field:

Architecture & Indeterminacy

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ISSN 1755-068

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ISSN: 1755-068
www.field-journal.org
vol.1 (1)
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Introduction

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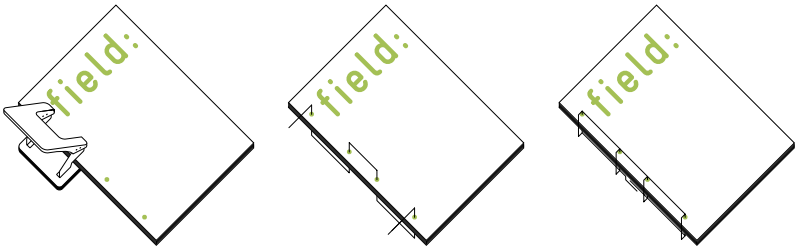

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ISSN: 1755-068
www.field-journal.org
vol.1 (1)
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Architecture and Indeterminacy
field: volume 1, issue 1 (October 2007)

field:
a free journal for architecture

ISSN: 1755-068
www.field-journal.org
vol.1 (1)
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ISSN: 1755-068
www.field-journal.org
vol.1 (1)
Editorial

Architecture and Indeterminacy

Editorial

Renata Tyszczuk, Doina Petrescu

When we sent out our call for papers for *Architecture and Indeterminacy*, as part of the Theory Forum we were organising at Sheffield, we didn't know what to expect. We were interested in indeterminacy as a suspension of the precise meaning of an architectural object action or idea. Our invitation to contribute to the discussion suggested that indeterminacy in architecture could be physical, material, social and political; it could be both theoretical and pragmatic, cognitive and experiential. We hoped that it would be an inspiring topic and generate an interesting response because it was open, not prescriptive and offered a forum, a shared space to address the ways in which architecture is a dynamic practice. Our research confronts the recognition that architecture incorporates interlocking yet distributed fields of knowledge, social practices and economic forces. However, architectural discourse has become anxious about itself, about its status, its contingency and its position with respect to these related yet disparate fields of interest. *Architecture and Indeterminacy* proposed to investigate those moments where there was a questioning of the disciplinary limits of theorising and practicing architecture.

At the same time we had started to imagine where the 'outputs' of events, workshops and activities in Sheffield and beyond, could be located. We had started to think that books were no longer the obvious place — partly because of the prohibitive costs of publication and partly because of the difficulty encountered by many (non academics) in finding or accessing the material. We were interested in developing a context where our work and research could be reflected on, but also where reflection on the material and immaterial conditions in which our practice as architects is engaged would be made possible. We were interested in a space of creative and critical production and not the habitual display of knowledge.
This is how **field:** came about.

The journal **field**: is not an empty location waiting to be filled but hopefully will continue to be discursively formed and reformed through our practices of research and engagement. This inaugural issue of **field:** is therefore focused on the indeterminate fields of architectural practice, education and discourse.

Architecture and Indeterminacy connects disparate work, weaving narratives and arguments that bring together critical writing, creative and exploratory practice, different media and documentation. The topic was a challenge to rethink some of the ways in which we think and practice architecture; to question some of the meanings we ascribe to cities, to buildings, to social formations to individual experiences.

Peter Blundell Jones' short essay reviewed architecture's traditional investment in the symbolic, its 'use of meaning' and its capacities to encapsulate and embody 'meaning of use'.

Gil Doron's discussion of the 'dead zone', those places habitually overlooked or avoided in cities, places on the edge, places of conflict and negotiation; reveals these 'indeterminate' spaces as contested space rather than neutral or 'empty'.

Ole Fischer explores a number of recent attempts by practitioners and theorists to grapple with the indeterminacy of 'atmosphere'; among them Diller and Scofidio's 'Blur' building and Olafur Eliasson's 'Weather Project'.

Helen Hills' article opens with a discussion about the potential and shortcomings of interdisciplinary thinking for architectural debate. She presents Deleuze's concepts of 'immanence', 'intensity' and 'rhizome' as indeterminate ways of engaging with the spiritual in Baroque architecture.

Yeoryia Manolopoulou's article posits itself as an introduction to an 'architecture of chance'. She argues for the acceptance of 'chance' and 'the contingent' along with the assertion that architecture can and already does use this condition to advantage.

Peter Mörtenböck and Helge Mooshammer looked at informal markets as micro-sites of paradoxical and indeterminate cultural production, as part of their work on the EU funded project 'Networked Cultures'.

Doina Petrescu discussed the practices of tracing and senses of place in the work of Fernard Deligny with autistic children. It detailed an alternative, properly indeterminative, practice of the 'common', through ways of mapping.

Dougal Sheridan draws on personal experience of the changing nature of Berlin for his discussion of sub-culture and the actual specificity of the city's 'indeterminate' territories.

Jeremy Till's discussion wrests architecture from its comfort zone — where it is often characterised as a discipline whose primary remit is to resist contingencies — and instead to embed it in a wider set of social and economic responsibilities and circumstances.

Kim Trogal and Leo Care's contribution combines architectural theory, criticism and personal dialogue in an exploration of their experience of architectural education and the aspirations of contemporary architectural practice to resist 'determination'.

Renata Tyszczuk's article develops a series of reflections on modes of indeterminacy through the themes of narrative, imagination, experiment, games and shadows. Thinking 'indeterminacy' invites a questioning of how architecture is constructed, produced and inhabited.

The inaugural issue of **field:** *Architecture and Indeterminacy* is therefore the start of a conversation about architecture and also an invitation to comment, to respond and above all to engage in a forum for practice and research.

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ISSN: 1755-068
www.field-journal.org
vol.1 (1)
The Meaning of Use and Use of Meaning

The Meaning of Use and Use of Meaning

Peter Blundell Jones

Studies of indigenous buildings across the world have revealed time and again, that dwelling structures have served as symbolic representations of the world as it was understood by the peoples that produced them. Thus the concept advanced by William Lethaby in his early book, *Architecture Nature & Magic* that 'the development of building practice and ideas of world-structure acted and reacted on one another' has repeatedly been substantiated.[1] Examples too numerous to list can be found in the pages of Guidoni's *Primitive Architecture,*[2] or Oliver's more recent *Encyclopaedia of Vernacular Architecture*,[3] but to gauge the full richness of possibility one needs to consult deeper ethnographies. A good example is Marcel Griaule's *Conversations with Ogotemmeli,* the classic text on the Dogon.[4] Here is revealed how the house symbolises the union of man and woman, its parts identified with their various organs, while the façade and its doors symbolise their ancestors stretching back to the primordial couple, at the same time combining the key numbers eight and ten. The orientated square layout of the house reflects the measure and making of fields, the original geometry, and this is further reflected in the technology of weaving, the warp and the weft intersecting like man and woman.[5] Thus we come full circle, noting that the interlocking mythical system finds in the constructed world endless forms for its reflection, almost as it were looking for them.

1 W.R. Lethaby, *Architecture Nature & Magic* (Duckworth: London, 1956) p. 16. (reprint of the 1928 version published in The Builder, which in turn updated Lethaby's book *Architecture, Mysticism, and Myth* of 1892).

2 Enrico Guidoni, *Primitive Architecture* (Faber: London 1987).

3 Paul Oliver, *Encyclopaedia of Vernacular Architecture,* 3 vols (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997)

4 Marcel Griaule, *Conversations with Ogotemmeli* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1966).

5 Ibid.. Most of this is described in the chapter 'The Large Family House', pp. 91-98.

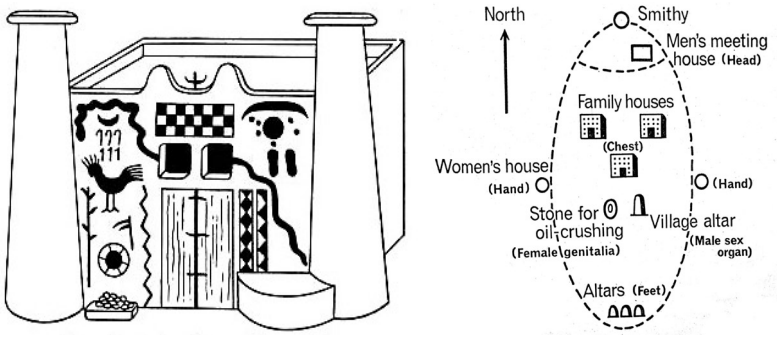

Fig. 1. (Left) Dogon Shrine showing emblems including the chequerboard of geometry, the mythical iron sandals of the smith, the cockerel, and other symbolic figures. Image: Marcel Griaule, *Conversations with Ogotemêlli* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1966).
Fig. 2. (Right) The ideal Dogon village plan, based on the human body with the Toguna, a kind of parliament, as head. Image: Marcel Griaule, *Conversations with Ogotemêlli* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1966).

In oral cultures, which means for most of human history,[6] buildings must thus have served as the principal mnemonic base on which memories could be inscribed and passed on to the next generation, and this was arguably the origin of architecture's monumental role. Parents could refer to parts of the building when explaining the order of things to their children, not only through the stated meanings of painted figures on the façade or of holy shrines and god-figures within, but also in the implicit order of the house as a whole, with its open and forbidden areas, its territories in varied ownership. This locally experienced and shared order could be extended to support the idea of a world-house — a world order — or be expanded into imagined houses for gods and animals. Deep ethnographic studies like those of the Hugh-Joneses among the Tukanoans, have further shown that the same house could support different symbolic readings on different occasions, even switching in gender.[7] We can conclude that symbolic readings are neither fixed nor exclusive. They are always open to reinterpretation, but with the important proviso that the meanings must remain shared.

Less obvious than those applied paintings or ornaments, which almost demand to become vehicles for conscious symbolic communication, are the implicit orderings in buildings — the structural patterns. Time and again these are found to reflect gender and kinship structures, as in the classic example of the circular Bororo village described by Claude Levi-Strauss.[8] These Amazonian people had evolved a form of social organisation depending on two moieties or intermarrying groups, each occupying half the perimeter of the village. Property being vested in the female line, it was the males who moved across to join a wife on the other side, having spent the phase after puberty in the central men's house.

6 We have had 5000 years of cities and writing, 10,000 years of agriculture, at least 100,000 years of language with intelligence at a modern level. The hunter-gatherer existence did not preclude reorganisation of the landscape for symbolic and mnemonic purposes, as studies of modern Aborigines have shown.

7 Stephen Hugh-Jones, 'Inside out and back to front: the androgynous house in Northwest Amazonia' in Janet Carson and Stephen Hugh Jones (eds.), *About the House* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995) pp. 226-252.

8 Claude Levi-Strauss, *Tristes Tropiques* (London: Jonathan Cape, 1973).

Levi-Strauss reports that a group was persuaded by missionaries to replan their village on a grid, and as a result their social structure fell apart. This example demonstrates how the village plan was more than a mere visible symbol: who you were was linked to where you lived, and the whole social network was daily on display. The village constituted the order of things.

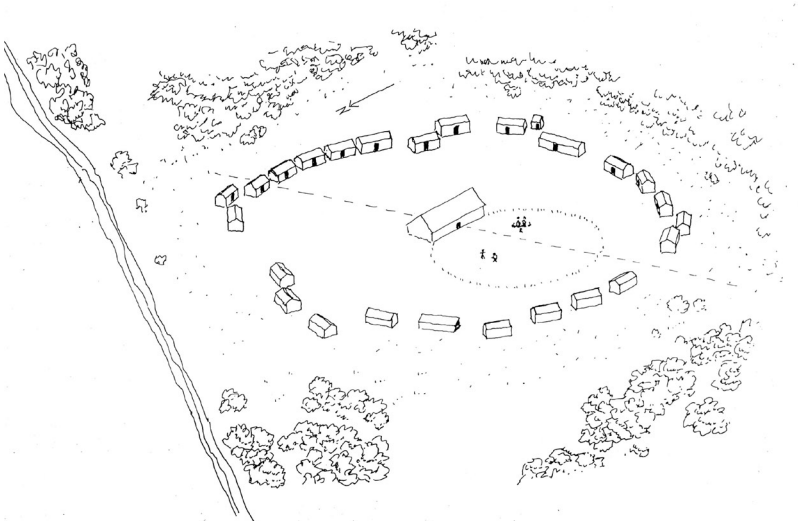

Fig. 3. Bird's eye view sketch of a Bororo village based on the plan in Claude Levi-Stauss's 'Tristes Tropiques'. The ring of huts is divided by a notional axis, shown dotted, which divides the two inter-marrying moieties. In the middle is the men's house with its dancing ground. Image: Peter Blundell Jones.

We can argue further that buildings have always been involved in the framing of rituals, those repeated practical and symbolic acts through which people define relationships and communicate with one another, and which need ordered space in which to 'take place'. I do not just mean the church. A blatant modern and secular example is the law court with its rigid hierarchical arrangements for the various actors in the legal drama. The judge is always on the central axis in the highest seat, and there are complex spatial layerings to keep the various parties out of contact with each other.[9] But much humbler rituals can also be shown to be played out in buildings, even if we tend to take them for granted. As Mary Douglas showed in a key essay, ordinary meals can be regarded as rituals, for they both mark out time and help define social relationships. They exist in a structured hierarchy along with their settings, from a wedding feast at the Ritz to consuming a Mars Bar in the street.[10] Just as the hotel gives 'place' to the reception, so the street is 'nowhere in particular' or non-place for this example, making a significant contrast.

9 All this is a surprisingly recent development: for the history of the English Law court see Clare Graham, *Ordering Law* (London: Ashgate, 2003).

10 See the essay 'Deciphering a Meal' in Mary Douglas, *Implicit Meanings* (London: RKP, 1975).

Architecture gives rituals their settings, whether or not it is designed for the purpose, but usually architects and their clients have it in mind. Certainly it can be difficult to read the symbolic values and ritual implications in buildings of one's own time, but buildings fifty years old and more become obvious and inescapable barometers of social values. Changing patterns in school building between 1850 and 1950, for example, can now be seen to reflect not only changing attitudes to education but also changing attitudes to age, class and gender.[11] Doubtless the new school buildings of today will read equally clearly in fifty years time, reminding us of the values of the PFI. We can conclude from all the foregoing that to make an architecture is inevitably to imply a world and a set of relationships.

[11] See for example, 'Chapter 3: Formation' in Thomas A. Markus, *Buildings and Power* (London: Routledge, 1993).

Architecture still reflects society

Even if former local rules and habits have been replaced by international ones, and even if buildings have been greatly distanced from social life by technical and bureaucratic processes, architecture still reflects society. For example, we might claim that the mass-housing forms adopted in the 1950s and 60s accurately and appropriately revealed the domination of technical and bureaucratic imperatives over individual lives and wishes. The anonymous repetition of such structures, whether in the form of the hastily built tower blocks in the UK or the larger and more monotonous ones across the Iron Curtain, showed a consensus on the part of the building authorities and their political masters that a kind of equality was being enacted, with rationally defined good standards consistently being put in place, nobody above the average and nobody below it.

The fast rate of social and technological change and an increasingly autonomous building process led in the same period to a widespread belief in loose-fit between buildings and their contents, and a romantic desire for open-ended flexibility. This reached one kind of peak in the work of Ludwig Mies van der Rohe and his followers, who proposed a series of universal building types supposedly adaptable to all purposes, all climates and all cultures: truly an international style. This reached a fitting if monumental extreme in the adoption for an art gallery in Berlin of a building type earlier intended as a company headquarters in Cuba.[12] Mies's quest for quiet perfection seduced a generation, but ironically it turned out less a bid for real useful variability than for simple old-fashioned monumentality. Only a building divorced from the impact of its social occupants could be sufficiently indifferent to purpose and time to avoid being touched by life, requiring no kind of conversion. Berlin's Neue Nationalgalerie remains a fascination and a puzzle for artists and curators who are always seeking ways to take possession of the aloof, overpowering, and ill-lit space: one exhibit a few years back consisted of offering the

[12] For the full argument see Peter Blundell Jones and Eamonn Caniffe, *Modern Architecture Through Case Studies* (Oxford: Architectural Press, 2002), Chapter 14, which deals with this building.

visitors bicycles on which to ride round and round the empty room. It is almost as if, feeling the denial of ritual implications in the architecture, people are obliged to seek them in the void.

More ruthless in his preparedness to abandon architecture's monumental preoccupations, more sincere in his bid for open-ended flexibility, was Cedric Price, who strove to reduce the social public building to a mere servicing framework. The paradigmatic example, though it remained on paper, was the Fun Palace for Joan Littlewood of 1963, a great skeleton of steel trusses and cranes which could be assembled and reassembled in all kinds of guises for as-yet-unpredicted types of theatrical performance. Price later built his Interaction Centre, but it proved less flexible than he hoped and was eventually demolished. The idea of the Fun Palace was taken up again with Centre Pompidou in Paris, designed 1970-71, the breakthrough work of Renzo Piano and Richard Rogers.[13] An enormous budget was now available to make this technology work: to create the huge frames and the external servicing system, while the idea of an arts centre which could grow and evolve in unpredicted ways rhymed with the informal atmosphere of the late 1960s. But in practice the placing of art galleries like shelves on a rack was soon considered too raw and parts of the building were given added interiors. In nearly 40 years of existence, the much-vaunted flexibility has been little used, while unpredicted changes have occurred against the fundamental concept, like the addition of internal circulation. Most ironic of all is that the anti-monumental arts centre planned by those students in jeans of 1968 has become a world monument, while they have become paragons of architectural respectability. In the absence — even the denial — of an architectural rhetoric about organisation, ritual and memory, it is the technical apparatus that has been monumentalised instead.

[13] This building is discussed in Ibid., Chapter 14.

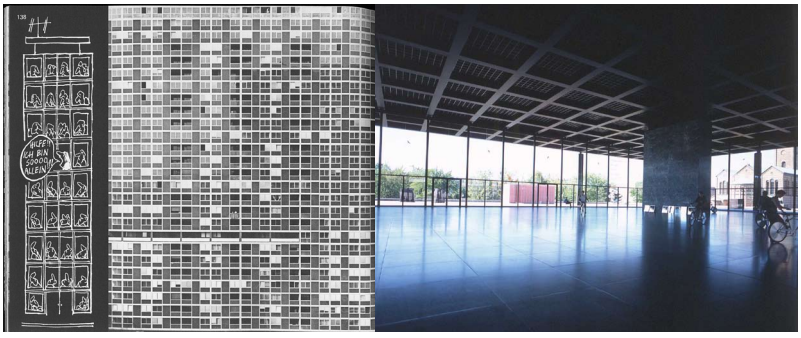

Fig. 4. (Left) Typical page from Rolf Keller's, *Bauen als Umweltzerstörung* (Building as pollution) 1973, decrying the anonymity of post-war mass-housing.
Fig. 5. (Right) Main exhibition gallery in Mies's Neue Nationalgalerie Berlin, completed 1968. This supposedly universal and flexible space has always posed a challenge to curators, but was enlivened in 2001 by an artwork inviting visitors simply to cycle around in it.

The flexibility cult of the 1960s resulted in a rash of general-purpose building types without much relation to place and purpose, and they tended to be autonomous if not autistic. Experience showed, however, that the future is always unpredictable, and flexibility could only be achieved within set limits. Buildings in practice never seemed to prove flexible enough to resist the need for change. The desired neutrality which went hand in hand with flexibility also proved elusive, for 'neutral' architectures have also turned out in retrospect to belong inevitably to their time, sometimes becoming overbearing in their aloof presence precisely because their order is an abstract and independent one. The call for 'timeless' architecture is also a vain one, for growth and change continuously occur, and to engage with them architecture must be a social product, involving complicity with the inhabitants and feedback from use into building. If sometimes a work like the Barcelona Pavilion appears timeless, we need to remember that it has always existed primarily as a much exposed photographic image, and that its two incarnations as German Pavilion in 1929 (for only 6 months) and as architectural monument in modern tourist Spain have been very different — it is if anything the myth that remains the same.[14]

To reiterate, making an architecture is inevitably to imply a world and a set of relationships, but these must operate within the terms of a reading — that of the user. Harmony between the implication of the design and the reading of the user perhaps produces the resonance which is to be regarded as architectural success, but there can also be dissonance. Architecture can be restrictive and oppressive, both through its dictatorial or constraining organisation and through imposing ideas about taste, as the buildings and projects of Hitler and Speer in both ways make clear. But architecture can also be liberating and utopian, suggesting new ways to live and think, which if they strike a chord with their public are more widely taken up to receive broader social currency. It can reinterpret social rituals in new and vital ways like Scharoun's Philharmonie in the 1960s[15] or Miralles's more recent Scottish Parliament. It can also identify a place and a nation with extraordinary power, as in the case of Utzon's Sydney Opera House, in retrospect the first modern icon building, and herald of the current tendency. Architecture can be an instrument of propaganda or a bringer of hope. It cannot altogether renounce these duties.

[14] Argued at greater length in Ibid., Conclusion.

[15] See Chapter 10 The Concert Halls, in Peter Blundell Jones, *Hans Scharoun* (London: Phaidon, 1995).

field:
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ISSN: 1755-068
www.field-journal.org
vol.1 (1)
...badlands, blank space, border vacuums, brown fields,
conceptual Nevada, Dead Zones ...

...badlands, blank space, border vacuums, brown fields, conceptual Nevada, Dead Zones[1], derelict areas,ellipsis spaces, empty places, free space liminal spaces, ,nameless spaces, No Man's Lands, polite spaces, , post architectural zones, spaces of indeterminacy, spaces of uncertainty, smooth spaces, Tabula Rasa, Temporary Autonomous Zones, terrain vague, urban deserts, vacant lands, voids, white areas, Wasteland... SLOAPs

Gil M. Doron

If the model is to take every variety of form, then the matter in which the model is fashioned will not be duly prepared, unless it is formless, and free from the impress of any of these shapes which it is hereafter to receive from without.[2]

The void cannot be earmarked as 'nature reserve', 'succession habitat', 'recreational field', or any other such designate, because to name it is to claim it in some way. And what is potentially more socially liberating about the void is precisely the absence of recognition and the subsequent indifference toward it. One simply does not 'see' it, even though it surrounds and enables performance, and is itself sustained by invisible mechanism and regulatory infrastructures.[3]

1 The term I have used to describe these spaces, which is reflected in all the other terms mentioned above, is 'dead zone'. The term was taken directly from the jargon of urban planners, and from a particular case of such space in Tel Aviv (cf. Gil Doron,'Dead Zones, Outdoor Rooms and the Possibility of Transgressive Urban Space' in K. Franck and Q. Stevens (eds.), *Loose Space: Possibility and Diversity in Urban Life* (New York: Routledge, 2006). The term should be read in two ways: one with inverted commas, indicating my argument that an area or space cannot be dead or a void, tabula rasa etc. The second reading collapses the term in on itself – while the planners see a dead zone, I argue that it is not the area which is dead but it is the zone, or zoning, and the assumption that whatever exists (even death) in this supposedly delimited area always transcends the assumed boundaries and can be found elsewhere.

2 Plato, 'Dialogues of Plato, vol. 3 – Republic, Timaeus, Critias [1892]' in *The Dialogues of Plato* trans. & intro by B. Jowett, 5 vols (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1892) III in The Online Library of Liberty, http://oll.libertyfund.org/EBooks/Plato_0343.pdf; p. 54; [accessed 2007].

3 G. Daskalakis et al. (eds.), *Stalking Detroit* (Barcelona: ACTAR., 2001), p. 124.

Taken from architecture and planning discourse, the title / list above is not a comprehensive lexicon of various types of urban space. This list is a desperate attempt by the discourse to make sense of a certain type of space, which, as I will argue, has existed in the city since antiquity. As some of the names suggest, from the subjective position of the urban researcher this place seems to be vague and undetermined, if not derelict or even empty. Nonetheless, to muddle through the ostensible marshyness of this space, the discourse has tried to define over and over again what it is, how it came about, and more than anything else, where it is located. Behind these attempts is the assumption that this space is unique, an anomaly that can be located in a certain place, and therefore managed, if not colonised.

This paper will try to draw a map of the genealogy of this space, within the discourse and within the city. However, this map will not attempt to locate it, but to show that this space transgresses the notion of a (localised) place. The effect of the map will be not to redefine it but to show that only in its disappearance from the map of the discourse can it truly come into being. In doing so this ostensibly uncertain space shows that the discourse itself is where uncertainty lies.

Fig. 1. Naples, *Bagnoli*. Photo: Gil Doron, 2004.

The 'derelict land' and the elephant

> Ultimately, dereliction is a question of degree. Like the elephant, it may be hard to describe but it is relatively easy to recognise.[4]

I would like to start with what is supposed to be the most concrete and prescribed categorisation of the space that is the subject of this paper – the categories of derelict and vacant land. These categories must be crisp and clear since they are legal definitions, upon which grants and building permissions are given. The location of these spaces and their size must be apparent because they are the basis for much of the housing stock and urban developments in the foreseeable future.[5]

The UK's National Land Use Database of 2007 (NLUD) describes some of the land that was previously used, and currently falls outside the norms of occupancy, use, and 'acceptable appearance' as Derelict Land. The term derelict land means 'Land so damaged by previous industrial or other developments that it is incapable of *beneficial* use without treatment'. It is somewhat equivalent to 'brown fields', which the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency describes as 'sites in which real or perceived environmental contamination impedes redevelopment' and to TOADS - Temporarily obsolete, abandoned, or derelict sites (U.S. General Accounting Office 1997) Using these definitions, derelict land could be spoil heaps, excavations or pits, derelict railway land, military bases, mining subsidence or general industrial dereliction.[6]

According to NLUD and the US Environmental Protection Agency, derelict land does not have to be empty, or devoid of *all* use. Land is defined as derelict when it has been used more extensively in the past, probably in more lucrative ways, and when it seems to have further development potential. By defining as derelict a site that has some uses and that might not be empty, these agencies are at odds with the more formal dictionary definition that defines a property as derelict, when it has been abandoned or neglected. This meaning is also the convention in legal terminology.[7] However, the UK government's definition for derelict land is not concerned with actual abandonment or ownership. It is worth noting that in a survey of attitudes towards such sites, the public often perceived them as public spaces.[8]

The term derelict has some moral overtones – it implies somebody has intentionally left something (or somebody) behind that is destitute and/or delinquent. The implication is understandable considering the places the term originally refers to were production sites that having been deemed unprofitable by their owners, were closed down with business transferring elsewhere. However, the term colours these spaces in overly negative hues even though, as I will show later on, they are often considered to be assets.[9]

4 Rupert Nabarro et al., *Wasteland: A Thames Television Report* (London: Thames Television, 1980), p. 11.

5 cf. Urban Task Force, Our Towns and Cities: The Future: Delivering an Urban Renaissance (London: Queen's Printer and Controller of Her Majesty's Stationery Office, 2000) at http://www.odpm.gov.uk/index.asp?id=1127174#P78886090; [accessed 1 August 2006].

6 cf. John F. Handley, *The Post Industrial Landscape: A Resource for the Community, a Resource for the Nation?* (Birmingham: Groundwork Foundation, 1996) at http://www.changingplaces.org.uk/upload/documents/document11.doc; [accessed 2007].

7 J. Barr, *Derelict Britain* (Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, 1969), p. 38.

8 cf. Handley, *The post industrial landscape.*

9 Definition of 'derelict' from, Dictionary.com (2007) http://dictionary.reference.com/browse/derelict; [accessed August 2007]: For a further discussion these issues see, Gil Doron, 'The Dead Zone & the Architecture of Transgression', *CITY: Analysis of Urban Trends, Culture, Theory, Policy, Action*, 4(2) (2000): 247-264.

Another term that refers to previously used land is Vacant Land. Vacant Land is 'land which is now vacant and could be redeveloped without treatment, where treatment includes any of the following: demolition, clearing of fixed structures or foundations and levelling'. Vacant land can be any land that was previously developed, thus making this term 'both broad and imprecise'.[10] What makes this definition even vaguer is the fact that 'vacant land' does not have to be vacant – it can include, for example, structurally sound buildings.[11] The vacancy is neither physical nor occupational – it is temporal. Vacant land is *de facto* never empty but is sometimes empty of human presence. A similar argument was made by the Civic Trust: 'Vacant land, in general, is seen to be a problem when vacancy is prolonged, when it is an eyesore, or when it is an obvious social and economic waste of a scarce resource'.[12]

By excluding particular areas from their definitions of derelict and vacant land, government agencies have allowed these categories to slip into ever more fuzzy and open interpretations; for example, 'land damaged by a previous development where the remains of any structure or activity have blended into the landscape in the process of time (to the extent that it can reasonably be considered as part of the natural surroundings)'also, 'land in which there is a clear reason that could outweigh the re-use of the site – such as its contribution to nature conservation – or it has subsequently been put to an amenity use and cannot be regarded as requiring redevelopment.'[13]

The problem with these exclusions is that derelict sites and buildings often contribute to nature conservation and sometimes even new natural terrain, even though they are not seen as part of the 'natural surrounds'. Take for example, sunken boats that provide the platform for aquamarine life to exist, or industrial ruins and wastelands that often stimulate biodiversity (*London Wildlife Trust 2007*). These ruins simply create 'new nature'.[14]

Even more problematic is the exclusion, in NLUD's definition, of land that has 'subsequently been put to an amenity use'. Originating from the Latin word 'pleasant', *amenity* refers to social, cultural and aesthetic suppositions and preferences. Would NLUD, for example, exempt from the registry of derelict land a site that is known for 'amenity uses' such as raving, dogging or making bonfires? According to Tony Swindells, Brownfield Land Consultant from English Partnerships who is responsible for NLUD, probably not. The 'informal land uses' that would prevent land being classified as 'derelict' or vacant, would be 'recreational activities' undertaken 'by the general population', for example 'walking the dog or off road cycling etc.'. [15] Of course, the idea of 'general population' in a diverse society is problematic, and excludes or marginalises various groups from

[10] Ann O'm Bowman and Michael A. Pagano, *Terra Incognita: Vacant Land & Urban Strategies* (Washington DC: Georgetown University Press, 2004), p. 4.

[11] cf. National Land Use Database, 'NLUD' (2007) http://www.nlud.org.uk; [accessed 2007].

