image has to note the differing modalities of time and movement. A road is present, connecting the houses, allowing and occasioning movement between them. While some house are finished, others are being constructed. Work is being directed; thus work is being undertaken. The city is a site of its own creation and transformation. There is no single founding act, thus no singular arché. *Architectura* would have no one singular object at which to point. Relationality is therefore anoriginal. (The term "anoriginal" marking the presence of an already pluralized site at the origin.[10]) Images of transformation and creation have their own history within imagistic presentations of the urban condition. Equally, within this elementary urban condition domestic animals are present. The dog is wearing a collar. The nursing of the baby occurs outside the literal *aedes* marking it equally as the *domus* within the *urbs*. In other words, these are mode of human activity precisely because of their location within the urban. Life is at home within the urban condition. If there is to be a place of justice – and equally for the control and yet equally for the possibility of injustice – then it is the city. There can be therefore no *secum habitare* as a purely self-referring term other than one that assumes a preliminarily and original *nobiscum*. In other words, responding to the question – Who dwells? – moves from the singular to a response that demands both the primacy and the originality of the relational; i.e. anoriginal relationality. This setting occurs within architecture's own history. Thus it is possible to interpret Vitruvius in terms of the centrality of this form of relationality. He notes, for example:

> Therefore, because of the discovery of fire, there arose at the beginning, concourse among men (*conventus*), deliberation (*concilium*) and a life in common (*convictus esset natus*). (II, 1, 2)[11]

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[9] See A. Rossi, *L'architettura della città,* Il Saggiatore, Milano, 2018. On the continual relevance of the city as the locus for the "project" of architecture see P. V. Aureli, "Means to an End: The Rise and Fall of the Architectural Project of the City," in P. V. Aureli (ed.), *The City as a Project*, Ruby Press, Berlin, 2013.

[10] In regards to the anoriginal see my "Recovering Anoriginal Relationality," *Research in Phenomenology*, 47, 2017, pp. 250–261.

[11] Vitruvius, *On Architecture*, vol. 1, Harvard University Press, Cambridge, Mass., 1983, pp. 78, 79.

Life in common necessitates relational architecture – here the *urbs* – as the founding relational event. Moreover, it is a conception of the relational, as the image makes clear, in which there are already differentials of power, including gendered divisions. Judgement would have to involve the relationship between being-in-common as the presence of a conception of equality within human being, and commonality's lived reality.

Within these images, there is a fundamental difference between the singular dwelling in which subjects are potentially in place – as the actualized presence of being-in-place – on the one hand, and, on the other, the inscription of already present subjects within an original form of relationality. In other words, what they project are different forms of life. While the differences between the images needs to be developed, the house as a singular object and the occupier – the dweller – who is equally there as a singular entity allows for a form of abstraction that then occasions a formulation, as will become clear, such as Heidegger's claim that "*der Mensch sei, insofern er wohne*" ("man is insofar as he dwells").[12] In other words, co-present here are the singularity of place and an abstract conception of human being where both are predicated on either the suspension or the effacing of any form of original relationality. What this means is that Heidegger's formulation, while accurate, is also misleading because of its level of abstraction. The effacing of the relational means that he does not just fail to note the distinction between the locus of dwelling as that which grounds the interplay between *domus* and *aedes* on the one hand, and their relation to the *urbs* on the other, it also fail to recognize that their interconnection involves differentials of power. Those differentials entail that the actualization of the potentialities within relationality is always contingent. Hence the failure of recognition is fundamental once it becomes necessary to connect a description of architecture as the housing of life to philosophy's own concern with the "good life."

3.

Heidegger argues in "Building, Dwelling, Thinking,", as a result of what he takes to be the historical and etymological connections between *Bauen* and *Wohnen*, that "building originally means to dwell."[13] This for

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[12] M. Heidegger, "Bauen Wohnen Denken," *Vorträge und Aufsätze*, *Gesamtausgabe*, vol. 7, Vittorio Klostermann, Frankfurt am Main, 2000, p. 149; M. Heidegger, "Building, Dwelling, Thinking," *Basic Writings*, p. 349.
[13] *Ibid*., p. 348.

Heidegger is a determination which is there today – perhaps as a type of vestige – in the word *Nachbar* (neighbour). In addition, *ich bin*, *du bist*, etc. he argues can be understood as "I dwell," "you dwell" etc., as much as the more direct "I am," "you are," etc. From Heidegger's perspective, *Bauen* and *Wohnen* have an indissoluble connection. Even though it will only be in terms of a form of abstract singularity, addressing the question of dwelling is therefore to address that which is proper to the being of being human. Agamben's response to Heidegger starts with this connection between "building" and "dwelling" (*Bauen* and *Wohnen*). In so doing, he also ignores the question of the relational and thus responds to that connection in terms of the attempt to establish a disjunction – rather than Heidegger's etymological connection – between "building" and "dwelling." The presence of that disjunction constructs what Agamben calls, drawing on Foucault's formulation, the "historical *a priori*" concerning architecture "today" (*oggi*).[14] This position is advanced in the lecture thus:

> *L'a priori storico dell'architettura sarebbe allora oggi precisamente l'impossibilità o l'incapacità di abitare dell'uomo moderno e, per gli architetti, la conseguente rottura del rapporto fra arte della costruzione e arte dell'abitazione.*
>
> [The historical *a priori* of architecture today is the impossibility or inability for modern man to live (*abitare*) and, for architects, it entails the consequent ruining of the relationship between the art of construction and the art of housing.[15]]

As a result of this "impossibility" Heidegger's project, and this despite the presence of etymology, has emphatically come undone. The consequences of this now clear "impossibility" are, for Agamben, that "architecture today finds itself in the historical situation of having to build the uninhabitable (*l'inabitabile*)." In other words, the predicament of architecture restates, from a different position, the predicament

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[14] In *The Order of Things* Foucault defines this "*a priori*" in the following terms:

> This *a priori* is what, in a given period, delimits in the totality of experience a field of knowledge, defines the mode of being of the objects that appear in that field, provides man's everyday perception with theoretical powers, and defines the conditions in which he can sustain a discourse about things that is recognized to be true.

M. Foucault, *The Order of Things: An Archaeology of the Human Sciences*, Tavistock, London, 1970 (Routledge, New York, 1989), p. 172.

[15] G. Agamben, "Abitare e costruire."

of human being. This occurs however in the way that differs from the form of abstraction that marks Heidegger's thinking of the relationship between "building" and "dwelling." (Though as will be argued, it is replaced by a different conception of abstraction.) The 'uninhabitable' entails a form of life that is radically distinct from the creation of the habitable and as a result marks the presence of differentials of power that are already there within the actualization of human being.

What has to be addressed is the question of what is stake in the identification by Agamben of a type of impossibility within Heidegger's attempt to construct a necessary connection between "building" and "dwelling." For Heidegger, this distinction leads to a sense of propriety. For Agamben, equally, a sense of propriety prevails. However, it involves a radical inversion. It is linked to the proposition for which he continually argues, namely that within the modern the "earth" has been repositioned as the "camp." Hence the formulation that "the camp is the *nomos* of the modern." The place of human being has been replaced. The "camp" is understood as

> a zone of indistinction between outside and inside, exception and rule, licit and illicit, in which the very concepts of subjective right and juridical protection no longer made any sense.[16]

The contemporary place of human being incorporates the continual possibility of sustaining that which defined the actual camp, namely the place of the absolute *conditio inhumana*.[17] For Agamben, this has become the condition of "building" (*Bauen*) rendering impossible any fundamental connection to "dwelling" (*Wohnen*). Human propriety has to be reconsidered as a result. Inherent in that reconsideration is another answer to the question – who dwells?

For Heidegger the original condition is captured in the formulation of human being as always already earthly. And yet for Agamben this set up becomes an impossibility as a result of the continuity of the severance between *Bauen* and *Wohnen*. The significance of this position is noted once it is recognised, both that for Heidegger "*Bauen is eigentlich Wohnen*"("Building is essentially dwelling") and equally that "*Das Wohnen ist die Weise, wie die Sterblichen auf der Erde sein*." ("Dwelling

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[16] G. Agamben. *Homo Sacer: Sovereign Power and Bare Life*, Stanford University Press, Stanford, p. 170.

[17] A formulation used by Agamben in *ibid.* p. 165.

is the way that mortals essentially are on the earth.")[18] That severance, evidenced by the continuity of the creation of the uninhabitable, leads to a different philosophical and political position. Once the severances is instantiated in practise by architecture, and, as Agamben argues, that severance is far from novel. After all, in Filarete's ideal city of Sforzinda, presented in his *Libro architettonico* (1464), contained prisons and torture chambers and thus uninhabitable spaces.[19] Given the move from the primacy the habitable to that of the uninhabitable, going on to define human being in terms of a setting created by the 'camp' rather than by the claim that "building is essentially dwelling" then becomes a possibility. The question is what does it mean to respond to this condition? In other words, is it possible to act in ways that can be understood as comprising strategic forms of resistance to the positioning of human being in relation to the ubiquity of the "uninhabitable" rather than an essential coalescence between "building" and "dwelling"?

4.

As has already been suggested, Heidegger's position is underscored by a specific sense of abstraction: abstraction as that which marks the presence of the non-relational. "Dwelling" (*Wohnen*) and thus "Building" (*Bauen*) do not admit of any sense of the differential and thus the implicit housing of the relational. Even though when actualized there may be forms of particularity, they are not the introduction of differentials at the origin of "dwelling" but are that which stands in the way of the recognition – thus the experience – of the original singularity of *Wohnen* and all that such a conception of the singular then entails. Heidegger's argument is that the crisis marking the relationship between building and dwelling should not be conflated with a shortage of actual houses. The necessity in question is more fundamental since it pertains to how human being should be understood. Heidegger's claim is that human being is housed as such, thus in being housed human being is. For Agamben, on the other hand, neither original meanings nor the implications of either terms have been "forgotten by us" (*uns verlorengegangen*").[20] Here it is vital to pay attention to Heidegger's precise formulation. He writes of an "us" (*uns*). This

[18] M. Heidegger, "Bauen Wohnen Denken," p. 150.
[19] See Filarete, *Filarete's Treatise on Architecture,* Yale University Press, New Haven, 1965, chapter 10.
[20] M. Heidegger, "Bauen Wohnen Denken," p. 141.

is the "us" that already figures with an answer to the question – "Who dwells?" Despite its form, the 'us' in question is no more than the plural version of an abstract singularity. In Agamben's formulation of the predicament of human being the setting is radically different. In a recent text Agamben describes this setting as living in a "burning house" (*casa brucia*). The implications of living in a 'burning house' are captured in the following explanatory proposition.

> It is as if power ought at all costs to seize hold of the bare life it has produced, and yet as much as it tries to appropriate and control it with every possible apparatus – no longer just the police but also medicine and technology – bare life cannot but slip away, since it is by definition ungraspable. Governing bare life is the madness of our time. People reduced to their pure biological existence are no longer human; the government of people and the government of things coincide.[21]

The extension of sovereignty such that there is a coincidence of "the government of people and the government of things" is a proposition with its own emphatic form of registration. Moreover, it creates an opening. As a result of Agamben's formulation, and thus even if elements of it can be questioned, what has to be addressed is the problem of what counts as a countermeasure. The problems are clear: however, are there responses that move beyond either the naturalization of the condition he describes, or stances created by passivity. For Agamben, what this predicament evidences is the presence of a complex form of inversion. The reduction of people to what he describes as "pure biological existence," for him, has its counter in the affirmation of the absence of any content or identity. It is as though what is at work here is a form of absolute negation. A pure negativity which not only resists its own negation into a positivity but remains defined by a predominating "without" (*senza*). This "without" singularises and abstracts. In fact, it is the counter sense of abstraction that is there in Agamben. Part of the argument is that what is lost in both Agamben and Heidegger's different senses of abstraction are modes of original relationality, modes in which the differential predominates; an example of the identification of such a position has already been noted in Vitruvius, in his invocation of "life in common." Were being-in-common to be taken as the point of departure, then its presence

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[21] G. Agamben*, When the House Burns Down*, Seagull Books, London, 2022, p. 6.

as an already plural site would complicate how the place of human being was understood. Divisions within cities, hierarchies within the urban, different flows of movement enacting public/private distinctions, logics of carbon heightened, attenuated or even suspended, etc., redefine the place of human being in terms of a *locus* of different interconnecting territories. The process of redefinition would mean that a simple opposition between the habitable and the uninhabitable failed to capture what is present on the level of description, let alone what would have to be involved in the formulation of countermeasures. They would be formulations that were as much philosophical as they would be architectural. Informing both would be a concern with questions pertaining to the enactment of potentializes within forms of life.

If what is at stake is original relationality – a form of relationality there at the origin, thus as noted anoriginal relationality – then it gives rise to a series of relations that always involve what can be described as modes of territorialization. A formulation of this nature, one linking plurality and activity, becomes necessary once there is the move away from differing forms of abstraction. What such a formulation is intended to identify is that while being-in-place as a descriptive term is accurate insofar as human being is of necessity placed, it is also the case that place Is always already structured by hierarchies of power. Modes of territorialization are the effective presence of those hierarchies of power. The move from place to modes of territorialization has to attend questions of governance. Rather than naturalize hierarchies of power, what has to be argued is that within them – within that which attends them – is the possibility of that which is other. In other words, once the priority of relationality is allowed, then other modes of relationality become possible. There is the potentiality for the suspension of those hierarchies and the maintenance of identities that involves different modalities of plurality. (Even accepting the necessity of limitations, it remains the case that this is a position that can be argued philosophically, acted out politically or enacted on the level of design.) It is in terms of this plurality of identities – thus the plurality of forms of life – that what continues to attend is the possibility of justice. Negotiating between plural forms of life, holding to the insistence of plurality and thus to maintain a life without injury, which is a life without injustice, necessitates both a reconfiguration of how life is understood philosophically and equally allow the question of the conception of architecture that attends a just life, a life without injury, can best be posed.

5.

Part of the argument is that with the necessity of architecture's relation to the creation of what Agamben identifies as the "unhabitable" – whose creation, as noted, is part of what he calls the "historical *a priori*" of architecture – architecture cannot separate itself from its implication in processes that lead to the position in which the 'camp' rather than the city having become "the *nomos* of the modern." In other words, it cannot separate itself from the reduction of life to "bare life" (*la nuda vita*). Here it is essential to be careful. That reduction is in fact a production, a production which in singularizing leaves its own traces. Opened up as a result is the possibility of other modes of production. What is of significance about Agamben's arguments is that the possibility of a response to the position he describes is already there in the way those arguments are formulated. However, its recovery would demand a further positioning that he will not make. It emerges in the following claim:

> *Abitare – questa è la definizione che vorrei provvisoriamente proporvi – significa creare, conservare e intensificare abiti e abitudini, cioè modi di essere.*
>
> [Living/dwelling – this is the definition that I would like to propose to you provisionally – means creating, preserving and intensifying modes of living and habits, that is, ways of being.[22]]

This position is ground in the claim that in Agamben's terms the human is an "*inhabiting being*" *(un essere abitante).* This is of course a restaging of the position that is already there, as noted, in Heidegger – namely – "man is insofar as he dwells."[23] What Agamben's formulation actually allows is the direct inscription of life. What that entails is that living and dwelling come to have an important coalescence. As a result there is a concomitant need to rethink life, thus allowing for its intensification. A rethinking that moves the philosophical and thus a thinking of the "and" beyond Heidegger's identification of building and dwelling while simultaneously opening up the question of responding to the presence of the uninhabitable.