[12] S. Joseph, *Urban Wasteland Now* (London: Civic Trust, 1988), p.1.

[13] NLUD, 2007.

[14] cf. R. Mabey, et al. (eds.), *Second nature* (London: Cape, 1984); T. Edensor, *Industrial Ruins* (New York: Berg, 2005).

[15] T. Swindells, 'Request for Information' (15.05.2007), personal email.

using and therefore redefining such sites – sites that are exactly the kind of places that marginalised groups often use.[16] Nonetheless, the mere possibility of excluding land from the 'derelict and vacant land' registry because it is used for informal uses is an interesting anomaly, in a system that from the start has catered to 'hard' land-use redevelopments.

[16] cf. Doron, 'The Dead Zone & the Architecture of Transgression', pp. 247-264 and also Doron, 'Dead Zones, Outdoor Rooms'.

The key issue of time and temporality is entirely excluded from the official definitions of derelict and vacant land, and for good reason because this factor can make these definitions completely futile. This issue was recognised by Thames Television's 'The *Wasteland* Report' which stated: 'A precise definition is virtually impossible: whether a site in partial use or a building unused for a given amount of time is 'derelict' remains to some extent a matter of subjective judgement.'[17]

[17] Nabarro et al., *Wasteland*, p. 11.

The attempt to include as much land and as many sites as possible weakens the category of derelict and vacant land further. Looking at the issue in an historical perspective, it seems that whilst the amount of this space has decreased in the past few years,[18] the amount of land that is perceived as or could be identified as vacant and derelict has increased. Until the 60s, the terms derelict and vacant land were usually used to single out areas sucked dry of their natural resources by mining concerns and only since the 70s has it been applied broadly to urban situations.[19] From 2000, NLUD has started to include under the definition of 'Previously-developed land by type (Brownfield land) sites which are currently in use with permission, or allocation, for redevelopment in addition to derelict and vacant land'. This has caused some confusion since other agencies such as the Urban Task Force (2000) and CABE (Commission for Architecture and the Built Environment) (2003) have included in their audits of derelict land, sites that have had permission for redevelopment. Furthermore, CABE's 2003 campaign Wasted Space? included formal public spaces such as parks and squares that, due to neglect or 'anti-social activities', were perceived as derelict. As part of the campaign, the public was asked to identify what they considered was a 'waste of land' in their areas. No parameters were given to help them determine what constituted 'waste' or 'wasteland'. It was evident in the public's feedback that the appearance of such sites was used as the main criterion to judge such places i.e. aesthetic (dis)appreciation.

[18] NLUD, 2007.

[19] cf. Nabarro et al., *Wasteland*.

A similar generalising approach, relying on aesthetic judgement to determine what is derelict, vacant or wasteland, can be seen in a Mori survey that looked at perceptions about such spaces. In this survey, commissioned by Groundwork, derelict land was interpreted broadly as 'urban and industrial waste land. It may be vacant, unused or ineffectively used, or land which is neglected or unsightly. It can also mean land, which is likely to become any of these things'.[20]

[20] Handley, *The post industrial landscape*, p. 3.1.

The tension between the different definitions of derelict and vacant land by the government and other organisations is not new and was already highlighted in the late sixties. For example, in *Derelict Britain*, Barr argued that the government's definition for derelict land was 'narrow and exclude[d] so much that an average observer would consider derelict... To most of us 'derelict land' means virtually any land which is ugly or unattractive in appearance.'[21] Relying on the appearance of places as a key to identifying wastelands was also used by CABE (2003) and Groundwork (2003) in their surveys, and earlier by the author of *Reclaiming derelict land*.[22] The association of a certain appearance with wasteland is, I would argue, reducing the whole debate about these spaces into indeterminacy. Why? Obviously, if beauty is in the eye of the beholder, so is unsightliness. But more importantly, the seemingly disordered landscape cannot be examined just by its appearance since it is known to be harbouring various spatial, natural, architectural, and social qualities that cannot be found in, and are often actively excluded from, other urban spaces, including the formal public space. These qualities show that these sites are not a waste of land.

Fig. 2. Detroit. Photo: Gil Doron, 1999.

21 Barr, *Derelict Britain*, p. 14.

22 cf. J. R. Oxenham, *Reclaiming Derelict Land* (London: Faber and Faber, 1966); Nabarro et al., *Wasteland*; Doron, 'The Dead Zone & the Architecture of Transgression'; Edensor, *Industrial Ruins*; INURA, *Possible Urban Worlds* (Berlin: Birkhauser Verlag, 1998); S. Willats, *Beyond the Plan: The Transformation of Personal Space in Housing* (UK: Wiley-Academy, 2001).

marks of indeterminacy

Most of the space the governmental agencies have defined as derelict or vacant, that is, 'dead zone', is of the post-industrial landscape. Because of their high visibility and concreteness, they have been the focal point in the 'war of décor'. Exactly for this reason, post-industrial space or industrial ruins, such as abandoned factories and disused harbours and train yards, can provide a set of attributes or qualities that can be located in other, more mundane yet elusive urban spaces. Having observed sites of industrial ruin throughout Europe, the US and Asia as part of my research, together with analysing works by various writers on this subject and most notably Edensor, I have found the following:[23]

- Industrial ruins are mainly to be found at what was the edge of the cities in the 19th or early 20th century. As such, they are spaces in-between the downtown and the suburbs. They can be just a single factory or an entire industrial zone.
- The spatiality of industrial ruins vary – it can be an open space, an empty lot or a dilapidated structure with hidden and barely accessible spaces. Often it combines both characteristics.
- As ruins within the urban or rural landscape, they usually create a hiatus within the continuum. They stand out and do not correspond to or with their surroundings.
- The aesthetic of such spaces are 'the aesthetic of ruins' – disordered and messy but in some cases, bare and dull.
- The industrial ruin is a place that does not have a formal usage or a programme.
- As such, it is assumed to be an unproductive space, but it can still be profitable as a speculative space, and productive in a way that cannot be quantified financially.
- It is often occupied by informal activities (by humans and non-humans) that transgress the original usage of the building.
- These informal usages, predominantly carried out by those who are not the owners of the place, create a space that is neither private nor public.
- The industrial ruin is both a concrete place but also, because it has lost its identity, a hollow place that can engender and contain fantasy, desires, expectations.
- The industrial ruin stands outside history (the official past) and the present and at the same time is entrenched in both. If it does not undergo preservation or documentation it will fall outside the corpus of history, and if it does, it will lose all the attributes mentioned here and will become a 'dead ruin'. Essentially, it is of the present because it changes everyday, yet it is also outside the everyday working of the city.

[23] cf. Doron, 'The Dead Zone & the Architecture of Transgression'; Kevin Lynch, *Wasting Away*, ed. by M. Southworth (San Francisco: Sierra Club Books, 1990); Robert Harbison, *The Built, the Unbuilt, and the Unbuildable: In Pursuit of Architectural Meaning* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1991); Rubio Ignasi de. Sola-Morales, 'Terrain vague' in Cynthia C. Davidson (ed.), *Anyplace* (London: MIT Press, 1995); C. Woodward, *In Ruins* (London: Chatto and Windus, 2001); Edensor, *Industrial Ruins*.

- The industrial ruin is an indeterminate and volatile place: structurally, since it is dilapidating, and socially because, in contrast to formal public space, where the rules of behaviour are determined by norms and laws (often place-bound by-laws), the industrial ruin's space has no such laws. It is agonistic and radically democratic since the ways of being in this place are negotiated between the various groups and individuals who use it rather than those who pass laws elsewhere.

Stripped of their specific association with the industrial ruin, the characteristics mentioned above can be summarised as follows:

- These are either spaces in-between or at the edge and their interiority transgresses the boundaries of open/close, interior/exterior, private/public;
- They have no official programme or usage and as such they trigger and embody limitless choice and desires.
- They are perceived to be with no history (since they are not recognised ruins) and have no future (demolished or preserved, they have lost their essence). Thus, they seem to live in a temporal break, a hiatus, and exist in the continuous present – i.e. outside time. Nonetheless, because these spaces are unkempt and free of a programme, they are continuously changing.
- Their aesthetic is of disorder – where boundaries between autonomous objects disintegrate, and they are without seams – where no boundary whatsoever is apparent;
- as marginal spaces, in both spatial and socio-economic terms, these spaces are the 'constitutive outside' and are thus the embodiment of the agonistic place. This is true both in their relationship to the 'outside' city and in the relationships between the various inhabitants
- All the above characteristics portray these spaces as other to the city – between utopian places and dystopic ones.

To counter the determinacy of seeing the industrial ruins as just 'The' dead zones (which as I have insisted before are not dead), I will give here examples of two other seemingly unrelated spaces, that have been only marginally considered part of the 'problem' of the dead zone, if at all. However, as the industrial ruins, both these spaces also share most of the above characteristics.

chora and the toilet on the Bartlett's ground floor.

> Transgression contains nothing negative, but affirms limited being – affirms the limitless into which it leaps as it opens this zone to existence for the first time. But correspondingly, this affirmation contains notion positive: no content can bind it, since by definition, no limit can possibly restrict it. Perhaps it is simply an affirmation of division; but only insofar as division is not understood to mean a cutting gesture, or the establishment of a separation or the measuring of a distance, only retaining that in it which may designate the existence of difference.[24]

> This force of rupture is due to the spacing which constitutes the written sign: the spacing which separates it from other elements of the internal contextual chain ... but also from all the forms of present referent ... that is objective or subjective. This spacing is not simply negativity of a lack, but the emergence of the mark.[25]

Embodying the characteristics I have described above, the 'dead zone' can be the result of any act of demarcation. This space is not, however, a dichotomous Other, that forms beyond the line as a secondary space, but it is the space of the boundary itself. Short of expanding on this, it can be best described through the notion of transgression and spacing.[26]

The most obvious and ancient space of demarcation, on an urban scale, is the city wall. Within the wall, the Greek *polis* (city-state) was defined by the ability of the members of the governing class to meet in common places. Although the city-state often spread outside the walls, this ability ended at the city's gates, i.e. it depended on geographical unity. The space

24 Michel Foucault, 'Preface for Transgression' in D.F. Bouchard (ed.), *Language, Counter-memory, Practice* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1997), pp. 34-35.

25 J. Derrida, *Margins of Philosophy* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1982), p. 317.

26 For 'transgression' see, Georges Bataille, *Eroticism* (London: Penguin, 1962) and Foucault, 'Preface for Transgression'; for 'spacing' see, Derrida, *Margins of Philosophy*.

beyond was the chora (or *Khôra*) – part agricultural land, part nature, and always militarised as it was the no man's land between the city-state and its often rival neighbours. A linguistic indication that the state of the chora was a no man's land can be found in the verb chōreō which, in the military sense, meant giving ground before the enemy. As a no man's land, the boundaries of the chora were never stable and always contested and in flux.[27]

In the *Timaeus*, some of these attributes can be found in Plato's concept of the chora as one of the three dimensions of the world/reality. According to Plato, the chora was a unique kind of space – a receptacle in which things were formed. It was associated with maternity, with the mother's womb. In itself, it lacked essence and could not acquire permanent identity. It was 'formless'.[28] Reading Plato, Derrida sees *chōra* as a radical otherness, or more precisely as a space that produces difference: 'It has to do with interval; it is what you open to 'give' place to things, or when you open something for things to take place' and 'chora is the spacing which is the condition for everything to take place, for everything to be inscribed.'[29]

Derrida emphasises that although Plato did not present the chora as a void, because it was at least temporally filled with content, he did see it as 'untouched' and therefore virgin space. But it is a very special virgin – The Virgin – who produced change, and gave a place for change to happen, but her surface stayed blank and unmarked. The virginity, the lack of characteristics, the passivity are all characteristics that would constitute the dead zone imagery after that.

In reality, it seems that the chora was indeed a transformative place, as 'it was on the out-skirts of the city that the new institutions, which set it off from ancient types, found a home.'[30] But this space was not serene. Generally speaking the chora was a space of contest, not only between rival city-states but also between reason and faith. The chora was dominated by faith, as it was here that most of the sanctuaries were located. The exception was Athens, but even here the Eleusinian Mysteries initiation ceremonies were held outside the city, as were the Dionysus anarchic celebration where sexual identity was transgressed. Even Socrates lost his mind in a state of erotic frenzy on the banks of the Ilissus when he ventured outside the city.[31]

The space outside the city is also the place of dissent – where politically marginal figures, women such as Antigone and the Wife of Phocion, transgressed the city laws and buried their brother and husband against the will of the king and against the will of the democratic regime. These

27 cf. L. Mumford, *The City in History* (New York: MJF Books, 1961); J. Bintliff, 'Issues in the Economic and Ecological Understanding of the Chora of the Classical Polis in its Social Context', in G. P. Bilde and F. V. Stolba (eds.), *Surveying the Greek Chora: The Black Sea Region in a Comparative Perspective* (Aarhus: Aarhus University Press, 2006); Indra K. McEwen, *Socrates' Ancestor: An Essay on Architectural Beginnings* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1993).

28 Plato, 'Dialogues of Plato', p. 50, 51.

29 J. Derrida, 'Architecture Where the Desire May Live – Interview with Eva Meyer' in Neil Leach (ed.), *Rethinking Architecture: A Reader in Cultural Theory* (London: Routledge, 1997), p. 9.

30 Mumford, *The City in History*, p. 144.

31 cf. Ibid.; Dag Øistein Endsjø, 'To Lock up Eleusis: A Question of Liminal Space', *Numen* 47(4) (2000): 351-386; P. Dubois, 'The Homoerotics of the "Phaedrus"', *Pacific Coast Philology*, 17(1/2) (1982): 9-15; Plato, 'Dialogues of Plato'.

women's conduct transformed not only the marginal space where they carried out their deeds, but effected and changed the policies both of the city and of the home. Elsewhere, a transgressive act by a marginalised woman, Rahab the whore, in a marginal place, her home within the city's wall, had even more shattering effects.[32]

The chora, as McEwen argues, was a transformative space, and played a key role in the colonisation and re-organisation of the Mycenae and other cities in the region that were conquered by the Greeks. However, the chora as an exterior space and space of exteriority was not suitable for ordering and regulating the archaic and chaotic cities. For this mission, an entire utopian socio-political vision and a strict grid system was configured by Hippodamus, the first town planner. However, this social and spatial utopia could have been realised only on a place that was imagined to be a tabula rasa, or was made to be such.[33] Thus, the about to be colonised cities were projected with the imagery of an uncertain, chaotic, and blank space, or in other words imagery that resonated chora. But this chora, as a complete otherness, had to be tamed. The means for this task was, as I would argue, the chora itself – but this time not as a radical exteriority but extrapolated, reduplicated and internalised to form the grid system. The chora as a spatial Pharmakon.[34]

In-conclusion

> The dynamics of contemporary life are such that crisis, and its discomfiting space of uncertainty and anxiety, is drawing ever nearer to the core of our common experience. Is there a no-man's land next door? if not, maybe you are already in one.[35]

The story does not end here of course, it just begins. Years after, in the modern city, the rational grid itself started showing its choraic innate traits in the form of what Jane Jacobs called Border Vacuum and in the perplexing 'Space Left Over After Planning' (SLOAP) … The imagery of the blank yet stained space of the Greek colonies was projected onto other colonies, in Asia and Africa, just to then be projected back again onto the metropolitan areas of the poor ... In post modern cities, away from the 'dead zones' of the industrial ruin, in the sprawling expanse, new 'nameless spaces', lacking identity or definition have sprung up ... And from all the metaphors that have been drafted in to capture this space, the imagery of the no mans land has struck the deepest: In the age of late capitalism, when the frontiers have been brought right into the heart of cities, the chora as a place of radical exteriority has become the total interior with no exterior…

32 cf. Gillian Rose, *Mourning Becomes the Law: Philosophy and Representation* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996); Joshua (2001) *The Holy Bible*, English Standard Version, Crossway Bibles, (Joshua 2001: 2 and 6).

33 cf. R. Paden, 'The Two Professions of Hippodamus of Miletus', *Philosophy* and Geography, 4(10) (2001).

34 cf. Derrida,'Plato's Pharmacy' in J. Derrida, *Dissemination*, trans. by Barbara Johnson (Chicago: University of Chicago, 1981).

35 Lebbeus Woods, 'No-Man's Land' in A. Read (ed.), *Architecturally Speaking: Practices of Art, Architecture and the Everyday* (London: Routledge, 2000), p.200.

Fig. 3. Rome, *Campo Boario*, an abandoned abattoir, at the site of ancient Rome's walls. The place was squatted about 15 years ago, and transformed into a gypsy camp, Kurdish info centre, social art and activism centre and more. Next to the Campo Boario on th e banks of the River Tiber, there used to live homeless people. The area was also depicted in Pier Paolo Pasolini's film, Accattone ('The Beggar') 1961 (top right photo). Collage and photos: Gil Doron, 2000.

And yet, in another twist to the story, exactly at the moment we are told that an external position is impossible, because the 'dead zone' is everywhere, and it is not as bad and not as dead as has been assumed, we are offered the real thing – the resurrected chora, in a suburban park which celebrates rational thoughts. (Although, I must say, the failure of some of Parc de la Villette's follies to generate any productive activity has resulted in them being truly empty and dysfunctional thus transgressive. So, the project may yet succeed)… elsewhere we are promised that radical exteriority can be generated,

deus ex machine, in 'zones free of architecture' inside some extra large projects ... [36]

Looking at the fragmented map I have presented here, one thread of the many it offers discloses that the imagery of the dead zone has existed since at least antiquity and that this imagery has in the past few decades proliferated in the architectural discourse, and although this space seems to come closer and closer to home we have still yet to understand what exactly it is and what its potentialities are.

Post Script

> It isn't a question of producing: it's all in the art of disappearing. Only what comes into being in the mode of disappearance is truly other. And yet that disappearance has to leave traces, has to be the place where the Other, the world or the object appears.[37]

Some time ago, at my MPhil to PhD transfer meeting at the Bartlett I wanted to demonstrate the mundaneness of these ostensibly extraordinary places. I decided then to take the committee and 30 or so guests for a journey in a search for the 'dead zone'. Leaving the lecture room on the 3rd floor, we partook on a long and treacherous journey, through the chaotic studios, and the uncanny corridor spaces off the tutors' rooms, to the men's room of the ground floor. The female entourage were ecstatic – they for a long time had heard stories about this contaminated shoddy pit, but could have only experienced a faint whiff of it, until now.

We enter. An eerie silence is flooding the place, interrupted only by the sound of dropping water. Making sure that we are not encroaching on any natives, I cautiously open the door of one of the cubicles. The place is empty. Pointing at the partition that separates this space from the adjacent cubical, I announce: 'here is the anonymous place where you can let all your self/ves disintegrate, this is the space public and private mix, where boundaries are transgressed, where unpredictable forms and programmes are created. Praise the architects (to be) who created this space. Their architecture shows us, yet again, the weak boundary between the architect private and public life.[38] This creative piece of architecture demonstrates the architect's desire to see, traverse the lecture hall and penetrate the privy'.

The baffled faces of the delegation make it clear they have not seen the void. Stepping into the cubical, I lower the loo's lid, sit down and point at an area of the partition about a meter above the floor. And there, there is the void. About two square centimetres in diameter, made by a repetitive etching, a hole transgresses the boundary of the space.

36 cf. Jane Jacobs, *The Death and Life of Great American Cities* (New York: Modern Library, 1993); J. Marriott, *The Other Empire: Metropolis, India and Progress in the Colonial Imagination* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2003); Stefano Boeri, 'New nameless spaces', *Casabella* 57(597/598) (1993): 74-76 & 123-124; Paul Virilio, *The Lost Dimension*, trans. by M. Moshenberg (New York: Semiotext(e), 1991); Jameson, Frederic, 'Demographic of the Anonymous' in Cynthia C. Davidson (ed.), *Anyone* (New York: Rizzoli International Publications, 1991); Bernard Tschumi, *Architecture and Disjunction* (London: MIT Press, 1996).

37 Jean Baudrillard, *Jean Baudrillard: Photographies 1985-1998* (Berlin: Hatje Cantz Publishers, 2000), p.131.

38 cf. G. Stevens, *The Favored Circle: The Social Foundations of Architectural Distinction*, (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1998).

It is not the first time that young architects project their desires, frustrations, and, I must insist, critique, into architecture, in the shape of penetrating holes. Gordon Matta Clark did it spectacularly. Of course, peeping holes and Matta Clarke's work have significant differences, but for our discussion on indeterminacy and voids, these holes have a similar effect. Not unlike Clarke's holes, the peeping kind has made the rest room a bit restless, diversifying the relationship with the architectural event, accommodating but also engendering desires that have no place where architecture is institutionalised. These holes have created architecture where a desire may live.[39]

39 cf. Derrida, 'Architecture Where the Desire May Live'.

p.p.s.

Two months later the toilet was renovated, and the space next to it became a neat lavish gallery. The void was determinately designed out.

field:
a free journal for architecture

24

ISSN: 1755-068
www.field-journal.org
vol.1 (1)
Atmospheres – Architectural Spaces between
Critical Reading and Immersive Presence

Atmospheres – Architectural Spaces between Critical Reading and Immersive Presence

Ole W. Fischer

Postmodern and post-structuralist theories in architecture have entered a phase of revision and re-evaluation. Taking the current academic debate of 'critical' theory versus 'post-critical' or 'projective' practice as a starting point, this essay analyses three examples of atmospheric spaces to test the alternative modes of interpretation and to question the clear oppositional dialectic developed by the protagonists. Especially the common denominator of weather and atmosphere in the projects of Diller Scofidio, Philippe Rahm, and Olafur Eliasson, might be able to introduce uncertainty, ambiguity and suspicion against the rendering of clear alternatives to the discourse. Whilst the arguments of the post-criticality debate are primarily based on a linguistic model of architecture, the indeterminacy of *atmospheric spaces* opens up different readings, with the brief remarks about the philosophers Gernot Böhme and Peter Sloterdijk being just a first step. Instead of giving answers, this essay asks for a reformulation of 'critical' thinking in architecture beyond the current atmospheric interferences.

Within the contemporary discourse on architectural theory there is a phase of reorientation: the definition of architecture (and especially theory of architecture) as a 'critical practice' – the similarity to the notion of 'critical theory' of Frankfurt School philosophy is not by accident – is challenged by a 'post-critical' or 'projective' understanding of the discipline, characterised by the development of scenarios, design of user interfaces and production of multiple lifestyles. The main issue of this debate is the relationship between architecture and society, or, to be more precise, between architecture and power, capital, media: On one hand there is a concept of architecture being a 'critical' device, reflecting on the power and gender discourse, economy and globalisation, participation and resistance, law, politics and representation. On the other hand there is an arrangement with the driving forces of society (the architect as 'surfer' on the wave of capitalism) and a focused concern about pragmatic questions of acquisition, concept, design, realisation and cultivation of architectural urban environments.

'Criticality' as the default mode of reflection, interpretation and evaluation of architecture was established in the US after 1968, under the impression of Continental European philosophic, linguistic and Neo-Marxist writings. Soon these theories turned into 'canonical' readings, rhetoric strategies and an established academic discipline, although they were originally meant to question the very idea of historisation, disciplinarity and elite culture. 'Post-Criticality' stems from the same Anglo-American academic background and exploits the transatlantic cultural transfer, but this time operating with the *work* of European architects as evidence: especially the projects and buildings of the Swiss Herzog & de Meuron, the London-based Foreign Office Architects (FOA) as well as the Dutch Office for Metropolitan Architecture (OMA) of Rem Koolhaas, which are used to proliferate the idea of a 'projective practice' beyond the resistance and negation of critical inquiry. Post-critical theorists attack the 'regime of Criticality' as a set of established concepts, strategies, texts and key-works, which they suspect to limit and pre-determine the discourse on architecture on a linguistic basis. Instead, they try to stage an open, multiple and liberal understanding of the discipline by introducing alternative reading strategies.

After pop and media culture and 'new pragmatism'[1] had challenged the institution of 'criticality' in architecture in a first round, the second attack came with the essay 'Notes around the Doppler Effect' by Bob Somol and Sarah Whiting,[2] in which they differentiate between a '*critical project* linked to the indexical, dialectic, hot representation and a *projective practice* linked to the diagrammatic, atmospheric, cool performance'.[3] This critique of critique by Somol & Whiting was broadened and intensified by other U.S. theoreticians of the same generation, like Sylvia Lavin, Stan Allan or Michael Speaks, but there is more at stake than an academic

1 So called 'Pragmatism Conference' at the MoMA, N.Y.C., November 10th – 11th 2000, with the full title: 'Things in the making: Contemporary Architecture and the Pragmatist Imagination', organised by Terence Riley and Joan Ockman.

2 Robert Somol and Sarah Whiting 'Notes around the Doppler Effect and other Moods of Modernism', *Perspecta 33. The Yale Architectural Journal*, (2002): 72-77.

3 *autonomy versus pragmatics*: disciplinarity as autonomy and process (critique, representation, signification) versus disciplinarity as instrumentality (projection, performativity, pragmatics), force and effect; *resistance versus engagement*: resistance and critical commentary versus engagement as experts in design: operating with qualities of sensibility (effect, ambience, atmosphere) in addition to the work with object qualities (form, proportion, materiality, composition); single articulation (program, technology, form) versus possibility of multitude and emergence; *hot versus cool*: hot representation, high definition, distinction versus cool media, low definition (atmospheric interaction of viewer); *performance versus representation*: alternative realities, scenarios, expanded realism (as if) versus narrative, belabored representation of the 'real'.

generational conflict or the call for a new style: this debate is addressing the relationship of architects and society, meaning not only clients, the housing market or the users of buildings, but the question of architecture as a cultural practice with political and social implications. The term 'projective' provokes an emphasis on design as architectural expertise (projective as in *project*, that is plan or scheme) and the aspect of engaging and staging alternative scenarios (pro-jective as 'looking forward' or 'throwing something ahead'). The main argument of the 'projective' is formulated in opposition to a linguistic (over) determined architecture, legitimised by instruments of political correctness and institutionalised critique,that insists on a status as autonomous formal object or negative comment. Instead, Somol & Whiting point out that strategies of engagement with mass culture, capitalist society and globalised economy can serve as powerful sources to generate liberating scenarios and alternative lifestyles, and they confirm their argument with constant reference to pop and media theory and the work of OMA/Rem Koolhaas. Another, maybe unintentional notion of the 'projective' derives from psychoanalysis and refers to the projection (imaging technique) of internal wishes onto external objects or persons. In this regard it is consequent for Somol & Whiting to align the 'projective' with the psychological, perceptional and sensual qualities of architectural space experienced by the observer, an agenda they share with Sylvia Lavin's 'architecture of the mood'.

However, the distinction of architectural concepts and practices between 'critical' and 'post-critical' architecture is not as clear as the dialectic argumentation of Somol & Whiting implicates. Firstly, there are undeniable differences within the combined front of the critics of 'criticality', as George Baird has clearly observed and demonstrated.[4] Secondly, there is not a single exemplary 'post-critical' building to exemplify 'projective' concepts, qualities, and the change of spatial perception, not a single 'projective' design to illustrate performance in architecture and the change in social interaction and effect.[5] And thirdly, *what* kind of qualities anyway? – So far, the contributions to the post-critical debate can be described as either radical abstract, a kind of meta-discourse on the epistemological paradigm shift following the 'end of critique' or 'the end of theory'. Or, the protagonists of the 'projective practice' eluded successfully from describing nameable architectonic characteristics – maybe to sustain a pluralistic credo of 'just do it' and 'everything goes', or maybe to avoid the commitment and petrification to a 'projective style'. Interestingly enough, 'post-critical' theory following the scheme of post-modernism, post-structuralism and other 'post-isms': defines its project *ex negativo*, as a critique of an established practice, without staging a clear alternative at first.

4 George Baird, 'Criticality and Its Discontents', *Harvard Design Magazine 21*, (2004): 16-21.

5 At the Stylos Conference 'Projective Landscape' at TU Delft, March 16th – 17th 2006, that intended to cover the debate on 'projective' and 'critical' design, there were just few architectural examples discussed as potential candidates for 'projective' architecture: F.O.A 'Yokohama Terminal', O.M.A. 'Seattle Library', Herzog & de Meuron, 'Prada Aoyama Epicenter, Tokyo'; today I would add the Gazprom City competition in St. Petersburg.

So far 'post-criticality' has been discussed primarily in U.S. academic circles and magazines, but there are signs of an exhaustion of theory in Europe as well. So called 'critical' theory has been diluted by methodological popularisation and turned into a kind of critical gesture or reflex, instead of opening new perspectives on momentary conditions and challenging the status quo with alternative concepts. Within critical discourse there has been a race for 'new' theories within the last 30 years that lead to the impression of arbitrariness and fashion. In addition, everybody has noticed that revolt and critique are part of the game of (late) capitalism: critical gestures are soon internalised, commodified and recycled as a consumer product; (Fig. 1), or critique is marginalised and corrupted by its own protagonists – critical strategies have proven their inefficiency in several ways.

Fig.1. *Starbucks revolution series*, marketing campaign. Image: *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung am Sonntag*, 13.11.2005; Frankfurt: 2005, p. 63.