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[22] G. Agamben "Abitare e costruire."

[23] M. Heidegger, "Building, Dwelling, Thinking," p. 349.

While there is the possibility that life can be identified with the *conditio inhumana* – in other words, while there is always an ineliminable precarity that accompanies life, life coming undone as a result of its incorporation either into the uninhabitable or the undoing of productive forms of plurality occurring in other ways – what attends such possibilities delimits it in an important way. At the outset, that delimitation has a twofold quality. Firstly, there is the non-necessity of that condition's actualization. In other words, the actualization of the *conditio inhumana* cannot be assumed. It can always be met with a counter strategy. The possibility of strategic counter-measures – and the move to the plural is fundamental in order to understand what is involved in the formulation or design of countermeasures – enjoin a politics played out as much on the level of the philosophical as it would the architectural. The development of countermeasures would take place in the name of other possibilities for life, thus other forms of life. Their actualization within the philosophical and the architectural would, of course, be determined by the specificity of each. Secondly, there is, within Agamben's formulation, "ways of being" (*modi di essere*) (thus presenting a contrast to his identification of the ethical with the monastic) the implicit conceptualization of human being as being-in-relation. Moreover, this conceptualization is already present – i.e. it is not being adduced to human being, it is a description of its already-placed quality. This has the important consequence that recognition of the anoriginality of being-in-relation would allow that set-up to then function as a ground of judgment, were versions of the creation of the uninhabitable to prevail. What follows from this is that the violence – and this would be a step towards a philosophical definition of violence – that undoes relationality, the violence that individualizes and thus allows for the creation of *conditio inhumana*, always operates on the level of the particular. In other words, violence is only ever particular. Violence is the creation of particularities – thus the undoing being-in-relation – that is then part of the possible actualization of violence in all its forms. Violence presupposes the presence of the relational, as it results from the latter's undoing. The defence of the relational is not a defence of an abstraction with a singular quality; rather it is a defence of forms of life. Defending relationality is suspending the means that seek injury and injustice. In other words, rather than start with Agamben's assumption that there is "bare life," life would be understood – life always becomes forms of life – in terms of what philosophy has continually allowed for, namely the "good life." That would be to express the position in directly positive

terms. Perhaps, to be more circumspect, it is possible to deploy a more negative formulation. When Adorno wrote that "there is no correct life in the false" (*es gibt keine richtiges Leben im falschen*), such a formulation demands a response to the question of what "a correct life" (*ein richtiges Leben*) might actually entail.[24] Part of any answer would be the suspending the injuring processes occasioned by contemporary forms of governance.

6.

In an extraordinary passage from his recent *When the House Burns Down*, Agamben returns to the possibility of judgment.

> We must learn to judge anew, but with a judgment that neither punishes nor rewards, neither absolves nor condemns. An act without goal, which removes existence from all finalities, which are necessarily unjust and false. Merely an interruption, an instant balanced between time and the eternal, in which flashes up the faint image of a life without end or plans, without name or memory—and is thus saved, not in eternity but *sub specie aeternitatis*. A judgment without preestablished criteria and yet political for this very reason, because it restores life to its naturalness.[25]

One of the central questions that attends this formulation is what is meant by "naturalness"? The suspicion is that for Agamben, no matter how it is understood, "naturalness" has an equivalence to "bare life." Namely, to that which is "without content." The political, for Agamben, involves therefore this sense of "restoration." In sum, the difference with Agamben, in this specific context, pertains to how the original is understood. What here is the *ἀρχή*? In the context of the argument that has been developed throughout this paper, the arché is not delimited by the "without." On the contrary, the *ἀρχή* is the site of anoriginal plurality and thus anoriginal relationality. Moreover, the distribution of human being within anoriginal relationality brings an inevitable sense of propriety into play, since that distribution has both a transcendental quality as well as having different configurations within modes of territorialization. The latter become *loci* of judgement precisely because anoriginal plurality can be attributed a transcendental quality.

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[24] T. W. Adorno, *Minima Moralia: Reflexionen aus dem beschädigten Leben*, *Gesammelte Schriften*, vol. 4, Suhrkamp, Frankfurt am Main, 1997, p. 43.

[25] G. Agamben, *When the House Burns Down*, Seagull Books, London, 2022, p. 12.

Again, even if Agamben were right and the house is "burning" and that as a result the continuity of interaction within that house are "with the ones with whom you will have to exchange a last glance when the flames come close" there is still a counter. (The burning house cannot be separated, of course, from Heidegger's invocation in "Letter on Humanism" that "language is the house of Being" [*Die Sprache ist das Haus des Seins*].[26] There is of course a different housing question.) The value of the formulations and images from Vitruvius that have already been cited is that they stage the necessity to think anoriginal relationality both in itself and in connection to the immediacy of "fire." That the house is burning is, on one level, not the point. The question to be addressed concerns how this incendiary house is to be understood. Fire will demand its own genealogy. The suggestion here is that a response to Agamben's "burning house" can be found in Horace, *Epistles*, 1.XVIII: 85-86. Horace writes:

> *nam tua res agitur, paries cum proximus ardet,*
> *et neglecta solent incendia sumere vires.*

> For it is your concern when the wall of your neighbour is burning
> And neglected fires are accustomed to assuming great power.[27]

The proximity to which Horace refers is not just a relation defined in terms of intersubjectivity and thus mere commonality. At work here is not being-in-common as an abstraction without location. Rather, it is a relation that has the quality of being-there. However the "there" in question involves a named presence – "walls" (*paries*). Houses divide and connect. *Paries* in the end cannot be separated from *murus*. Taken together they disclose the placed nature of human being. Walls – be they literal or as identifying spaces within placed relationality – delimit modes of territorialization. Equally, walls are threatened by fire. Recalled because the centrality of wall and placed relationality – the latter as being-in-relation and being-in-place articulated within modes of territorialization – and the enduring threat posed by fire, is Heraclitus DK44.

> The people must fight for its law as they would defend the city walls.

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[26] M. Heidegger, "Brief über den 'Humanismus'," p. 313; M. Heidegger, "Letter on Humanism," p. 217.

[27] I also discuss these lines from Horace in my "Thinking Life: The Force of the Biopolitical," *Crisis and Critique*, 9, 2022, pp. 60–82.

There are at least two important considerations at work in the claim that that the defence of "the city wall" (*τεῖχος*) is undertaken by "the people" (*δῆμος*) with the same alacrity as they defend *νόμος*.[28] Firstly, it identifies both place – the space disclosed by the walls – and *nomos* as conditions of human plurality. Secondly, the fragment ties together the disclosure of spaces and the presence of the law.

Fire figures within this setting. It is not reducible to a threat merely to subjects or even to the intersubjective. What is threated is their conditions of possibility, namely the disclosed space of human being. (Human being as being-in-place.) And if the opening provided by Heraclitus were pursued, then the interarticulation of place and law would have to be incorporated into any understanding of the risk posed by fire. (Both law and place as transcendental conditions of human sociality.) The threat of fire therefore necessitates both a conceptualization and a response that has to begin with the relational. Such a response is essential once the threat is given extension, such that it incorporates as much the ineliminability of catastrophic climate change as it does the naturalization of forms of energy – coal, oil, and gas cannot be separated from any genealogy of fire – and their ensuing modes of control. While both Heidegger and Agamben address the ethics of architecture, the way in which abstraction figures within their respective arguments means that, albeit for different reasons, neither can address the ethical once both *ethos* and ethics start from the anoriginality of the relational, the setting of which is its articulation within differentials of power. Hence the relational here is as much a relation to the other as it is to place. Both are themselves articulated within differing modes of territorialisation. It is the presence of these modes that yields sites of judgement. This is the setting in which the question of how the "and" – the "and" connecting and separating philosophy and architecture – is both to be understood and addressed.

Agamben's response to Heidegger does not seek to avoid judgement. After all he writes that "we must learn to judge anew." However he then adds a few lines latter that it should be a "judgment without preestablished criteria". And yet, once fire becomes a defining concern what is opened up is fire's almost axiomatic relational setting. There can never be

[28] References to Heraclitus are to the edition established by M. Marcovich, *Heraclitus: Greek Text with a Short Commentary*, Los Andes University Press, Merida, 1967, in which it is Fragment 103. Markovich usefully links the fragment to DK 43, in which Heraclitus draws a connection between violence and fire. In any genealogy of fire the connection between violence, fire and law established by Heraclitus would have to form an integral part.

just fire. As the flames get close – and here as the climate crisis becomes more emphatic, any evocation of fire is haunted by its always possible reality – the response has to be grounded in attempts to realize modes of plurality that suspend organizational logics that sustain fire. Differing forms of movement towards their actualization, be this a creation of philosophical propositions or design interventions, are always already linked to the anoriginality of relationality. The creation of the uninhabitable, the denial of relationality, the creation of singularities in order to be confined or excluded call on judgment. Judgement is possible precisely because the refusal of relationality is the refusal of the actualization of a potentially that is always already there defining the possibility of the "good life."

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The Thrown Project: Architecture and War

ABSTRACT: This paper examines the concept of the project through a tragic but significant example, namely Albert Speer's project. Speer, like any architect worthy of the name, does not drop his designs from some hyperuranium of creativity, nor does he confine them to a drawing board for the benefit not of the inhabitants, but of the readers; and even more, unlike a machine, he does not merely execute the prescriptions of an algorithm. It is, on the contrary, rooted in a soil. By defending himself, by digging a hole of words, by invoking devices and programmes, by hiding behind a Diktat, Speer opens up a path that will be beaten after him, that, to express himself with Heidegger, of the "thrown project,", of the fact that all our designing is nothing but the execution of a Message from the Emperor, the submission to the injunctions of technology. But the project, if it is a project, is lagging behind the programme, and conversely a programme that is not lagging behind (the laws of nature or trains when it goes well) is not a project. The project has a constitutive delay, it always has a delay, and that is why it is the delay, it does not have a delay.

KEYWORDS: philosophy of architecture, project, programme, delay, Albert Speer

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Half a century ago, Venturi and Scott Brown urged architects, soon followed by philosophers, to learn from Las Vegas. In hindsight, and having experienced the limits of postmodernism, I wonder if it is not worth learning from Nuremberg and one of its secondary actors, Albert Speer. Not because all architects should behave like him (he was given 20 years in prison at Spandau, and it is not easy to determine whether it was too much or too little), but rather because in the human story of Speer's collaboration with Hitler, the whole of the project's distinctive traits are concentrated, as in a grotesque but expressive caricature. Architecture "and" the other from architecture can be seen particularly well in Speer, architect and politician as well as war criminal. This is why instead of starting in Las Vegas, like Venturi and Scott Brown, we will start in Nuremberg. In effect, the project's actors, i.e., the client, the architect, the work and the delay (the constitutive difference between the project conceived and the project realized) are exasperated by the circumstances: the client is a tyrant, the architect a demiurge, the work a failure in relation to the project, and the delay a mode of being that, present in every project, here manifests itself with a clarity that is unparalleled.

The Judgement

Starting with a courthouse in a freshly bombed city after a terrible war instead of a hotel and casino complex in the desert is already a way of emphasizing the responsibility of the project from the outset. Speer, like any architect worthy of the name, does not drop his designs from some hyperuranium of creativity, nor does he confine them to a drawing board for the benefit not of the inhabitants, but of the readers; and even more, unlike a machine, he does not merely execute the prescriptions of an algorithm. It is, on the contrary, rooted in a soil, which is not necessarily the *Blut und Boden*, the soil from which and on which its design will be realized through the encounter with a reality full of unforeseen events, for every architect, but especially for an architect who found himself living Speer's life. To counteract the unforeseen, he has a pinch of inventiveness, but above all a huge inventory of invisible links, standards, documents, prefabricated forms with which he measures himself, physical limits and economic constraints. While designing, all this is, indeed, invisible or at least intangible, but the fruit of those elaborations is destined to endure even when the documents have burnt out, the original context has

disappeared, and the initial function has lost all meaning. So, learn from Nuremberg, in many senses.

Nuremberg is first and foremost the setting for the Neo-Greek architecture that Hitler's architect prepared for the Nazi rallies of the 1930s, and which is described by Heidegger in his essay on the Origin of the Work of Art, where the Greek temple is in fact a reproduction of the Pergamon altar created by Speer. And, above all, like the luminous columns that circumscribe space by heading upwards, to infinity, just as infinite was, in the expectations, the empire that was being built from Nuremberg onwards. The luminous columns were made famous, along with the disciplined marching columns and the waving of swastikas, by Leni von Riefensthal, and they have nothing to envy (and perhaps something to teach) the projects glorified by Venturi. Above all, they have much to teach in terms of sobriety to Filippo Panseca, Craxi's Speer, the author of a famous pyramid that stood out at the 1989 PSI congress. Creating in peacetime, with few material constraints, no bombing, no shortage of raw materials, is certainly an easy game to play.[1] But just comparing Speer's and Panseca's achievements, and even more so between Speer's and Panseca's principals, shows that it is precisely the lack of constraints, especially for ephemeral architecture and stage sets, that can allow the worst to emerge, a lack of inner restraint that is all the more evident in the absence of outer inhibitions.

However, the tribunal that judged Speer in Nuremberg in 1946 was not made up of *Casabella* editors, and condemned him not for the light games, nor for the New Chancellery, nor for the elegant armchairs that furnished Hitler's parlor in the bunker below, but for his actions as armaments minister. A political office like few others, but given, as it should be, to a technician, since it involves enormous planning actions, most significant in their effects. The situation, therefore, is not a foregone

[1] Although, as Alessandro Armando, whom I thank for the report, points out to me, Panseca also had his own thing to do: "I enjoyed making artistic things, I always tried to find symbols to remind people of the event. The '89 pyramid, in Italy, I would not have been able to make it, the regulations did not allow the import of more than a certain number of LEDs from Japan and by that year the level had been reached. So I asked Senator Formica, Minister of Industry at the time, to make a decree that allowed us to import the 50,000 LEDs needed to build it from Japan. And so we did, thanks to the work of a small artisan company in Oderzo." C. Dardana, "Filippo Panseca, l'artista di Craxi Dai progetti per le discoteche più in di Milano alla Piramide craxiana, storia dell'anima creativa dei socialisti che ha costruito un pezzo di Italia anni '80. Poi Tangentopoli ha spazzato via tutto," *Living Corriere*, 28 January 2020, https://living.corriere.it/tendenze/extra/filippo-panseca-artista-bettino-craxi/ (accessed 15 July 2022).

conclusion. At Nuremberg, called upon to defend himself as a minister, Speer is judged for his designs, thus as an architect. They imprisoned him, which is rare but not impossible for an architect if his designs generate undesirable effects – collapsing bridges or the like. Here, however, the projects seem to have little to do with architecture. Are they projects in their own right? Of course they are. Even Operation Barbarossa is a project, of destruction and not construction, but still exposed to the unexpected and contingency. And on closer inspection, Speer's activity as armaments minister embodies the essence of architectural design more than any other project: designing a production line for tanks is much more historically decisive than building a villa in Berchtesgaden, even if the villa is still there, in excellent condition, and the tanks were blown to pieces in Kursk or Sandomierz, in Bastogne or Caen, on the Atlantic Wall or the Siegfried Line.

It will be observed that there are differences between the events judged at Nuremberg and those recounted by Armando and Durbiano. I will leave aside the most obvious ones and come to the decisive one: the Minister for Armaments is confronted with a project that is abstract in its aim, to support the military effort, and concrete in its means and procedures. Which after all seems to be the opposite of the design adventures, characterized by an extreme concreteness of ends and a very strong, if not abstraction, certainly indeterminacy of means. In both cases, however, in that of the Minister of Armaments and in that of the designer of Piazza Arbarello, the fundamental point remains that of a wager against contingency: in the promise of something that one does not have, and more precisely in the promise of a domination of circumstances and a government of destiny.

It is precisely the friction of the real that unites my architects with Hitler's minister. Not programs, paper prescriptions, those on which generations of architects[2] have been fed, similar indeed to the military plans of Benningsten, Barclay de Tolly and Schwarzenberg ("*die Erste Kolonne marschiert, die Zweite Kolonne marschiert*...") regularly reduced to waste paper by Napoleon. As Helmuth von Moltke, the strategist of the Prussian triumph of 1870, wrote, "Only the uninitiated glimpse in the unfolding of a campaign the consistent execution of an original idea,

[2] Cf. G. Durbiano, *I nuovi maestri: architetti tra politica e cultura nel dopoguerra*, Marsilio, Venezia, 2000, on paper architectures, on the architectures that fascinated a group of architects who never became architects, just as Agnelli never became lawyer, and Dick Diver stopped being a psychiatrist very early on.

previously worked out in all its details by the commander and to which he remained faithful to the end." It was this principle that guided Speer in delaying the catastrophe, with a strategy even more impeccable than Kesselring's on the Italian front, and it was this that he had to account for in the Allied tribunal.

Before the tribunal, Speer adopted a particularly intelligent political line. Unlike the majority of the Nazi establishment, he pleaded guilty to the crimes he was accused of. This obviously predisposed his judges favorably. But the masterstroke took place with the final declaration made on 31 August 1946, in which the fundamental responsibility for the incident was ascribed to the complexity and effectiveness of the German technical apparatus,[3] downgrading the project to a program. *Cherchez la femme*: the technician blames the technique. Speer's discourse opened up the broad perspectives of the non-responsibility of technicians that still prevails in common sense today (think of the absolution and impoliticity that the syntagm 'technical government' presupposes) and at the same time made it possible to realize a kind of Metropolis-like dystopia, according to which humans, in the "age of technology" (a strange expression, given that technology has accompanied and defined humanity since its origins) would be reduced to automatons, and moreover enslaved by the machines they themselves had produced.

"With the help of technical means, such as the radio and the loudspeaker, the will of one man was able to dominate eighty million men." That is, Hitler's will. Speer's self-absolution, his wanting to place all the blame on the technique (the program) and from there on the Leader (the one and only person in total charge of the project), is really weak.

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[3] "Hitler's was the first dictatorship of an industrialised state in the modern 'technical age.' A dictatorship that made complete and perfect use of technical means to dominate its people. With the help of technical means, such as the radio and the loudspeaker, the will of one man was able to dominate eighty million men. The telephone, the telegraph, the radio allowed the orders of the supreme authority to reach directly to the farthest branches of power where, because of their high origin, they were executed without the slightest objection. It was by this route that the civil directorates and military commands received their sinister orders directly. The technical means permitted the capillary control of the citizens and at the same time allowed criminal acts to be carried out in the utmost secrecy. This state apparatus looked, seen from the outside, like the tangle, apparently devoid of system and order, of the cables of a telephone exchange. But it too, like the latter, could be moved and dominated by a single will. The dictatorships of the past needed, at all ranks, even the lowest, quality collaborators, men capable of thinking and acting for themselves. The authoritarian system, in the age of technology, can afford to do without the lower management cadres: it replaces them, mechanising them, with the modern means of civilisation. Hence the pure 'executor of orders' is born, who does not use criticism."

The more sophisticated a technique is, the greater the autonomy it grants to the human being, and thus the responsibility it places on him, in the first person, without shielding himself behind a Chief, a technocratic autocrat, as Speer does, or behind the omnipotence of technique. Because technology cannot be at fault, it is not daggers, cars or tanks that are on trial, but the humans who, in various capacities, were behind them, who had designed them, even if then, in the age of automation, a program was all that was needed to realize them. The program is innocent, because it cannot be guilty; the design, on the other hand, always carries a responsibility and an intention, however great the constraints and obstacles it may come up against.

The Lair

Disguised as an executor of programs, like generals fleeing disguised as soldiers or civilians, Speer could not deny the evidence, the fact that he was a designer, that he had engineered everything he did and had it done. Succeeding an engineer, Fritz Todt, he was the superior of another engineer, Franz Xaver Dorsch, the designer of the Atlantic Wall, a reinforced concrete Chinese wall that after the war experienced a second life as a destination for architecture enthusiasts. In other words, an immense enclosure on a territory that, over time, was strewn with dens. And one wonders how many orders, how many regulations and norms, how many problems and solutions lay behind the pyramids of the Wolf's Lair lost in a Polish forest just like the Mayan pyramids overrun by forest in Chichén Itzá or like the barracks of Chernobyl. It is pure design. And if we were to bring Speer's project together under one name, it would be: the lair. Speer did nothing but produce dens, large or small, for the Cape, solid walls to defend it when things took a turn for the worst (in 1935 the walls were beams of light, in 1945 they are five meters of reinforced concrete), and suitable weapons to keep enemies as far away from those walls as possible.

The object lasts longer than the project and indicates both its success and failure. In those rooms, until 30 April 1945, the great commissioner was locked up. There was no air, there was the constant hum of the malfunctioning ventilation system, the blows and jolts of the Russian artillery that had taken the place of the Allied air raids for a few days, and there was the portrait of Frederick the Great. This time the grand coalition had prevailed, and there would be no Sanssouci to survive the grand

design. Thus ends the chapter of Speer as interior architect, designer of furniture for the Chancellery today for sale among enthusiasts. As well as of cutlery sets with swastikas. A total design, a design *Gesamtkunswerk* that stems from the fact that Speer, unlike, for example, Piacentini, was not the architect of a state, but of a person and his environment.

As a builder of dens, here Speer had responded to the needs not only of the tyrant, but also of the tyrant's fiancée and wife *in extremis*, Eva Braun. The fact that Hitler did not have a harem definitely simplified Speer's interlocutions, not least because Eva, a lover of jazz and sentimental songs was probably much more in tune with the fundamental Stimmung of the elegant Heidelberg architect. "Blood-Red Roses Tell Me about You" was a song of the time that both Eva and Albert liked very much. For Eva, Albert, revealing his versatility, designed the sofa on which the newlyweds lay motionless after their suicide, speaking of blood-red roses.

The Bunker's minor projects are not necessarily atypical (there are plenty of architects who have also tried their hand at furniture and design) and are a counterpoint to the major projects which, conversely, of all the architects in history only Speer had the privilege of: the material organization of the German military effort. They were, I repeat, projects in their own right, and certainly no one could claim that, as the projects of an architect, they are above criticism (this, of course, also applies to all those architects, and they are the majority, who did not plan the German wartime armaments industry). On the contrary, they were the essence of design as an organization of space and time, that of which architectural design is but one manifestation, privileged perhaps because of its particular concrete recognizability. How much to say that the Atlantic Wall, the hangars, the harbors, the dry docks that are still visible today, are but the vestiges of the Absolute Lair; of the project for the defense of Fortress Europe that would lose the race to the Operation Overlord project, of which we are left with more tenuous and posthumous traces, such as the cemeteries near the Norman coast and the monuments that here and there evoke the combat.

Walls, casemates, anti-tank ditches. This sounds like engineer's rather than architect's stuff, but once you get into the overall horizon of the lair, the project becomes clearer. The client needs dens, and the architect designs them. This is classically the case with the Wolf's Lair in Rastenburg, in what was then East Prussia and is now Poland, the headquarters of Hitler's military command from the start of Operation Barbarossa until the

winter of 1944, when Hitler abandoned it to move west to another lair, the Eagle's Nest in Bad Nauheim from which he directed the Ardennes Offensive, before entrenching himself in the Chancellery Bunker that was to be his last landfall, his last lair and his temporary grave. The Eagle's Nest, used for less than a month, appeared to Hitler too elegant for its military purpose. No trace remains of the Bunker, all we know is that it was located under today's Hannah-Arendt-Straße, a stone's throw from the Holocaust Memorial designed by Peter Eisenman with the same basic material as the bunkers and dens built by Todt, concrete.

The exemplary den therefore remains the Wolf's Den, which was created in the euphoric times of the advance as a temporary residence before Moscow – for some time between 1942 and 1943 Hitler left it to move to a more advanced location in the Ukraine, in Vinnycja, christened 'Werwolf'. The Rastenburg lair was initially made up of wooden barracks, but the stagnation of the war, the risk of Soviet (and indeed German) *coups d'état* on 20 July 1944 and Hitler's paranoia imposed pharaonic work on Speer's organization. The Soviets, who occupied it on 27 January 1945, the same day as the liberation of Auschwitz, stunned as they walked through the complex that the retreating Germans had unsuccessfully tried to demolish with tons of explosives. Those ruins, immense pyramids for a pharaoh who died elsewhere, are still visible today, a sign of the survival of a truly cast project, built for practical purposes and with materials that ensured its immortality far more and far better than the simple models of Linz.

This survival may open up the question of recovery, i.e., the birth of a new project on the rubble of the old. This case is anything but infrequent, and thus opens up a new page of planning, whether it be the spontaneous planning that turns the Colosseum into a popular apartment block, or the amphitheaters of Lucca, Arles and Pollenzo as a form of the city that closes in on itself by contracting demographically, or the initially awkward planning (what are we going to do with it?) then increasingly free and flowing in the recovery of the military vestiges of the Third Reich. If Castel Sant'Angelo is the case of a tomb that becomes a fortress, we can give the case of a fortress that is transformed not into a tomb, but certainly into a mausoleum, into architectural evidence that goes far beyond the original intentions of the project.

This is, typically, the story of the Flakturm, dens to the nth power, made to protect like shelters and to attack like artillery positions. A unique artefact in the history of architecture, the flak towers that in

Berlin, Vienna and Hamburg the Todt organization built, to designs by Friedrich Tamms, Speer's collaborator, from 1942 onwards, made up for the Luftwaffe's inferiority of means, they housed field hospitals and thousands of Berliners (in Vienna and Hamburg they did not play such a central role) and, because of the skill with which they were built, they left it to posterity, who only very rarely managed to blow up those concrete mountains, to do something with them. Hence the multiple reuses, which in some cases have the air of a casual survival, perhaps in a context that combines the eternal of the tower with the ephemeral of Las Vegas; or with an eternal that is better integrated into the environment, and restored to its dimension of luxury, calm and bourgeois voluptuousness as in the penthouse on one of the two Berlin towers; or with the opening up of a design that, in the style of the vertical forest, transforms the tower that between 1942 and 1945 housed up to 25,000 people under bombardment into a 136-room hotel of the NH chain, as well as a concert hall.

The Client

But let us not digress. By defending himself, by digging a hole of words, by invoking devices and programs, by hiding behind a Diktat, Speer opens up a path that will be beaten after him, that, to express himself with Heidegger, of the "thrown project," of the fact that all our designing is nothing but the execution of a Message from the Emperor, the submission to the injunctions of technology. But if it is understandable as a line of defense, that of the thrown project (plainly put: dictated) is not an acceptable motivation, especially outside a court of law. And, if the project is not dictated, it is a real project, the anticipation of an idea destined to change as much as one likes in its making, but which is nevertheless someone's idea and not the prescription of a cynical and baroque fate. Responsible in every way as a designer, he shared responsibility, one hundred per cent, like a burden that is not divided but multiplied, with the client, who, in ancient times, was remembered in place of the architect. It is the client who needs the project, it is he who indicates its purpose, it is he who allows its feasibility, at least until the Russians, in our case, enter his palace and force him to commit suicide in the Bunker. Until a moment before, however, the client's planning is still alive, and mobilizes the architects no less than the generals. Just like my reference architects, Speer had to work closely with a client – and what a client: a

genocide, a dreamer, an Austrian petit-bourgeois, a megalomaniac, and above all a manic depressive.

The thousand-year Reich only lasted 12 years, yet the game of infinity has not yet ended. The project, which in this case is not Speer's but Hermann Giesler's, goes beyond death, beyond bombs, beyond defeat. It remains, however, a pure project, a failed project, a model that was lost along with so many furnishings in May 1945. We know that in those months Hitler went through moments of depression and moments of euphoria, and we do not know whether the contemplation of that model was tinged with regret for a world that was collapsing or with hope for the new world. Indeed, in the early days Hitler found the bombings providential, as they would pave the way for a complete reconstruction of the Reich; which in fact took place, of necessity, but without any planning. In order to find planning again on German soil, we will have to wait half a century, to make up not for the devastation of the Lancasters and the B29, but for that of the bulldozers that, by removing the Berlin Wall, had left a large empty strip in the heart of the city.

This is where the theme of the Almighty Principal opens up. There have been certain moments when design has enjoyed a freedom inconceivable in any democratic regime and has seemed subject only to the law of gravity: in Speer as in Isidore of Miletus and Anthemius of Tralles, in Oddone of Metz as in Michelangelo and Bernini, in Vauban as in Juvarra. The two designers, the tyrannical client and the demiurgic architect, know that they can do whatever they want, and it is from this omnipotence that they envisage gigantic statues of Charlemagne in Paris looking towards Aachen, and from there to Berlin, the new capital of Europe. These are projects that seem to remind us by amplifying Haussmann and prelude to the great axis of Niemeyer's Brasilia, but which, in our pride of modernity, we are perhaps unable to see as reminiscent of Constantine's plans for the new capital of the Roman Empire. Not to mention the fact that, unlike the cosmopolis planned by Hitler and Speer, Constantinople was indeed the base of an empire that lasted not twelve years, but twelve centuries, mainly thanks to the walls built by Theodosius II that made it impregnable until the advent of artillery.[4]

[4] As Alessandro Armando suggests, "Perhaps the walls, being persistent and difficult to demolish (like the Wolf's Lair) were not a mere design but realised architecture? In short, these examples reinforce more and more the distinction between the project as a mere design of a vision that remains on paper and the project as a laborious ferry towards a material

Returning to our patron and our architect, surely the generals throughout the war, and increasingly so as the conflict progressed, saw their planning and professionalism systematically hampered by the interference of the man who was ironically and resignedly referred to as *GröFaZ, Größter Feldherr aller Zeiten* ("the greatest leader of all time"). Did the architect remain free? Or did he follow the generals' fate since he was also a minister? Certainly, by slowing down the production of necessary fighters in favor of bombers that were now useless if the war had gone on the defensive, the commissioner interfered heavily in the designer's decisions. On the other hand, it was the times, and not the customer, that dictated the requirements.