As an example of the dilution between 'critical' and 'post-critical' practices and as a testing ground for the transfer of the 'projective' argument in European discourse, we might look at the *Blur Building* in Yverdon, by Diller & Scofidio for the Swiss Expo 2002; (Fig.2). The newspapers and visitors of the Swiss national event favored this pavilion above all other exhibition buildings and named it the 'wonder cloud', though there was nothing to see, except a hint of a steel structure in dense fog.The rest of the programme was rather negligible: a water bar and a media project that was reduced from an interactive media-scape to a straight-forward sound environment, because of the exit of the telecommunication sponsor a few months before opening. Still everybody was fond of the 'beauty' of this 'habitable medium', as Liz Diller had phrased the concept, and journalists were astonished about the new Swissness: 'No use, just fun.' Though abstract, the cloud, hovering above the lake – high-tech product of

the water of the lake – was immediately perceived as a poetic happening. Backed up with the success of the pavilion after the opening, Liz Diller said in an interview with the national newspaper: 'Our architecture is about special effects [...] Fog is inducing some sort of Victorian anxiety about something that one cannot define.'[6]; (Fig. 3). The immersive effect of being surrounded by dense fog, to walk alone or in groups in a cloud – a dreamlike or surreal situation – with just the noise of the nozzles, has something of the dramatic visionary of Victorian fantastic novels, indeed. Earlier, during the design process the architects pushed the idea of constructed naturalness and the mode of individual perception even more:

> The project goal is to produce a 'technological sublime', parallel to the 'natural sublime' experienced in the scaleless and unpredictable mass of fog. This notion of sublimity, however, is based on making palpable the ineffable and scaleless space and time of global communications.[7]

6 Elizabeth Diller, interview with Gerhard Mack, *NZZ am Sonntag*, special edition to EXPO 02, 05.05.2002.

7 Ricardo Scofidio, 'Presentation Sunrise Headquarters, March 2000', in Diller + Scofidio, *Blur: The Making of Nothing* (New York: Harry N. Abrams 2002), p. 162.Abrams 2002), p. 162.

Fig. 2. Diller & Scofidio, *Blur Building*, area view, Yverdon, Expo02, courtesy of the architects. Photo: Beat Widmer.

Fig. 3. Diller & Scofidio, Blur Building, inside, Yverdon, Expo02, courtesy of the architects. Photo: Beat Widmer.

This is a reference to the transcendental philosophy of Immanuel Kant, who discussed the sublime as the second aesthetic category next to beauty in his *Critique of Judgment*.[8] For him, the observer receives eerie aesthetic pleasure from perceiving the limitation of his power in front of nature. Kant continues to explain, that the delight in confronting a superior force can be transferred into abstract imagination as well. Diller & Scofidio applied both notions of the sublime and proposed a simultaneous effect of manipulated climate (nature) and abstract media presentation (imagination). Since the theme of this national park was 'I and the universe' the architects reflected on the dialectic between the individualised experience of the observer (*I*) and the environmental scale of their atmospheric installation in the landscape, and by addressing the topic of 'weather', its relationship to the whole of society and culture (*Universe*):

> Blur is smart weather. Within the fog mass, man-made fog and actual weather combine to produce a hybrid microclimate. [...] Weather is at center of a technological debate. Our cultural anxiety about weather can be attributed to its unpredictability. As a primary expression of nature, the unpredictability of weather points out the limitations of technological culture. [...] At the same time, global warming are proof that weather and climate are not impervious to human intervention. When we speak about the weather, it's assumed that more meaningful forms of social interaction are being avoided. But is not the weather, in fact, a potent topic of cultural exchange – a bond that cuts through social distinction and economic class, that supercedes geopolitical borders? [...] In truth, contemporary culture is addicted to weather information.[9]

There is a rhetorical ambition to charge the topic of weather – in common terms connected to small talk – with additional meaning, and stage the *Blur Pavilion* as an example of direct sensual experience and at the same time a product of mediatisation and representation. If we analyse the effect of this building on visitors and apply the matrix of 'projective practice', established by Somol & Whiting, we are able to identify the following features of the *Blur*:

- performance
- special effect
- ambiance and mood
- immersion and synaesthesia
- it requires engagement and participation of the observer, therefore a low definition media (McLuhan: cool)
- it is diagrammatic (in the sense of Deleuze: imposing a form of conduct on a particular multiplicity)
- it stages alternative scenarios and the virtual (what is more surreal than walking in a cloud?)

[8] Immanuel Kant: *Kant's Critique of Aesthetic Judgment*, trans. James Creed Meredith (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007) from the original: *Kritik der Urteilskraft* (1790).

[9] Elizabeth Diller, Ricardo Scofidio, 2nd Presentation Sunrise Headquarters, June 2000, in: Diller + Scofidio: *Blur*, p. 182.

- architecture as design expertise engaging with other disciplines: media and IT, irrigation technology, civil engineering, government officials, sponsoring by corporate capital, landscape architecture and environment, etc.

So, we might think, 'check on all boxes', and therefore proceed to conclude: the cloud is a paradigmatic example of projective architecture? – Well, not quite, because the architects designed the *Blur Pavilion* as an act of architectural resistance and critique. The *Blur* was meant to 'question' the idea of national exhibition and spectacle and to 'problematise' the superiority of visual representation.[10] A critical gesture takes an object of consumerist mass culture and turns it upside down. This shift of perspective is thought to break with conventions and display mechanisms of the everyday, which then become perceptible and intelligible – and finally changeable. If exposition pavilions are manifestations of 'spectacle' and 'progress', the anti-pavilion makes use of these expectations in order to frustrate them. Further instruments of the 'critical' include the display of suppressed topics in society, the intentional displacement and misuse of elements, or the revelation of the construction behind the production of effects, like the theater of Bertold Brecht. In comparison with a common exposition pavilion, the *Blur Building* stands out as an anti-object, since it has no 'skin', no façade, no ground or roof; it has no definite form, nor size, if the steel structure is read as mere sub-construction of the cloud. Above all, it does not exhibit anything, except atmospheric experience itself.[11] Within a critical discourse, 'vision' is connected to unbalanced power relationships, constructions of identity and 'truth', in the same way as 'representation' or 'display' is labeled with exploitation, manipulation and consumerist commodification; therefore they qualify as primary targets of critical practice.[12]

There is a similar attitude towards media and technology: For *Blur*, Diller & Scofidio have used computers fed with weather scenarios of the site and informed with data about actual weather conditions, in order to calculate the pressure and distribution of water and the correcting of the artificial fog. The nozzles came from irrigation and cooling technology (though a similar technique was used by Fjiko Nakaya for the Osaka World's Fair of 1970), whilst the steel frame employed 'tensegrity' structures developed by Buckminster Fuller, and the bridges were made of fiberglass. In addition there was the 'braincoat' – an unrealised media concept of wireless communication devices integrated into waterproof clothing that should have kept track of visitors and matched their digital personal profiles. This embracing application of material and construction techniques, information and communication technology, is on one hand strictly operational – to stage artificial weather, to keep control of the density of the fog or to optimise the steel construction as carrier of the visitor

[10] Ibid., p. 162.

[11] Ibid., p. 195.

[12] See: *Scanning. The Aberrant Architectures of Diller + Scofidio* (New York: Whitney Museum of American Art, 2003), exhibition catalogue.

platform and nozzles: this is the 'special effect' part of technology.[13] On the other hand the architects address the problematic aspects of modern technology, the dehumanising, restrictive features and side effects of control, optimisation, instrumentalisation and reification of people and things – not by avoiding, excluding or hiding them, but by an experimental implementation of high-tech devices in a deviant way of pose or game; (Fig. 4). Originally Diller & Scofidio were asked to provide a media concept for the Yverdon site, but during the competition they focused on a 'messageless message'. Hence the cloud does not stand for phantasm, performance or event, but for silence, emptiness and absence. Following this argumentation, the *Blur* must be read as 'critical architecture', because it demonstrates the characteristics of:

- autonomy: featureless, meaningless, objectless, formless[14] (or hyper-form)
- resistance against 'spectacle', the pavilion as 'display at display'
- critique of mediatisation and visual consumerism
- problematisation of technical evolution and futurism
- references to external critical discourses: representation: history of expositions; environment: climate and weather; media theory; technological based power, etc.

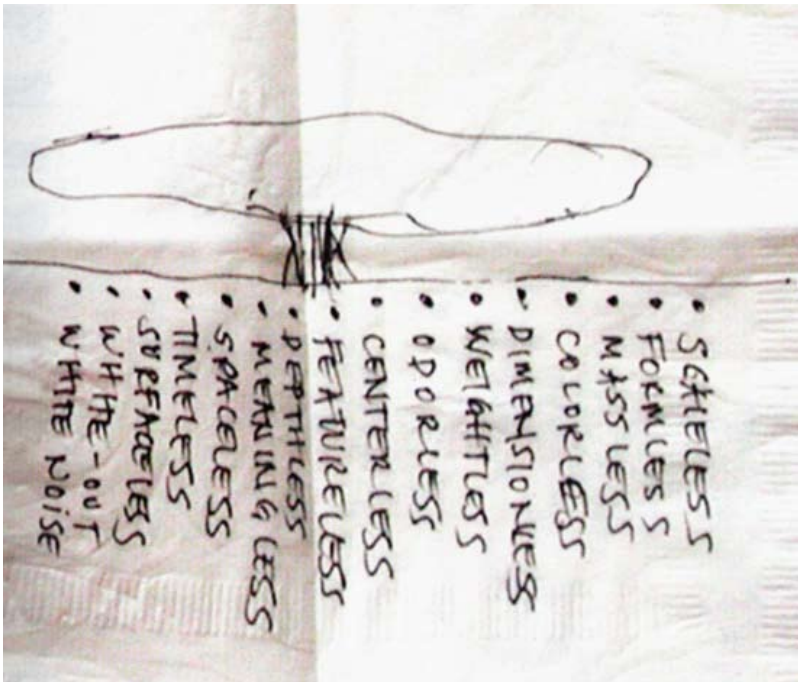

Fig. 4. *Blur Building*, early sketch, courtesy of the architects. Image: Diller & Scofidio, 1998.

13 Elizabeth Diller, 'Blur/Babble' in: Cynthia C. Davidson (ed.), (*Anything*, Cambridge: MIT Press, 2001), p. 132-139.

14 For the term 'formless' in critical discourse see: Yves-Alain Bois and Rosalind E. Krauss, *Formless. A User Guide* (New York: Zone, 1997) (French original: *L'informe: mode d'emploi*, Paris: 1996).

One reason for blurring the boundaries between critical and post-critical features of the *Blur* might have to do with a different point of view: a projective interpretation relies on performance and effect on the observer (reception), whilst a critical reading puts emphasis on intention and content as defined by the author or critic (reflection). But in the case of a national event like the EXPO 02 experience is constructed by mass media. The spectators knew what to expect, because their experience of the *Blur* was immediately conditioned by special editions of newspapers, TV, and the marketing campaign of the Expo; (Fig. 5). On the other hand there might be some doubts about the 'critical' content of *Blur* as well: There is the general question of the critical potential of immersive atmospheres, events and icons, – is an image, even a *blurred* one, able to be critical? In addition, the critical content of the *Blur* shows the same traces of predetermination, this time not by mass media, but by the architect-authors themselves: Diller & Scofidio have used the channels of institutionalised critique (magazines, lectures and reviews) to distribute their authorised 'reading' of the work.[15] A number of articles that enforce a critical interpretation of the *Blur Building* show a significant degree of coherence. Diller & Scofidio define themselves as conceptual architects and regard theory and critical content to be essential parts of their design product.

[15] Not to forget the 'documentary' book to the building, see: Diller + Scofidio: *Blur*.

Fig. 5. Diller & Scofidio, *Blur Building*, night view, 1998, with courtesy of the architect. Photo: Beat Widmer.

However, the self-regulating academic criticality might not be aware of features that have not yet been introduced to critical discourse, i.e. topics beyond ideology and representation, gender, colonialism, minorities, reification, commodification, etc. To give a short example, the German philosopher Peter Sloterdijk has contributed an interpretation of the *Blur Pavilion* as a 'macro-atmospheric installation' and as an 'immersive climatic sculpture', which might be still within the range of options set

by the architects. But he went on to read the atmospheric and climatic qualities not as an aesthetic metaphor, but as initial experiments of 'air-design'. He identified 'air' as a relevant product of a future market society and predicted the end of communal atmosphere. For him, the design and commodification of 'air' follows from the history of privatisation of public services, common space, water, ground, etc.[16] Within modernity he distinguishes the dialectical opposition between an individual cell in the atomised 'foam society' and the macro interiors as social collectors and urban space multitudes, such as the stadium, the congress center or the exhibition hall, where individuals transgress to groups and masses. The architecture of the self – Sloterdijk thinks of the ego-cell as externalised immune system, therefore as prosthesis – has integrated more and more common goods and functions, to enable an autonomous existence within the conglomerate society of the foam.[17] And finally, it is not that far from universalised air conditioning of interior spaces to a complete autarkic 'air-design'.

[16] Peter Sloterdijk, *Sphären III*, 'Chapter 2: Indoors. C Foam City' (Frankfurt/ Main: Suhrkamp, 2004), pp. 669-670.

[17] Ibid., p. 534.

For another example not discussed by Sloterdijk, but addressing similar issues of technologically controlled climate as the *Blur*, and therefore another possible testing ground of 'projective' theory on European ground, I suggest to look at the *Jardin d'Hybert*, the 'winter house' in Vendée, France, by Philippe Rahm; (Fig. 6). This project takes into account the generalised climatisation of contemporary spaces, and proposes an architectural approach to this condition. In the past, the question of air conditioning has been a technological one, solved by engineers; nowadays it has become a political one, revolving around sustainable development, energy standards and ecology and climatic change. The project, a country house for a writer close to the French Atlantic coast, does not work within the common standards of assuring a habitable environment for humans, or of creating comfort and cosiness, but stages the technical devices of climatisation. The machines for heating, ventilation and humidification are exposed, the whole building is arranged around a closed palm herbarium with artificial light; (Fig. 7). The house enables the inhabitant to live in a different climatic zone, in a different season, within a different time zone – for example Tahiti – regardless of outside weather conditions. The special quality of the climatic house, from the outside a black box, must be experienced from inside. Its main feature is invisible, but not insensible: the artificial atmosphere triggers direct effects on the human melatonin production, and therefore on the health and mood of the inhabitants. If we apply the matrix of 'projective practice' suggested by Somol & Whiting, there is:

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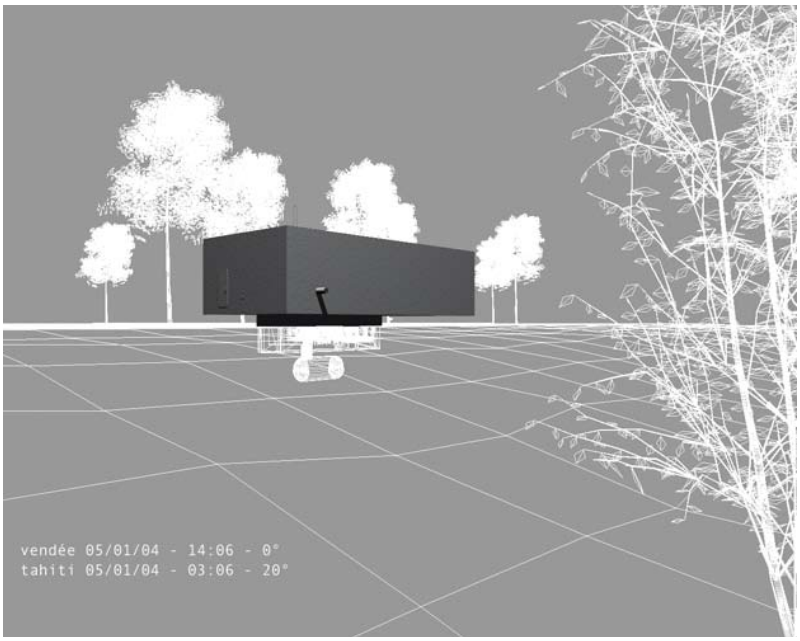

Fig. 6. *Jardin d'Hybert*, winter house in Vendée, France, perspective; courtesy of Décosterd & Rahm, Paris/Lausanne, and Collection Musée National d'Art Moderne, Centre George Pompidou, Paris). Image: Philippe Rahm, 2002.

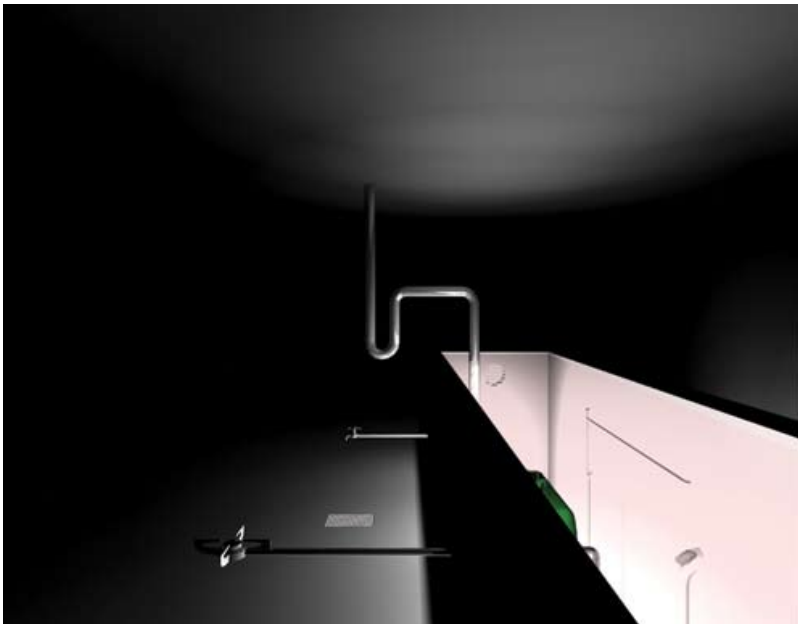

Fig. 7. Jardin d'Hybert, winter house in Vendée, France, inside; courtesy of Décosterd & Rahm, Paris/Lausanne, and Collection Musée national d'art Moderne, Centre George Pompidou, Paris. Image: Philippe Rahm, 2002.

- performance
- special effect
- ambiance and mood
- immersion and atmosphere
- it requires engagement and participation of the observer, therefore a low definition media (McLuhan: cool)
- it is diagrammatic (in the sense of Deleuze: imposing a form of conduct on a particular multiplicity)
- it stages alternative scenarios and the virtual (what is more surreal than living in Tahiti, but located on the French Atlantic Coast?)
- architecture as design expertise engaging with other disciplines: engineering; air conditioning; gardening; psychology; environment, etc.

In addition, the architect thinks of himself as decisively post-critical, or better non-critical: he is not interested in a theoretically informed design practice employing the critique of globalisation, simulation or the lament about the loss of individual and specific characteristics, put forward by authors like Jean Baudrillard or Marc Augé.[18] This attitude towards architecture can be described as 'applied projectivety', because he is working on extending the possibilities of architectural design into the fields of infrastructure, technology or the invisible qualities of space. With his projects he is testing the thresholds of the architectural discipline and engages with scientific methods and technological imports, which might be typical of the generation of 1990s, if we think of other architects like FOA, MVRDV or Jürgen Meyer H.

But on the other hand, against the rhetoric of pragmatism and experimentation, there is a distinctive critical aspect to the works of Philippe Rahm. This object, though set into a touristy landscape, remains closed, dark and anonymous, and frustrates common expectations of a country house. The unseen and soft factors of architecture are explored, framed and displayed. His architecture tries to uncover the space conditioning technologies, instead of integrating them into the construction or conceal them behind architectural surfaces and interfaces; (Fig. 8). His architectural projects problematise the subconscious mechanisms of climate control; they unveil the artificial constant climate continuum spread out from apartments, to lobbies, offices, cars, trains, airports and shopping malls, atriums and congress centers, which encloses us almost everywhere. They can be read as a comment on the de-localised, de-territorialised and de-temporalised way of life of the jet-set, who have made artificiality into a program or cult. At the same time, this excess of technical devices reflects on the issue of minimum-energy building

[18] Interview with the author on January, 20th 2006; Marc Augé, *Non-lieux: Introduction à une Anthropologie de la Surmodernité* (Paris:La librairie du XXe siècle, 1992); Marc Augé, *Non-places: Introduction to an Anthropology of Supermodernity*, trans. John Howe (London, New York: Verso, 1995).

regulations – or the dependency of Western culture on fossil energy sources, as you like. With the interpretation of Sloterdijk in mind, the projects of Philippe Rahm can be read as a laboratory of the individual, as experiments with the ego-cell, or as a new stage of the externalisation of the human immune system, closing the inhabitant into a herbarium, but enabling independence from environmental factors like light, temperature, humidity, time and space. But even without the display of the manipulative aspects of building technology, one could feel inspired to articulate connections of the concept to the Western myth of the noble savage (Tahiti!), and the exit fantasies from modern civilisation, – with the help of state of the art technology.[19] A short roundup of the critical features of *Jardin d'Hybert* lead to this conclusion:

- autonomy: container architecture, form as absent discourse, independent from environment outside and touristy view
- resistance: against ecological regulations as well as globalisation
- critique of mediatisation and visual representation
- problematisation of technological climate control and 'soft' effects of spaces
- references to external critical discourses: environment: climate and weather; globalisation; tourism; psychological and physiological manipulation; technological based power; cultural history: the 'noble savage', utopia, etc.

Fig. 8. *Jardin d'Hybert*, winter house in Vendée, France, herbarium; courtesy of Décosterd & Rahm, Paris/Lausanne, and Collection Musée National d'Art Moderne, Centre George Pompidou, Paris. Image: Philippe Rahm, 2002.

[19] This is not the space to discuss the influence of utopian projects of the 1960s and 1970s and the idea of a technological based exit from history, but there are obvious references in contemporary architectural practice to the atmospheric and pneumatic projects of Reyner Banham, Cedric Price, Archigram, Haus Rucker & Co., Superstudio, Archizoom, etc.; see for example: *Exit Utopia: Architectural Provocations 1956-76*, (Munich: Prestel, 2005).

Compared with each other, both examples of atmospheric architecture show the problematic relationship of critical and projective discourses: The resolute 'critical practice' of Diller & Scofidio was able to deliver a 'projective' object, if not to say an icon, with obvious potential for commodification, whereas the non-critical approach of Philippe Rahm turned out to produce concepts and projects, that enable a critical commentary on ideology and society. The theoretically informed process of scanning, slowing down and 'blurring'[20] of a mass spectacle produced an immersive event, whereas the straightforward instrumentalisation of technology and engagement with scientific research on hormonal effects of light and climate, questions architecture's role of providing human habitats.

[20] K. Michael Hays, 'Scanners' in *Scanning: The Aberrant Architectures of Diller + Scofidio* (New York: Whitney Museum of American Art 2003), p. 129-136 (exhibition catalogue).

With constant reference to indeterminate elements of atmosphere and weather, and as a detour to contemporary installation art, I suggest a look at a piece by Olafur Eliasson as a third and last example: *The Weather Project* at the turbine hall of the Tate Modern, London, 2003. Eliasson used the enormous room of the former turbine hall, reconstructed by Herzog & de Meuron, to create a lasting sunset: He covered one end of the hall with mono-frequency lamps emitting bright orange light, arranged in a semi-circular form that became a virtually complete full circle by reflecting off the mirror ceiling; (Fig. 9). The dimensions of the hall, now virtually enlarged by the double height of the reflected image, were made palpable by artificial mist that wafted inside and dispersed the orange light. The turbine hall, which is open free to the public, turned into a space for non-museum activities ranging from transcendental perception to talking or having lunch. People met, sat or lied down on the floor, sometimes people organised themselves in ornamental group patterns that were reflected from the mirrored ceiling. If we apply the projective matrix again, though being aware, that the installation is neither an object nor architecture, we get:

- performance
- special effect
- ambiance and mood
- immersion and atmosphere
- it requires engagement and participation of the observer, therefore a low definition media (McLuhan: cool)
- it is diagrammatic (in the sense of Deleuze: imposing a form of conduct on a particular multiplicity)
- it stages alternative scenarios and the virtual (what is more surreal than exhibiting real elements of a fake landscape in an art gallery?)
- concept art as design expertise engaging with other disciplines: architecture; landscape; air conditioning; environment, etc.

Fig. 9. Olafur Eliasson, *The Weather Project*, Tate Modern London, 2003-2004; courtesy of the artist. Photo: Jens Ziehe.

However, this is just half the story: when Olafur Eliasson talks about the weather, he is interested in the fundamental aspect of life, because he reads culture as a process that produces body-friendly environments. This notion of physicalness, haptics and presence leads to the German philosopher Gernot Böhme, who refers with the term 'atmosphere' to the 'emergence of things', and who assumes interdependence between the physical perception of an emanating presence (object) and the realisation of the physical presence of the observing self (subject).[21] With the help of phenomenological and communicative theory, aesthetics might transcend the fixation with artwork and the question of the rational judgment of taste (Kant), in order to develop an integral perception of physical presence that is always embedded in a continuous exchange of energies and signals with the surrounding environment – that's what he calls atmosphere.
For Böhme, the experience of synesthetic, immersive environments does not exclude a reflective and critical stance, on the contrary, the self-

[21] Gernot Böhme, *Atmosphäre: Essays zur Neuen Ästhetik* (Frankfurt/Main: Suhrkamp, 1995).

consciousness of physical presence and the awareness of the relativity of human apperception are the foundations of intelligence, of maturity and of an aesthetic access to reality – opening the emancipating effect of art. In addition to this epistemological and ontological reflection Eliasson questions the construction and mediation of human apperception: For him, weather is not only addressing physical presence, but is a cipher for time, including the future. Weather in urban societies, he says, is a mediation of indeterminacy, the unforeseeable, the dialectic of duration and constant movement. The term 'mediation' describes the degree of representation that interferes with the experience of a situation – which can be language, cultural codes, media, or social, moral and ethical ideologies. Eliasson is well aware, that experience is mediated *per se*, but he wants to problematise the subconscious mediation (by others). In his works he questions and frames the construction of accustomed ways of experiencing by inflecting the view of the observer back on perception: 'seeing yourself seeing'.[22] *The Weather Project* disclosed its imaginary machinery, (Fig. 10) and was meant to unmask the artificial aesthetic environment as a constructed experience. Though Eliasson's critical inquiry does not halt at his own work, his installations aim at the frame of the museum as an 'institution', not by repeating formal avant-garde moves, but by taking responsibility of media reports, public relations, marketing and the museum education of the Tate Modern. Eliasson believes in the utopian aspect of artwork: 'museums are radical', because they enable alternative frames and constructions of life, providing evidence, that 'reality' is just one out of many possible world models, and therefore functioning as the 'immune system' of society.[23] But critical strategies have to be light, flexible, temporal, for the context of here and now, in order to avoid the inefficiency of petrified critical gestures: an art beyond objects.[24] And last but not least: staging the topic 'weather' had less to do with neo-romanticism, than with sociological considerations, since 'everybody talks about the weather.' To close the argument of the critical aspects in Eliasson's work:

- autonomy: from disciplinarity of art, exhibiting art, perceiving art
- resistance: against representation and mediated experience
- critique of representation and normalised thinking
- problematisation of institutions, commodification and marketing
- references to external critical discourses: architecture; media; environment: climate and weather; globalisation; natural science; technologically based power; sociology and utopia, etc.

[22] The title of another work by Olafur Eliasson, mirroring the view of the observing visitor back on himself, 2001, exhibited in the MoMA, New York, etc.

[23] Olafur Eliasson, 'Behind the scenes. A roundtable discussion' in: Susan May (ed.), *Olafur Eliasson: The Weather Project*, (London: Tate Publishing, 2003), p. 65-95.

[24] Olafur Eliasson, 'Museums are radical', in Susan May (ed.), *Olafur Eliasson: The Weather Project* (London: Tate Publishing, 2003), p. 129-138.

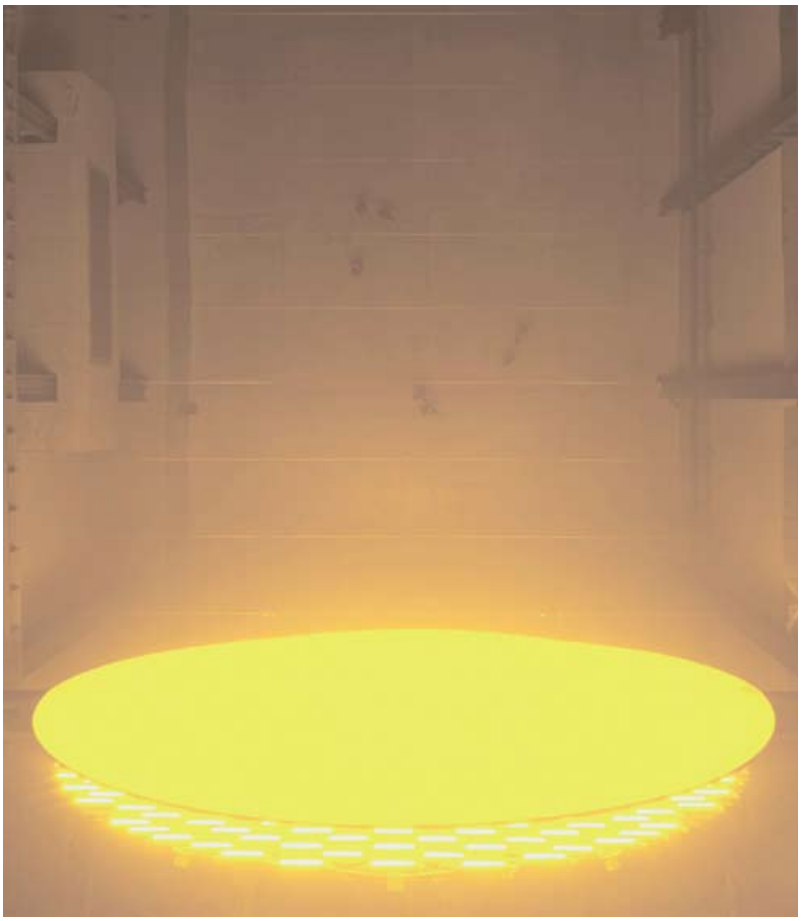

Fig. 10. Olafur Eliasson, *The Weather Project*, Tate Modern London, 2003-2004; courtesy of the artist. Photo; Jens Ziehe.