Design freedom opens up two problems, one of an aesthetic nature, the other of an ethical nature. From an aesthetic point of view, Haussmann and Napoleon III, as well as Speer and Hitler, define a privileged relationship between architecture and power, which as such is rare and perhaps undesirable. The condition of Mira Petrescu, winner in 1981, at only thirty-two years of age, of the competition that, starting in 1984, would lead her to build, under the guidance of seven hundred architects and twenty thousand workers, the Casa Poporului, the third largest building in the world and the heaviest by far. Consider that the competition for that building took place ten years after the one for the Centre Georges Pompidou, but the result of which, unlike that of 34-year-old Renzo Piano, goes back decades.

As for the ethical problem, as we saw at the beginning, Speer did his utmost to downgrade to a program, i.e., to the mere execution of orders, a project that he had certainly shared with a client, but which did not cease to be a project, on the contrary. An attitude that is understandable, of course, but which forgets a fundamental element, namely that the client's aims were implemented thanks to the architect's means. The latter, having reached the last act, by dismissing the client and blaming the technique reveals himself to be a great designer, in the sense that he sells a captivating and exonerating narrative, but he does it, it really has to be said, *pro domo sua*. Before that deft but disingenuous move, Speer had made others in the last months of the war. One is most likely a retrospective invention, an attempt to make the patron die in the den he had built for himself by throwing gas down the ventilation chimney.

realisation, which when completed is practically irreversible. Between the delirium of omnipotence and implementation."

The unpredictability of the project here had manifested itself in the fact that someone else had noticed how vulnerable the chimney was, and had raised it several meters, preventing the architect's industrious repentance.

But apart from the failed murder of the client, which, if successful, would perhaps have fulfilled the secret aspirations of many architects even in peacetime, and avenged all the architects in history who were murdered by clients to keep the building secret, it remains that Speer represents the, to say the least, singular case of an architect who, when things take a turn for the worse, dismisses the client, resigns his mandate like a lawyer in the face of an indefensible lawsuit, resigns his political robes and resumes those of the impolitic.

The Delay

It was too late when, in the months of a meltdown suspended between Wagner and Céline, Speer had been faced with a serious case of conscience, that of planning the destruction of the entire German infrastructure and industrial apparatus in order to make scorched earth ahead of the Russian advance. This was what the Nero Order issued by Hitler on 20 March 1945 prescribed. As we know, Speer, in agreement with the upper echelons of German industry, did not carry out the order and even tells us of the daring landing in Berlin on 26 April 1945 for a final farewell from his great patron to whom he confessed that he had disobeyed. Now, if he was able to disobey, it was because he had previously chosen to obey, manifesting that discretion which is the mark of the designer. And when he disobeyed, I repeat, it was too late, and too little.

Speer, in fact, is not only the one who did not follow Nero's order, he is the one who, against all odds, claimed to have known nothing about the extermination. But who was to all intents and purposes part of a project within which the extermination and war of aggression was also included, as well as the use of forced labor. It was he who arranged a production system of unprecedented efficiency, who kept open the virtually impossible and factually surreal dialogue between the dictator now out of his depth and German big business. It was he who held negotiations no less difficult and surreal as those with Goebbels and Himmler, who wanted to turn his army of workers into an army of *Volksturm* or SS. The armaments minister worked miracles and allowed the war to last beyond all human planning. And he did this precisely through planning that did not take place in a desert full of possibilities and free of obstacles, but

under the weight of bombing, of military defeat, and, what is perhaps even worse, in a fight to the death with the rest of the Nazi leadership, in a fight that he had not experienced in the good old days when he was simply an architect and only had to contend with the client.

A decorator of dens as large as the New Chancellery or as small as the Bunker below, Speer failed, therefore he designed: like Beckett, he tried, he failed, and history gave him no opportunity to fail again and to fail better. If his actions, as he explained at Nuremberg, had been dictated by a device, there would have been stumbles or catastrophes, but not failures. Because an algorithm, as such, is infallible, and it is precisely this infallibility that creates the greatest problems for those who have to deal with it, i.e., all of us (try to make a computer understand in simple terms that it should not produce "I'm coming!" every time we type the S, and not to capitalize after every exclamation, and you will see what I mean).

But what is the failure? The lost war? The ugly house? If this were the case, there would be no wars won (which, let's face it, are exactly equal in number to the wars lost) and no beautiful houses, which there are, and still are, being built, contrary to the convictions of Charles of England and Houellebeq,[5] who evidently believe that if old houses seem more pacified, it is because the patrons are dead, and at most express their dissatisfaction by wandering around like ghosts. Here we are confronted with a mystery I do not know how painful or joyous, for which one has never seen anyone complain about the works exhibited in a gallery, while anyone, even the most external and indifferent observer, always has something to complain about a project, its execution, and above all its result.[6] Certainly, the fact that the project ideally includes the cli-

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[5] M. Houellebecq, *Anéantir*, Flammarion, Paris, 2022, pp. 93ff, describing a walk in Lyon: "On the opposite hillside stretched wooded hills interspersed with groups of old buildings, which must have dated back to the beginning of the 20th century. It was all very harmonious, and above all extraordinarily relaxing. Unfortunately, one couldn't help but notice that a pleasant landscape, nowadays, was almost necessarily one that had been preserved for at least a century from any kind of human intervention."

[6] Carlo Dossi's analysis in *I mattoidi, al primo concorso pel monumento in Roma a Vittorio Emanuele II* (1884) is a catalogue of irritations and impatience with all kinds of projects, which declares in its incipit the cruciality of failure: "Here I am, you poor little sketches that have fled or are on their way to the asylum, before which those who take life on the tragic pass by making acts of indignation and those who take it, as it should be, at play, indulge in moments of resounding hilarity. Once the competition is over, the honours, if not of marble, of bank paper are attributed to a project that is an insult to contemporary art and a parody of ancient art, and the impotence of the happenstance and intriguing mediocrity are mentioned with official praise. But I come to you, you little monsters of the imagination, I come to gather you into the coffers of my spirit, to place you in the pathological muzzle of

ent (as an eponymous hero, as an inspirer, or even just as an inhabitant) explains the awkwardness that architects sometimes encounter in designing for themselves (Eisenman's house has nothing Eisenmanian about it) or, conversely, the hyperbole of the unappeasable client who exhausts the architect, for example by making Malaparte's "House like me"[7].

There are two ways to justify failure. The first is to see in the client the general, i.e., the one who indicates the ultimate goal of the strategy, and in the architect the colonel, i.e., the one who puts into practice the goals expressed by the general. Now, although this narrative may please both generals and colonels, I suspect, in which I am also comforted by my reference architects, that things are very different. There is no doubt that in manifesting the purpose, the client possesses only a vague idea, and thus wields imaginary power. For his part, the architect presents himself as the executor capable of giving reality to the idea. Both representations are mythological, but they define a play of parts. Just to understand, if things go well, it is very easy to conceive of a client who, when things are done, sees in the realized work the faithful execution of ideas he never had. And it is just as easy to think that if things go wrong, the client blames the architect.

But in Nuremberg the Chief was not there, he had been dead for more than a year. It was really too late to remedy the situation, to call

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my writings. First of all, you deserve it. You are not at all, as they say, unworthy of consideration. At the very least, your fathers show with you a much grayer wit than the authors of those projects that belong to the bureaucracy of art. What are these in fact? They are projects of things that already exist, daring that do not go beyond 'the lurid' combinations of rhyme and recipe, thefts with the aggravating circumstance of having spoiled the stolen stuff to dissimulate its origin. You, on the other hand, have in common with the authors of genius the eagerness for research and the ambition for the new, qualities that frighten even the ignorant crowd and the adventurous plebs from beauty. You fell, it is true, in the attempt - which did not come to your aid with sufficient wings of mind - but, at least, it was your purpose to fly to the stars, not to jump a fence. Nor is the study of you superfluous. One arrives at that artistic perfection which is claimed by all and attained by few, a perfection which eludes all axiomatic precepts, as much by meditating on beautiful deeds as by examining those which are the opposite. Nothing can be learnt from mediocrity alone. Conconi, Otto, Amèndola, Ximènes and a few others, with their magnificently conceived and executed projects, give us an idea of sanity in art. Here, on the other hand, illness is analysed, an equally important study." C. Dossi, *I mattoidi, al primo concorso pel monumento in Roma a Vittorio Emanuele II*, A. Sommaruga e C., Roma, 1884.

[7] One would not say the same of the other famous "house like me" that fills the philosophical imagination of the 20th century, Heidegger's hut or cabin in Todtnauberg, without forgetting, however, that it was in fact a prefabricated one, something similar to the tiny houses of which YouTube clips are buzzing. Truly a house like that, a handmade house even if (and there is nothing surprising about this, it is the characteristic of all tiny houses) it is in fact prefabricated, i.e., pre-planned, prescribed, pre-fabricated.

himself out. The marvellos weapons that were supposed to defend him and the Chief arrived too late, and the only short-term result of the V2 missiles was to persuade the Allies to continue bombing raids that were at that point only massacres of civilians, and in the long term to anticipate the conquest of space by offering Hergé creative material in the meantime. Of course, it was not he who had invented them, nor had he designed the futuristic jet planes that took to the skies when the fuel had run out. Having arrived late, after the death of Fritz Todt, his predecessor, on 8 February 1942, a few months before El Alamein and Stalingrad, in all his efficiency, Speer had done nothing but accumulate delays in relation to an increasingly less predictable, increasingly cumbersome, increasingly rapid reality, precisely because it was real and not imaginary. It was no longer enough to execute plans, as his predecessor had done in the days of fat cows and blitzkrieg, it was a matter of planning in the face of an unpredictable contingency, and in the face of the unexpected and the sudden, a plan is of no use, you need a plan, but when it arrives, it will always be late.

This is what Speer was guilty of, like every architect: delay, which in this case was very bad luck for him and very good luck for mankind. You can make wonderful, horrendous or even criminal plans, but if there is a project behind, there is always a delay; if there is no delay, there is no project, but program, mechanical execution of a plan. The hospital built in a week in China, the Liberty-class ships built by the dozens by the Americans during the war, had no plan behind them, no time, but only a program, drawn up as a copy of a prototype. And after the fall, in Spandau prison, Speer was left with nothing but programs, writing memoirs and cultivating the garden. These were precisely programs, against which he could never have fallen behind.

But the project, if it is a project, is lagging behind the program, and conversely a program that is not lagging behind (the laws of nature or trains when it goes well) is not a project. The project has a constitutive delay, it always has a delay, and that is why it is the delay, it does not have a delay[8]. This is what my two reference architects suggest and I think

[8] E. Albinati, *La scuola cattolica*, Rizzoli, Milano 2016: "Goals are made on purpose not to be achieved; it is the unique nature of the centre not to be centred. Whether the forces diminish along the way, whether the goal moves imperceptibly forward, whether the initial plans were too optimistic or presumptuous or abstract, or the obstacles higher than expected [...] I don't know what the name of his science is or what it is based on, but a certain scholar has calculated that whatever project is put into the pipeline will on average cost a third

I understand what they mean. On paper you study optimal solutions, but in reality you negotiate with sub-optimal solutions, sometimes it goes well, sometimes not. I am writing these lines in my office at the Luigi Einaudi Campus in Turin, designed by Norman Foster's studio and very beautiful to look at. The view from the studio is also beautiful, but I am dying of heat in January, this is because in the execution, the insulating glass envisaged by the architect was not installed, but rather completely ordinary glass. As a result, the architect did not sign the project, I am contemplating buying a penguin, increasing precisely that ecological damage that was intended to be prevented with the insulating glass, and somewhere in Turin there is a happy glazier. I am careful not to complain since I spent the rest of my academic life, as a student and as a teacher, in Palazzo Nuovo, designed by Gino Levi-Montalcini (the Gino of Ginzburg's *Lessico famigliare*), built between 1961 and 1966, inaugurated in 1968 and since then (sixty years since work began) in reconstruction and deconstruction, an absolute record that for me as for others has been a cause of sadness and discomfort, but which indicates well what distinguishes the impeccability of a program from the fallibility (and therefore also perfectibility) of a project.

About ten years ago, before I got to know my reference architects and began to learn from Turin, as well as Las Vegas and Nuremberg, I would have simply said that Palazzo Nuovo sucked.[9] It was a superficial position and a hasty judgement, that of Charles of England and Houellebeq. Today this is no longer the case, the resignation of old age has something to do with it, and the hope that things will not end too soon, but certainly in these ten years, in dialogue with Alessandro and Giovanni, I feel I have learnt the essence of the project, which is precisely a mixture of failure, hiccup, and last but not least, delay. There is always something wrong, there is always someone complaining, there is always a snag or a hindrance. This must be why the architect's conscience is often, by destiny or vocation, an unhappy conscience. And the only one to fully enjoy the secret of the project, its essence, is the umarell in front of the construction site, a pensioner who contemplates the project of others with the nostalgia and suffering reserved for a phantom limb.

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more than the initial budget and take a third longer than the planned time to realise. And this seems an inescapable fact. Only rare exceptions escape the law of constitutive delay."

[9] And I wrote it in M. Ferraris, "Palazzo nuovo e altre folies," P. D'Angelo *et al.* (eds.), *Costellazioni estetiche: dalla storia alla neoestetica. Studi in onore di Luigi Russo*, Guerini, Milano, 2013, pp. 157–164.

Sixth Piece: The Thrown Project

Seen from the other side, the example is a project, that is, the will projecting itself forward to make objects or events possible. This projecting forward is teleology in its purest state, since we turn not towards the world of what is or has been, but of what, in the light of our project, should be there.

On the one hand, therefore, there is a banal observation to be made, namely that in its projection into the future, the project is pure possibility, which may be realized very differently from what was thought or not at all. Indeed, if there is anything certain we can say about the project, it is that its realization – be it a house, a battle or a novel – will be different from the form it took in its first conception.

Hence a perhaps somewhat less obvious observation, namely that the project is at least as much in the world as in the head of its conceiver, if not more. As a result, in the project, teleology does not fly freely – as it does in the imagination – but is conditioned by what is there, i.e., by ontology, by the situation in the field; by what we know at the moment we design, i.e., by epistemology; and by the happy or unhappy way we act, i.e., by technology.

The most surprising result of the project, then, is that its technological projection translates into an archaeological revelation: that which is in front of us, and which is the fruit of a tension towards the future, carries with it all its own past, i.e., not only the stages of its own manufacture, but also the reminiscences and examples that triggered the genetic act of the project.

Seventh Piece: The End and the End

Turning from projects to proverbs, we recall the saying that when the house is finished, all that remains is to wait for death. In a melancholic or sinister way, this sentence reminds us of the essential link between having ends, i.e., purposes in life, and having an end, i.e., being part of an organic process, life, precisely, whose ultimate end is death.