Though these examples are not strictly interdependent, the issue of weather and climate seemed to offer possibilities for staging experimental concepts in art and architecture. These atmospheric-immersive spaces elude the oversimplified categorisation of 'critical' or 'projective' practice, because they combine performance with reflection, engagement with resistance. At the same time they are able to transgress the alternative modes of delivering an autonomous formal object or producing a documentary display of socio-political or ethical problems, frictions and discourses. And this is maybe part of the answer to the post-critical debate and its transfer to the European architectural landscape: the 'post-critical' – or 'projective' – theory might not gain the same impact and disturbance in Central European discourse, since the dependence of art and architecture on criticality has not been as dominant as in the US. Nonetheless, 'critical architecture' has shifted from a mindset to a style or methodology, and criticality has been stereotyped to gesture

and reflex. Criticality has lost its critical effect and therefore it is time to criticise critique and question theoretic production. On the other side, if architecture wants to be more than a services provider for design and planning, and art more than decoration, it relies on conceptual thinking, on experiments and on discourse. Critique – as the debate about these concepts and perceptive modes – is necessary to identify relevant topics and to provide criteria to produce, analyse, understand, evaluate – and therefore improve – architectural ideas. Critique is the mode to focus on the cultural surplus of architecture beyond mere 'production', to relate architecture to other cultural practices and society itself. Therefore it is necessary to understand, accept and apply the constant shift of the relationship architecture-critique-society. Critique needs to be revised to regain its ephemeral and agile status of reflecting on its own basis, concepts and constructions.

Maybe, the irreconcilable juxtaposition of 'criticality' and 'projective' is to no avail, maybe it has to be understood as a dialectic relationship. Maybe the projective is a critical device to reform criticality. Maybe the projective is just criticality's 'other'? – If we have a look at the history of 'critical theory' as formulated by Frankfurt School philosophy, critical thinking was developed to liberate critique from history and description, and to activate its potential for contemporary questions. 'Critical theory' was meant to engage with reality and to analyse society in order to initiate change and project alternative scenarios. In other words: the 'projective' has once been part of the 'critical', and it has to become part of its future.

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ISSN: 1755-068
www.field-journal.org
vol.1 (1)
Architectural History's Indeterminacy

Architectural History's Indeterminacy: Holiness in southern baroque architecture

Helen Hills

This article is a critique of architectural history's tendency to over-determine in thinking about practice and theory in general, and in thinking the relationship between architecture and spirituality in post-Tridentine ecclesiastical architecture in particular. It first demonstrates what is meant both by over-determination and resistance to interdisciplinarity within mainstream architectural history before critically exploring in relation to this how post-Tridentine architecture and spiritual life or religious devotion might be thought together, the sorts of relationships between the two that may be thought to take place, and asks where this relationship might be located. Suggesting that it might be profitable to follow Deleuze's philosophy of the Baroque in refusing the tripartite division between a field of reality (the world) and a field of representation (in his case the book, in ours, architecture) and a field of subjectivity (the author, the architect), and rather to adopt like him, the notion of rhizome — without beginning or end, always in the middle, between things, interbeing, *intermezzo*, indeterminate. The article seeks to consider Baroque architecture as rhizomatic construction, rather than the usual (and unhelpful) preoccupations with it as dichotomous, expressive, or 'propagandistic'.

Last year I was invited to write a short paper on 'architecture and spiritual life in Tridentine Naples'.[1] My first inclination was to dismiss the idea: there seemed so much that was wrong with the underlying assumptions. But in articulating what I felt to be wrong, I found myself on new ground. The ensuing problems might, I think, be pertinent to the aims of this special issue of *field* in thinking about architecture and 'indeterminacy'. This is, then, both a consideration of architectural history's tendency to reductively over-determine, both in thinking about practice and theory in general, and in thinking the relationship between architecture and spirituality in post-Tridentine ecclesiastical architecture in particular. How might we think post-Tridentine architecture and spiritual life or religious devotion together? On what terms may architecture speak in regard to anything as slippery as 'spirituality'? What sort of relationship between the two may be thought to take place? And where would this relationship be located? Might we profitably follow Deleuze in refusing the tripartite division between a field of reality (the world) and a field of representation (in his case the book, in ours, architecture) and a field of subjectivity (the author, the architect), and rather, adopt like him, the notion of rhizome, without beginning or end, always in the middle, between things, interbeing, *intermezzo*, indeterminate? Baroque architecture as rhizome, perhaps, rather than as dichotomous, expressive, or 'propagandistic'?[2]

First, I turn to architectural history's generally steadfast resistance to such ideas, indeed to any ostensibly theoretical intrusion at all — a resistance which increases in intensity with regard to early modern architecture.[3] This is neatly encapsulated in a recent edition of the *Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians* (USA), which, for the sake of argument, can be described as the leading architectural history journal. Volume 64 n.4 Dec 2005 was a special issue dedicated to 'Learning from Interdisciplinarity'. It contains 8 short essays encompassing less than 24 pages or one-fifth of the volume on inter- and multi-disciplinary issues. After this relatively brief space dedicated to these 'interdisciplinary' reflections, follow four longer articles (totalling 110 pages). While each author might adopt knowledge from disciplines other than art or architectural history, none of its four principal articles pays the slightest attention to interdisciplinarity or to the theoretical developments discussed in the first part of the volume.[4] In one volume, therefore, we are presented with a strange chimaera — an architectural history which promises to be porous, to welcome ideas from other disciplines and between disciplines, to '*learn* from interdisciplinarity' (my italics), but which nevertheless *in the same issue* blithely turns its back on these challenges, ignores them in an untroubled familiar fortress island of architectural history, shut up behind a *cordon sanitaire*. Of course, all disciplines harbour these radically divergent approaches. But what is remarkable here is that there is no embarrassment

1 The term refers to the Alpine city of Trent ('Tridentum' in Latin), where a Council of Church leaders met in three phases between 1545 and 1563. Among much else, the Council reaffirmed medieval teachings on the authority of tradition, transubstantiation in the Mass (repudiating Protestant beliefs in consubstantiation), the sacraments and veneration of saints and relics. On the Council of Trent, see H. Jedin, *Geschichte des Konzils von Trient,* 4 vols (Freiburg im Breisgau: 1958-75); John W. O'Malley, *Trent and all that: renaming Catholicism in the early modern era* (Cambridge MA: Harvard University Press, 2000); R. Bireley, *The Refashioning of Catholicism, 1450-1700,* (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1999), pp. 45-70.

2 See G. Deleuze and F. Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia*, trans. by B. Massumi (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1987). For treatment of baroque architecture as expressive of context, and/or as representation of the will of the architect or patron, see S. Ostrow, *Art and Spirituality in Counter-Reformation Rome: The Sistine and Pauline Chapels in S. Maria Maggiore* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press: 1996); John Beldon Scott, *Architecture for the Shroud: Relic and Ritual in Turin* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2003). For an interpretation of baroque architecture as 'propaganda', see E. Levy, *Propaganda and the Jesuit Baroque* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2004). For the problems with such an account, see Helen Hills, 'Too Much Propaganda', *Oxford Art Journal,* 29(3) (2006): 446-453.

3 Of course, all scholarship is informed, consciously or not, by theoretical frameworks of some kind. I refer here, however, to the overt articulation of theoretical or political approaches. While theoretical sophistication is welcomed in architectural historical analysis of modern or contemporary architecture, this is not the case with pre-modern architecture (including medieval, Renaissance and baroque). The reasons for this are complex and have to date not been adequately analysed.

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in such a brazen juxtaposition. The Editor's 'Introduction' presents the interdisciplinary ideas, not as inherently divisive issues for debate — but rather as a bouquet of interesting ideas on which *future* architectural history might usefully draw, but the avoidance or ignorance of which presents no handicap to *present-day* architectural history.[5] Indeed, the packaging presents them as a whimsical sideline.

I wonder how this special issue now functions. As encouragement to architectural historians to absorb some of the selected ideas labelled 'Learning from interdisciplinarity'? Perhaps. But surely far more readily as reassurance, that it's perfectly OK to ignore them, as the really significant portion of the same volume does. The message from this volume seems to me to be 'Business as usual': either you can 'learn from interdisciplinarity' or you can do real (autonomous) architectural history.[6] Never the twain shall meet. The lesson to learn from interdisciplinarity is that it is irrelevant to the serious business of architectural history.[7] We are shown an Architectural History that is, in JM Coetzee's sense of the phrase, 'Waiting for the Barbarians'.[8]

Steiber ends her Introduction thus: 'Despite their varied and contrasting points of view, these essays make clear the objective of an interdisciplinary yet autonomous architectural history: to reveal the often unarticulated ways that architecture embodies how people have lived, thought, and worked'.[9] Architecture, then, as *embodiment* of lives, thought, and work. Architecture is understood here as an apparently magical materialisation of, at worst, verbs, and at best, ideas. This is to limit architecture in a manner characteristic of much architectural history, proceeding on the assumption that there is an autonomous 'base' or 'origin' '*outside*' of architecture which can serve to '*explain*' architecture, and which architecture seeks to '*represen*t', to house, to embody (or exclude).[10]

The special issue of *JSAH* is a useful demonstration of contemporary debate within architectural history — at least at its not unsophisticated, if conservative, core.[11] The question of why architectural history as a whole, and particularly early modern architectural history, has been so peculiarly resistant to theoretical approaches and learning from interdisciplinarity — far more than any other branch of art history — is an important one whose scope extends beyond this paper.[12]

The conjunction 'and' in 'architecture and spiritual life' stages an agon in which architecture's social vocation is enabled but also contained by its own powers of representation. How might we think of architecture and spirituality, then, without treating architecture as simply the enactment of idea? I should like to offer, rather than definitive answers and interpretations, some questions and issues for reflection, attempting

4 I am drawing a distinction between 'multidisciplinarity' whereby scholars use additatively ideas and knowledge from more than one discipline (e.g. the use by an architectural historian of the history of mathematics or geometry), and 'interdisciplinarity', or the development of approaches to problems and questions arising between, rather than within disciplines (e.g. sexuality), which then require changes in the precepts and practice of all involved disciplines.

5 Nancy Steiber, 'Learning from Interdisciplinarity; Introduction', *JSAH,* 64(4) (Dec 2005): 417-419.

6 Steiber structures her 'Introduction' around the question 'Is architectural history an autonomous field?' Steiber, 'Learning from Interdisciplinarity', p. 417.

7 'What happens when the passivity of verbs "symbolise, represent, and reflect" that we use to describe architecture's relation to society and culture is replaced with the forcefulness of verbs such as "transform, perform, inform"?' the editor asks, before singling out one essay, which 'proposes a new social history of architecture that explores its contribution to identity formation, considering the built environment as the *stage* for performing identity' (p. 417). Here then architecture, having been pushed towards agency, is quickly steered out of the limelight, simply to form a *stage* on which the real action takes place, architecture as backdrop, as stage, not as player. Architecture, in this model, does not take place.

8 J. M. Coetzee, *Waiting for the Barbarians* (London: Vintage, 2004).

9 Steiber, 'Learning from Interdisciplinarity', p. 418.

10 For a nice discussion of this, see Andrew Benjamin, *Eisenman and the Housing of Tradition: Art, Mimesis, and the Avant-garde* (Routledge: London, 1999).

11 Crucially, the conservative core remains the principal organ for scholarship on early modern architectural history. While *JSAH* may well be amongst the more conservative scholarly journals, it is also the only journal dedicated to architectural history including pre-modern architecture from countries beyond the USA and

to move away from an interpretation based on secure identities, an hermeneutics of depth, and linear historical time, to thinking instead about the relationships between architecture and spirituality in Tridentine Italy — as a continuing travail of openings, fissures, and delays. I want to avoid defining either 'architecture' or 'spirituality' by confining them to a box of periodisation in terms of a (finished) past. Instead I consider both architecture and spirituality as pluralistic, while also tending to produce each other's limits.

'Architecture' in Tridentine Naples was not homogenous or unitary. It would, in any case, be wrong to foreclose the discussion by restricting it from the start to ecclesiastical architecture, to assume that architecture built for the Church had an exclusive relationship to spiritual experience. What is it to say of spirituality outside ecclesiastical buildings, in wayside shrines, in domestic chapels, or in kitchens, storerooms, bakeries and laundries, and numerous other places sometimes occupied or preoccupied by spirituality?[13] The sacred and profane did not occupy separate architectures. The church was a place of transaction and conflict, as much as of transcendence and tranquillity. Always fractured, always spilling out into the street and into more registers of meaning than can be contained within a rubric, church architecture cannot be contained by a verbal logos. What is it to say of spirituality outside of buildings, above all in processions which unfolded through the city, articulated at specific sites by temporary altars, triumphal arches, facades laced with epigraphs and encomia, but not composed of them?[14]

Spiritual lives extended beyond the liturgical to all religious practices and beliefs. In Tridentine Naples, just as the practices of architecture, including ecclesiastical architecture, were many, contested and contradictory, so also — though in different ways — were the practices and precepts of spiritual lives. There was no single spiritual life to which all adhered, and there was no distinct form of life that was 'spiritual', separate and autonomous from other aspects of life. Even within the main religious orders, religious practices varied considerably. Outside these groups, 'spiritualities' also embraced those beliefs and forces, which were marginalised and repressed by (certain groups within) the Church. This outside imprinted even the 'official' architecture of orthodox Catholicism with its marks. In so far as church architecture of this period made it its business to exclude difference, to divide and taxonomise those accepted within, it bears the imprint of all it sought to exclude.

Britain. The terminology 'pre-modern' is awkward, but it reflects what is, I believe, a divide in scholarship between the history and theory devoted to modern / contemporary architecture and that which addresses architecture from earlier periods. See note 3 above.

12 The claim that architectural history is 'conservative' because both architecture and history 'conserve' is insufficient as an explanation of this.

13 This is not the distinction between sacred and profane indicated architecturally by Michael Camille. For Camille, the architecture of Chartres 'manifests the desire' to encompass and structure official exegesis in opposition to the instability of the 'countless unofficial and indecipherable meanings that are projected onto it and that proliferate in the profane world it seeks, but fails, to exclude.' Michael Camille, 'At the Sign of the "Spinning Sow"' in Axel Bolvig and Phillip Lindley (eds.), *History and Images: Towards a New Iconology* (Turnhout: Brepols, 2003), pp. 250-251.

14 'The manipulation of a space that exists prior to the parade is necessarily accompanied by the production of a space that is specific to it.' L. Marin, *On Representation,* trans. Catherine Porter (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2001), p. 42. The best discussion of the procession in this regard remains Marin's, pp. 38-52.

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Just as the practices of architecture, including ecclesiastical architecture, were many, contested, and also contradictory, so also — though in different ways — were the practices and precepts of 'spiritual life'. There was no single spiritual life to which all adhered, and there was no distinct form of life that was 'spiritual', separate and autonomous from other aspects of life that were not. Spirituality is also the relationship between oneself and infinite alterity that sees without being seen, the *mysterium tremendum*, the terrifying mystery, the dread and fear and trembling of the Christian in the experience of the sacrificial gift. Rather than a substantive, spirituality as having an essence that can be identified and stated as such, is better termed an actative. This actative was conflictual and therefore unable to support an essential. Thus these categories — 'architecture' and 'spirituality' were never sharp-edged, and our analysis of them should not be so either. 'Spirituality' seems to proffer a useful key to unlock architecture, to explain it (away). Indeed, the 'spiritual' is readily seen as opposed to the architectural, and therefore 'outside' it (rendering the displacement of architecture almost salvational, redemptive). *Spiritus*, immaterial breath, is the counterpart to the materiality of architecture; the immateriality of the spirit and of spiritual matters is readily opposed to the body and matter that constitutes architecture. Some approaches, effectively Hegelian, nevertheless search for a commonality between (or above) thought and matter (architectural and philosophical) seeing architecture as the materialisation of the spirit.[15] The Protestant hermeneutic that conflates the Holy Spirit with the spirit of the biblical text also works against architecture in this regard.[16]

In offering for consideration 'architecture and spirituality', architecture is thereby conceived as separate from 'spirituality' and as constituting its material embodiment or its material evocation — a 'pointing to' of something which either is imagined or actually exists already 'elsewhere'. This 'elsewhere' haunts much architectural history, displacing and replacing architecture with its imagined predecessor ('religion') or destiny ('spirituality'). Architecture thus becomes a sort of interloper — the illegitimate occupier of a space, which is more appropriately occupied by word or deed, by 'origin' (birth) or 'destiny' (death). Architecture approached this way is off-limits, already always elsewhere.

If architecture is conceived as a technique separate from thought (and affect and spirit) and either as coming after, or preceding it, then it produces affect and spirit. Architecture, especially ecclesiastical architecture, appears like a gigantic butterfly net, able to trap 'spiritual experience' and pass it on to its users. This conception of architecture as 'capturing' pre-existing transcendental effects, termed 'spiritual', or better still, recognised as such by viewers / users (like the identification of the butterfly in the net by reference to the pre-existing wallchart) reduces architecture to little more than a conveyor belt or tunnel through which

[15] Such a conception underpins Erwin Panofsky's famous attempt to incorporate into one explanation the principles of Gothic architecture and Scholasticism. He searches in two contemporaneous but diverse phenomena, the University disputation and the system of Gothic vaulting, for common principles of clarification and conciliation of opposing forces. Erwin Panofsky, *Gothic Architecture and Scholasticism* (Latrobe PA: Arch Abbey Press, 1951).

[16] 'For by a kind of mutual bond the Lord has joined together the certainty of his Word and of his Spirit so that the perfect religion of the Word may abide in our minds when the Spirit, who causes us to contemplate God's face, shines; and that we recognise him in his own image, namely, in the Word.' in Jean Calvin, *Institutes of the Christian Religion,* trans. John Allen, 3 vols (London: SCM, 1961) I, bk.1, p. 95.

precious (pre-determined) feelings can be transmitted. Like the butterfly, such 'spirituality', deemed to be immanent within certain buildings, is divorced from history. As we have seen above, that architecture 'reflects' or 'expresses' remains a common assumption in architectural history practice, but it is fundamentally flawed, as its dependency on the mode of the mimetic, relies on binary logic to describe phenomena of an entirely different nature. However, rather than simply dismiss this manner of practising architectural history, I shall return to it below as not coincidental to what is habitually presented as the Council of Trent's own architectural history.

Might we think instead of spirituality, not as restricted to church architecture (nor as chronologically or teleologically corralled within a 'pre-modern' period enclosure), but as intensity of affects which may both mobilise architecture and be mobilised by it?

Reading Trent: Architecture as Representation

The Council of Trent has little to say about architecture directly. The Decrees show concern for images, but little interest in architecture. Indeed, Catholic treatises throughout the sixteenth century, largely ignore architecture and are overwhelmingly concerned with images, especially paintings.[17] While word and image (painting) have readily been seen as competitors for the status of revelation, architecture has not.

Nevertheless, for Rudolf Wittkower and others, the Council of Trent set in motion a spirit, which artists pursued and caught up with (or not): 'Are we at all capable to judge whether, where, and when the artists caught up with the spirit of the Council?'[18]

Consequently, architectural history has tended to treat liturgy and the Decrees of the Council of Trent as principal explanators for Counter Reformation church building. The most familiar model is the analysis of the Gesù in Rome (Fig. 1) (rising from 1568 and consecrated in 1584), as if it were an illustration of the Decrees of the Council of Trent. Thus Rudolf Wittkower in 1958 treated it as the archetype of a typology, its form read in terms of its function (more or less a container for the masses being preached at):

> The beginning was made with the Gesù, the mother church of the Jesuit Order. With its broad single nave, short transept, and impressive dome this church was ideally suited for preaching from the pulpit to large numbers of people. It established the type of the large congregational church that was followed a hundred times during the seventeenth century with only minor variations.[19]

[17] This point has been made, but not critically considered, by several scholars: C. Dejob, *De l'influence du Concile e Trente sur la literature et les beaux-arts chez les peoples catholiques* (Paris: 1884), p. 265; Giuseppe Scavizzi 'La teologica cattolica e le immagini durante il XVI secolo', *Storia dell'arte,* 21 (1974): 171-212; Scavizzi, *The Controversy on Images from Calvin to Baronius* (New York: Peter Lang, 1992), pp. 242-248; and Pamela Jones 'Art Theory as Ideology', in C. Farago (ed.), *Reframing the Renaissance* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1995), pp. 127-139.

[18] Rudolf Wittkower, *Art and Architecture in Italy 1600-1750, Early Baroque* I, (ed.) J. Connors and J. Montagu (Singapore: Yale University Press, 1999), p. 1.

[19] Ibid., p. 15.

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ISSN: 1755-068
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Fig. 1. Rome, Il Gesù. Interior view east towards main altar. Photo: Helen Hills.

This can, of course, be read as another of architecture's founding myths. By this account the Neapolitan church of S. Maria degli Angeli a Pizzofalcone (1600), with its vast and luminous dome at the crossing (Fig. 2), S. Caterina Formiello, or the fabulously decorated San Gregorio Armeno, simply repeat a 'solution' (the bare bones of the Gesù) invented in Rome.[20] By this account, architecture elsewhere was merely a repetition of the Gesù that was itself little more than reactive representation. Beyond this, Wittkower's account treats architecture as *expressing* the social forms, which are also those capable of generating and using it. The building of the church sets up a place that did not exist before; yet, at the same time, its inhabitants — God, clergy, worshippers — required the place before it was invented. Indeed, the 'spiritual' is readily seen as opposed to the architectural, and therefore 'outside' it (rendering architecture's displacement almost redemptive).

Any assumption that liturgy and architecture (often even further reduced to architectural plan) encompass each other in corresponding form is problematic. Analysed in terms of liturgy, architecture is seen as accommodating a pre-existing 'function' that is coherent and productive. It is usually envisaged that architecture houses liturgy, as if 'liturgy' were conceived independently, already, and in existence somewhere

[20] For these churches, see Anthony Blunt, *Neapolitan Baroque and Rococo Architecture* (London: Zwemmer, 1974); Helen Hills, *Invisible City: The Architecture of Devotion in 17th C Neapolitan Convents* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004); Silvana Savarese, *Francesco Grimaldi e l'architettura della Controriforma a Napoli* (Rome: Officina Edizioni, 1986).

else, quite autonomously from architecture, which is then produced to house it. Parallel to this is a tendency within architectural history to see the architect as explanator, as originator of the new. The architect, understanding the requirements of liturgy, produces a new form, all the better to house it. The liturgico-architect, positioned outside of architecture, is then advanced as its explanation and cause. The architect is spiritual prophet as his architecture presences the divine. Yet such an account uncomfortably matches the ambitions for architecture of Trent.

Fig. 2. Naples, S. Maria degli Angeli a Pizzofalcone (1600), with its vast and luminous dome at the crossing. Photo: Tim Benton.

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The Tragedy of Trent

The tragedy of Trent was that the command was mistaken for something to be understood, obedience for knowledge itself, and being for a *fiat*. This was the resort of the Catholic Church in a state of emergency, threatened by Protestants (as historians always remember), and by Muslims (as they often forget).[21] The Council of Trent claimed separation for the Roman Catholic Church: separation from the Protestant churches and from secular Catholic powers. Yet Trent declared the Church to have responsibility for spiritual (as opposed to temporal) matters, in an era where the spiritual seeped into all aspects of life.

Catholicism's culture was to shield it from Judaism, Islam and Protestantism. The Council of Trent sought to influence culture, to contain the unconstrained, and to martial the errant in a mode familiar to us today by which 'clarity' of message becomes key, martialling art to tame and recuperate, a sort of ethics of knowledge, directed when expedient at unlettered people and those who were, in a range of ways, considered to be inferior, in need of corrective instruction:

> The Decrees of Trent treat art as being in the service of religion and spirituality, their docile instrument, servile and exterior to the dominant power of 'Catholicism'. But the Decrees' institutionalisation, and their institutionalised interpretations, imply a performative and interpretative force, a call to faith, in the sense of architecture that would maintain a more internal, more complex relation to what is called spirituality, faith, religion.[22]

Architecture and intensification

It may be more fruitful to think of architecture as tracing the spiritual, or that which cannot be contained, of gesturing elsewhere, as allowing through one space — though not in a hermeneutics of depth — an opening to another beyond, hidden, invisible, transcendent. Might we think of the sacred and architecture as producing each other at the edge of the same limit? Both architecture and religion not only institutionalise but shift and transform. Both cannot be except as they constantly distance themselves from their own boundaries. They are continuously in the process of becoming and changing, even while they are institutionalising and establishing.

Ecclesiastical architecture does not only contain worshippers; it is that place where people become worshippers. It finds them, refines them, defines them, and limits them. The church gives to worshippers their outlook both on God and on themselves as worshippers of God. Yet

[21] 'Our impious and ruthless enemy the Turk was never at rest.' J. Waterworth (ed. & trans.), *Decrees of the Council of Trent, The Canons and Decrees of the Sacred and Œcumenical Council of Trent* (London: Dolman, 1848), p. 2.

[22] Ibid., p. 235.

the church is not the place where worshippers feel 'at home'; they are displaced, in another's house, in the house of the Other. Ecclesiastical architecture assumes the task of letting God be present, letting God be, being God's house, housing God, domesticating God, bringing God down to earth.

Architecture inevitably played no small part in the Christian technology of the believer. We are told 'the Christian sacralisation of space is not as old as Christianity itself', that 'Christianity sacralised people, not objects.'[23] Early Christian apologists strove to distinguish their Christian God from pagan gods by denying Him a home. While pagan temples housed their gods, the Christian God was boundless, uncircumscribed. For St Augustine (*Sermon* 337) the true dwelling place of God was in baptised Christians' hearts, rather than in their churches.[24] Yet although the location of a church was not sacred, the celebration of the Eucharist sacralised the church: *Haec est corpus meum*.[25] Like the sacrifice of the Eucharist, the sacrifice of martyrdom sacralised Christian place, too, as soil stained with the blood of martyrs and their tombs marked the place for Christians to worship. Here the idea of the sacred, while appearing to be spatial, is in fact temporal — or atemporal, the sacred as abolition of time. The Church, by encompassing and enclosing these sites, thereby sought to enclose both place and time. Together, the Eucharist and martyr saints formed a specifically Christian way to sacralise both space and time through each other.[26] By affirming the cult of saints and of relics, Trent attempted to sacralise both location as temporal, and the temporal as location. Architecture was central, not incidental, to this work and both its measure and its limit.

Therefore, Tridentine architecture, particularly through its emphasis on sanctity, martyrdom, and relics, was orchestrated by its claims to temporalise place and to localise time. Such ambition was doomed to failure, betrayed by the impossibility of closure, because time is shot through with delay, and place with fissures. Sites could never be enclosed. The *virtus*, or good will of the saint was localised — intensified — in both time (feast days) and place (through relics).[27] Thus a church on a feast day was particularly resonant with sacredness. The gifts piled high on the tomb of Andrea Avellino in Naples, for example, always increased in number around the time of his annual feast.[28]

Much was based on an archaeological regression toward a foundation. Insistence upon the relic as starting-point, or, more precisely, on martyrdom as place through the relic, is at its most spectacular in the church of Santa Cecilia in Trastevere, Rome where Stefano Maderno's famous sculpture, St Cecilia (1600), shows the saint supposedly as her body was found on its excavation from the catacomb (Fig. 3).[29]

23 Béatrice Caseau, 'Sacred Landscapes', in G. W. Bowerstock et al. (eds.), *Interpreting Late Antiquity: Essays on the Postclassical World* (Cambridge MA: Harvard University Press, 2001), pp. 40, 42; Robert Markus, 'How on Earth Could Places Become Holy? Origins of the Christian Idea of Holy Places', *Journal of Early Christian Studies,* 2(3) (1994): pp. 257-271.

24 Quincy Howe (ed. & trans.), *Saint Augustine, Bishop of Hippo, Selected Sermons* (London: Gollancz, 1967), p. 132.

25 For a development of this claim, see Caseau, p. 41. In the Sacrament the essential body or the bodily flesh of Christ is eaten. This means that the domains of faith and sense-perception intersect. In the real presence spirit and flesh are one.

26 Ibid., p. 42.

27 On relics see especially, E. Bozóky and A. M. Helvétius (eds.), *Les reliques: Objets, cultes, symbols* (Turnhourt: Brepols, 1999).

28 ASN, Corp.relig. sop.S. Paolo Maggiore 1180, ff.1r-93r.

29 For a reading of this sculpture as a 'fulfilment of contemporary liturgical concerns', see T. Kämpf 'Framing Cecilia's Sacred Body: Paolo Camillo Sfondrato and the Language of Revelation', *The Sculpture Journal,* (6) (2001): 10-20.

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The sculpture seeks to combine historical truth, represented by the archaeological discovery of the saint's body, with spiritual truth; her martyrdom, thereby combining the spiritual 'origin' with the historical (archaeological) discovery. Or, more accurately, it combines two different sorts of 'origins' of the contact point between human and divine: the point where a woman slithers into martyrdom and sanctity, the end of her life, end of the human being and beginning of the spiritual being; and the *inventio* of the saint's relics. The sculpture shows spiritual truth both as confirmed by archaeology (history, knowledge) and as beyond it. The body bears the wound of martyrdom (Fig. 4). That wound is turned to the viewer, even as the face is turned away. That wound, like a mouth replacing the mouth, is an opening to something, as if to utter something yet being unable to say something; a mouth of the ineffable, the point of entry to the beyond, that beyond which now holds the woman, but which is invisible to her whose head and eyes are turned. The body lies twisted before us, chastely beautiful, the face swivelled away, the wound marking the turning point between the body and the head, between the visible and the ineffable, the unspeakable unseeable of the eyes.

Fig. 3. (Left) Stefano Maderno, St Cecilia (1600), Santa Cecilia in Trastevere, Rome. Photo: Helen Hills.
Fig. 4. (Right) Detail of the neck wound on Maderno's St Cecilia. Photo: Helen Hills.

The basilica of Santa Cecilia where the statue occupies the key position in front of the main altar, is thereby reinscribed, in relation to the perpetual start that is the martyr's end, the repetition of the sacrifice, back to origins, and therefore the end of something old and the beginning of something 'new'. The wound — a gap — is where spirit and matter become one, the start of something new. The gap, something missing, becomes an opening to something entirely unknown. The wound that marks the death of the subject marks the opening to martyrdom, the transformation of body into relic. The relationship between Self and Other is presented as this gaping slit, this dumb mouth, a departure from history (continuity, human time). The main altar becomes the point at which historical time (the finding of the body) meets spiritual time through the martyred body (the relic), meeting at that juncture which is severed, at the wound. But it is

something 'new' that is positioned outside of historical time. It is the end of history and the start of that which is beyond the edge of history. Here visual analogy represents the embodiment of spiritual faith. Spirituality is embodied at the point where it is disembodied. This is what the Tridentine concern with the relic proffered, and which has been too hurriedly smoothed out by historians into a linear history.

Even as it sought to localise time, Trent described time that was circular: images of saints admonished the people to 'revolve' in their minds articles of faith, whilst other images showed miracles to prompt the imitation of saintly actions in the future.[30] It is perhaps more useful to think of ecclesiastical architecture less as an enactment of the Decrees of the Council of Trent, than as their translation. Such architectural translation is neither an image nor a copy. If there is a relationship of 'original' to version between the Decrees and the architecture that followed, it cannot be representative or reproductive; architecture does not represent or reproduce, nor does it restitute. In writing about translation, Walter Benjamin uses the image of the core and the shell, the fruit and its skin, a body and a cloak: 'the language of the translation envelops its content like a royal robe with ample folds. For it signifies a more exalted language than its own and thus remains unsuited to its content, overpowering and alien.'[31] The royal cloak, floating and swirling about the royal body produces the body underneath it, makes it royal. Likewise, architecture does not seek to rehearse the Decrees, to say this or that, or to house this or that concept, but to exhibit its own possibility, and to do so in a mode that is both anticipatory and prophetic.

Reform meant desire for another form. The desire for a new place, new churches, new cloisters, new corridors, new colleges, new seminaries: not simply new repetitions, but new forms. The re-evaluation of the visible God, following Protestant denunciation, coincided with a re-evaluation of the senses, since it was through the senses that divinity was received.[32] It maybe useful to think of architecture, less as mimetic representation of 'spirituality' (preconceived) / liturgy, etc., but as producing zones of intensity, or pure 'affect', which can enhance the human power to become. Thus rather than as the structuring of and container for Trent, its Decrees and Catholic liturgy, baroque architecture might be thought affectively, as productive and intensificational. Rather than think of the Tridentine church as the container for the well-attended sermon (Wittkower's Gesù), thereby reducing it to a generalisation and (empty) locus for instruction, might we think of it in terms of affect? For Deleuze speakers are the *effects* of investments in language. Might we usefully think of worshippers as the effects of investments in architecture?

[30] *Council of Trent*, p. 235.

[31] Hannah Arendt, 'The Task of the Translator: An Introduction to the Translation of Baudelaire's *Tableaux Parsieins*', in Walter Benjamin, *Illuminations: Essays and Reflections*, trans. H. Zohn, (New York: Schocken Books, 1969), p. 75.

[32] The Eucharist is not a Platonic representation (*adumbration*) of historical events. Rather, flesh and spirit, the sensuous and the spiritual, the literal and the figurative are actively involved. It entails a conjunction of categories, a form of transgression.

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Here are two contrasting examples to explore this suggestion. First, Cosimo Fanzago's doorways in the large cloister of the Certosa di San Martino, Naples (Fig. 5). About these extraordinary doorways by Cosimo Fanzago, in his classic *Neapolitan Baroque and Rococo Architecture* (1971) Anthony Blunt writes:

> Here the forms are more complex. The triangular consoles, which break the 'pediments' over the doors and support the busts, are squeesed in between the scrolls, the same arrangement being repeated above the niche, but with the scrolls inverted. The arches supporting the vault end on consoles which are linked to the jambs of the door by marble ribbons, from which hang flowers, leaves, and fruit. Over the door itself the architrave bursts into a life of its own, projecting upwards a curl of marble and downwards two scrolls, which [...] seem to act as clamps to the top of the door itself. The whole is so like a grotesque mask — volutes for eyes, curl of marble for the nose, scrolls for lips, cut out lobes for cheeks — that the illusion can hardly have been unintentional.[33]

'[T]he illusion can hardly have been unintentional.' Blunt seems reluctant to greet the puzzled, puzzling faces that look down on us, tongues lolling, in spite of the evident strain placed on his attempt to read them in classical terms of architectural grammar. And indeed, what are they doing poking out impudently below the busts of saints above? Those busts (not finished until the 1640s) which, instead of sitting in niches above the doorways, burst forward, overflow them, just as the elements of mouldings and architrave overflow the boundaries they begin to sketch. Blunt himself ascribes these strangenesses to Florentine artists, Buontalenti and his school, brought to Naples by Michelangelo Naccherino, who, by the 1620s 'had established a fashion for it in tombs, fountains, and other decorative features.'[34] (Compare Fig. 6.)

Yet something of the provisionality of these sculptural-architectural forms, seems in danger of being overlooked by this genealogical formal ancestry. Most striking is the way that these hard forms, fashioned in marble and stucco, so evidently are shown to *seem to be*; we are shown the anthropomorphising of architectural mouldings — not their anthropomorphosis — the malleability of form, a fearful slippage of architecture into body and back again.

The mobility of the face, the eyes, the mouth, the tongue, that they evoke, also inherently imply a rapid disbandment and dissolution. It is not just a face that is suggested, but a particularly mobile, expressive face; not just eyes but rolling eyes; not just a tongue, but a cheekily licking one (Fig. 7). This is as far from Gombrich's static duck-rabbit as you can get. This is also what renders them particularly interesting from a Deleuzian perspective. They do not represent a face, though they may suggest one. The saints' busts seem closer to that mimetic idea of representation — though even they, instead of sitting in niches above the doorways, burst

[33] Blunt, *Neapolitan Baroque*, p. 74.

[34] Ibid., p. 74.

forward, overflow them, just as the elements of mouldings overflow the boundaries they begin to sketch, and their fine light smokiness deliberately undercuts any presupposition that this is a portrait bust, a fleshly body.

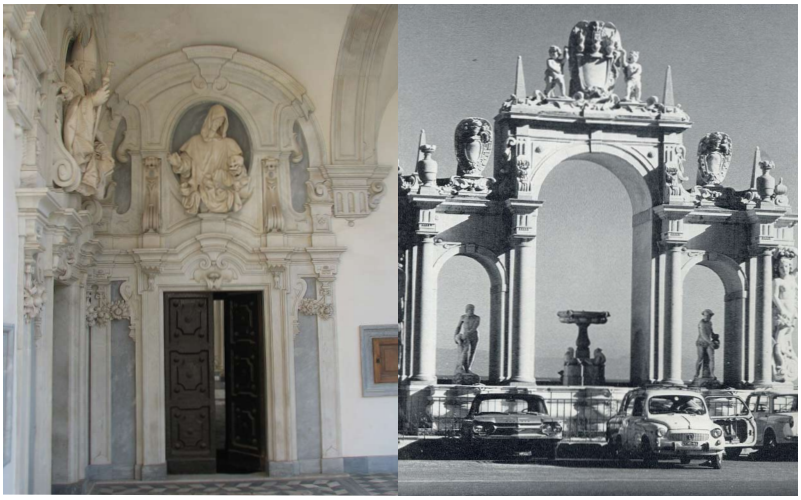

Fig. 5. (Left) Cosimo Fanzago, doorways in the large cloister of the Certosa di San Martino, Naples. Photo: Helen Hills.
Fig. 6. (Right) Michelangelo Naccherino, Fontana dell'Immacolatella, 1601, Naples, Photo: Helen Hills.

For Deleuze any actual thing maintains its own virtual power. What something is, is also its power to become. Art works are singular by transforming the world through images that are at once actual (being) and virtual (having the power to become). Art — including architecture — has the power to imagine and vary affects that are not already given. It is the vehicle for producing holiness rather than its expression. Less important than what architecture is, are the forces or powers of *becoming* that it reveals.

Fig. 7. Detail of the 'face' in Fanzago's doorways in the large cloister of the Certosa di San Martino, Naples. Photo: Helen Hills.

Thus the setting of the scrolly eyes (architrave becoming face) and the beniched bust (saint becoming architrave) directly one above the other begin to make more sense. One is to illuminate and undercut that which the other is (not). The two becomings interlink and form relays in a

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circulation of intensities pushing the deterritorialisation further. But while such overspilling and destabilising may seem at home on a fountain, its use in a Carthusian cloister, and particularly at a junction which supports busts of saints, is striking. The gurgling faces seem to undercut the seriousness of St Bruno *et al.*. The participation in the formation of connections and over-runs is unlimited. This sort of architecture-sculpture is particularly rhizomic. Rhizomes can shoot out roots, leaves, and stems from any point. A rhizome has no beginning: no roots; it has no middle: no trunk; and it has no end: no leaves. It is always in the middle, in process. It can connect from any part of itself to a tree, to the ground, to other plants; to itself. Fanzago's swivelly-eyed face as rhizome.[35]

These hump-backed anthropomorpho-architraves, where we seem leered at, jeered at, and in on the joke, show us, half ludically half-threateningly, that 'the middle is by no means an average; on the contrary, it is where things pick up speed'.[36] Deterritorialisation is the chaos beneath and within territories; it is the lines of flight without which there would be neither territory nor change in territory. There is an intensity or enjoyment of movement itself, of openings that reveal further openings; of faces that appear to peer out of curlicues of stone and stucco; of crossing space, and burrowing, disappearing, re-emerging. The sculptured doorways are produced from this movement (rather than being the supposed end of the movement).

Fig. 8. Naples Duomo, Treasury Chapel of San Gennaro, interior. Photo: Helen Hills.

My second example is the Treasury Chapel of San Gennaro (Saint Januarius, principal patron saint of Naples) in Naples (Fig. 8). This Chapel was built in 1608, within Naples Cathedral but financially and administratively independent of it, to fulfil a vow made during the plague of 1526-27. It remains the most venerated sanctuary in the city, where the

35 'The rhizome is alliance, uniquely alliance. The tree imposes the verb "to be", but the fabric of the rhizome is the conjunction, "and... and ... and..."'. Deleuze and Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus,* p. 25.

36 Deleuze and Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus*, p. 25.

miraculous liquefaction of San Gennaro's blood occurs. This compression chamber boasts not only San Gennaro's prodigious relics, but the fabulously wrought silver reliquaries of all its (competing) protector saints, martyred in diverse places and times and restituted through sanctification at different times (now present both on Heaven and earth). It might therefore be thought of as thwarting linear time and relationships with compressed time and place, with a sort of instantaneous circularity, with intensive time and place rather than with extensive time and place.

If we compare this reliquary chapel to the Chapel of S Francesco de Geronimo in the Gesù Nuovo, where the bones are aligned beneath the busts of their saintly owners, like a barracks — a visual taxonomy of sanctity (Fig. 9) or to the reliquaries of ebony and gilt copper by Gennaro Monte in the Treasury Chapel in the Certosa di San Martino, Naples (1691) (Fig. 10), where the reliquaries and bones are arrayed on each side of Ribera's beautiful *Pietà* altarpiece (1637), as if in jewelcases, immobile and fixed, part of a narrative of Christ's martyrdom, then the Treasury Chapel is striking in its treatment of the saints as living presences, not a peep-show of bones behind glass, but part of our world, mobile and fluid, animating not just the chapel, but out into the street during annual processions back to their church of provenance. Far from Stefano Maderno's St Cecilia (Fig. 3), which locates history and redemption in martyrdom, the Treasury Chapel in Naples looks ahead to the future, to redemption through *repeated* miracle. Hardly does it pause to consider death or loss, unlike the other reliquary chapels, here we see no bones.

Fig. 9. (Left) Wall reliquary display in the Chapel of S Francesco de Geronimo in the Gesù Nuovo, Naples. Photo: Helen Hills.
Fig. 10. (Right) Naples, Certosa di San Martino, Treasury Chapel: reliquaries of ebony and gilt copper by Gennaro Monte (1691), Jusepe de Ribera's Pietà (1637). Photo: Helen Hills.

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The silver reliquary busts themselves were modelled on that of San Gennaro, famously donated to Naples Cathedral by Charles II of Anjou in 1305 (Fig. 11). In these exported objects, such as Lorenzo Vaccaro's *St Mary of Egypt* — which belonged simultaneously to Neapolitan convents and churches and to the Treasury Chapel — nature, artifice, and the holy were combined and refracted (Fig. 12). Gilt silver assumes the place of flesh and skin, resplendent with the bones that it both conceals and stages. It is anticipation incarnate, the glory of the saint's body transfigured for eternity, reunited with its happy soul, on earth and in heaven.

Fig. 11. (Left) Reliquary bust of San Gennaro (St Januarius) famously donated to Naples Cathedral by Charles II of Anjou in 1305. Photo: Helen Hills.
Fig. 12. (Right) Unknown Neapolitan silversmith to design by Lorenzo Vaccaro, St Mary of Egypt, silver reliquary bust (1699), Treasury Chapel, Naples. Photo: Helen Hills.

In the re-liquefaction of San Gennaro's congealed blood, the miracle is seen, and seen to be seen. The Treasury Chapel is a striking visible testament to that seeing. Here the miraculous liquefaction of blood is less transcendental than transformative. Twice or thrice a year, spurred on by fervent prayer, worshippers became witnesses to his martyrdom. The severed head and spilled blood, made the miracle inside the chapel, and concentrated the saint's virtus amongst the thronged crowds, thus affirming the future.

The chapel did not represent the power of the Deputies or the power of the saints; it produced a capacity for being affected, a *puissance*. It did not contain something pre-existing elsewhere. Its impetus multiplied Naples' patron saints. Under the aegis of the city's Seggi (Naples' aristocratic political and administrative centres) and right under the nose of the Archbishop, indeed, in the cathedral itself, the chapel gathered together an

army of patron saints, martialling an unparalleled spiritual force on behalf of the people of Naples, to protect them from cataclysmic nature; from Vesuvius' eruptions to depredations of the plague.[37] One after another patron saints were promoted by rival religious orders and institutions. The convent of Santa Patrizia advanced St Patricia, the Theatines St Andrea Avellino.[38] They competed over which reliquary bust should occupy the best places in the chapel, whether a mere blessed could take precedence over a fully-blown saint, or whether precedence should depend simply on date of election as patron saint to the city. Meanwhile the Deputies sought to attract famous painters from outside Naples to decorate altarpieces and vaults, and the painters of Naples sought to deter them by threats and violence.[39] The chapel set new currents seering through Naples' already complex devotional practices and civic politics. And thrice a year the deputies, the archbishop and viceroy, aristocrats, and people of Naples gathered to witness the terrible and longed-for liquefaction of the blood of San Gennaro. The Chapel was not simply the setting for that astonishing event, nor did the miracle produce it or it the miracle; they mobilised, intensified, and circumscribed each other.

The citizens of Naples were brought together, even assumed a shared identity, through their worship of their protector saints, particularly San Gennaro. The investment produced the body (not the other way about). The architecture of the Treasury Chapel was not a vehicle for messages about sanctity in general or about San Gennaro in particular, rather it was a creative intensive event that produced its users (believers). Just as the bones become a relic through the reliquary, the reliquary chapel here produced San Gennaro's spiritual consequence.

Conclusion

I have not intended to produce a critique that claims to be a methodological examination in order to reject all approaches except for a single (correct) one. Rather, I hope to have contributed to the problematisation of our understanding of the relationship between architecture and holiness, while seeing religious architecture as necessarily a site of contestation — including while it was built throughout the seventeenth century — and as an object of interpretation today; a site whose meaning has not been closed down, and which is not unified, in spite of all the efforts, architectural and scholarly, to close it down and to unify it.

37 The march of patron saints in Naples is unparalleled. At the end of the sixteenth century Naples had seven patrons including Gennaro. There followed: 1605 Tomas Aquinas; 1625 Andrea Avellino and Patricia; 1626 Giacomo della Marca and Francesco di Paola; 1640 St Dominic; 1657 Francis Xavier; 1664 St Teresa of Avila; 1667 St Philip Neri; 1671 St Gaetano da Thiene; 1675 Gregory of Armenia and Nicola di Bari; 1688 St Michael Archangel; 1689 Chiara of Assisi; 1690 Peter Martyr, Maria Maddelena de' Pazzi and St Blaise; 1691 Francis of Assisi and Cecilia; 1695 Giovanni da Capestrano and Anthony Abbot; 1699 S Maria Egiziaca; 1705 Mary Magdalen; 1711 St Augustine, 1731 St Irene of Thessalonica.

38 For their rivalries, see Helen Hills, 'Nuns and Relics: Spiritual Authority in post-Tridentine southern Italy', in C. van Wyhe (ed.), *Female Monasticism in Pre-Industrial Europe* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2008).

39 On the history of the building and decoration of the Treasury Chapel, see A. Bellucci, *Memorie storiche ed artistiche del Tesoro nella cattedrale dal Secolo XVI al XVIII* (Naples: Antonio Iacuelli, 1915); F. Strazzullo, *La Cappella di San Gennaro nel Duomo di Napoli* (Naples: Istituto Grafico Editoriale Italiano, 1994).

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ISSN: 1755-068
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Two precepts, then. First, architecture must be thought of as beyond any patron's or architect's intention (even if that were ascertainable).[40] Second, style or form is not the external or accidental adornment of a message; it is the creation of affects from which speakers and messages are discerned. Style is not something that ornaments voice or content. Voice, meaning, or what a text says is at one with its style. Likewise, there is no message 'behind' architectural affect and becoming; any sense of a message or of an underlying meaning is an *effect* of its specific style.

Thus rather than think of the Tridentine church as a mere container for the well-attended sermon, we might instead, think of it as producing the crowds it housed so well. We might, for instance, think of the Treasury Chapel of San Gennaro in terms of its exceptionality, its intensification. We might think of the Chapel as generating its (increasing number of) protector saints, rather than simply housing their reliquaries. If we think of architecture, less as mimetic representation of preconceived 'spirituality' (liturgy, etc.), but as producing zones of intensity or pure 'affect', which can enhance the human power to become, then, rather than as the structuring of and container for Trent, its Decrees, and Catholic liturgy, architecture might be thought *affectively*. Might we think of architecture as presenting singular affects and percepts, freed from organising and purposive points-of-view? In and through spiritual intensity, we apprehend architecture's mobilisation. Architectural location, in spite of Tridentine ambitions and appearances, was never static. Multiple investments, different speeds and plural determinations, albeit drawn together at the same location, sabotaged stasis and coherence. It is, then, architecture itself that is desirable and affective; not a concealed belief or meaning behind it. Architecture is not the expression of meaning, but the production of sense, allowing new perceptions, new worlds.

Architecture makes a promise to spirituality and spirituality to architecture. Unlike promises we may make to each other, these promises can never be broken. But they can also never be fulfilled. Southern Baroque architecture seems to participate in a constant emotional storm in which architecture and ornament are wrested apart and driven together again, like torn and flapping banners, emblematic of the tension between immanence and transcendence. Architecture and decoration work together and challenge each other in the harsh light of their changing resolve. Concertedly architecture and decoration epitomise a state of emergency in the soul, the rule of the emotions.[41] This twisting turning architecture is not a polite representation of an underlying human norm, not an 'embodiment of lives, thought, or work' or of anything else already existing elsewhere, but the creation and exploration of new ways of perception, worshipping, and becoming.

[40] Some art historians persist in seeing the artist as key explanatory to all works. Interestingly, those who insist on 'agency' in the artist also tend to treat 'context' as explanation, and to limit admissible 'evidence' accordingly.

[41] cf. Walter Benjamin, *The Origin of German Tragic Drama (Ursprung des deutshen Trauerspiels)* trans. J. Osborne (London: Verso 1985), p. 74.

I am pleased to thank the British Academy for a Research Readership which greatly facilitated the research for and writing of this paper. My thanks also to Renata Tyszczuk and the anonymous readers at field for their comments and suggestions.

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ISSN: 1755-068
www.field-journal.org
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The Active Voice of Architecture

The Active Voice of Architecture: An Introduction to the Idea of Chance

Yeoryia Manolopoulou

In this text I hope to present a preliminary inquiry into the idea of chance in architecture and to begin a discussion on the theorisation of chance in the process of design. To a certain extent the institution of architecture is interested in making predictions — this is how chance enters in the process of design, as a creative play of probabilities. This play can be impulsive, systematic, active, or a combination of these — a number of examples from the arts give us critical ground to explore preferred ways of 'using' chance in design. But when designs are realised as built environments chance takes a forceful and unpredictable role: it becomes a synthesising function of space, time, and the on-lookers, constantly influencing the equilibrium of forces that constitutes experience. Buildings attempt to frame but sustain this equilibrium and within it negotiate architecture's defence against the real. This architecture, call it *architecture of chance*, is *all* architecture: it is the architecture of the moment, indeterminate, vulnerable to accidents, but constructively so; it gains from failures and imperfections, and accepts chance as an essential element of existence.

Unnoticed Beauty

Chance, in the form of coincidence and simultaneity, is inseparable from our experience of space and time. The activity around the dining table at a specific moment, the sound of the passing train, a bright reflection on the window, the sudden opening of the door, the coming of the evening storm and the rear garden's smell, all these orchestrate a spatiality that is based more on chance factors and relationships than on design. It is this modest simplicity of chance, fleeting and hardly noticeable or spoken about, that builds up architectural experience's magical complexity and everyday beauty. This beauty, I suggest, is what André Breton meant by 'the marvellous', beautiful reality made by chance.

The architecture of the moment, its calm or terror, requires subject-object relationships that architects can influence to only a limited degree. While inhabiting an architectural environment, chance and its greater realm of indeterminacy play crucial roles in influencing these relationships and in possibly reshaping the architects' initial work.

Chance may mean an event proceeding from an unknown cause and thus 'the equivalent of ignorance in which we find ourselves in relation to the true causes of events'.[1] But it may also mean the unforeseen effect of a known cause. Although we go about our everyday lives and to a certain extent produce space, with a view to fending off the unknown aspect of existence, we often note a furtive enjoyment related to the unpredictability of chance. Even modern societies, which believe in causality and the impossibility to fully predict the future, secretly enjoy oracles related to chance. Throughout history many cultures have seen chance as having a sacred and magical power. Greek mythology, for example, tells us how *Tuché*, the goddess of chance, is superior in her say about people's fates to that of all the other gods (even *Zeus*, the leader of the gods). But the civilisation most exclusively preoccupied with chance as central to the world's order is the Chinese. While the West accepts the role of chance primarily in opposition to causality, chance in China and most of the Far East is understood as an independent concept deeply embedded in life:

> What we call coincidence seems to be the chief concern of this peculiar [Chinese] mind, and what we worship as causality passes almost unnoticed. We must admit that there is something to be said for the immense importance of chance. An incalculable amount of human effort is directed at restricting the nuisance or danger represented by chance. Theoretical considerations of cause and effect often look pale and dusty in comparison to the practical results of chance.... The matter of interest seems to be the configuration formed by chance events in the moment of observation.... While the Western mind carefully sifts, weighs, selects, classifies, isolates, the Chinese picture of the moment encompasses everything down to the minutest nonsensical detail, because all of the ingredients make up the observed moment.[2]

[1] David Hume quoted in Harriett Ann Watts, *Chance: A Perspective on Dada* (Ann Arbor: UMI Research Press, 1980), p. 155.

[2] Carl Gustav Jung in Richard Wilhelm and Cary F. Baynes, *The I Ching or Book of Changes* (New Jersey: Bollingen Foundation & Princeton University Press, 1977), pp. xxii–xxiii.

The Chinese picture of the moment is a *chance image*. It encompasses all minuscule impressions of reality simultaneously present.[3] It anticipates 'the possible' and appreciates chance as a mediator for beauty and change.

Habit and Accident

For Marcel Duchamp the possible is an 'infra-thin': a passage between two states, a 'paper-thin separation' between two very similar conditions that happens in the interval of a second. He writes:

> The possible / is an infra-thin —...
>
> The possible implying / the becoming — the passage from / one to the other takes / place / in the infra thin. / allegory on 'forgetting'...
>
> Sameness / similarity ... / In time the same object is not the / same after a 1 second interval...
>
> The warmth of a seat (which has just / been left) is infra-thin...
>
> Subway gates — The people / who go through at the very moment /
>
> infra-thin...[4]

The infra-thin is an ethereal quality that characterises the thinnest possible slice of space — reaching sameness — and the shortest possible duration in time — reaching synchronicity. It exists between visibility and invisibility and emerges in tiny details that quickly escape our attention.

According to Henri Bergson we, involved in many similar daily actions, become 'conscious automata' and respond to our environment with 'reflex acts'. This kind of perception depends on memory, resemblance and familiarity. It is not conscious or specifically motivated; it is just automatic. We go down a staircase without thinking and guided by habit, for instance, because we have memories of doing this many times before. But habit protects us from the plethora of information that surrounds us and the confusing and indeterminable changes of our environment by making us inattentive.[5] Through protecting ourselves in this way, we are menaced by a sense of repetition and boredom. An accident can then act as an antidote to this vicious circle to disrupt our routines with novelty.

The human ability to design and produce ideas within different registers of thought is evidence of the operations of the infra-thin. However, the spatial register of the passing of the infra-thin cannot be easily grasped. Chance can rupture its passing to reveal a possibility for change. This is why it is important to architecture, as it is to any creative process.

3 For Jung the interdependence of events and observers is based on an *a priori* principle he calls 'synchronicity': the occurrence of *meaningful* coincidences in space and time, which he regards as an 'acausal connecting principle'. He writes: 'it seems [...] necessary to introduce, alongside space, time and causality, a category which not only enables us to understand synchronistic phenomena as a special class of natural events, but also takes the contingent partly as a universal factor existing from all eternity, and partly as the sum of countless individual acts of creation occurring in time.' See Jung, *Synchronicity: An Acausal Connecting Principle* (London: Ark, 1991), p. 143.

4 Marcel Duchamp, *Notes* (Paris: Centre National d'Art et de Culture Georges Pompidou, 1980), unpaginated.

5 For, 'to regain control of ourselves in the midst of the moving bodies, the circulation of their contours, the jumble of knots, the paths, the falls, the whirlpools, the confusion of velocities, we must have resource to our grand capacity of forgetting'. Paul Valéry quoted in Jonathan Crary, *Suspensions of Perception: Attention, Spectacle, and Modern Culture* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1999) p. 299. See also Henri Bergson, *Matter and Memory* (1896) (New York: Zone Books, 1988).

Design *In* and *As* Play

Nearly all our ordinary actions require an understanding of chance, the notion of probability and the ability to automatically estimate the likelihood of expected events. We know, for instance, there is a better chance to see a leaf falling if we stare at a tree for hours rather than for a second. But is such a strong and frequent intuition based on a gradual understanding of probability, acquired empirically, or is the concept of chance inborn? Jean Piaget and Bärbel Inhelder investigated whether the intuition of chance is as fundamental as, say, that of whole numbers. Through a number of experiments with chance (meaning here the interaction of independent causal series), they demonstrated that young children have no concept of chance.[6] This is because they have neither a concept of law nor a concept of design as an ordered operation. Design and chance are fundamentally interdependent ideas, which start emerging and evolving in one's consciousness after the age of seven.[7] The two ideas when woven together in play are especially attractive for adults. Neither intuition nor conscious logic can affect the result of the cast of a die but, though aware of this, we are often tempted to guess the result and bet on it. This pleasure perhaps reflects a desire to overthrow our gradually acquired logic and attachment to causality, at least temporarily, and return to that naïve age of ignorance when we understood neither design nor chance. This principle of pleasure in coupling design and chance is necessary in all creativity.

Duchamp, who was deeply interested in the interaction of skill and chance, makes the following remarks about the pleasure of playing chess:

> The aesthetic pattern that develops on the chessboard seemingly has no visual aesthetic value and is similar to a sheet of music, which can be played over and over. Beauty in chess is much closer to the beauty of poetry; the chess pieces are the alphabet that shape the thoughts; and although these thoughts form a visual pattern on the chessboard, they express beauty in the abstract, like a poem. I really believe that every chess player experiences a mixture of two aesthetic pleasures; first the abstract image, which is closely related to the poetic idea in writing, and then the sensual pleasure involved in the ideographic representation of that image on the chessboards. Based on my own close contact with artists and chess players, I have come to the personal conclusion that although not all artists are chess players, all chess players are indeed artists.[8]

Playing chess means formulating a strategy, a number of moves, which although dependent upon the rules of the game and the opponent's performance are also independent actions with particular objectives. While the game unfolds as a complex field of relationships and movements,

6 The definition of chance as the interaction of independent causal series is given by the mathematician and economist Antoine-Augustin Cournot (1801–77).

7 Piaget and Inhelder explain that four-to-seven year olds make decisions about future occurrences in an emotional manner not based on probabilistic considerations and fail to differentiate between the possible and the necessary. Seven-to-eleven year olds discover the existence of chance but only through its antithesis to tangible operations of organisation and order they can now perform. They also understand the irreversibility of chance configurations. Finally, at eleven or twelve years children can deal both with tangible and imagined operations. In this way they can construct a synthesis between the mechanisms of chance and of operations, and gradually organise better their judgement of probability. See Jean Piaget and Bärbel Inhelder, *The Origin of the Idea of Chance in Children* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1975).

8 Duchamp quoted in Kornelia von Berswordt-Wallrabe (ed.), *Marcel Duchamp Respirateur* (Schwerin: Staatliches Museum Schwerin, 1999), p. 22.

numerous possible patterns are shaped mentally and abstractly projected onto the chessboard. The sophisticated 'alphabet' of chess provokes inspiration but always within a framework of causality in which the game unravels. Naturally, each game is unique. The process can be paralleled with the creative freedoms and limitations involved in the course of architectural design. The aesthetic pleasure of coupling chance and skill in play can be similar to the aesthetic pleasure involved in architectural drawing and making, at least when the design process is both imaginative and reflective.

Impulsive Chance

The interplay of necessity and chance has been a principal concern in the creative consciousness of the world throughout history. But, contrary to philosophy, science, and the arts, architecture has not sufficiently interrogated the idea of chance in its own production. Architecture's dominant theories and practices have hardly pursued, at least not openly, the thought that chance may be a positive agent in the different stages of architecture, from design conception to construction and use. Is this partly because the actions of chance question the architect's authorial control? Is it also because they challenge one of architecture's elementary purposes to defend itself against the contingencies of physical reality? After all most buildings try to offer protection against the environment and construct an order within its chaotic and unpredictable facets. Architecture's resistance to chance is however contested by a number of radical approaches in the arts. The pressures on architects are different from those on artists but it is worth examining how others have engaged with chance and what they can possibly offer to architects and vice versa. As I will show it is also important to realise that although artists, more often than architects, have been consciously drawn to chance, architecture's troubled relationship with chance is not unknown in the arts.