This characteristic, that is, the fact of being an organism that as such is subject to irreversible processes, is what unites us with any non-human animal. However, because – as humans – we are organisms systematically connected to mechanisms, the constitutive circle of human nature is created.

As organisms, we only possess internal purposes, and we only go in one direction, death. But as human organisms, we are connected with mechanisms that possess external purposes (the knife is made to cut, the book is made to be read, the constitution is made to regulate a state, etc.), which retroact on our first nature, the organic nature, and determine our second nature. The latter, therefore, overflows with external purposes that come to us from the techno-social world we enter when, immediately after birth, we begin to receive an education.

On the one hand, then, as organisms, we feel the pressure of metabolism, and precisely for this reason we develop an intentionality, a temporality, a value system whose first origin lies in organic need and its absolute character: there is no remedy for death, and therefore it is a matter of submitting to the impositions of that struggle against death which is precisely metabolism. And it is here that the essential link is constructed with the end that constitutes us as organisms.

On the other hand, however, as human organisms, we feel the pressure not only of the primary need, but also of the great technological apparatus of external ends that we call "culture" or, indeed, "second nature," and it is those external ends that, as I have said, retroacting on the internal end, modify and structure it, constellating the road that leads to the end with a great number of external ends, objectives, aspirations and ideals. (Which is why, returning to the proverb with which I began this piece, every achievement of an end carries within itself, more or less covertly, the air of the end).

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Writing in, on, and for Architecture: Interview with Cynthia Davidson

KHŌREIN: Let's start with the questions about editing magazines on architecture, and writing about this discipline. In a lecture about your editorial practice, titled "Image and Word: A Critical Context," held at SCI-Arc in 2013, you said that magazines recontextualize architecture through text. However, the lecture title contains both the *image* and the *word* with the conjunction "and" between them. What does this mean for architectural writing? What is the status of the image here? When we introduce the "and," do we speak about some kind of simultaneity between these two categories, image and word?

CYNTHIA DAVIDSON: I have since been teaching writing in architecture schools, and I have come to believe that architects, on average, think visually and produce images far more easily than they produce text. This is not the rule, it's just an observation.

I teach a required graduate course, called "Image and Text," at Pratt, where I try to help the students to understand that an image generally needs explanation in order to be understood in a certain way by the broad population that is involved in the project. So, you could say *and* implies a supplement. It is important to add words that don't simply describe what we can already see, which is the students' tendency to do. They need to write a text that explains the ambition of the project or the goal of the project, that explains what the average viewer would not be able to see or read in the image. We live in an image culture, but that culture also requires texts.

I would defend the word to the end, but in a certain sense, by saying "image and text," I'm admitting that text – note that I don't call it "text and image," I call it "image and text" – is, in that school, second in importance to image. Hence that pairing. I think of them, though, as a pair. Not as confronting one another, but needing each other to survive, and particularly to survive in a critical context.

KH: In the same lecture, you distinguish between activating and reactive magazines. You described your first editorial experience, at in *Inland Architect*, as a magazine that reacted to what was already happening, and you said you did not want *ANY* magazine to do that.

CD: It's important to situate *ANY* magazine not in relationship so much to *Inland Architect*, which I edited for eight years prior to starting *ANY*, but in relationship to the Anyone project. Anyone was a project in the 1990s, at the so-called end of the Millennium, to consider the undecidable condition of architecture at that point in time, as well as the many technological things that were going on, such as Y2K – fears that computers wouldn't recognize that the calendar was turning over from 1999 to 2000. There were lots of questions surrounding architecture and the digital, or virtual space.

At its outset, Anyone was a 10-year project in which architecture was the host of a multidisciplinary cross-cultural conversation about architecture. We staged one event a year with some 25 people, lasting two-and-a-half days, to consider aspects of architecture through a framework established by using one of the 10 "any-words": anyone, anywhere, anyplace, anywise, anytime, anybody and so forth. *ANY* magazine was an offshoot of that. Since the conferences were a way of activating a theoretical discussion, the magazine was also activating. We conceived of *ANY* as a theoretical journal that I would run with guest editors who would propose thematic issues, or I would recruit people to address a particular concept in order to explore how different disciplines were thinking about architecture.

It was important that Arata Isozaki in Tokyo, Ignasi de Solà-Morales in Barcelona, and Peter Eisenman in New York initiated and were part of this cross-cultural project. They helped to sustain Anyone's international dialogue. Jacques Derrida was at the first two events Anyone in Los Angeles and Anywhere in Japan. Other early participants included science fiction writer William Gibson, the Harvard Law School professor and Brazilian philosopher Roberto Mangabeira Unger, the postmodern theorist Fredric Jameson, from Duke University, and, of course, architects, such as Rem Koolhaas, Liz Diller, and Toyo Ito.

Some people criticized the conferences because they the project was quite closed, that we were a little club of elite thinkers in architecture that outsiders resented, in part because the word anyone means, or course any individual. We kept expanding the table of participants, but *ANY* magazine was another way to invite more voices into the Anyone project.

The conferences started in 1991, and *ANY* began in 1993. Many of those themes issues were staged events – actually, collaborations with the Guggenheim – in New York on Saturday mornings with a guest editor For example, Mark Taylor, a philosopher of religion then at Williams College, did an event and issue called "Electrotecture," a term he coined in order to describe the architecture of future virtual spaces. He, Avital Ronell and others discussed different concepts of virtual space that architecture was facing. This was in 1994, when there were only chat rooms online, way before Facebook, Twitter, Zoom or Skype. Chat rooms were sites where you could participate in a conversation through typing. All words, no images. It was all text. Mark, in his foresight, saw a different future coming, and he was right. In this sense *ANY* was activating ideas in architecture in the 90s, in anticipation of the new century. But when *Log* came along, in 2003, the world was a different story.

KH: In your preface to the first issue of *ANY*, you say that the journal uses the form of the letter, which refers to addressing someone who is not present, that there is a distance between the one who is writing and the one who is being addressed. How does this relate to the idea of connection present in those projects of creating space for discussion, conferences, etc.?

CD: In planning the editorial scope of *ANY*, the idea was that we would have two letters from specific places in every issue that did not relate to the thematic substance of the issue. They tended to report on current events or situations.

The letter is generally considered to be a form of personal correspondence. What do we say when we believe we're saying it privately? In the 90s, when I was writing letters on stationery, whether by hand or by machine, I was writing just to you. When you received it, you could decide to share it with whomever, but that meant sharing a sheet of paper that had come through the mail, sealed in an envelope. It may have contained confidences or opinions that weren't ready to be shared with a wider audience.

Why are we still interested in the letters of creative thinkers? Because we think we're going to learn something about them that wasn't public? Something that will add to how we see the work, or bring us a new understanding of the work? This is the case, for example, with Emily Dickinson, the poet, or Oscar Wilde, or any number of people who write letters.

The letter suggests a certain kind of intimacy, a sharing of thoughts. It's also a more informal way of writing. As an editor, I edit a letter differently than I edit a transcribed conversation, an essay, or reportage. They're different forms of text that use language differently.

KH: They are a different literary genre. It's not only a question of private or public. Letters are completely accepted as a form of expression, because they are a great chapter of literary, expression, of human communication. Just to give an example in architecture, among the books of Le Corbusier there is the book of his letters to Auguste Perret, his teacher.

KH: The *ANY* #0's theme is "Writing in Architecture." Almost like a manifesto, the issue brings important discussions on the role writing should have in architecture. In these discussions we encounter almost an endless multiplication of formulations – "writing in architecture," "writing architecture," "architectural writing," "writing on architecture," "writing of architecture," "writing about architecture," etc. All of them seem to be employed in the search for modes of writing that can produce architecture.

CD: This is something that has continued to interest me because the keyword here is not a conjunction, but a preposition. Prepositions, I believe, describe one's relationship to the subject or object of attention. So, writing *in*, writing *on*, writing *about*, writing *for*, writing *toward*... Those could be seen as function words, but they primarily signal a spatial condition, as to where the author is in relationship to what is being written about. Jane Rendell, who teaches at the Bartlett, has done a lot of work on this in a program she calls it "site writing." Some of her work stems from Michel Serres' theory of prepositions in his book *Angels*. I absolutely love this book. He says that prepositions are like angels that deliver messages and then help us understand where, in space, we are. When we talk about a discipline that produces space, that creates space – not just form, but space – our relationship to that space is defined in large part by prepositions when we try to describe it in writing, or through writing.

KH: Two years after this issue was published, you established the "Writing Architecture" series at the MIT Press. Was this an acknowledgment that academic writing can also become active, in spite of its slowness?

CD: First I'd like to point out that "Writing Architecture" uses no prepositions. When you remove the "in," "on," or "about," it's simply writing architecture. What does that mean? It doesn't mean we're writing *with* architecture. We conceived this series at about the same time as *ANY* magazine, but it's much faster to produce a magazine than it is a book. The magazine came out in '93, but the first book didn't come out till '95. This is partly because the first two books had to be translated from the Japanese and from the French. Translation takes time.

Academic writing moves slower than architecture itself. Let's say the average project is a three-year process from gestation to certificate of occupancy. And this is not scientific fact, just my observation. Three years minimum. Writing architecture books can take years longer than building. Most Writing Architecture Series books I have edited have been in the works for more than three years.

KH: The discussion about the relationship between the word and the image is also found in your interview with Bernard Tschumi in #0 of *ANY*. When you asked him why writing had been important to him, he replied: "The logic of words allows you to apprehend certain concepts better than, let's say, the logic of materials. There is an abstraction, there is a conceptual dimension to architecture that is inevitably part of architecture and that, not surprisingly, can be mastered more precisely through the conceptual means of words." Does this "conceptual dimension" of architecture need a non-architectural writing? In other words, does architectural writing need to be supplemented with, for example, philosophical writing?

CD: I think your question "does this conceptual dimension of architecture need a non-architectural writing," is a question for Bernard. I think it's embedded in how he thinks and how he works, and not necessarily how I think or work. Does architectural writing need to be supplemented with philosophical writing? Not in every case, no. We already have the problem of a distracted audience, or an audience that doesn't really care about architecture in the United States... There are very few people writing about architecture in mass media in this country – once in a while you see something in the *New York Times*, the *Washington Post*, or the *LA Times* – because there's no real audience for it, people don't necessarily want to read about it. And there is no room for philosophical writing, so to speak, in mass media because there is no audience for it. Its platform is in specific journals, such as *Khōrein*.

I think it's quite interesting that in thinking about the climate crisis we are now trying to come to terms with that people like Sanford Kwinter have returned to philosophy, to Spinoza, Whitehead, and others, to try to rethink our relationship to the cosmos. This is clearly a philosophical position, but most of the architects working on the climate crisis are doing research on material.

KH: Could you tell us what is for you the difference between an architectural concept and a philosophical concept?

CD: I'm not convinced that architectural concepts stem from the meanings of words, and I associate philosophical concepts as stemming from words. For example, the idea of "house" could have very different meanings for architects and philosophers. But I don't know what those differences might be. When I interviewed Rem Koolhaas, back in 1993, about why he wrote *Delirious New York* – it's in *ANY* #0 – he said two things that have stayed with me: first, that he wrote it in order to create a condition or territory – I forget his exact words – in which he could practice the kind of architecture he wanted to practice, because that condition didn't yet exist. He thought that through writing he could create it. However, *Delirious New York* is a retroactive manifesto for Manhattan. Rem used the history of New York to create a condition in the 1970s that he felt he could operate in as an architect. Second, Rem said that before he designs any project – and this would be the antithesis of Frank Gehry – he first writes down the concept. But he's thinking about a design concept, I believe, not philosophy. Anyway, I don't want this conversation to turn into an analysis of Rem Koolhaas. I only use his work as an example.

KH: In 2003, ten years after *ANY* was established, you published the inaugural issue of *Log*. What was the motive behind the transition from *ANY* to *Log*?

CD: I guess you can call it a transition. By the year 2001, the Anyone project had concluded, *ANY* magazine had stopped, and the last conference book, *Anything*, was had been published. There was the question as to what should happen to the nonprofit Anyone Corporation, because its initial project of 10 conferences leading the millennium had been completed. I was taking a kind of gap year when the World Trade Center towers went down; after the design competition for rebuilding

the site, I felt we needed a new kind of journal, one that focused on texts, not images.

Log is definitely a reactive journal. I don't believe that *ANY* was a reaction to *Inland Architect* but *Log* was clearly a reaction to *ANY*, in part because times and events had changed. So where *ANY* was thematic and theoretical, *Log* is open, without a theme, but also critical. We set out to record the movement of architecture in the new millennium. I thought architecture seemed a bit adrift after the digital revolution of the late 90s, with its fixation on design software. Architecture was changing. The question was, where was it going to end up? Would it cohere in a uniformity of thought, like in prewar modernism? Or would it become something much more fragmented? Essentially, something much more undecidable.

The ideas introduced by deconstruction, and by Deleuze and Guattari, are still with us, even though no one talks about them. I think they're deeply embedded in how architecture operates because architecture is so fragmented. The recent issues of social justice, economic inequality and climate change themselves are so big that you can't possibly address all three at once. It's literally impossible for an architect to do that and it's not necessarily an architect's primary responsibility to do that. These are the changing conditions and concerns that *Log* records. Initially I was hoping for more criticism of architecture itself, of buildings and projects, but today it's more about process, material and research than criticism.

I began working on *Log* in December 2002, after the World Trade Center design competition. At the time, the image that the proposed buildings projected to the world seemed to be the major concern, though the developer was concerned with leasable space. *Log* was conceived in the tradition of a literary journal, a form it still has, as a way to suppress the dominance of the image. It was a deliberate attempt to place text ahead of image. Images were only black and white, and they were basically the size of postage stamps. This has changed overtime. The most recent issue, *Log* 56, was our first full color issue. It served as the catalog for an exhibition I curated, called "Model Behavior." There were several essays, but most pages featured large images of the objects with short explanatory texts. Several people wrote to say "this is what *Log* should be now, enough of this repression of the image, we don't need to do that anymore. The image is everywhere. We need to deal with the image." That had gradually been happening over the course of *Log* itself, which will celebrate its 20th anniversary in September this year.

KH: At the end of your essay "What's in a Log?," you say something about the journal's position: "A log, by definition, is a way of recording observations of the present through writing in time. Seen against the backdrop of a culture of images and rhetoric, and in its distance from both the academy and mass media, this *Log* offers the possibility of a critical context for writing about architecture today - for observing its movement or lack thereof, its images, its texts, and its subtexts." We could notice the emphasis on the issue of time here. How did this change the idea of "writing architecture?"

KH: I would like to answer this. I think it has something to do with the transition from the printed newspaper to the Internet. This means that newspapers can survive only through opinions and judgment. No more with information. This is all about the crisis of magazines and architecture worldwide. The age of *magazines as tools of information* is over, they're gone. It's another time. We need more critical opinions. I think this is the transition. It's the same with newspapers. All the newspapers had to face this because of the Internet. Every second you have information. So, of course, what you don't have are opinions, judgment, critical thinking about the events.