Dada's employment of chance, for example, was linked to an intense opposition to art as a practice based on formal and rational values. Its reliance on chance was part of a greater anti-artistic perspective, a general attack on rationality, which frequently became an overpowering concern. Gradually chance-related operations became prescribed and unsatisfactory to many Dada artists. Richter notes:

> We were all fated to live with the paradoxical necessity of entrusting ourselves to chance while at the same time remembering that we were conscious beings working towards conscious goals. This contradiction between rational and irrational opened a bottomless pit over which we had to walk. There was no turning back; gradually this became clear to each of us in his own secret way.[9]

9 Hans Richter, *DADA: Art and Anti-Art* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1965), p. 61.

Finally, Dada realised the relationship between design and chance was more complex: '... the realisation that reason and anti-reason, sense and nonsense, design and chance, consciousness and unconsciousness, belong together as necessary parts of a whole — this was the central message of Dada.'[10]

[10] Ibid., p. 64.

The surrealists cultivated the use of chance differently from Dada. They saw the outcome of their well-celebrated 'automatism' as a point of departure for further elaboration, something that subsequently required skilful work. Joan Miró, for instance, would be stimulated to paint through a mistake or an accidental, which for others was an insignificant detail. He called this a 'shock': 'I begin my pictures under the effect of a shock I feel that makes me escape reality. The cause of this shock can be a little thread out of the canvas, a drop of water falling, that fingerprint I've left on the brilliant surface of the table.'[11]

[11] Joan Miró quoted in J. H. Matthews, *The Imagery of Surrealism* (New York: Syracuse University Press, 1977), p. 146.

It is clear that Freud's investigations of the unconscious workings of the mind and the meanings he assigned to symptoms and such everyday phenomena as mistakes, jokes, dreams or slips of the tongue, greatly influenced the artistic modes of the first part of the twentieth century. Freud's thought encouraged chance to be seen as *impulsive*: an intuitive mechanism of creativity that could 'unlock' unconscious desire to escape the Cartesian thought. This kind of impulsive chance, artists thought, could assist plunges into indeterminacy, offering momentary glimpses of an a-causal world that transcends existing knowledge. On the other hand scientific theories of the period related to new conceptions of time, probability, and the principle of uncertainty pointed to *systematic* notions of chance.

Active Chance

A fascinating range of theories and practices of chance can be traced in the humanities as well as the social and natural sciences of the twentieth century, from literature and music to economics and biology. The history of this development and its full implication in our area under discussion is too big to review within the limits of this paper. But it is useful to isolate another example: the contrasting position to Surrealism and Dada as expressed by the Situationist International.

The Situationist International were suspicious of the unconscious as a creative source and disputed the surrealists' absolute fidelity to it. 'We know that the unconscious imagination is poor, that automatic writing is monotonous, and that the whole genre of ostentatious surrealist "weirdness" has ceased to be very surprising', Guy Debord writes.[12] By distrusting the surrealists' search for the unconscious, the Situationist International also distrusted the spontaneous use of chance.[13]

[12] Guy Debord in his 'Report on the Construction of Situations', in Ken Knabb (ed.), *Situationist International Anthology* (Berkeley: Bureau of Public Secrets, 1995), p. 19.

[13] Debord insists: 'the discovery of the unconscious was a surprise, an innovation, not a law of future surprises and innovations. Freud had also ended up discovering this when he wrote, "Everything conscious wears out. What is unconscious remains unaltered. But once it is set loose, does it fall into ruins in its turn?"' Ibid., p. 19.

However, chance was a significant factor in their practice of *dérive*. The constantly changing psychogeographical relief of the city and its diverse microclimates and centres of attraction made the *dérive* a practice of unpredictable wandering. But Debord hurries to indicate a danger:

> [...] the action of chance is naturally conservative and in a new setting tends to reduce everything to an alternation between a limited number of variants, and to habit. Progress is nothing other than breaking through a field where chance holds sway by creating new conditions more favourable to our purposes [...] The first psychogeographical attractions discovered run the risk of fixating the dériving individual or group around new habitual axes, to which they will constantly be drawn back.[14]

[14] Debord, 'Theory of the *Dérive*', *Situationist International Anthology* , p. 51.

Hermetic processes which become strictly methodical are likely to exclude pure chance. Pure chance has to embrace indeterminacy and the possibility of change. It has to be *active*, in other words to operate dynamically in time.

Through the experience of the *dérive* the Situationist International aimed to arrive at objective and determinate conclusions about the city that could be utilised to inspire a new consciousness about urbanism and about architecture. Yet the *dérive* was not a determinate act in itself and did not exclude chance. Accidental rendezvous and conversations with unknown passers-by, weather contingencies, 'vague terrains' of leftover spaces, hidden back streets layered overtime, and 'emotional disorientings', all led to discoveries of unforeseen 'unities of ambiance'. These discoveries were achieved by enabling two types of chance: the impulsive chance of the group or individual (based on hidden unconscious forces) and a kind of *active* chance operating through time within the complex forces of the city. Whether or not the Situationist International admitted it, the *dérive* was a positive practice of employing chance, arising collectively and in time as an expansive indeterminate drawing of action on the surface of the city.

If chance is always present in our experience of the city and of architectural artefacts, it then comes as a surprise that architects have not sufficiently considered it during the design process. The above examples are only a selection from the many artistic, political and scientific movements of the twentieth century that engaged with chance.[15] The diversity of the approaches and, at times, their contradictory philosophical positions can offer architects valuable ground for critical reflection.

[15] For a related discussion directly linked with the process of design see Yeoryia Manolopoulou, 'Drawing on Chance: *Drafting Pier 40'*, *Journal of Architecture*, 11(3) (2006): 303–314.

Pseudo-indeterminacy

Bernard Tschumi has based many of his ideas in cinematic montage and has defined architecture as 'making room for the event'. His proposals are relevant to our discussion of chance and indeterminacy as he argues for an 'architecture of event' and an 'architecture of disjunction' where space, movement, action and event can permeate each other. However, in his *Manhattan Transcripts* (1981) the trio of movement, action and event is manifested as a translation of bodily movement into fixed curved walls and corridors. When fluid action is translated to solidified concrete form, Tschumi achieves not an open space, an architecture of event and action, but a restricted space, an architecture of control.

In his built project of Le Fresnoy, the National Studio for Contemporary Arts in Tourcoing (1997), Tschumi attempts to offer an ambiguous space between the new large roof and the lower building it shadows. The large roof acts as a hangar offering a void between itself and the rest of the building, which is left undetermined and in a sense useless. Tschumi explains: 'what interested us most was the space generated between the logic of the new roof (which made it all possible) and the logic of what was underneath: an in-between, a place of the unexpected where unprogrammed events might occur, events that are not part of the curriculum.'[16] In Le Fresnoy the significance, according to Tschumi, lies in the in-between, the unexpected. But Tschumi's emphasis on the indeterminate possibilities of Le Fresnoy is false. The project is characterised by *pseudo-indeterminacy*: it leaves some space for unprogrammed events but, I would argue, not necessarily more than other buildings.

In modernist architectural discourse indeterminacy in buildings is usually discussed in terms of flexibility, a term associated with function and efficiency. A flexible building should allow change. This may be done by redundancy, the absence of determined content or use. But useless and empty spaces are no more vulnerable to chance than ones with a predetermined use. A building may also provide flexibility by technical means, a system for rearranging components, say.[17] But by designing a building as flexible in mechanical terms, the architect defines how the building can change, trying rather to control its appearance and use.

Indeterminacy in architecture does not just mean flexibility. Flexible and inflexible buildings can equally, although differently, provoke doubt and possibilities for the unexpected. Unpredictable chance can affect all types

16 Bernard Tschumi, *Event-Cities (Praxis)* (Cambridge MA: MIT Press, 1994), p. 399.

17 See, for example, Cedric Price's idea of 'free space'. For his Generator project Price writes: 'a "menu" of items caters for individual and group demands for space, control, containment and delight.' Quoted in Stanley Mathews, *From Agit-Prop to Free Space: The Architecture of Cedric Price* (London: Black Dog Publishing, 2007), p. 245.

of building, whether flexible or not, functional or not. There is no definite boundary where design ends and chance takes over.

Interrogating the Real

Our perceptual experience cannot claim objectivity and certainty; it involves instead a great range of indeterminacy. Jacques Lacan's dialectic of the eye and gaze shows that psychologically subject and object are not absolutely distinct. A sense of contact between subject and object on the screen of representations affects perceptual experience in ways that cannot be determined.[18] Whether the unconscious is seen as a subjective mechanism in Lacan's terms or a collective one in C.G. Jung's terms, a mistake, dream or accident, ruptures one's habits; it causes disturbance, a 'noise' in the field of experience. Simultaneously, it brings into light a glimpse of something initially invisible.

Accidents operate beyond the realm of representations: they cannot be forecasted or drawn. Their presence in the architectural process should be particularly welcomed because it brings to the front an element of the real. In his book on photography, *Camera Lucida*, Roland Barthes defines a relevant term, the 'punctum'. Closer than the Lacanian gaze to the accident, it is 'this element which rises from the scene, shoots out of it like an arrow, and pierces me'.[19] The 'punctum' is a 'sting, speck, cut, little hole — and also a cast of the dice. A photograph's 'punctum' is that accident which pricks me (but also bruises me, is poignant to me)'.[20] The 'punctum' is the effect of what the Greeks call *tuché*, which Lacan translates as 'the encounter with the real'.[21] *Tuché* is an aspect of reality that the spectators are not aware of until they encounter a rupture in their representational field. The rupture comes unexpectedly and interrupts the norm of one's perception. Its location is confusing but it has the potential to expand and affect the meaning of the whole. Although causality can explain its presence, from the spectator's viewpoint the 'punctum' is an addition to the picture that is offered as if by chance. As a result of chance, not design, the 'punctum' is not determined by morality or aesthetics.

Architecture is being shaped by planned and unplanned actions, logic and chance. But what kind of architectural ideas does the acceptance of chance untangle? What kind of practices does it invite? The design tools we choose are not innocent as they imply different kinds and degrees of control. Which working tactics can help us achieve a positive distance from the expected for revelation to emerge? An engagement with chance in the design process might mean the use of impulsive or systematic processes, which remind us of experimental techniques used by avant-garde writers

[18] At a sub-atomic level, events are impossible to determine except on a statistical basis. Werner Heisenberg's principle of indeterminacy, the 'uncertainty principle', shows that 'the act of observing a physical process modifies the outcome of the event, so that prediction is rendered impossible by the observer's unavoidable intervention'. Quoted in Watts, *Chance: A Perspective on Dada*, p. 155. By analogy, we can hypothesise that any act of observing can influence the observation whatever the scale of the event. The process of perceiving a building can affect the mental image and meaning of the building and, thus, the way in which it 'lives'.

[19] Roland Barthes, *Camera Lucida: Reflections on Photography* (London: Vintage, 2000), p. 26.

[20] Barthes, *Camera Lucida*, p. 27.

[21] Jacques Lacan, *The Four Fundamental Concepts of Psycho-Analysis* (London: Vintage, 1998) p. 53. Lacan bases his seminar 'Tuché and Automaton' on Aristotle who links the function of the cause with the notions of tuché and automaton. See Lacan, *Four Fundamental Concepts*, pp. 53–64.

or musicians such as Stéphané Mallarmé, Iannis Xenakis or John Cage.[22] But an engagement with chance might also mean the opposite: acknowledging the role of chance in the experience of the users of architecture but rejecting its function as a design tool. In the second case the design process would aim to generate a simple architectural framework where chance can be lived, felt and celebrated. In any event a truly creative engagement with chance would be able to challenge deterministic approaches to design, functionalism, taste and authorship.

The history of architectural design is dependent on the parallel history and evolution of our attitude to indeterminacy and chance. It is time to write an account of the evolution of the idea of chance from the early avant-garde scenes of fine art, design, and performance of the twentieth century, to the current condition of virtual and mixed realities.[23] Such an account would be fascinating for architecture, design culture, and the broader histories and theories of creativity. It would highlight how architecture has ignored chance or has engaged with it in hesitant and unspoken manners, sometimes even with guilt. We can uncover different conceptions of chance in the work of Cedric Price, Bernard Tschumi, Rem Koolhaas, and Coop Himmelblau, and less successfully in the work of Peter Eisenman, Daniel Libeskind and Frank Gehry, for example. These works offer a limited and not always a positive account on the subject, yet a good foundation.

There is almost no published literature on the subject of chance in architecture. This is why I have deliberately given many heterogeneous references, mainly outside architecture. I consider them crucial if we are to take a holistic approach to the subject. These sources of course require further analysis and interpretation. So the purpose of this paper is foundational: to begin a conversation about the principles, operations and formations of chance and ask if and how architectural practice might theorise chance. Beauty, play, impulse, and the encounter with the real are key issues I have pointed to. But, if this introduction aims at something, it is a definition of architecture as an embracing agent of the indeterminate. To a certain extent the institution of architecture is interested in making predictions — this is how chance enters in the process of architectural design, as a play of probabilities. But when designs are realised as built environments chance takes an even stronger role: it becomes a synthesising function of space, time, and the on-looker, constantly influencing the complex equilibrium of forces that constitute experience. Architecture is the practice of sustaining this equilibrium: confronting indeterminacy, appreciating and at times purposefully enabling the performance of chance rather than trying to rule it out. This architecture, call it *architecture of chance,* is *all* architecture: it is the architecture of the moment, vulnerable, but constructively so, to accidents; it gains from

22 Contemporary aleatory practices in the performing arts can perhaps give further inspiration as they suggest time-based and interactive operations.

23 Significant research on the area under discussion can be found in my doctoral thesis Yeoryia Manolopoulou, *Drawing on Chance: Perception, Design, and Indeterminacy* (PhD thesis, UCL, 2003).

failures and imperfections, and accepts chance as an essential part of existence. Chance is the only real and radical voice architecture has. We should nurture it.

My warmest thanks to Dr Victoria Watson who made critical suggestions during the writing of this piece.

ISSN: 1755-068
www.field-journal.org
vol.1 (1)
Trading Indeterminacy — Informal Markets in Europe

Trading Indeterminacy – Informal Markets in Europe

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Informal markets generate sites of counter-globalisation based on a deterritorialisation of cultures. Many of these markets are hubs of migratory routes whose idiosyncratic complexity reflects the tension between traditional economies, black markets and the new conditions of deregulated and liberalised capital markets. The dynamics of these sites highlight the network character of the radicalised and deregulated flows of people, capital and goods worldwide. One of the effects this network phenomenon creates is an increased transnationalisation and hybridisation of cultural claims and expressions. In view of growing cultural homogenisation, this brings to the fore one of the most potent traits of informal markets: the sprawl of a myriad of indeterminate parallel worlds existing next to each other or literally within the same place. Along a set of case studies carried out by the EU funded research project, *Networked Cultures* (www.networkedcultures.org), this text looks at three different informal markets as micro-sites of paradoxical and indeterminate cultural production: Izmailovo Market Moscow, Istanbul Topkapi and Arizona Market BrČko (BaH).

A striking facet of the many contradictions produced by the global economic system is the resurgence of markets as prime sites of struggle relating to questions of governance and self-governance. Markets have turned into a stage upon which battles over existing societal order and alternative forms of organisation are smouldering. The notion 'informal market' is commonly used as an umbrella term to describe scattered phenomena of trade whose origins and spatial materialisations are of varied character, while having more or less the same political and historical context. Most often these globally distributed nodes of the informal economy are an effect of political upheaval, global economic deregulation, migratory movements and new labour situations. These days they emerge in periods of transition, between omnipotent government control and globally oriented neoliberal societies, in which the state's role is confined to optimising 'informal' arrangements. Hand in hand with the dissolution of the Soviet Union in the early 1990s, new nodes of exchange have sprung up in previously peripheral regions of Europe. These spots have turned into transient agglomerations of thriving informal trade, bringing different cultures together along the new axes of commercial gravitation. This development accounts for an abundance of uncontrolled interactions, indeterminate spaces and eclectic imageries in different pockets of Europe. From the improvised shanties of post-war economies, such as street traders and kiosks, which provide basic supply in derelict urban areas, to the widely ramified infrastructures of Eastern Europe's shuttle trade, informal markets have become prime sites for economies of survival to impinge upon contemporary forms of spatial organisation. Driven by the new imperative of social mobility and the undertow of expanding transnational spaces, these sites have evolved into novel and extreme material configurations. Among the best known European markets of this kind are Arizona Market in the Northeast of Bosnia-Herzegovina, Izmailovo Market in Moscow, Jarmark Europa in Warsaw's Dziesieiolecie stadium and the so called 'suitcase trade' between the Balkans and the Caucasus with its Istanbul base Laleli. They contribute to a proliferation of transitory spaces in which different cultures engage in a variety of shadow plays alongside the homogenising forces of globalisation, and in doing so, have become a vital source for architects, artists and theorists to study the potential of accelerated spatial appropriation and self-organisation.

Many examples could be given. There is the work of the longstanding Lagos project by Rem Koolhaas and its intimate engagement with the city's informal economies.[1] This project probes the effects of growth in the self-regulating organism of Lagos' Alaba Market, in the spontaneously emerging links between transport and informal trade, and in the many ingenious inventions which help organise everyday life in a seemingly

[1] Rem Koolhaas, Lagos Wide & Close: An Interactive Journey into an Exploding City, DVD and booklet (Amsterdam: Submarine, 2005).

dysfunctional mega city.[2] Another case would be Ursula Biemann's video geographies: works that bare highly complex topological relations by portraying the tactics and disguises of smugglers in the Spanish-Moroccan border region, or by documenting the geo-strategic rivalries and representational politics around the trans-Caucasian oil pipelines and through investigating the economy of Mediterranean migration. What emerges through these works are relations which complicate the clear distinction between formality and informality, between inside and outside in dealing with material and symbolic goods.[3] Using maps and diagrams of the trajectories which link global sex work, informal economies, self-organisation and migration, these relations are further explored in Tadej Pogačars project *CODE:RED*. Its support in the formation of communication networks for informal economic actors, instigates an uncontrollable space of dialogue whose geometry is both mobile and affected by the encounters between its users. This is also true of the street kitchens of Atelier d'Architecture Autogèrèe or Osservatorio Nomade which engaged a plethora of people in an unregulated space of communication and collaboration. The formation of open communications and infrastructures also plays an important role in Azra Akšamija's proposals to make Arizona Market, in the south-east European BrČko District, sustainable by means of what she calls *Provocateur Poles*: poles furnished with complex ICT infrastructure, which would be available to all market users free of charge. Or, the 9th Baltic Triennial *Black Market Worlds* (2005), which scoured the potentials of grey economies stretching between Vilnius and London: an exhibition that considered black markets less as its subject than as an organising principle for practices and systems, in which moments of social exchange are brought into being through opaque operations.[4]

This list of experimental explorations of informal economies could be extended with many more examples. Each of these projects engages singular transgressions and violations against existing spatial arrangements, and produces a set of openings in the matrix of economic inclusions and exclusions, hubs and peripheries. What is common to all these endeavours is the question of how to organise a space, which has neither centre nor specific end; a space that is neither characterised in relation to a central authority nor through programmed identities and strict objectives. What is at stake here is a complex and transient spatiality, which resists the usual analytical tools suitable for static associations and formalised institutions. A possible way of incorporating this challenge into our research strategies is to look at the dynamics emerging from the contact of formal and informal urban structures; to look at the 'impure', 'contaminated' and 'situated' networks effected by the coming together of formal and informal urban forces. How do the formal and the informal

2 Rem Koolhaas and Edgar Cleijne, *Lagos: How It Works* (Baden: Lars Müller Publishers, 2007).

3 Ursula Biemann and Brian Holmes (eds.), *The Mahgreb Connection: Movements of Life Across North Africa* (Barcelona: Actar, 2007).

4 Sofia Hernández et al. (eds.), *The Black Box: BMW* (Black Market Worlds), 9th Baltic Triennial Vilnius/London (Frankfurt am Main: Revolver, 2005).

engage with one another? What kind of cultural encounters does this constellation provoke? What leads us to believe that these encounters produce innovative spatial effects that reach beyond the immediate situation? And how can we negotiate these glimmers of hope with the more unfortunate aspects of the realities of informal markets?

Relational Spaces

Informal markets are spaces of transition in one way or another. For one thing they act as places of transient inhabitation, for another, they are themselves seen as mere 'boundary effects'; as adaptors between deregulated conditions and controlled order. The shortcoming of such thinking is that it presents transition as a linear process whose endpoint is a foregone conclusion. It also presupposes the existence of a central plan governing the slightest manipulation, as well as the presence of a regulatory scheme that has the power to cover the totality of progress. The notion of transition that we prefer in our own deliberations, is more connected to a slide into a condition as yet unknown, whose particular spatial character reveals itself slowly.[5] This transition is a-physical in the first instance, but generates an accelerated space saturated with an abundance of conflicting signs and practices of signification. In this sense, transition characterises indeterminate sites prone to a constant reshuffling and reinvention of subjectivities, and informal markets become unsurfaced places, hidden in the matrix of territorial and ideological belongings of individuals and cultures. They form trajectories in which cultures begin to interact with the forces of globalisation beyond the assigned sites of encounter. The underbelly of the liberalised capital market performs a shadow play, whose relation to the homogenising force of globalisation, is most of all characterised by a paradoxical production of micro sites of cultural heterogeneity. Here, the cultural paradoxes of globalisation make themselves manifest conspicuously; the traditions of spatial appropriation and self-organisation of markets are intimately tangled up with the dynamics of neoliberal globalisation, in the shape of accelerated network formation, movements of capital, people and goods, transterritorial spatial production and cross-cultural experience.

Looking at these sites, we cannot condone the convenient co-optation of survival strategies of the global South by neoliberal myths that equate informality with an nebulous expression of free individuality. Mobile and transient accumulation seem to be as much a constituent mechanism of black market worlds as of efficient capital markets. Elmar Altvater and Brigitte Mahnkopf have argued a certain structural alliance

[5] S. Boeri, 'Eclectic Atlases', in Multiplicity (ed.), *USE: Uncertain States of Europe* (Milan: Skira, 2003), p. 434.

behind this kind of ephemeral accumulation, describing informality as a 'shock absorber of globalisation' beyond the means of the welfare state. It ought to be located through structural changes in the interaction between global, national and local economy following the requirements of global competition.[6] Indeed, this complex entanglement of neoliberal technologies of government and forms of self-organisation, alongside the incorporation of a market mentality into the organisation of creative processes and critical practices,[7] has led to an unfortunate point of departure in approaching the question of how we can organise cultural experience that creates a space for expressions whose form is yet to come.

In Saskia Sassen's sceptical view, informal markets are the low-cost equivalent of global deregulation, which act first and foremost as modes of incorporation into the advanced urban economies. The only difference they make, is that at the bottom of the system all risks and costs are to be taken over by the actors themselves. Her main concern is that 'the growing inequalities in earnings and in the profit-making capabilities of different sectors in the urban economy [...] are integral conditions in the current phase of advanced capitalism (and not) conditions imported from less-developed countries via migration.'[8] In dismissing postmodern myths of informality, Sassen strikes the same chord as Mike Davis in his reflections on the informal sector in *Planet of Slums* (2006): From hidden forms of exploitation and fanatic obsessions with quasi-magical forms of wealth appropriation (gambling, pyramid schemes, etc.) right through to the decrease of social capital effected by growing competition within the informal sector, Davis instances all the epistemological fallacies of those who follow Hernando de Soto's popular economic model of an 'invisible revolution' of informal capital.[9] Instead of delivering on the promised upward mobility in the unprotected informal sector, through means such as micro credits for micro-entrepreneurs and land titling for urban squatters, the booming informal sector has been paralleled by increased ethno-religious separation, exploitation of the poor and sectarian violence in the 1980s. Davis' idea of a counteroffensive against neoliberal informality consists in strengthening union structures and radical political parties as well as in renewing bonds of worldwide solidarity to refuse 'Informal survivalism as the new primary mode of livelihood'.[10]

This wealth of arguments and all its supporting statistics, maps and diagrams seem to suggest a condemnation of informality, a rejection which rests upon well documented dynamics of poverty, exploitation and oppression. The role played by global power has been clearly positioned and seems to be far too immovable to consider the emergence of unforeseen alternative social formations. But what if we, for a moment,

6 E. Altvater and B. Mahnkopf, 'Die Informalisierung des urbanen Raums', in J. Becker et al. (eds.), *Learning from* - Städte von Welt, Phantasmen der Zivilgesellschaft, informelle Organisation* (Berlin: NGBK, 2003), pp. 24-25.

7 Karl Polanyi, 'Our Obsolete Market Mentality: Civilization must find a New Thought Pattern', *Commentary* (3) (1947): 109-117, reprinted in G. Dalton (ed.), *Primitive, Archaic and Modern Economies: Essays of Karl Polanyi* (New York: Doubleday Anchor, 1968).

8 S. Sassen, 'Why Cities Matter', in La Biennale di Venezia (eds.) *Cities, Architecture and Society* I (Venice: Marsilio Editori, 2006), pp. 47-48.

9 Mike Davis, *Planet of Slums* (London: Verso, 2006), pp. 178-185.

10 Ibid., p. 178.

tried to suspend the monolithic gravity of these logics. Wouldn't we notice a whole array of shortcomings in the apparatus of global economic control, shortcomings that offer a space for social experience outside the boundaries of its exercise of power? What if beyond the boundaries begotten by the economic system we became aware of a political space of boundaries that is not fully governed by economic agency and thus offers a possibility to break up the dominance of calculative norms. An arena for all sorts of social and cultural encounters would emerge. Oblivious to what ought to be done under the rule of the capitalist economy, there are minor changes occurring locally through unexpected constellations of actors and spontaneously co-ordinated conduct. These changes may inflict a set of irregularities and interruptions both on determinate movements in space and movements of the mind. Looking away from the clichéd notions of slum culture and economic chaos, social mobility and transitional society, we hope to stir up other notions, expressions, images and experiences, which throw some light upon how local co-ordination takes place in sites of informally organised trade, and how the virtue of transformation cannot be appropriated and circulated as an analogy of belongings and goods.

In his lectures at the Collège de France (1975-76) Foucault has pointed at the circulation of power, arguing that people are never the inert target of power. While power is exercised through networks, individuals are always its relays. Power passes through individuals and can thus be seized and deflected.[11] These are the terms that we would borrow to abandon the usual interrogations structured by questions around the true nature of informal markets and their ultimate aims. Instead, we are interested in what they help to enable on another level. The question we direct at informal markets is not oriented at a level of intentions. It is oriented at the point where transformation takes place, effected by the coming together of informal market realities and their fields of application: the place where they temporarily settle, solidify and provide a basis for widening the field of social perception and behaviour. We are interested in how we can produce an alternative engagement with the spontaneously emerging spaces of informal market activity and its material and visual peculiarities, in order to stimulate a logic of resistance, which not only touches at the level of concrete experience but also the horizon and modalities in charge of organising these experiences.

There are several temptations that need to be shuffled aside within this engagement: an alleged specificity of trading places; a cartography of places geographically predestined for such activities; a comprehensive typology of the dynamics of networks or informal markets or a typology of places where informal trade takes place. All these temptations tend to

[11] Michel Foucault, *Society Must Be Defended: Lectures at the Collège de France 1975-76* (London: Penguin, 2004), p. 29.

re-inscribe and stabilise the indeterminate turmoil of informal markets within established categories of knowledge, instead of challenging the categories around which we have been told to conceptualise the relationship between subjectivities and places. If we refer to the local as the sphere of illicit trade, then that is because it matches the perspective from which the many transient flows, the movements of aggregation and the dispersal characteristic of informal trade are thought. And it is also the place in which visual clues, spontaneous scenes, physical mutations and inconsistencies begin to make themselves felt early on. They all play off each other in miniscule movements, and provide an indication of the self-creating flow of meaning that fashions subjects and spaces. Full of indeterminate relationalities and idiosyncratic encounters, these places are at the same time, however, to be seen in an enlarged way, as trans-local sites formed by flows of intensities, pressing ahead in a multitude of combinations.

Istanbul Topkapi: Trading among ruins

In 2005 a bustling site of high-contrast undertakings emerged in Istanbul's central district of Topkapi: the process of rapid urban transformation constituting of the strong political gestures of reconstructing the Byzantine city walls and building the tracks of a state-of-the-art low-floor tram, was suddenly faced with kilometres of informal trafficking. This spontaneous black market took place just outside the gates of the historic city, along the construction sites of the high-capacity interchange between Topkapi Edirnekapi Caddesi and the eight lane Londra Asfalti. Squeezed in between newly delivered and derelict building material, busy freeways and almost impassable heaps of crushed stone, tens of thousands of people formed an endlessly meandering and pulsating structure.

The lower end of this formation is marked by the Metro station Ulubatli, the upper end by Cevizlibag, a new stop along the ultra-modern tram line, which runs from Zeytinburnu past the Grand Bazaar (Kapali Çarsi) to the old centre of the city and across Galata bridge up to the Bosphorus. The merchandise consists of heaps of second-hand goods and clothes laid out on the bare ground blending in with new TV sets, refrigerators, computers and pieces of furniture. In stark contrast to this 'wild' and bustling accumulation, the whole place is bordered with an immaculate but deserted layout of formal green, whose ghostly abandonment is amplified by the garish colour of the artificially irrigated lawn. In 1852 Théophile Gautier wrote about this stretch along the city walls:

> It is difficult to believe there is a living city behind these dead ramparts! I do not believe there exists anywhere on earth [a thing] more austere and melancholy than this road, which runs for more than three miles between ruins on the one hand and a cemetery on the other.[12]

[12] Orhan Pamuk, *Istanbul: Memories and the City* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2005), p. 231.