CD: I think you're absolutely right, Manuel. We're also at a very strange moment in the United States; if you make the "wrong" judgment, you are canceled. It's out of control. The "cancellation" comes through social media. Yes, people want judgment, but I don't know how many writers are willing to take a strong stand on something because we're in a strange judgmental moment.

KH: Walter Benjamin said that when you look at *Die Fackel* directed by Karl Krauss, you are looking for judgements on the world. Cancel culture is also about judgment. In Italy, we were contesting everything in the 60s and 70s. That's why there were thousands of magazines, because they were erasing all the traditional values. I think that the cancel culture is stimulating.

CD: Specifically, I think *Log* is at a critical turning point. I didn't expect it to go on for 20 years. *Log* is not affiliated with any institution, therefore it's free of their ideology, if such a thing exists. Its independence, I believe, is critically important. The United States has never had the culture of architecture that exists in Europe, especially in Italy.

KH: In the same text, “What’s in a Log?,” you ask: “In a culture dominated by the image – filmic or still – is it nostalgic to yearn for a text? For writing?” What is your answer to this question today, after twenty years? Later on, at the conference “Issues?”, held in Belgrade, you said that you stand for resistance to “the seductive power of images.” What can be the role of architectural theory in resisting the dominance of images in contemporary society?

CD: Your question makes me think of the 2016 Architecture Biennale in Venice, when Mónica Ponce de León and I created the show called “The Architectural Imagination” for the US pavilion. We wanted to exhibit models and drawings and renderings of speculative proposals for Detroit, thinking that this would be a way to represent thinking in 2016 about how we make architecture for four different sites in a city that was badly in need of investment. The 12 projects we commissioned for this exhibition presented new ideas not only about design but also about habitation, education, reclamation, and so forth.

To explain this, Mónica and I felt we needed a lot of text. I have always been critical of exhibitions that have too much explanatory text on the wall. I once wrote a piece criticizing a show by the Museum of Modern Art curator Terence Riley, saying that he basically exhibited a magazine of photos and texts on the wall. We at least had models, drawings and text.

Architecture doesn’t always speak for itself. It may speak for itself within the discipline, but not to the broader public. So again, who is the audience? We can’t just talk to ourselves, especially at this critical moment in time. There are so many architectural – and philosophical – questions to be raised and discussed.

Obviously, writing is important as a supplement to the image, or I wouldn’t be teaching it. I don’t think it’s nostalgic at all to advocate for writing, and good writing, because it’s another mode of expression – of thought – that is critically important. There’s no scientific proof, but perhaps writing causes us to dream, even to visualize, in ways that images do not.

Interview conducted by Petar Bojanić, Snežana Vesnić, Marko Ristić, and Manuel Orazi.

Architecture Must Help the World: Interview with Odile Decq

KHŌREIN: Which philosopher did you first read? Who are those you are reading today? Whose philosophy book do you own? Which philosopher did you know personally? Whose lectures and seminars did you attend? Might you be able to provide us with a brief retrospective of your encounter with philosophy and philosophers, above all, French philosophers?

ODILE DECQ: I never formally studied philosophy, even at school as I obtained my baccalaureate without doing the last year, so I never had a philosophy teacher.

However, in my third year of studying architecture, I had to find a job and I met Philippe Boudon who proposed to me to work with him as I was studying linguistics then, prior to my architecture studies, and knew a little bit about Chomsky, Benveniste, etc.

KH: Can you say that Philippe Boudon influenced your work?

OD: I worked with him for four years, and left as I wanted to get my degree. I think he expected that I would continue to do research with him. But I decided not to, I wanted to become an architect. We reconnected ten, fifteen years later.

Did he influence me? I don't know. When we worked together, we would be sitting on opposite sides of a table, I was reading a lot at his demand and I would be synthetizing for him. This is, in a way, how I studied history of architecture. I would also try to read his particular handwriting upside down (which I was able to do). This was my work with him for four years. He was receiving many visitors from architecture and from all over the world and I met them.

In the place where he was working, I was part of a team of four, there were two other members, a sociologist and a linguist (I think), and even though I was merely an assistant, I felt integrated into the team.

KH: Would you say that you were thinking together, collectively?

OD: Yes and no, because I was too young. But my name is on some of his research books.

KH: You wrote about Claude Parent. What was your relationship with Parent and Virilio?

OD: I discovered Claude while I was still studying in Rennes, before coming to Paris. I saw an exhibition of the oblique function in the mid-seventies. But they had already split; they worked together for six or seven years in the sixties, but split after 1968, because Virilio was a leftist and Parent was not; he wasn't on the right exactly, but certainly not on the left, and they were no longer speaking to each other.

I saw their exhibition on "*La Fonction oblique*," which fascinated me. Later on, a young journalist introduced me to Parent, in 1984. And we became friends. And Paul, who was the Dean of the Ecole Spéciale d'Architecture, asked me to give a lecture, at the beginning of the nineties. Six months or twelve months later, he invited me to teach there.

At the time I also met Frédéric Migayrou who was working with Claude Parent, and Frédéric and I managed to create a sort of reunion between Claude and Paul, even if their relationship remained contentious.

KH: Can you recognize something from their work in yours?

OD: Absolutely! My first oblique surface was an installation, named Hypertension, in 1993 for the art center "*le magasin*" in Grenoble. Then for the competition for a restaurant on the Champs Elysée, This was in the nineties, and the nineties was a very interesting time for me. There were lots of competitions, I designed my first big building in 1988, the *Banque Populaire de l'Ouest*, and the design was to be published in *Architectural Design*, the magazine run by Andreas Papadakis. I had met him in '91 or '92. I brought him an image of the *Banque* and a little catalogue of our own exhibition "*Maquette Invraisemblable*" from 1989 in Paris. After that, Papadakis invited me to many symposiums he organized with Charles Jencks in London. I ended up friends with a lot of the architects – every symposium was a group of some 15 to 20 architects; siting around a large table. Charles Jencks would give us a topic and we would all talk about it. That's how we spent our mornings, and then in the afternoon

there would be two or three lectures by three persons from the group – never me, because I was too young – but afterwards, we had to send texts that were published in *Architectural Design*.

KH: You prefer the phrase "architecture thinking," which you deployed in a number of lectures. What is it?

OD: At the time there was a lot of talk about "design thinking" coming from Stanford university. There were teachers and researchers who talked about "design thinking." They defined that as a kind of methodology to provide ideas and contexts, and formulate problems that could be solved through design. I too started to speak about "design thinking;" but I started thinking it was not enough, I am not just a designer, I was talking about architecture, which is more than design – more global, broader. So, I thought that for me, it has to be "architecture thinking." And then I had to explain that. When you are an architect facing a question, a problem or a program you need to study and question it through a lot of disciplines, which you only touch upon. Just a bit of philosophy, technology, art, mathematics, geography, sociology, geology etc. – but you know how to manipulate all these disciplines for your work. And then you have to find the nodes within – which are the more interesting places in your overall problem – and bring them together to synthesize all these issues from different disciplines and at the end make a proposal.

The proposal has to be efficient from the larger scale of the city to the smallest detail of a door handle. Architecture is the only discipline that is able to work across such a broad range of disciplines. It allows for every person to answer the same problem differently when each person will combine all these disciplines differently.

This is also why I like to say that I do not instruct my students how to become architects, but I teach them architecture and this is very different. I do not care whether they become architects; I want them to build themselves and decide who to become with architecture in order to help and act in the world.

KH: This means that philosophy is only one of many disciplines within architecture?

OD: Yes. And if you think about Philippe Boudon and his work on scales in architecture, this is similar. I realized after I developed "architecture

thinking" that it was similar to what Boudon was doing when he was doing his researches he called "*Architecturology*."

KH: When you explain architectural thinking, do you feel that you are also explaining your objects, your projects? When thinking architecture, are you comparing it with your practice?

OD: No, not necessarily. It's my life. This much more describing a process of thinking. My practice is only one part of "architecture thinking."

KH: Did you ever compare or harmonize your projects through this?

OD: No, because my way of practicing is much more intuitive, I work intuitively even if I am able to describe in following through which phases it has travel.

KH: This is similar to what Peter Eisenman is always saying, "I do not know what I am doing." Nevertheless, let us try to understand what you are doing?

OD: But this is your task as a philosopher; not mine.

KH: This is the same logic, the same answer as Eisenman's.

OD: Maybe this is normal. Why ask me to explain what I am doing? The way ideas are travelling in your brain and how do they proceed to be conscious is not clearly defined. Some people say "I walk therefore I think!". I can maybe use that as a metaphor "I walk therefore I design." I sometimes say to my people in the office, "this morning, this idea came when brushing my teeth." Brushing teeth is a kind of automatic gesture that you can do without thinking on what you are doing, so your brain is liberated and free to provide or combine ideas.

So, this is why I can say I do not understand what I am doing, I work intuitively, and you are here to give me explanation or your way of interpretation of what I am doing. Maybe this is only an interpretation and someone else can have another interpretation and will explain differently.

I don't have ideology, I don't use specific and constant principles, I navigate depending on the context, the client, the site etc. This is exactly as sailing depending on the wind, the sea current, the sun. Going to a point is never direct nor a right line, this is discursive and evolutive.

KH: We have your sentence: architecture is a discipline that must help the world. What does that mean?

OD: I strongly believe that. Yes. We are inserted into the world and we are looking forward as we don't work for yesterday nor even today. The process of architecture is very long and take several years to finalize a project. So, we need to open our eyes and our brain as wide as we can to every development of the society and the human organization in the world and be curious of evolution of the society. This architecture thinking, this way of thinking builds us to be able to act in the world and make proposals for the world. Architecture teaches how to make proposals. There is first a search, a hypothesis, then a proposal, which comprises complex questions, bringing together all the disciplines we were talking before. After studying architecture, I believe we are able to do that.

Some years ago, I was reading about these big companies that hire philosophers or sociologists to come in and help them to rethink how they are running the companies. My thought was that people trained in architecture could do the same: we are able to analyze, to understand complex question, make a proposal. This is why I think with architecture you can do whatever you want, whatever you can without being condemn to only be an architect in the way we practice today; that, may be, will disappear in a near future thanks to AI.

KH: We are also interested in your use of the word "help."

OD: I think the main task of architects is to help. To act in the world. To consider the problems that we encounter everywhere in it. Because after all, architecture is for humanity; it is not just an abstract thinking.

This is also why I do envy the young students, born after 2000. They are in a fantastic position for inventing a new century when using all the new development of new technologies that are running fast now. I often tell them their main task is to look and be curious of everything happening, then to dream of being able to create, invent and build in the near future the new century in which they will live. They have to do that without forgetting human being. And this is fantastic and exciting.

KH: Let's talk a bit about acting in a good way on the world, about morality. In one of your interviews you say, "we are today in a society where everybody wants to behave as a nice person. No, sometimes, you

can do something bad. Everything that is perceived by users as bad could be interesting." So you are seeking to help, seeking change, but without moral protocols.

OD: It is not exactly this. We want to help people to live better. I don't really have the vision of good or bad. I don't have a moralistic vision of acting. I have convictions and know that not everyone has the same as we are all different and only humans.

KH: We had a conversation with Peter Eisenman where he says that architects are evil. Are architects evil?

OD: Yes, absolutely. It is complicated and even impossible to live with an architect. Because architecture is our passion, our life, and if you are not an architect, this is quite difficult to live with. As architect you are constantly analyzing the situation, constantly making proposals, moving, evolving. And not everybody likes that. Above all, the architect is curious about all in the world.

KH: Could a philosopher and an architect live together?

OD: Maybe or maybe not. I have no idea about that.

KH: Let us take a slightly different approach. You have a school, and we assume that there is something like architectural knowledge. If architecture is a discipline, if it has disciplinary autonomy, that means it produces some kind of knowledge.

OD: I would say that I do not teach; I coach. I don't know what teaching means in the academical meaning. I have conversations with students and through these conversations we are traveling through their proposals and I always ask them why.

KH: Could you tell us the difference?

OD: Teaching is bringing knowledge, telling the student what do they have to learn and do something in a particular way. Coaching is to bring out who they are, looking at what they can do, trying to extract from them something they might not even be aware of. Giving them the more autonomy of thinking and doing. Let them to take position and be engaged with is.

KH: The American philosopher Emerson distinguishes between instruction and provocation. Do you feel you are "provoking" your students to do something?

OD: I only push them to go beyond.

KH: We want to ask you about the topic of institution and protocols. Your school seems to us to be what Derrida called *contre-institution*.

OD: I wanted a free way of teaching. In our school we re-invent something every semester. Bringing new themes, new people for interacting with students, new organization between Studio, workshops and seminars. We try to invent and redefine it every time. In a way, there is no curriculum; a kind of a frame yes, but no curriculum.

KH: How would you describe, let's call it, your architectural style of built projects?

OD: Never. I wouldn't. Because I do not know. I can't define it. I don't have a style; in fact, I do not want to speak about 'my' style. Perhaps somebody else can do it; but not me.

KH: How would you then describe your architecture? Your projects? How do you start designing?

OD: I always say that it depends. I go to the site, I meet the client – always, regardless of the size, where it is in the world. This way, sometimes I immediately have ideas, in part because I have some experience; sometimes not; I take the plane, the train, the car back to Paris, I speak to one or more often two people in my office. I describe what did I saw, how it felt, what are the conditions. I ask them to start to do something. Previously, it was done through models, but now the young generation is not able to make models as well, which is problematic for me. But we were used to make models, put them on the table, play with them and see what happens. I react to that.

KH: Could you tell us something about the overall idea of project MACRO in Rome? What did you want to do conceptually?

OD: We were in Rome, a very preserved city where Roman ruins are part of the cityscape, where contemporary architecture was not really present

in the center. So, I decided to play the game "to go on with a mask." By keeping the facades on the street, covering the whole place by a large roof, we could create inside another world, more contemporary that people will discover when entering and traveling in.

Covering the whole place with a roof to be used is the story of Rome, the rooftop terraces. When we looked at the surroundings of the Museum, we discovered that there were no public squares around. But, for me Rome is a city of squares – so I decided to create a rooftop and a square all together. Then took in our advantage the level differences between the two entrances on both sides for creating hallways going up and down to travel and discover – really discover – the building, via different ramps and passages. This is the story of the project.

At the beginning, if you look at the first images of the competition, the walls were white, but through a conversation with a journalist who said that because I wear black, the walls should be black. I tested and experimented them. I have a lot of stories that I can add, but I am not sure that I could explain it any further why.

Regarding this project, which was done in 2000, I had gone to visit the Guggenheim in Bilbao a year earlier; I spent seven hours, step by step through the whole building. I discovered that there were multiple passages and perspectives that the building provided. I wanted to give the same sense of surprise to the visitors of MACRO. This is a kind of reference, I guess, even if they do not literally relate to one another in terms of design.

KH: Do you use some other media for projects? Like drawing or painting?

OD: I don't draw; I sketch sometimes. Actually, now I dare to sketch, but in the past, I thought my sketching was terrible, so I avoided it. I rather talk a lot. And my medium are the people working for me. We sit in front of the screen, and I ask them to make changes – shift this, do that, etc. If it's still not right, I put tracing paper on top of the screen, I draw on that and we scan it and they re-draw.