The informal market repeats the archaic model of the city's organic emergence at the intersection of traffic routes and trading places. In the case of Topkapi, however, trade flourishes in the shadow of official urban planning, transforming the latter into a vehicle of informality. The wide spread impact arising from this informal economy is not confined to the market's own dynamics, though. It is amplified by a series of secondary services linked to it: shuttle buses, street kitchens, intermediaries, suppliers, vendors and occasional street performers. It is through this bizarre entanglement of modern transport systems, symbolic sites of national renaissance and short-lived subsistence economies, through the complexities of legal work, third economies and informal trade, that this temporary market accounts for more than just an incidental set of happenings. Certainly, the mutual permeability of formal and informal structures, the aberrant utilisations of urban space and the acceleration of spontaneous cultural eruptions, designate the emergence of new urban networks, trajectories and hierarchies.

Fig. 1. *Informal Market Istanbul Topkapi.* Photos: Peter Mörtenböck & Helge Mooshammer, 2005.

In summer 2005 the informal market in Topkapi had grown to an agitated swarm-like shape more than two kilometres long; thousands of people wandering around small piles laid on dusty sand, many of the latter barely distinguishable from disposed waste, vanishing among existing debris. What black markets like Topkapi render visible is the increasing pace with which vast networks of self-organised economies enter, inhabit and withdraw themselves from unsettled territories, without being mitigated or isolated from the politics of formally organised space. There are neither recognisable borders nor consistent frameworks on whose grounds an

exchange between systems would take place. We live, as Laclau has suggested, as bricoleurs in a world of incomplete systems, whose rules we co-produce and revise by constantly retracing them.[13] Flagging down a mini-bus at Topkapi market, we don't know if it will pull up, until we have actually boarded.

[13] Ernesto Laclau, *Emancipation(s)* (London and New York: Verso, 1996), pp. 79-82.

Parallel economies: Izmailovo Market Moscow

Izmailovo is the largest open market in Europe, its foot print three times larger than the Moscow Kremlin. More than 100,000 workers, traders and buyers frequent the location on a busy weekend. The former site of the historic Izmailovo village and the Royal Estate, 15 kilometres east of the Kremlin, Izmailovo served as one of the main venues to host the XXII Olympic Games in 1980. The Olympic event facilitated the regeneration of the 1930s 'Stalinets' stadium at Izmailovo, the construction of a new all-purpose sports hall for the weightlifting tournaments and, on the southern fringes of today's market area close to the metro station Partisanskaya, the biggest hotel complex built for the Olympics to accommodate some 10,000 visitors and participants.

As public investment in the sports facilities decreased after the Olympic Games, owing to the worsening financial situation of the Soviet Union especially after the demise of the USSR, traders began to move into the vacated parts of the complex and to use ever expanding sectors of the adjacent outdoor area. In 1989 a private company took charge of the stadium and, while keeping the football pitch intact, developed it into a curious mix of historico-cultural venues and sports and health facilities, equipped with massage and beauty parlours, a shooting gallery, an underground concert hall, a war time museum, restaurants and other recreational facilities open to the general public. Assisted by the rapidly sprawling Eurasian market, the former sports complex has been transformed into a fathomless labyrinth of improvised stands, containers, warehouses and open market areas. The stadium and its new amenities are completely engulfed and dwarfed by thousands of small retail spaces of what is one of the largest European hubs for goods, capital and humans. Over more than 80 hectares of retail area, Moscow's Izmailovo market, and its Cherkoizovsky Rynok in particular, are one of the most important nodes in the transnational suitcase trade between Eastern Europe, China, Uzbekistan, Tajikistan, the Caucasus region and Turkey. Traders travel long distances in crowded overnight buses or lorries to buy large amounts of goods, which they sell on at domestic markets.

One of the ironies of Izmailovo is that its sprawling main part is itself masked by a quixotic *mise-en-scène*: a maze of wooden turrets and walkways, the souvenir market *Vernisazh* is a popular tourist attraction in Moscow. It is located towards the southern tip of the market, shielded off from the hustle and bustle of the adjoining subsistence economies, through a mock wooden fortress, which provides the backdrop to a bewildering array of matrioshka stalls, Soviet memorabilia, Russian handicraft, Central Asian rugs, antique busts, Georgian shashliki, street performers, and bear shows. Considered to be the world's largest exhibition-fair, *Vernisazh* houses a leisure centre named 'The Russian Court', which boasts the reconstructed Palace of Tzar Alexander and is expected to become part of a new ambitious project to set up a large-scale Trade Centre in the heart of Izmailovo.

Fig. 2. *Izmailovo Market Moscow*. Photos: Peter Mörtenböck & Helge Mooshammer, 2006.

While nested dolls may be *Vernisazh*'s best selling item, the market moulds itself into a gigantic urban matrioshka, a figure of countless parallel economies nested into each other without visible contact points. Izmailovo is a place of extreme geopolitical entanglement, while the touristy *Vernisazh* points out the illusory expectations generated by the Western market, these expectations find their match next door in the informal economies of Eastern transitory societies. The entire market is made up of a plenitude of parallel worlds, zones of Soviet planning interspersed with zones of wild capitalism and numerous deregulated zones of cultural co-existence, whose presence is hardly known to an outside world. As is the case with the cultural renaissance of the 15,000 Caucasian Mountain Jews in Moscow, whose central synagogue is a carpeted room measuring thirty-feet-by-eight-feet under the stands of the multi-faceted Izmailovo stadium.

Arizona Market: Inter-ethnic collaboration in Brcko/ BaH

Arizona Market, one of the best known open markets in the Balkans, is based in the district of BrČko, a separate entity at the intersection of the Bosnian, Croatian and Serbian territories. 2,500 stalls and shops sprawling over 25 hectares of land, 3 million visitors per year and some 20,000 people employed, together make up the market. For some, it is a model for all multi-ethnic communities in the region, for others the largest open air shopping mall in southeast Europe. And for others still it is hell on earth. The difference in perspective rests upon the numerous stages and transformations of what is commonly called Arizona Market.

Initially, Arizona emerged as a black market at a US military checkpoint, along the main road connecting Sarajevo and eastern Croatia, via Tuzla and Orašje in post-Dayton Bosnia. The informal trade was fostered by the international SFOR troops as a way of encouraging inter-ethnic collaboration and economic growth. As the shanty of mobile stands, livestock, produce stalls, CD shops, motels and night clubs flourished and grew into a bustling site of commercial activities, the area also saw the arrival of unauthorised dwellings ranging from improvised shelter to single-family houses. The illicit building structures were set to be the harbingers of a self-organised urbanisation process. At the same time, Arizona increasingly attracted human trafficking and the trade in drugs and weapons. When the BrČko District came into existence in 2000, political decisions were made to confer legal status on the market, to formalise it and to collect revenues from the commercial establishments. After years of heavy struggle against the proposed master plan, large parts of the initial structures were cleared, bars and brothels were shut down, and a vast private shopping mall erected on the adjacent piece of land.

Fig. 3. *Arizona Market, BrČko District (BaH).* Photos: Peter Mörtenböck & Helge Mooshammer, 2006.

This further period of transformation, between the years 2002 and 2007, highlights the complexities and limits of converting the informal structure of a black market into formal businesses. The protest of resident traders had little effect on the development of the privately managed shopping centre, a joint venture between BrČko District and the Italian consortium Ital Project. An estimated 120 Million Euros will be invested to build 100,000 square metres of retail area, storage and warehouses, restaurants, entertainment facilities and even residential units. Once at its peak, the 'economic and merchants centre for southeast Europe' will include multiplex cinemas, hotels, casinos and a conference centre. More than 100 Chinese businesses will be housed in a separate mall billed as 'Trade City of China'. 15 Million Euros in taxes and fees annually contribute in turn to what is now one of the richest districts in this region.[14]

In architectural terms, Arizona Market comprises two different areas, one predominantly occupied by commercial premises, and another boasting an idiosyncratic hybrid character: two storeys of sales floors are supplemented with a third storey, which resembles the typical features of contemporary residential estates. Flower arrangements, garden furniture, awnings, loft conversions, balustrades and miniature turrets of different style and colour produce a scene of patched domesticity, some seven metres above industrialised retail space. The improvised individual fit-out of the corporate master structure exposes the self-regulated hierarchies of these trading networks, the bizarre mix and structure of this development echoing the struggle between official planning and the dynamics of informal economies. In this small segment of Arizona Market, the clash of the two systems has led to a paradoxical co-existence of contradictory cultural claims and practices. Bringing into existence a whole set of eclectic and contradictory aesthetic expressions, the parallel worlds of Arizona Market materialise the tension between formal and informal spatial organisation. They make manifest the relationship of determinate and indeterminate forces and create an antithesis to the fixity of the master plan. This ground-level cultural and economic contestation facilitates a strange aesthetics of spatial use, which Srdjan Jovanović Weiss has termed 'Turbo Architecture': 'Turbo Architecture is an unconcealable, unrestrainable effect of the black market. Turbo Architecture is proof that architectural production depends neither on a stable market nor on a stable political system.'[15]

[14] B. R. Scott and E. Murphy 'BrČko and the Arizona Market', Harvard Business School, Case 905-411 (2005).

[15] S. J. Weiss 'What Was Turbo Architecture?', in Weiss (ed.), *Almost Architecture*, edition kuda.nao (Stuttgart: merz&solitude, 2006), p. 28.

The 'informal market test'

The production of architecture may not depend on a stable market, but the market does depend on architectural production within the structures of civil society. As Foucault has noted in his writings on *homo œconomicus*, there are several preconditions for the functioning of markets, including relations of mutual trust, expedient spatial production and a proper socio-institutional layout. The question is always just how much market we can afford within the matrix of civil society.[16] Along the fringes of this matrix, informal markets behave as a mobile stage on which civil society and its relation to territorial, political and global power is questioned and negotiated through temporary arrangements and an unmediated collision of worlds. This is showcased in the attempted nation building around the now disappeared informal market in Topkapi Istanbul, in the initiation of a regional economy in BrČko District and in the abstruse revitalisation of a former Olympic site in Moscow. These three markets vary significantly in how they deploy structures of indeterminacy, but they are all recognised as urban catalysts in the making of cultural co-existence: Moscow's Izmailovo Market is a complex assemblage of layers held together through formal and informal segments of economic activities, Arizona Market could be seen as the transformation of a black market into a strategically formalised economic hub in Bosnia and Herzegovina, while Istanbul's Topkapi market simply disappeared after the modern transport infrastructure had been completed and the market site cleared. In close vicinity to strategic elements of urban planning, military and transport infrastructure, sports facilities and tourist attractions, these markets all employ creative structures based on principles of nonlinear interaction between many different people and produce effects that were neither planned nor intended.

Given their proximity to the transformation of large-scale urban infrastructures, what can be the role of these markets in terms of subject formation? In his essay 'Actor Network Theory – The Market Test' (a term obviously borrowed from Foucault's analysis of political economy), Michel Callon has argued that market transactions depend on continuous processes of decontextualisation and dissociation of sellable things from other objects or human beings. Actor Network Theory pictures a market world in which the (transient) disentanglement of objects from producers, former users or contexts enables buyers and sellers to achieve a market situation where both ends of the transaction are quits once the deal is done.[17] This suggests a view of the market in which framing dissociates individual agents from one another and allows for the definition of objects,

16 Michel Foucault, *Naissance de la biopolitique: Cours au collège de France 1978-1979* (Paris: Éditions de Seuil/Gallimard, 2004).

17 M. Callon 'Actor-Network Theory: The Market Test', in *e*d. by J. Law and J. Hassard (eds.), *Actor Network Theory and After* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1999), pp. 181–195.

spaces, goods and merchandise which are perfectly identifiable. As one withdraws from old relations, transformation takes place through turning associated goods into commodities. As the dynamics of *informal* markets demonstrate, however, the terms of transformation that pertain to these sites have much more to do with structures of prolonged entanglement; it is not *despite* but *because* of this entanglement that such assemblages transform themselves into something new. They reshape themselves into amphibian structures, meaning that rather than disentangling themselves, they multiply. This mechanism has less to do with a dissociation of market transactions from other cultural contexts than with a multiplication of entanglements on various levels. And this is precisely the structure through which information passes between informal market structures and the political subjectivities emerging from these complex sites. The subject as a boundary process, a deformable and deforming agentic composite, a resilient force that defies determinateness in trading objects as much as in trading itself.

There is a lively entanglement of actors evoked by the processes which stimulate the self-organisation of informal markets and guide their transactions. It is because of family ties, the prospect of a brisk sale or the chance to sell items on at other markets, because of friendships, dependencies, liabilities or debts to suppliers, because of unexpected twists in one's life or in the light of newly emerging relations, that people come together in an environment where they can benefit from other worlds. It is not the constitution of leakage points – points where overflowing is allowed to occur and the commodification of things is partially suspended – but a much more generous and inconspicuous opening up of many different worlds onto each other that generates the exuberant dynamics and maximises the turnover of the informal market.

Drawing on analyses by the Swiss sociologists Urs Bruegger and Karin Knorr Cetina, Brian Holmes has pointed out how markets can be described as knowledge constructs. They act as epistemic objects within a sphere of technological and institutional frames. They are highly unstable and variable in their nature as they always remain incomplete and changing. This variability makes them seem alive and unpredictable.[18] Informality adds another epistemic dimension to markets: as much as they can be conceptualised as knowledge constructs, they also act as a knowledge *filter*, allowing only parts of the goings-on of the market to become intelligible, while certain secrecies, dubious relations and equivocal transactions are to remain unframed. It is particularly these sites of knowledge and interest, the deferral, obfuscation and active fragmentation of archival composition, which accounts for much of the activities that define informal

[18] B. Holmes 'The Artistic Device. Or, the articulation of collective speech', Université Tangente (2006); http://ut.yt.to.or.at/site/index.html.

trade as well as accounting for the spatial emergence, dispersal and re-aggregation of informal markets. Perhaps, this is the model of fertile undercodings and misapprehensions which emerges in the trajectories of informal markets: the lack of price tags, the false trade descriptions, the improvised trading places, the mutability of constellations, the devalued spaces filled with cultural hybridities, the abundance of strange objects that can be used for almost anything. They allow us to consider the potential of cultural encounters outside the formal market prerequisites of transparency, clear calculation and disentanglement. A cacophony of sounds, voices and accents making themselves heard publicly, prior to any neatly designed arrangement for ideal speech situations. Scattered informal arrangements of stalls, trailers, trucks and tent cities that don't lead to what architects, politicians and planners might consider a rich form of cultural co-habitation but to a place elsewhere. Irregularities that characterise the 'mosaic universe' of diasporic movements where things and beings don't converge on a totality, but assert their mutual relatedness through, 'inventing junctions and disjunctions that construct combinations which are always singular, contingent and not totalising.'[19] Arguably, the organising principles of informal markets may not be ideal blueprints for sustainable alternative economies, open community projects and new bonds of worldwide solidarity. They may, however, destabilise processes occurring within larger institutional and non-institutional ecologies that have been taken for granted for quite some time. From spatial organisation based around calculative agents and thoughtful planning to transient alliances, spatial meshworks and assemblages of autonomous social agents, the shift in organisation is familiar.

Informal economies thrive on top of formalised ones. This is not to suggest trajectories which capitalise on the principle of discontinuation. The prolific networks of informal trade rather adhere to a form of amalgamation, which relies on practices of sustained contradiction. An experimental theatre of civil society, it highlights the open-ended outcome of operations that emerge from places of transition.

[19] M. Lazzarato 'To See and Be Seen: A Micropolitics of the Image', in A. Franke (ed.), *B-Zone: Becoming Europe and Beyond* (Barcelona: Actar, 2006), p. 296.

field:
a free journal for architecture

ISSN: 1755-068
www.field-journal.org
vol.1 (1)
The Indeterminate Mapping of the Common

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This article is about mapping and its paradoxes: mapping as a tool to speak about the indeterminate relationship between humans and space, but also as a means to operate with this indeterminacy. These relationships can be represented, mapped out only if they are performed, acted upon, experienced through. This mapping 'from within' which relates the psyche and the body to the physical, the socio-political and the cultural space, has been explored by several art groups and socio-urban practices, starting with the great 'walkers' and 'wanderers' of history and including the Surrealists, the Situationists and contemporary urban research and media practices. The article takes as an important example the work of the French psychiatrist and educator Fernard Deligny and his methods of mapping 'autistic space'. 'Autistic space' and its tracing brings at its limit the question of indeterminacy within the common experience of space and its representation, a limit that challenges conventional notions of space and community. The main question addressed by Deligny's work is that of the 'common'. In a world dominated by the drives of separation (e.g. increasing privatisation, individualism, exclusion, segregation...) what are the means to construct the common? How can different ways of mapping contribute to this construction?

This text[1] developed from a concern with mapping and its possibility of researching the indeterminate relationship between humans and space. This indeterminacy could be represented, mapped out only if it is performed, acted upon, experienced through. Such mapping could be therefore considered itself as a relational practice, a practice 'from within', but not without a few questions: When, in what conditions could mapping become a form of collective practice? How could it create community? How do (collective) practices of mapping address the question of the 'common'?

Roaming traces

In his book *Walkscapes*, Francesco Careri suggests that the 'architectural' construction of space began with human beings wandering in the Palaeolithic landscape: following traces, leaving traces. The slow appropriation of the territory was the result of this incessant walking of the first humans.[2]

By considering 'walking' as the beginning of architecture, Careri proposes another history of architecture – one which is not that of settlements, cities and buildings made of stones but of movements, displacements and flows .... It is an architecture which speaks about space not as being contained by walls but as made of routes, paths and relationships. Careri suggests that there is something common in the system of representation that we find in the plan of the Palaeolithic village, the walkabouts of the Australian aborigines and the psychogeographic maps of the Situationists. If for the settler, the space between settlements is empty, for the nomad, the errant, the walker – this space is full of traces: they inhabit space through the points, lines, stains and impressions, through the material and symbolic marks left in the landscape. These traces could be understood as a first grasping of what is common, as a first tool to size and constitute resources for a constantly moving and changing community.[3]

How to make this 'common' visible, how to map these traces? The traces contain information, but how to reveal it, to communicate it in another way than by controlling, by imposing, by knowing before hand – how to map unknowing? What lines do we need for this mapping? What lines are those that map the indeterminate relationships between subjects and spaces? What kind of place is revealed through these lines? What kind of knowledge?

[1] This article is an extended version of the article 'Tracer là ce qui nous échappe', published in *Multitudes n°24* (2006): 45-42.

[2] Cf. Francesco Careri, *Walkscapes: Walking as an Aesthetic Practice* (Barcelona: Ed. Gustavo Gili, 2002).

[3] This sense of appropriation, community and shared use resonates strongly with what is called in English 'the commons', a word that acknowledges the importance of naming in a certain way the land which marks the territory of a community. But the idea of the 'common' that we want to speak of here is maybe larger and more complex than that of 'the commons'.

ISSN: 1755-066
www.field-journal.org
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The lines that we are

In some of their texts, Deleuze and Guattari use the notion of the 'line' to explain their metaphoric cartography of social space. This is because the 'line', as opposed to the 'point' is a dynamic element, it can create *'millieux'*. The 'line' constitutes an abstract and complex enough metaphor to map the entire social field in terms of affects, politics, desire, power, to map the way 'life always proceeds at several rhythms and at several speeds'. 'As individuals and groups we are made of lines which are very diverse in nature – we have as many entangled lines as a hand. What we call with different names – schizoanalysis, micro-politics, pragmatics, diagrammatics, rhizomatics, cartography – is nothing else but the result of the study of the lines that we are.'[4]

The 'line' is somehow the metaphoric basis of all of Deleuze and Guattari's thinking. They mention several times the work of Fernard Deligny, a radical French educator and psychiatrist who worked from the fifties through to the seventies with groups of autistic children who had been written off as unmanageable by his fellow psychiatrists.[5] He worked in an unorthodox way, criticising the educational methods of the time that expressed the will of society to repress whatever deviated from the norm. Unlike his colleagues who worked in medical institutions and asylums, Deligny spent time with the autistics, living with them on an everyday basis. He did not presume that he could teach the autistic children anything, but hoped instead that he could learn from them. For someone who is autistic, language is not a means of expression, so Deligny hoped to learn by following and watching how the autistic move and create space. He formed a network of people who chose to follow his method of research, and formalised their surveys through maps and drawings. The researchers who were also living with the autistics, mapped the lines that the children traced on their walks and throughout their everyday life activities, discovering that there were fixed points where their movements concentrated, where they stopped and lingered, where the lines they followed intersected. According to Deligny, these were often sites with magnetic fields and underground waterways, and autistic children appeared to be especially sensitive to them.

Deleuze qualifies Deligny's approach of the autistic space as 'geo-analytical'; it is based on the analysis of 'lines', which map relationships between the psyche, the body and everyday life. This *geo-analysis* is not merely pedagogy or therapy but an attempt to invent through mapping ways of being and sharing with 'the other', the radically other, the one who does not live in the same manner, who does not have the same means of communication, the same logics, the same gestures: the autistic, the idiot, the fool ... There where nothing is common, instead of language, what is shared is the 'place' and its occupation – and this place together with its

4 Gilles Deleuze and Claire Parnet, *Dialogues* (Paris: Flammarion, 1996), p. 151 (my translation).

5 Deleuze and Guattari refer to Deligny most notably in their book, *A Thousand Plateaus* (London: Continuum, 1987).

different activities, gestures, incidents and presences is drawn on the map with different lines and signs. The drawing act is a 'tracing', *tracer*.

The daily courses of the autistic children were 'traced' through 'customary lines' and 'supple lines', marking where the child makes a curl, *a chevêtre,*[6] finds something, slaps his hands, hums a tune, retraces his steps, and then makes 'meandering lines', *lignes d'erre*. The lines developed in space are sometimes translated on the map as coloured patches, surfaces, erasures and signs. Tracing is 'a language' which can be shared by those that can speak and those that only know 'silence'; some trace with their hands, others with their bodies. The lines that trace the courses are supplemented with signs that indicate movements or tools, like a choreographic notation.

They are traced at different moments in time on separate sheets of tracing paper – creating something like 'a plan of consistency'[7] where the improbable 'language' of the autistic is 'revealed',[8] through the superimposition of the different layers of tracing paper. This *plan of consistency* represents somehow the place shared by the tracers and the traced.

The presence of the tracers is also marked on the map – acknowledged as part of the language through which not only the autistic bodies express themselves but also, as Deligny puts it – 'the common body of "us" and "them"'.[9] This place of the 'common body' which reveals itself in the process of tracing after years of uncontrollable and unforeseen movements, is called *'l'immuable', 'the unmoving'*.

Psychogeographic mapping

The Situationists have also related the psyche to 'place', to space, through their psychogeographic practice.[10] They too have traced courses and drifts, but they were interested in the ephemeral, the randomness, the aesthetisation of the furtive passage, in 'the ordinary' within which they wanted to seize, to catch the unique, the exceptional. Deligny wished on the contrary, to recreate a common sense, 'the common body', an ordinary everyday life including those that were exceptional, incomprehensible, abnormal.

The maps of *l'immuable* differ from psychogeographic maps. The erring is not a *dérive*. The territory established in the Cevennes region by the network of people that chose to work with the autistics by following this method, is not the grid of the modern city that the Situationists wanted to subvert, but a place to be made; it is what Deligny calls with different names: *le réseau, le radeau*. This is not a political subversion through a sensorial and aesthetic experience, it is neither 'play' nor 'pleasure'.

6 '... a chevêtre (an "entangled curl") is similar to a detour as long as the necessity, the cause of this detour escapes our knowing. The term of 'chevêtre' designates the fact that there is *something there that attracts* a perfusion of *lignes d'erre*.' F. Deligny, *Les enfants et le silence* (Paris: Galilée et Spirali, coll. «Débats», 1980), p. 25 (my translation).

7 This is Deleuze and Guattari's concept developed in *A Thousand Plateaus*.

8 cf. F.Deligny, *Les Vagabondes Efficaces et autres récits* (Paris: François Maspero, 1970).

9 F. Deligny, *Les cahiers de l'Immuable 1/2/3 :* «Voix et voir», *Recherches*, n°18 (Paris: Avril 1975), «Dérives», *Recherches*, n°20 (Paris: Décembre 1975), «Au défaut du langage», *Recherches*, n°24 (Paris: Novembre 1976).

10 According to the Situationists, psychogéography is 'the study of the precise laws and specific effects of the geographical environment, consciously organised or not, on the emotions and behaviour of individuals.' Guy Debord, *Introduction to a Critique of Urban Geography*, published in *Les Lèvres Nues* #6, 1955. In 1958, Debord also wrote the *Theory of the Dérive*, which served as an instruction manual for the psychogeographic procedure, executed through the act of *dérive* or 'drift'.

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ISSN: 1755-066
www.field-journal.org
vol.1 (1)
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The maps of *l'immuable* try to reveal something other than 'the feelings and sensations related to a place'. This 'something other' can't be sized immediately, it is not in the realm of the movement, the spontaneous and the furtive but rather in the realm of the *unmovable*: tracing-erring in the same place for years, supported by the passion and the gaze of the tracers. If the context of the Situationist dérive is aesthetical, the roaming of the autistic is ontological. They do not *detour* and do not *drift*, do not play getting lost in the city, but turn again and again, in *chevêtre*, around the same place, while being lost for real. They can't really chose to do it in another way and can't communicate about it. The *chevêtre* is something different from the Situationist *plaque tournante*: it is not a term of a specific aesthetical lexicon but a marker of hidden ontological data, the designator of the 'escaping cause of that which escapes' our control and understanding while being fundamental.

Locative mapping

Today, GPS technology allows for an accurate location in space.[11] This kind of tracing is not the tracing that pays attention to the 'close presences' of the tracers, but one which is connected to military technology and surveillance. The individual is traced, or rather *tracked*, as a point, which is precisely situated and controllable in time. GPS equipped pedestrians can now trace real time cartographies, as in the project 'Real Time' by Esther Polak (one of many other projects of this kind), which shows inhabitants of Amsterdam making visible a giant map of their city through the retracings of their daily routes.[12] This type of cartography has a lot of positive aspects[13] but – as remarked by the cultural theorist Brian Holmes, it also has an important weakness: it exposes the fragility of individual gestures to the surveilling satellite infrastructure, which supports and coordinates the GPS public infrastructure.[14] With these tools that are always traceable by global satellites and are dependent on global temporalities, there is no common and possible community between the tracers and the traced. Global time is not a 'common time' and the satellite is not a 'close presence'. The lines traced by locative technology are always 'exposed' and could never be secret, hidden, like *the lignes d'erre*.

As Holmes noticed, technological locative tracing (very fashionably used in recent years by many contemporary art projects) encounters here its own limit, which is in fact its own ideology: a kind of humanist locative ideology of 'knowing your place', which promotes and exposes at a global scale, the scale of the *Empire,*[15] the aesthetics of the drift, generalising cartography as individual tool, abstract and isolated, while giving at the same time the illusion of communication and traceability.

11 The Global Positioning System (GPS) is composed of twenty-four satellites 20,200 km (12,500 miles or 10,900 nautical miles) above the earth. The satellites are spaced in orbit so that at any time a minimum of six satellites will be in view to users anywhere in the world. The satellites continuously broadcast position and time data to users throughout the world. GPS was developed in the 1970s by the U.S. Department of Defense so that military units can always know their exact location and the location of other units. (cf. About.com, 'Global Positioning System' (2007) http://geography.about.com/od/geographictechnology/a/gps.htm [accessed 2007]. Contemporary Art, Architecture and Urban Planning projects today, use GPS and other 'situated' and 'locative' technologies to allow different ways of designing and inhabiting the contemporary metapolis.

12 Esther Polak and Den Waag, 'Amsterdam RealTime' http://realtime.waag.org [accessed 2007].

13 One of the positive goals is the creation of public data. In order to oppose the increased privatisation of geographic data, media activist groups organise tracing actions using GPS technology aimed at creating digital maps of important urban areas that can be freely used. See for example the OPENSTREETMAP movement, Open Street Map: The Free Wiki World Map, www.openstreetmap.org [accessed 2007].

14 Brian Holmes, 'Drifting Through the Grid: Psychogeography and Imperial Infrastructure', http://ut.yt.to.or.at/site/index.html [accessed 2007].

15 I use here the concept of 'Empire' in the sense developed by T. Negri and M. Hardt in their book *Empire* (Cambridge MA: Harvard University Press, 2000).

For Deligny, in order to have an edge, a border, to have *something in common* with the autistic, you need an 'outside' and an 'inside'. Also, for seizing a place, no screen or other 'scopic' prostheses are needed. What is necessary is what he called 'this seeing', a 'seeing' which is not related to 'thinking', a gaze which doesn't 'reflect'; *this* 'seeing' is for him the language of the children 'who do not speak'.

Everyday life mapping

The everyday tracings initiated by Deligny are not the tracings of the city users which caught the interest of the sociologist Michel De Certeau, who theorised the practices of everyday life at about the same time as Deligny's experience in Cevenes.

De Certeau speaks about 'the spatial language' of walking but at the same time, he criticises its representation in the urban cartographies of the time. He speaks of the difficulty of representing the practice of walking rather than the walking trace;

> While making visible the walking trace, what made it possible remains invisible. This fixation of the trace is a forgetting procedure. The trace substitutes itself to the practice.[16]

De Certeau speaks about the impossibility of representing the very *act of walking*, which rather than a simple movement represents 'a way of being in the world'.

But Deligny's mapping escapes this aporia, because it does not pretend to 'represent' the act of walking: his lines do not seek to make the walking visible, do not conform to what has happened; the fact of keeping on tracing a map for several years, makes the act of tracing itself 'a way of being in the world'.

For De Certeau, the rhetoric of walking is made of a series of tours and detours, the style figures that constitute the pedestrian discourse: walking is 'the art of touring'. By contrast, the *chevêtres* of the autistics are not simple style figures – they do not belong to a 'text' or a discursive organisation. They are called customary lines, but are not yet a 'proper' that could be subject to *détournement*. For De Certeau, the walking body moves in search of a familiar thing in the city. He invokes Freud, saying that walking recalls baby's moves inside of the maternal body: 'To walk is to be in search of a proper place. It is a process of being indefinitely absent and looking for a proper.'[17]

[16] M. de Certeau, *The Practice of Everyday Life* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1984), p. 97.