KH: France has some famous women philosophers, Hélène Cixous, Luce Irigaray, Sarah Kofman, etc. – is there a relation between women philosophers and women architects? Are you not thematizing all the time your position as a woman architect? Is it possible to talk about being a woman architect?

OD: It is not easy when you start, especially if you are a woman. But this is life. It has been like this for two thousand years.

KH: Is it possible to recognize your work as a woman architect?

OD: No, I do not want to be recognized as a woman architect; I want to be recognized as an architect. I'm sure that there are differences, that they are differences between men and women architecture, again because we are human and there are differences between all of us. I do not want to be categorized as a woman architect. I even tell young women in school, you can do it, but not if you think of it as being a woman, but only with architecture on your mind.

KH: Does that mean that architectural thinking is beyond this difference between men and women?

OD: Of course. I do not think the two are connected.

But when you were asking me about why I don't theorize or I don't think about how I work, I remembered the exhibition in London in 1995, "Theory and Experimentation," organized by Papadakis. We were the only French team invited to this exhibition. All the American and English participants had theoretical explanation for what they were doing, for their architecture; which we did not. Why was that? Because when you are a young architect in the US, just out of school, you cannot find work, so you start by teaching and doing research. So, you theorize your architecture. And then, later, you find a project, and you try to link your theory and your practice. But in France it was different: thanks to the competitions for young architects in the eighties and nineties, we were young architects who were working a lot, designing projects immediately after graduation. We were experimenting as well, but through projects, not through theory. We also tried to explain what we were doing, but we were experimenting first and theorizing after.

I also wrote a text on the difference between theory and doctrine. In theory, you make a hypothesis and you test it and modify it constantly after the result of your experimentation. This is the scientific approach. While a doctrine is something you announce and you never modify. And this is out of my way of thinking.

Interview conducted by Petar Bojanić and Snežana Vesnić.

Book Review Received: April 5, 2023

Željko Radinković*

Jörg H. Gleiter, *Architekturtheorie zur Einführung*, Junius Verlag, Hamburg, 2022.

The fact that Jörg Gleiter's book *Architekturtheorie zur Einführung* was published in probably the most prominent German edition of Junius-Reihe's introductory texts can serve as an indicator that philosophical reflection on the problems of architecture is widely recognized as a legitimate philosophical discipline and issue. Gleiter's opus itself contributes to this significantly. The interweaving of considerations about "theory" or the theoretical element in Gleiter's also practically oriented concept of the theory of architecture includes various types of theoretical thinking – originally architectural, cultural, historical – among which philosophical concepts stand out as key places of defining architectural thinking.

In the introductory part, Gleiter includes architecture in the group of those objects, institutions and activities with which humans indirectly ensure their existence. From this he derives a very extensive definition of the theory of architecture: "The theory of architecture is a form of critical reflection on the conception, creation and effectiveness of architecture, as well as on the function of architecture in a wider, dynamically ever-changing field of culture. The goal of critical reflection is to review, confirm or formulate representations and models on the basis of which humans create for themselves the only suitable environment that differs from pure naturalness."[1] The three basic characteristics of architectural theory are its focus on practice, the dependence of architecture on theory, and the difference between a practical and a scientific kind of theory. Namely, architecture is necessarily practically oriented, whereby architectural work of course moves in the space of real possibilities, where it

[1] J. Gleiter, *Architekturtheorie zur Einführung*, p. 13.

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encounters resistances that return it to its theoretical foundations. They are implicitly or explicitly (design, construction, use) crucial to architecture itself. Gleiter points to a number of influential architects who have combined architectural theory and architectural practice in their work. In its scholarly form, architectural theory can be understood as an explication of the implicit theoretical knowledge contained in architectural practice.

Gleiter organized his book according to basic concepts, trying to avoid the systematics that would be dictated by the usual divisions into epochs and paradigms. Given that similar objections can be made to the approach based on basic concepts, that is, that basic concepts generate a certain type of conceptual constancy and normativity according to their structure, Gleiter notes that apart from a certain ontological and cognitive-theoretical inherent constancy, basic concepts are also characterized by what he calls the historical index, which refers to the fact that theoretical synchronicity always overlaps with historical diachrony.

The basic terms featured are sign, phenomenon, ornament, language, form and space.

Referring directly to Kant and the systematization of categories in the *Critique of Pure Reason*, Gleiter formulates four categories of architectural theory: quantity, quality, relation, and modality. In terms of quantity, which according to Kant is divided into universal, particular, singular, Gleiter makes a distinction between philosophy of architecture, which deals with the general function of architecture within cultural and social relations, architectural theory with its specific practice of conceiving, implementing and operating architectural ideas, and finally critique of architecture focusing on individual architectural cases. Gleiter understands the categorical determination of quality, which according to Kant is divided into affirmative, negative and infinite judgments, in a historical sense and differentiates between thinking about architecture, traditional architectural theory and critical architectural theory. In fact, these three phases testify how and to what extent social and historical changes affect changes in the way architecture is reflected upon. Thus, Gleiter emphasizes that certain changes in the understanding of architecture, such as the crisis of architecture in the nineteenth century and the criticism of modern architecture that began in the 1950s, can be connected to certain historical turning points, such as technical progress and civil emancipation, or the development of pop culture in the middle of the twentieth century. The category of relation in Gleiter's system of architectural

categories deals with the differentiation of scientific conceptions into anthropological, cognitive and aesthetic. The anthropological conception thematizes the relation between architecture and human needs and desires, the cognitive-theoretical tackles the relation between architecture and cognitive processes, while the aesthetic deals with the relation between architecture and sensory appearance and perception. When it comes to the category of modality related to the possibilities of doing and making, Gleiter distinguishes between the modalities of designing (conception), making (construction) and using (performance).

Considering the difference between the linguistic and architectural sign, Gleiter relies on Jacques Derrida and the arbitrariness of the linguistic sign, which allows him to emphasize the "naturalness" of the architectural sign, that is, point out the materiality of the architectural sign, through which it primarily refers to itself. According to Gleiter, the architectural sign represents the unity of materiality, presence and form. However, he also points out the peculiarity of the architectural sign, which refers to its double character of simultaneously indicating presence and absence, whereby it actually transcends the mere materiality and presence of its own phenomenon. Therefore, the architectural sign is always determined by its own materiality, from which it simultaneously refers to an immaterial intelligible moment. Building on this elementary insight into the character of the architectural sign, Gleiter also systematizes the process of its perception, distinguishing between image, phenomenon and performance. Namely, the process of perceiving an architectural object generally begins with the phase of observing the pictorial appearance of the object. During this phase, the spectator gets a perspective on a given form and content. Through more detailed observation it passes into the phase of phenomenal, i.e., material appearance, in which the object is observed more precisely in its three-dimensionality and potential functionality. Gleiter marks the transition from the first pictorial to the second phenomenal phase of the process of perceiving architectural signs as necessary for the architectural experience, while the transition to the third, performative phase remains optional. This is also confirmed by everyday experience of dealing with architectural phenomena, when only in certain cases the position of phenomenal observation transitions into the "use" of the object itself, revealing other dimensions of its spatiality and functionality.

Gleiter's links the consideration of the problems of architectural theory to the concepts of aura, atmosphere, mood and immersion. Referring

to Walter Benjamin's indispensable theses about the suppression of auraticity from art in the age of increasingly pronounced technicization and scientism, Gleiter observes similar phenomena in the field of architecture. According to Gleiter, just as with the disintegration of the role of the aura in art, attempts will also be made to "reauratize" architecture. Much as Benjamin sees attempts to introduce new forms of auraticity in technically predetermined arts (i.e., the establishment of the movie stars cult), he points to phenomena in architecture that can be considered as reinventive attempts to introduce the aura into modern architecture. Thus, he emphasizes that traces of the aura can be found in classicist and neo-historical architectural genres, but also in a number of modern steel and glass constructions that have not relinquished ornaments and similar additions that fall out of the scope of pure functionalism. In this regard, Gleiter speaks of "repressing the ornament into material,"[2] citing examples of residential buildings from the beginning of the twentieth century designed by Adolf Loos in which, within a clearly functionally defined project, the architect plays with expensive materials and spatial relationships that exhibit moments of auraticity. When it comes to theories of immersion, Gleiter points out that this concept has opened a perspective on modern architecture: previously perceived as fundamentally soulless and devoid of all non-functional elements, it appeared as an expression of psychological energies in which one could be immersed. Therefore, modern architecture, even in its most minimalistic form, is understood as something that develops a certain expressive dynamic that can potentially be part of a process of emotive understanding.

Some of the key observations are introduced in the chapter dedicated to space as the basic concept. Referring to Derrida and Huber, Gleiter points to the parergonality of architecture, meaning that the relationship between the whole and the detail is established as a relationship between center and periphery, the ergonal core and the parergonal additions, the secondary and the detail. Therefore, architecture turns out to be "a topological landscape permeated by the most diverse marginal conditions."[3] Topological space is understood as a space organized according to sensory, social and psychological aspects, a space that is not homogenous in meaning, but is structured as something that has a center and periphery, where the latter has its own share in the constitution of the respective

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[2] *Ibid*., p. 117.
[3] *Ibid*., p. 249.

topological space. Included in the chapter "Space," these considerations can be found in the sub-chapters entitled "The Body" and "Time," for certain reasons included in the chapter on space. This is all the more interesting, if we take into account that Gleiter points to a realization that occurred in modern architecture, that space is a function of time and something that can only be experienced in movement, freeing it from historicist restraints still present in the nineteenth century. It becomes apparent that Modernity in architecture places time, the processuality of becoming and change, at the center of its considerations. In this regard, Gleiter shows the way in which August Schmarsow questions the vertical and the surface as the two formal dominants of Vitruvian understanding of architecture; Schmarsow adds the horizontal movement, that is, the performative act as the third dominant of architecture that actively opens up space, moving through its various levels across time, passing from the present into the past, that is, memory.[4]

All functions in modern architecture become functions of movement and therefore functions of time. However, one cannot speak of representative, but of experiential time, or what is called immanent time in the theory of architecture (Zucker). Gleiter shows how Modernity has not only established the primacy, but rather a special understanding of time that is also characteristic of modern science and art. At the same time, he emphasizes that architectural structuralism is also subject to the concept of immanent temporality, and that it cannot be hastily classified into a linguistic paradigm. "Structure" here refers to the "internal rationality and conception of architecture" which actually permanently question the constants of perception. Structure primarily means "internal forces that apparently produce unusual, perspectival effects."[5] In the context of said considerations about structure, the notion of virtuality appears as something that is generated by the elements of structure. In addition to the influence of structuralist-oriented philosophy, of particular importance here is the emergence of digital techniques that define the potentiality of projects and concepts as virtual creations and their actualization, transcending the relationship of two actual forms. The author of *Architekturtheorie zur Einführung* notes that this context gives rise to the problem of radical formalization, through the growing disconnect between virtual design and its material and anthropological foundations.

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[4] *Ibid.*, 251ff.

[5] *Ibid.*, p. 261.

In his conclusion, which is short but very important for understanding his objectives, Gleiter closes this introductory book by appealing to reason, enlightenment and humanism as "moments of resistance"[6] against reductionism and the alienation of the instrumental mind. In this context, the issue of "orientation in thinking,"[7] the insight into the inevitable connection between theoretical and practical thinking, is of key importance. The theory of architecture that Gleiter has in mind turns out to be something that should have the characteristics of a critically oriented theory of cognition, whereby a productive relationship with one's own heritage and past must be taken as a fundamental prerequisite. According to him, the historical index implies not only that we "have" a past, but above all that we have "historically-spiritually become."[8] In an almost hermeneutic tone of Heideggerian-Gadamerian provenance, Gleiter formulates his critical-theoretical approach as "an open adoption of procedures on the basis of which the new appears in the old, which then produces impulses for the future."[9] Thus, the aim of the book is to formulate a critical understanding of the overall structure of history.

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[6] *Ibid*., p. 265.

[7] *Ibid*.

[8] *Ibid*., p. 266.

[9] *Ibid*.

Book Review Received: March 2, 2023

Igor Cvejić*

Paul Guyer, *A Philosopher Looks at Architecture*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2021.

Paul Guyer's new book *A Philosopher Looks at Architecture* is a refreshing philosophical exploration for both aesthetic theory and philosophy of architecture. The strength of this book draws on the fact that it does not come from someone who is primarily trained in architectural theory, nor architecture – though demonstrating extraordinary knowledge of it – but rather from someone who rightly declares himself as a historian of philosophy.[1] Paul Guyer is indubitably one of the greatest living interpreters of Kant's philosophy and history of aesthetics, the author of the three-volume book *A History of Modern Aesthetics* (Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 2014). However, he also authored three prior intriguing articles on architecture.[2] By intertwining the history of architectural theory with the history of aesthetics, starting from Vitruvius, through modern aesthetic theories, and all the way to contemporary architectural theories, Guyer succeeds in originally showing the interconnectedness of these disciplines in an innovative way, as well as their changes over time. At the same time, he shows that solid foundations of architecture – namely, their main principles – have stood the test of time and that we have every reason to believe they will remain the theoretical principles of architectural work.

[1] P. Guyer, *A Philosopher Looks at Architecture*, p. 14.
[2] *Id*., "Kant and the Philosophy of Architecture," *Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism* LIX, 1, 2011, pp. 7–19; *id*., "Monism and Pluralism: The History of Aesthetics and Philosophy of Architecture – Part 1," *Architecture Philosophy*, I, 1, 2014, pp. 25–42; *id*., "Monism and Pluralism: The History of Aesthetics and Philosophy of Architecture – Part 2," *Architecture Philosophy*, I, 2, 2015, pp. 231–245; *id*., "Formalism around 1800: A Grudging Concession to Aesthetic Sensibility," *Philosophy and Society*, XXX, 2, 2019, pp. 241–256.

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The book *A Philosopher Looks at Architecture* has been published in the recently established Cambridge University Press series "A Philosopher Looks at." The aim of the series is to provide philosophers' personal and philosophical exploration of a topic of general interest. The series is very important for the status of contemporary philosophy because it enables the intervention of philosophers in the significant domains of everyday life. Moreover, it provides a new opportunity to get acquainted with the accounts of some of the most prominent philosophers on pressing issues.

Although *A Philosopher Looks at Architecture* represents an overview of different historical architectural theories and philosophical views on architecture, it revolves around one main general thesis. The author aims to demonstrate that the basic principles of architecture proposed already by Vitruvius in the 1st century BCE – durability (*firmitas*), utility (*utilitas*) and beauty (*venustas*) – have not changed. However, he cautions against confusing philosophy of architecture with architectural theory and warns that this claim should be considered carefully. The author does not intend to suggest that the meaning of those particular principles has not changed over time; nor that technology through which we can realize durability has not advanced. Our understanding of durability is vastly different now than it was 2000 years ago. Further, the function of buildings, as well as our understanding of aesthetic appeal, have changed with transformations of our society and culture. Moreover, the interconnectedness of those principles (e.g., how much beauty depends on function) has been perceived differently in different epochs. These are all examples of issues related to architectural theory. Nevertheless, on a higher level, the very principles have remained the same and that is the level which the author as a philosopher of architecture wants to address. In other words, architectural theory provides explanations one level down: what the means to these ends are or what counts as a good construction/function/aesthetic appeal.

The book consists of five chapters preceded by an introduction. The first four chapters offer chronologically sorted explorations of various theories, while the fifth discusses the thesis that the Vitruvian triad will remain valid in the future despite new challenges. The first chapter, "Good Construction, Functionality, and Aesthetic Appeal" covers a long period of time from Vitruvius to the 18th century. It starts with the explanation of Vitruvius' understanding of architecture. According to the author, the main framework of Vitruvius' account involves the understanding architecture as a fundamental medium for the relation of

human beings to the rest of nature and to each other.[3] Thus, the goal of architecture is to facilitate "human flourishing in its natural and social context."[4] However, this does not mean that Vitruvius argued for a naïve imitation of nature. It is rather a case that humans use available material to adapt natural environment by both imitation and invention. And not only are humans able to use natural elements in an innovative way, but they are also able to incorporate the innovation of others by observing each other. This process is what the author calls intelligent adaptation to nature.[5] The introduction of Vitruvian principles, apparently those related to building materials, construction methods and building types, takes place against this background of human space in the world. Guyer chooses to rename those principles – durability, utility and beauty – as values of good construction, function and aesthetic appeal. This decision does not only seem to be correct, but it also exemplifies Guyer's clear and engaging style that is accessible to readers coming from a wide range of backgrounds. The greatest part of the discussion is devoted to the aesthetic aspect of architecture, usually the most interesting topic for a philosopher. Guyer puts the accent on two important details of Vitruvius' account. First, although most of Vitruvius' analysis of beauty highlights formal, mathematical principles (proportion, arrangements, etc.), he also "emphasizes that what is crucial to beauty is how the parts of a building *appear* to human observers from normal vantage-points [...]."[6] In other words, he appreciates the empirical/subjective aspects of beauty and its dependence on the observing subject – by custom and nature rather than mathematics. Secondly, Vitruvius further recognizes that *content* as well as form contribute to the aesthetic appeal. Here Guyer introduces the concept of *meaning*, related to that of content. The fact that buildings have meaning in various ways can be found already in Vitruvius' work and it plays an important role in Guyer's conception of the history of philosophy of architecture.

The second part of the first chapter focuses on two significant figures: Leon Batista Alberti, representing the Italian Renaissance, and Henry

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[3] P. Guyer, *A Philosopher Looks at Architecture*, p. 16.

[4] *Ibid*.

[5] We can draw a comparison between this understanding and more contemporary theory of niche construction (a process by which an organism alters its own environment), see for example J. Odling-Smee, K. Laland, M. Feldman, *Niche Construction: Neglected Process in Evolution*, Princeton / Oxford, Princeton University Press, 2003.

[6] P. Guyer, *A Philosopher Looks at Architecture*, p. 24.

Home, Lord Kames, a prominent figure in British aesthetics. The author also provides a brief overview of Palladio's work, which illustrates Alberti's approach, and an analysis of the architectural theories of Marc-Antoine Laugier. Both Alberti and Lord Kames generally follow Vitruvian principles, but with some important deflections. The most striking difference between Alberti and Vitruvius is that the former insists on objective, mathematical rules of beauty, putting aside the empirical issue of appearance to the observers and the impact on human emotions. In addition, as Guyer emphasizes, Alberti entirely disregards that buildings can have meaning. On the contrary, Lord Kames insists on how works of architecture actually appear to us in the case of utility as well as beauty and advocates for a more empirical approach to the aesthetic appeal.[7] Laugier argued that beauty arises from good construction, thus implying that there cannot be any demands of beauty that are not also demands of utility. Despite the obvious differences between the three theoreticians regarding their conception of aesthetic appeal, the fact that beauty is considered a core value still stands. This is one of the examples of Guyer's main point: although there have been innumerous variations in the interpretations of the core principles, good construction, function and beauty have remained the core values of architecture.

The second chapter "The Meaning of Beauty" addresses the thesis that the idea of meaning has become central to the conception of the aesthetic appeal of architecture since the time of Kant. Guyer explores the work of four influential authors: Immanuel Kant, Arthur Schopenhauer, John Ruskin and Gottfried Semper. The chapter begins with a succinct yet eloquent introduction to Kant's aesthetics, followed by a comprehensive analysis of his views on architecture. Guyer puts emphasis on two important Kant's extensions of architectural aesthetic appeal. The first one is the involvement of freedom of the imagination in the analysis of beauty. The second one is that fine arts should express aesthetic ideas, which might be related to the symbolic representation of moral ideas or the representation of building types themselves, i.e., its purpose. Schopenhauer clearly fits in this chapter as another author who highlights the importance of meaning concerning the aesthetic appeal of architecture. He puts the accent on the representation of "platonic ideas." However, it is

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[7] *Ibid*., 48. Guyer stresses the importance of emotional impact in several places. However, it is a bit strange that he never mentions the concept of affective atmospheres important for contemporary theorists as well as practitioners of architecture (see G. *Böhme, Atmospheric Architectures: The Aesthetics of Felt Spaces*, Bloomsbury, London, 2017).

intriguing to note that he also abandons one of the Vitruvian principles, namely function. I will come back to it in the concluding part of this review. The chapter further contains an extensive discussion of Ruskin's seven principles (sacrifice, truth, power, beauty, life, memory and obedience). These passages perfectly demonstrate how multiple forms of meaning can comprise beauty in architecture. Additionally, Ruskin underlines the issue of truth and freedom, highlighting not only the freedom of the architect as well as the client, but also the freedom of workers. The chapter closes with a brief sketch of Semper's theoretical position.

The third chapter, "Multiplicity of Meaning in Twentieth-Century Theories" revolves around two central topics: language and phenomenology of architecture. In the first part, Guyer highlights communicative nature of architecture and connects it to the Vitruvian principles by discussing Raphael Moneo's critique of Eisenmann and the work of Susanne K. Langer. The author argues that we have to take into account not only syntax (form), but also the semantics/symbolism (meaning) and use (function) of architectural work. In the second part, Guyer focuses on the experience of architecture through the work of Steen Eiler Rasmussen, Roger Scruton and Steven Holl. In these passages, Guyer underlines how the concept of aesthetic appeal has been enriched to encompass not merely visual experience, but also the experience of how our life-space has been shaped by the architectural work.[8] The works of Steven Holl, deeply influenced by Maurice Merleau-Ponty's phenomenology, serve as an excellent example.

The fourth chapter focuses on three great architects: Frank Lloyd Wright, Adolf Loss and Ludwig Mies van der Rohe. Guyer's main goal in this chapter is to establish a connection between freedom and truth in architecture, on the one side, and the Vitruvian triad:

> [...] truth can enter into our conception of good construction, as in Ruskin, and into our conception of aesthetic appeal, beginning with

[8] It has to be noted that Guyer only indirectly discusses the main figures of phenomenological approach who have influenced architectural theory, such as Heidegger and Merleau-Ponty. However, it cannot be taken as a crucial objection, given that the author does not come from the phenomenological background. A critique of Guyer along those lines has been published by Bert Olivier (B. Olivier, "Review Essay: Paul Guyer's A Philosopher looks at Architecture," *Montreal Architectural Review*, VIII, 1, 2022, pp. 21–41.) – although I would not agree with his view that Guyer neglects to highlight ethical function of buildings. In my opinion, Guyer, at least implicitly, holds the Kantian background that ethics can and should be part of the meaning of architectural works.

> Kant, freedom of the imagination can enter into our conception of aesthetic appeal, but also into the use of technology; freedom of use, particularly of the use of spaces by their inhabitants at any time and over time, can enter into our conception of functionality.[9]

The concluding chapter demonstrates socially responsible and engaged aspect of the book. It reiterates the main thesis of the book that the Vitruvian principles have remained core values of architecture throughout history. Moreover, Guyer suggests that we have every reason to believe that they will remain the main principles of architecture in the future:

> [...] what counts as good construction, functionality, and aesthetic appeal will change, as it has changed in the past, with changing circumstances – economic, political, environmental, cultural, whatever – but these overarching values and goals of architecture will remain constant.[10]

Furthermore, Guyer stresses the importance of two challenges for architecture: climate change and social justice. With the full awareness that neither of these crises can be addressed by architecture alone, Guyer presses the import of these issues to remind that architect can also contribute to addressing them and that they also have responsibility to act in accordance with it.

One might object that the book does not contain much discussion about authors who oppose the Vitruvian principles. The only such author who is extensively discussed is the "eccentric [...] Schopenhauer."[11] One paragraph refers to proponents of reductive functionalism – who claim that function could determine how a building should look. Guyer strongly opposes to this view, stating:

> That is obviously false; the choice of a structural technology, such as the choice bolted or of welded steel members, the choice of energy-efficient gas. Even the choice to expose as much structure as possible for aesthetic impact, can hardly determine everything about how building looks – if the steel is not Corten steel and needs to be

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[9] P. Guyer, *A Philosopher Looks at Architecture*, p. 128.
[10] *Ibid*., p. 180.
[11] *Ibid*., p. 97.

coated, then what color should it be painted? If the glass needs to be tinted, what color?[12]

In addition, Guyer argues that Louis Sullivan, the author of the slogan "Form follows function," never meant that function is a sufficient condition for the design of a successful building, but rather a necessary one.[13] Although Hegel, who neglected values of good construction and functionality, is mentioned a few times in the book, there is no further discussion about his view. A curious reader might like to see more academic debate with those from the opposite camp, although it could disrupt the otherwise very compact and accessible structure of the book. However, it is worth mentioning that such academic critique can be partially found in Guyer's earlier two-part text about pluralism and monism in architecture.

Paul Guyer's book *A Philosopher Looks at Architecture* provides a comprehensive synthesis of architectural theory and history of aesthetics, aiming at the elucidation of the fundamental goals of the architecture, which he finds in the Vitruvian principles of durability, utility and beauty. Its engaging style makes it assessable and interesting literature for both experts and those who are not familiar with the topic, while the detailed exploration of various significant authors and topics, followed by an original thesis, marks it as an invaluable source for everyone dealing with the philosophy of architecture, architectural theory, as well as practicing of architecture. It is of particular significance today that Guyer uncovers responsibilities and challenges of the architecture concerning both its relation to nature (ecological issue) and society (the question of social justice). In this regard, the importance of this book lies also in the fact that it depicts architecture as an activity in social space and in relation humans have to nature, and for which we have to be responsible.

[12] *Ibid*., p. 100.
[13] *Ibid*.

Book Review Received: April 03, 2023

Vera Mevorah*

Alessandro Rocca, *Totem and Taboo in Architectural Imagination*, LetteraVentidue, Siracusa, 2022.

"Deep down, architects are afraid of [...]"[1]

In 1913, the book *Totem und Tabu: Einige Übereinstimmungen im Seelenleben der Wilden und der Neurotiker* by Sigmund Freud came out. In it, Freud applied his newly founded psychoanalytic method to the wider scope of society and culture. He argued that obsessiveness, projection, neuroticism, and narcissism that characterize modern subjects revolve around the dynamic between totems – as sacred objects representing our human communities (our main symbols and power structures) and taboos – whose role is to protect the social system (based on morality and religion) as one of the main products of human imagination.

Alessandro Rocca's book *Totem and Taboo in Architectural Imagination* investigates the Western contemporary cultural imaginary cantered on social responsibility, ecological concerns, political ramifications, and technology development determinants, in which architecture becomes completely entangled as a field. Although perhaps more complex than Freud envisioned, this cultural imaginary seemingly continues to operate within the framework of totems and taboos. Within this context, obsessiveness, projection, neuroticism, and narcissism have emerged as the fundamental building blocks of culture, disrupting architectural practice as much as all other spheres.

Rocca's quote from the beginning of the text states: "Deep down, architects are afraid of images." This statement introduces the first of

[1] A. Rocca, *Totem and Taboo in Architectural Imagination*, p. 15.

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four main chapters in the book "Images, an architectural taboo,"[2] which explores the historically conflicting and almost iconoclastic relationship between architecture and "the image." While Rocca's book is a compilation of diverse papers in the broader scope of architectural theory, images surface as just one of the taboos – or key, unresolved, yet governing issues characterizing contemporary architecture.[3] The author examines internal cultural conflicts as a common theme throughout the book, offering a more complex analysis of "architecture as a system of communication," a field that seems to function today primarily at a latent level of cultural consciousness.

Like Lewis Carroll's Alice, who finds herself in the world of reverse logic and meaning behind the looking glass, these specific fears or taboos (of images, of montage, of discourse, of origin) seem to function backward yet in a very (self)reflective manner. What was once the modernist rejection of the image through ornamentation, is now a rejection of architecture as an *imaginary* of modern consciousness. A call to arms coming from the critical architecture of a "radical protest against today's world through a rejection of its images."[4] Image was, however, through most of the history of architecture, a part of the less significant sphere of post-production; and now post-production, Rocca claims, rules the process. In a world where design can no longer be viewed as anything but a discursive practice, architecture follows the fragmented path set by postmodernism, wondering the strange backward world devoid of clear rules, yet in which it is forever governed by its taboos.

As a Holocaust, art, and media scholar I found it interesting how significant architectural and artistic works representing the Holocaust were for Rocca's thinking (Peter Eisenman's Berlin Memorial, Daniel Libeskind's Garden of Exile and Emigration, John Hejduk's Masques and Victims). Because where else should one look if not to practice which explored the very possibility of representation of a world outside the familiar, outside of what kept the (Western) world in place, the system in check? Rocca appears to be looking for instances of the same artistic

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[2] The other three chapters are titled: "Composition and post-production montage," "Another post-production: The end of the classic," and "Parodies, analogies, and other imitations."

[3] Key thinkers Rocca invokes through his theoretical explorations are Valerio Olgiati, Joseph Rykwert, Mario Carpo, Giorgio Agamben, Manfredo Tafuri, Georges Didi-Huberman, Nicolas Bourriaud, and Peter Eisenman. He analyzes projects and practice of Rem Koolhaas, Forensic Architecture, Studio Albori, Lacaton & Vassal, and others.

[4] *Ibid.*, p. 44.

inventiveness that brought us anti-monuments, non-places, and presence through absence and vice versa.

The ultimate goal seems to be "making sense" of conflicting and fragmented processes that guide contemporary architecture. Rocca doesn't seem to find this too daunting a task, professing enthusiasm for a time of no linear history – a "long wave where everything is held and everything has a reason."[5] He posits the image and montage as the core tools of theoretical and critical analysis of architecture and a strong energetic impulse that could guide it. He demonstrates in his writing the same approach that he uses to analyze contemporary architecture – conversing with the classics, as with his contemporary counterparts, with art, literature, film.

Good theoretical books should be able *to move* the debate in the field. Rocca's text, although fragmented in its main theme, confronts us as theorists, philosophers, architects, artists, and citizens with, for some uncomfortable and others exhilarating, facts about the state of Western and globalized culture and society – forcing us to (re)think the ways of building the world and communicating with it.

[5] *Ibid*., p. 8.

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