[17] Ibid., p. 103.

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But the autistic children have no origin to recall. Or, maybe, as Deligny suggests, their courses and their gestures recall a 'world' which is too far away to be appropriable, hidden in the prelingusitic memory of the human species. Therefore, if their movement is a language, still this language doesn't *signify*, but simply indicates that the human *takes place*.

Tracing without 'control'

Contemporary urban cartography searches more and more for methods to represent flows of matter, information and persons. The lines of these mappings try to describe space in order to make it more efficient and more controllable. Tracing in the 'control society' (Deleuze) is different from Deligny's tracing. We trace in order to make the flows more fluid, the city smoother and appropriable.

An example is Space Syntax's cartography, which uses lines to represent degrees of connectivity within the city.[18] These lines are always, to simplify, 'right'. They are approximations of the trajectories chosen by different persons in space. They are approximations of the number of persons (and cars) that have passed by during the time of observation. These traces are rarely those of the same people. These observations are a routine rather than a *custom*. The degree of connectivity of these routes are supposed to give information about the degree of sociability of space. Space Syntax (and contemporary urban planning) seek to emphasise the most connected routes, the diagonals, the shortcuts, the most secure routes; they are not interested in the hidden gestures and 'delinquent' routes like those taken by the autistic children. For Deligny, the human mapped through *chevêtres* has nothing to do with the quantifiable, abstract representation of the human – it is rather something unrepresentable which is immanently shared by *all* humans. It is (the) *unmoving*.

[18] cf. Space Syntax (2006) www.spacesyntax.com [accessed 2007].

The 'common body' of an 'impossible community'

Tracing is not drawing, it does not represent a social space in order to control or manipulate it. *Tracing* is not mapping in order to inform as do the GPS technologies. The 'common body' is not a cadastre – it is a moment in which the emotion – the *e-motion* is important. The common body is an *affected place*.

The 'common body' traces itself at the same time that it assembles. The common is always a common-there. It is made by the presence of bodies in the same place, it is a common which does not communicate, which is refractory to language, to domestication by language. It reveals itself in

bits and pieces that need time to be recorded together, as a fragmented memory of an ungraspable 'whole'. It reveals itself as *désoevrement*,[19] as a still possible action of an impossible work.

> What was still to be discovered between us and them, was the PLACE. When I say between, I do not mean a barrier, on the contrary the fact that it was something to share and discover and this was the place, the topos, the settlement, the outside.[20]

The community was then simplified to what was most ordinarily common – the place made out of traces, gestures, routes, trajectories and presences. The pile of tracing papers indicated the presence, the place and the time needed; because it is only by seeing and seeing again, in the same place and in time, a time spent in 'close presence', that the 'common body' could be grasped through lines. It could be grasped and unknown, because according to Deligny, 'the maps do not say much, they only can show that we *unknow* what is the human, as well as what is *the common*'. [21]

This is Deligny's answer to the question of mapping, but maybe also, his answer to the question of community. This question has been brought into debate by a number of contemporary thinkers who call for the deconstruction of the immanent notion of community, which has been particularly influential in the Western tradition of political thinking: community as the dominant Western political formation, founded upon a totalising, exclusionary myth of national unity, must be tirelessly

[19] The term *désoeuvrement* ('unworking') is used in the sense of Maurice Blanchot, who has developed this concept in, *The Space of Literature*, trans. Ann Smock (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1982, first pr. 1955), where he speaks about the impossibility of (common) language to seize the full signification of the literary word.

[20] F. Deligny, *Les cahiers de l'Immuable*, p. 24 (my translation).

[21] Ibid., p. 19.

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ISSN: 1755-066
www.field-journal.org
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'unworked' in order to accommodate more inclusive and fluid forms of dwelling together in the world, of being-in-common.[22]

The mapping experimented by Deligny, constitutes somehow his own 're-presentation', his own enactment of 'the impossible community', the 'inoperative community', the 'unavowable community', 'the coming community' that haunt the contemporary imaginary. Deligny states that the 'common body' of this community which is impossible to write, to seize and to be mastered, can still be mapped as a PLACE. Indeterminately.

The autistic space and its tracing push to the limit the question of indeterminacy within the common experience of space and representation, a limit that challenges conventional notions of space and community. The lesson drawn from Deligny's work is that the process of place-making and its mapping are coextensive, and that the language through which a 'common' place is represented is always embedded in the way this place is inhabited. Such mapping analyses traces and leaves traces at the same time. Rather than theories, it produces practical knowledge and new experiences of place. We learn from Deligny that *tracing* is a patient and sensitive collective mapping, which needs time and attention in order to create the conditions for sharing, communication and communality. Its aesthetics are embedded in its ethics.

The question addressed to architects, urban planners and place-makers is how to operate with a space which is traced at the same time as it is lived and how to use this tracing to understand and eventually create more relationships between those who inhabit it. How to allow them to have access to and decide about their common *tracing* which is also the condition of their *indeterminate community*?[23]

Images are from the installation of Deligny's drawings in the exhibition, *Des Territoires* by Jean-François Chevrier and Sandra Alvarez de Toledo (Ensba Paris: October-December 2001). Photographs by Doina Petrescu.

22 I refer here particularly to the philosophical inquiries into the notion of the community of French thinkers like Jean-Luc Nancy (*The Inoperative Community*, 1983), Maurice Blanchot (*The Unavowable Community*, 1983) and more recently, the Italian philosopher, Giorgio Agamben (*The Coming Community*, 1993). All these inquiries that continue in time and relate to each other, constitute somehow a whole movement of critical thinking that has influenced the contemporary take on the notion of 'community' in social science and political philosophy.

23 Deligny's contemporary challenge could be interpreted in many ways – one approach is that of a few urban activist groups in Brussels, who are developing research on collective and subjective mapping tools such as open-source mapping softwares, which allow for collective production of knowledge and subjective representation of different types of space (geographical, social, political, economical, sensorial, affective, etc...) and at the same time, their freely shared experience. See Towards, (2006) www.towards.be [accessed 2007].

Another way is suggested by the initiative of the OpenStreetMap movement which 'aims at creating and providing free geographic data such as street maps, as a reaction against the legal protection and technical restrictions on their use, which hold back people from using them in creative, productive and unexpected ways'. The open ended community of tracers use GPS technology, and combine individual and collective tracing with data collection meals and street parties. The OpenStreetMap is at the same time a political tool for subjective mapping and a device to create community. 'All of these restrictions and advances in technology like cheap GPS units mean you can now create your own maps, in collaboration with others and have none of the restrictions outlined above. The ability to do so allows you to regain a little bit of the community you live in - if you can't map it you can't describe it'; http://wiki.openstreetmap.org/index.php/whymakeopenstreetmap [accessed 20 August 2007].

ISSN: 1755-066
www.field-journal.org
vol.1 (1)
The Space of Subculture in the City

The Space of Subculture in the City: Getting Specific about Berlin's Indeterminate Territories

Dougal Sheridan

This paper is concerned with those apparently abandoned, disused, indeterminate urban areas not readily identified and included in the understanding of cities. Examining such areas of Berlin has allowed an investigation of them in relation to the historical, cultural and sociological context of a specific city, and reveals their consequential and symbiotic relationship to the rest of the city. Do the opportunities offered by fragments of the city, in the absence of the deterministic forces of capital, ownership, and institutionalisation affect cultural formation and development? Extending the notion of indeterminacy to include its cultural and sociological effects both reveals its significance as the space of subculture within the city, and allows an examination of the nature of this space. This paper is based on primary research including photographic documentation, mapping, and a case study of a particular 'indeterminate' fragment of Berlins' urban fabric recording the patterns of activity, occupation, social formation and architectural action. Walter Benjamin's observations and experiences of Berlin suggest that there are pre-existing ways of understanding these areas and the urban subjectivity they imply.

Introduction: Two Postcards

This essay is concerned with those apparently abandoned, disused, indeterminate urban areas, which have been labelled and romanticised using the term *Terrain Vague* coined by Ignasi de Sola-Morales in the 1990s. In this discourse, 'indeterminate' has been interpreted as the absence of limits, often resulting in a sense of liberty and freedom of opportunity. Architecture is associated with a degree of determination or ordering that reduces the possibilities and potential embodied in the vacant site.[1] Indeterminacy may be a useful term with which to interpret these urban spaces. However I wish to extend and clarify the use of 'indeterminacy' in this context beyond merely describing the spatial characteristics of these areas. Instead I propose an understanding of indeterminate territories as any area, space or building where the city's normal forces of control have not shaped how we perceive, use and occupy them.

[1] Ignasi de Sola-Morales, 'Terrain Vague' in Cynthia C. Davidson (ed.), *Any Place* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1995), p. 120.

To do this we will look at the specific historical, cultural, and sociological context of Berlin, where the existence of such indeterminate territories has had a significant effect on the cultural life of the city. These places which are not readily identified and included in the understanding of cities, nevertheless have a consequential, symbiotic although often under-recognised relationship to the rest of the city. We will then examine existing ways of understanding these areas and the urban subjectivity they imply, by referring to Walter Benjamin's concepts of 'dialectical images' and the 'illumination of detail', including his own observations and experiences of Berlin. Extending the notion of indeterminacy to include its cultural and sociological effects reveals these indeterminate territories as the space of subculture within the city. We will examine the nature of this space with an occupational case study of a particular indeterminate fragment of Berlin's urban fabric.

The research and observations examined here were made between 1994 and 1996, while I was studying and working in Berlin and living in one of the buildings referred to in the case study. As such the observations and research in this paper document a particular time in Berlin's urban history and development. We see this in the two postcard images from this time; (Fig. 1). Rather than some timeless and identifiable scene like the architectural monument, they depict a situation of rapid change, while still being concerned with architectural or urban space - the building that is becoming and the building that is disappearing, the construction site and the ruin.

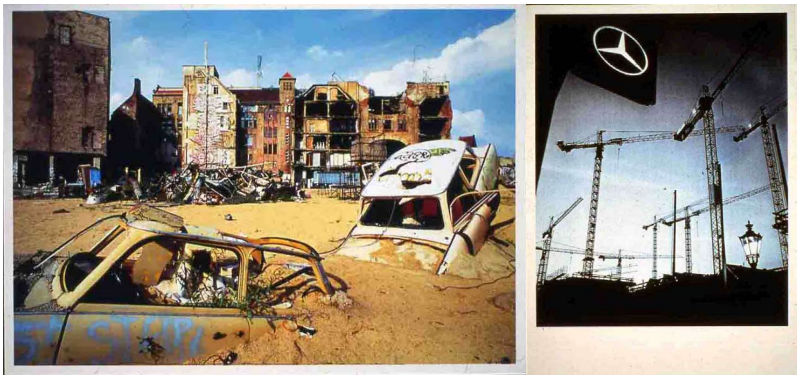

Fig. 1. Two postcards; Gerd Schnürer Postcard Die Zeichenen der Zeit Berlin Friedrichstrasse 1995; Tacheles 1995.

Usually the ruin reminds us of some other past while the construction site might evoke the excitement of a new future. Ironically, observations of Berlin at the time hinted at the inverse; the completion of the buildings under construction spelt the repetition of the same; while in the ruins and residual spaces, the possibility of other less defined alternatives were being pursued.[2]

The first postcard depicts an area on Friedrichstrasse, which in the 1990s was the most complete and densest area of the 'critical reconstruction of Berlin.' The illuminated Daimler Benz emblem informs us of the corporate nature of this development. This transfer of entire districts into private ownership has been described as 'a turning point in the history of modern urban-planning in Europe.'

The second postcard is of a semi-ruined building called *Tacheles* and its surroundings. This building remains a condensed record of the forces of extreme change to which Berlin's urban fabric has been subjected. Originally built in 1907/08 as a grand department store, it was later used by AEG as an exhibition hall and archive named the 'House of Technology'. The building was partly destroyed by bombing during the war and then, like much of Berlin further sections of the building were demolished to make way for roads, which in this case were never completed. After the reunification it was occupied by squatters who transformed the building and its surrounds into what has been described as a 'centre for independent forms of cultural life in Oranienburger Strasse'.[3] The building incorporates a bar, cafe, theatre, cinema, furniture workshop, music and performance art venue, studios, gallery spaces, and residences. Tacheles is the publicly perceived representation of Berlin subculture. The acceptance of this building into mainstream culture by way of its postcard image, indicates the extent of this phenomenon in Berlin.

2 J. Hauptman, 'A view of Berlin', *Werk, Bauen & Wohnen* (1995): 6.

3 Planergemeinschaft Dubach & Kohlbrenner, *City Centre Projects: Office buildings and business premises* (Berlin: Lebenswertbauen, 1993).

Berlin History: Abandoned Territory

> The existence of these vacant spaces has never been officially acknowledged. On the city map they were covered over with fictitious streets, reflecting of the shame that Berlin is not like other cities with their respectable centres.[4]

4 W. Firebrace, 'Jasmine Way', *AA Files* 25 (1994): 63-66.

Examining the specific history of Berlin reveals the causes and spatial positions of these indeterminate territories. They comprise those fragments of the city that were wrested out of the usual mechanisms of metropolitan development. The destruction of one quarter of Berlin by carpet-bombing in 1944 and the succession of Fascist, Communist, and Capitalist regimes, have provided the underlying conditions for this phenomenon above and beyond the usual processes of spatial obsolescence resulting from post-industrialisation. These historical circumstances culminated in two events unique to Berlin, which had a pervasive effect on both the conditions and spaces described here as indeterminate. The first situation was the erection of the Berlin wall in 1961 and the second was its removal in 1989; (Fig. 2).

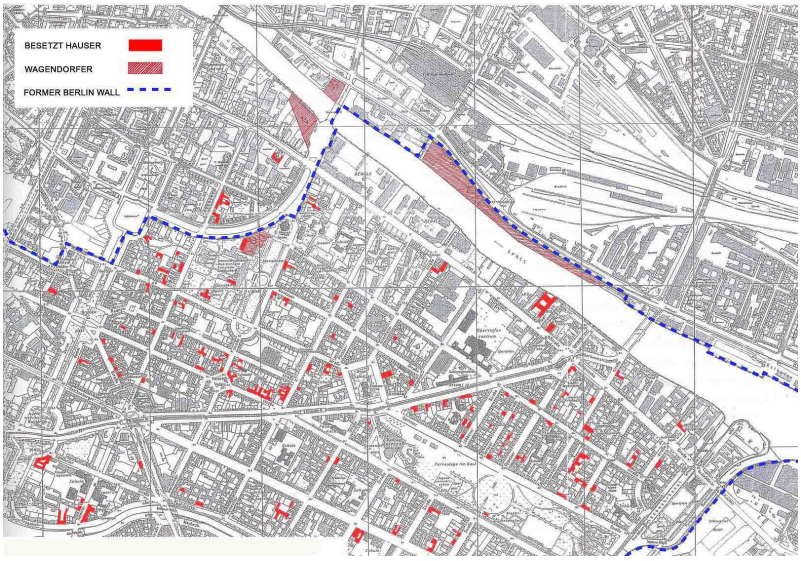

Fig. 2. Excerpt from map showing concentration of empty buildings and sites, which became occupied (*Besetzt*) in Kreuzberg when it was cut off on 3 sides by the Berlin wall. This includes some of the spaces adjacent to the wall, which were occupied shortly after its removal in 1989. Image: Dougal Sheridan, 1996.

The erection of the wall cut off the inner city district of Kreuzberg from its close relationship to Mitte, which was historically the central district of Berlin. Suddenly this working class quarter of dense tenement blocks

was marginalised on the periphery of West Berlin. The wall had the effect of strangling West Berlin's economic and social systems, resulting in Kreuzberg becoming a depopulated cul-de-sac where property had lost its value as inner city real estate.

Kreuzberg's peripheral position meant that it was no longer a through-route for traffic.[5] This effectively excluded it from most of the urban planning projects of the time, as described in the Hauptstadt Berlin competition of 1957, for the separation of new residential areas and commercial zones along the newly planned traffic routes. As a result, the existing urban landscape of semi-derelict housing stock and vacant tracts of land remained undeveloped.

Although Berlin became economically dysfunctional, it retained unique ideological and strategic functions for the West German government, which provided subventions amounting to almost 50% of the city's total income.[6] In an attempt to save Berlin from becoming a ghost city, the Berlin Senate (West Berlin had become its own self-contained state with its own parliament), introduced incentives, in conjunction with the federal government in Bonn, to bring people back to the city. The most effective incentive was exemption from compulsory military service for males living in Berlin. This had a very specific effect on the demographics of people moving to Berlin, and from 1968 onwards the city became a magnet for 'discontented youth' from all over Germany.

The city, especially Kreuzberg, was described as providing 'the setting and infrastructure for a developed, if multi-faceted and hence tension ridden Second Society.'[7] These people were predominantly students, youth, and immigrant *Gastarbeiter*. These 'guest workers' were predominantly Turkish and had no rights of citizenship. Many of the vacant and deteriorating buildings in Kreuzberg became occupied with a variety of cooperative enterprises, ranging from residential communes to alternative businesses. Berlin became the centre of West German political activism from which the 'alternative' movement and youth subculture developed. Kreuzberg emerged as the locale and symbol for this nascent subculture.[8] Kreuzberg's geographic location 'on the fringe'[9] also became a phrase used to describe its social situation.

For former East Germany, the fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989 meant the abrupt passage from centralised control over land, planning, and resources, to the mechanisms of western development. This restitution of private ownership of property nationalised by the communist regime, resulted in large tracts of property being suspended in indeterminate ownership or remaining caught within the mechanisms of the legal

5 Marianne Suhr, *Urban Renewal Berlin: Experiences, Examples, Prospects* (Berlin: Senatsverwaltung fur Bau- und Wohnungswesen, 1991), p. 58.

6 S. Katz and M. Mayer, 'Gimme Shelter: Self-help Housing Struggles within and against the State in New York City and West Berlin', *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research*, 9(1) (1983): 15-45.

7 Ibid.

8 R. Eckert and H. Willems, 'Youth Protest in Western Europe: Four Case Studies', *Research in Social Movements, Conflicts and Change*, 9 (1986): 127-153.

9 Suhr, *Urban Renewal Berlin*, p. 71.

system. The successive acquisition of land by the Nazi regime, the Soviet occupation authorities, then the East German government, resulted in a complex situation determining ownership of this property. During the 1990s up to a third of this land of indeterminate ownership in East Berlin, was once owned by Jewish people who had either fled Germany or were killed during the war.[10]

Additionally, as a result of former East German housing policy and the absence of renovation associated with private ownership, much of East Berlin's 19th century housing stock was not maintained and slipped into decay. This condition was so extreme that when the Berlin Wall was removed, 25000 dwellings were empty in East Berlin. This was more than twice the number that had been vacant in West Berlin in the 1980s; (Fig. 3).

Fig. 3. 19th Century building fabric was neglected in East Berlin and replaced with apartment blocks (Plattenbau). Photo: Dougal Sheridan, 1994-1996.

Thus, in the vacuum of control and responsibility in East Berlin following the removal of the wall, all kinds of self-generated activities and projects sprung up as 'the alternative scene' shifted from Kreuzberg to the eastern side of the city. These groups have been described as a 'dense network of subcultures and alternative practices, encompassing around 200 000 people'.[11]

It is apparent from Berlin's historical circumstances that these indeterminate territories have resulted from a combination of the spatial gaps within the city and gaps within the cities regulatory forces. These indeterminate territories have taken on the form of both empty or abandoned buildings, and vacant terrains. These buildings, ruins and urban landscapes all have varied spatial characteristics and urban

[10] A. Read and D. Fisher, *Berlin The Biography of a City* (London: Pimlico, 1994), p. 314.

[11] Katz and Mayer, 'Gimme Shelter', p. 37.

properties. However, the condition they all share, and that I use here to define them as indeterminate, is the absence of the deterministic forces of capital, ownership and institutionalisation that, to a large degree govern people's relationship to the built environment. This is an understanding of indeterminacy as existing within the factors affecting the reception of architecture and urban space and not necessarily within the physical characteristics of these spaces themselves.

Specificity and Urban Identity

> The waste lands of the city which cut through its centre. They are vacant or used for what may seem like only minor activities - markets, circuses, the storage of building materials, motor-repair works, training grounds for dogs. A journey along the railway lines at times gives the impression of wild countryside scattered with the remains of an alien culture. The pomposity of Berlin's imperial monuments is somehow mitigated by the landscape in which they sit.[12]

[12] Firebrace, 'Jasmine Way', pp. 63-66.

Abandoned buildings offered potential for reuse, and adaptation in ways limited only by the structures themselves, and the means and imagination of the occupier. Frequently the building's potential permeability was exploited in contrast to the cellular separation of tenancies and territories characteristic of conventional building occupancy. These situations offered the opportunity for new uses and forms of living not possible within the normal tenancy subdivisions. This enabled the easy insertion of many self-initiated programmes including theatres, cinema, venues, galleries, cafés, clubs, and community spaces, allowing these locations to take on public, cultural, and political roles.

Vacant sites were settled by various mobile and temporary structures and were used for various transient activities including markets, circuses, outdoor theatres, parties, and even farming. These spaces ranged widely in nature. Some aspired to be utopian semi-agrarian communities playing public roles as places of entertainment and carnivals, while others were seen as the refuge of the 'homeless'. The large open spaces remaining where the Berlin Wall had been, allowed many of these *Wagendorfer* – literally 'wagon village'" – to be centrally located on highly prominent sites. With the *Reichstag* or other Berlin institutions as a backdrop, these surreal landscapes appeared to critique conventional monumentality and fixed urban architecture by visually confronting them with open, un-institutionalised and implied nomadic space;[13] (Fig. 4).

[13] J. Hejduk and B. Schneider, *John Hejduk: Riga Exhibition Catalogue* (Berlin: Aedes Galerie fur Architektur und Raum, 1988). As objects of counter-monumentality these Wagendorfer have a remarkable equivalence to John Hejduk's 'victims' and his 'traveling carnival' of objects, animals, or mobile 'homes' that have appeared in Berlin, Riga, Vladivostok and Praha.

Fig. 4. Wagendorf and farm animals with the Reichstag in the background. Photo: Dougal Sheridan, 1994-1996.

It is apparent that indeterminacy provides a space for the self-determination of the occupant. However, I would go further and suggest from the observations made above that this indeterminacy allows the occupant a less mediated and more direct relationship with the specific qualities of a place; (Fig. 5).

Fig. 5. Informal seating and recreational areas, dwelling structure, and out-door theatre structure resourcefully exploiting found materials. Photo: Dougal Sheridan, 1994-1996.

In the post communist era, Berlin's politicians and the city's development authorities have shown an ambition to establish a more complete and clear urban identity for Berlin, comparable to that of cities like Paris and London. Berlin's urban environment was described as consisting of 'faceless city fragments with isolated historical buildings, but simply not a city in the tradition of the great European cities.'[14] Architecture was seen to offer the 'creation of urban space which can bestow identity on a city torn in half for so long'.[15] These sentiments are still prevalent today within the cities' development authorities as evident in the plans to completely reconstruct the City Palace (*Stadtschloss*) on the site occupied by the former East German Parliament Building. Berlin's planning policy, *Planwerk Innenstadt Berlin*, planned to fill the gaps within the city's fabric by restoring the 19th century perimeter block typology under the guise of 'critical reconstruction'. This plan utilises Architecture as a tool in the creation of a more singularly defined urban identity.

Fig. 6. Floating café/restaurant structures, roof terrace, and covered market all exploiting the specific qualities of their locations. Photo: Dougal Sheridan, 1994-1996.

In these terms, indeterminate territories are spaces the city chose not to identify within itself, until recently. Identification is usually linked to the processes of incorporation, registration and control. The indeterminacy of these areas arises largely due to their position outside these forces. The absence of those conditions that usually predetermine our perception of such places, makes our encounter with their specific qualities all the more intense. For example, a canal bank is used for floating structures, existing

14 Senatsverwaltung fur Stadtentwicklung & Umweltschutz und Tecnologie, *Planwerk Innenstadt Berlin, Erebnis, Prozess, Sektorale Planungen und Werkstatten, No. 25* (Berlin: Kulturbuch Verlag, 1999).

15 Eberhard Diepgen (mayor of Berlin) in R Stein (ed.), *Hauptstadt Berlin Central District Spreeinsel: International Competition for Urban Design Ideas 1994* (Berlin: Birkhauser Verlag, 1994).

waste vegetation becomes a garden, a roofless ruin becomes a terrace, an industrial shed a covered market, and a bank vault becomes a club. (Fig. 6.) In these instances the particular qualities of these places becomes memorable and these conditions of indeterminacy offer us the opportunity for an unmediated experience of the specificity of a place. These conditions have also been described as allowing the creation of 'immediate identities' at the 'moment in which the institutional whole is overruled by the everyday.'[16]

[16] K. Cupers and M. Miessen, *Spaces of Uncertainty* (Wuppertal: Verlag Mueller & Busmann, 2002).

Urban Subjectivity

> They are not lonely, merely without mood; the city in these pictures looks cleared out, like a lodging that has not yet found a tenant. It is in these achievements that surrealist photography sets the scene for a salutary estrangement between man and his surroundings. It gives free play to the politically educated eye, under whose gaze all intimacies are sacrificed to the illumination of detail.[17]

[17] Walter Benjamin, 'A small History of Photography' in *One Way Street and Other Writings*, trans. E. Jephcott and K. Shorter (New York: Verso, 1985), pp. 240-257.

At this stage I would like to refer to Walter Benjamin's descriptions of urban experience based on his memory of similar spaces in Berlin from the turn of the previous century, which he describes in 'A Berlin Chronicle'. Benjamin developed a 'topographical conscience' wherein he organised experience architecturally into areas of the city. He contrasts the world of respectability, affluence, apparent completeness, and permanence with the urban landscape of the subterranean, forgotten, incomplete or deserted spaces of the 'other'. However, it is in these spaces and not the 'countless facades of the city' that Benjamin encounters the past and describes, 'life pausing'.[18] Benjamin also encounters these outmoded redundant areas of cities in Eugene Atget's photographs of 1920s Paris, as described above; (Fig. 7).

[18] Walter Benjamin, 'A Berlin Chronicle' in *Reflections*, trans. E. Jephcott (New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanocial, 1978), p. 25.

The abandoned spaces in these photographs are of the last pre-modern remnants of Paris's medieval streets. Theses are images of the 19th century equivalents of the dysfunctional tracts in today's cities, described by such terms as *terrain vague*. These images also documented 'the Zone', a strip of land on the periphery of Paris inhabited by a colony of rag pickers and scrap merchants, Romany and squatters: the poor and the disenfranchised who didn't fit into the new order of Houseman's' Paris; (Fig. 8).

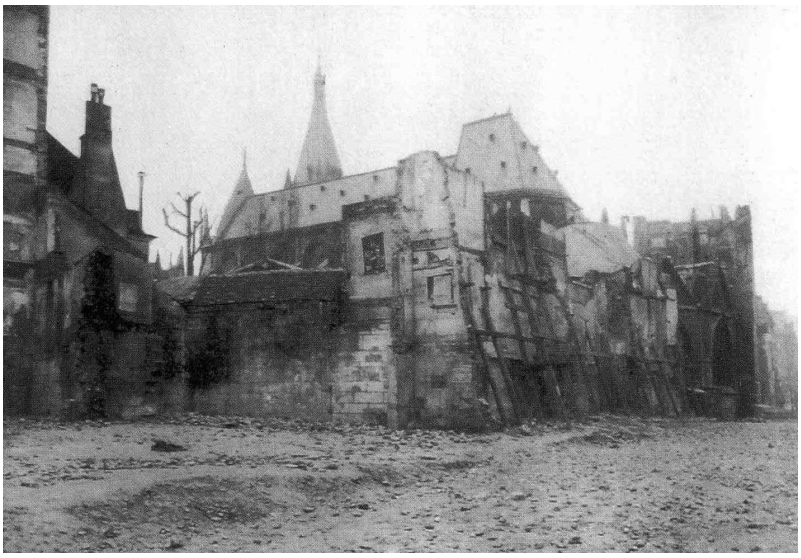

Fig. 7. Coin Rue du Renard et Pierre au Lard - Vue prise de la rue St. Merri (4e), Eugene Atget, 1912, albumen print; © supplied by George East Man House: International Museum of Photography and Film.

Fig. 8. Porte de Montreuil - zone des fortifications - zoniers, Eugene Atget, 1913, albumen print; © supplied by George East Man House: International Museum of Photography and Film.

The 'illumination of detail' was central to Benjamin's appreciation of Atget's photos. In Benjamin's archaeological analogy of memory, the goal is the 'treasure hidden within the earth: the images severed from all earlier associations that stand like precious fragments or torsos in the collector's

gallery - in the prosaic rooms of our later understanding.'[19] Atget's images of these indeterminate spaces do not describe the complete whole that fits seamlessly, both spatially and historically, into the apparent continuum of the city. Instead, these spaces are characterised by the fragment, which implies both as a spatial incompleteness in the body of the city, and the temporal discontinuity of places where 'life paused'.

The implication is that these gaps in the *spatial continuum* of the city also exist as gaps in the *temporal continuum* of the city. By being both spatially dislocated from the city, and displaced from its administrative structures, these indeterminate territories are the spaces where fragments of the city fall out of the illusion of historical continuity. These spaces of indeterminacy, by existing as gaps or cracks in the hegemonic forces of the city, escape the processes of identification and incorporation that tend to locate objects, events, and our understanding of them within the dominant structures of the present.

Benjamin describes the fragment of the past dislodged from the illusion of historical continuity allowing the 'illumination of detail'. The past is not found in the continuity of urban identity, but in the specific dislodged or discovered fragment. On the urban scale, the 'illumination of detail' manifests itself in the specificity of these deserted spaces and fragments. This is because they exist outside the frame of urban identity, which usually presents an image of historical continuity.

These fragments have the potential to be read as 'critical constellations of the past and present', or as 'dialectical images'.[20] As abandoned or disconnected fragments of the past, they fracture the smooth totality of the present, allowing potentially demystifying insights into political reality. Dialectical images are described as 'those "rough and jagged places" at which the continuity of tradition breaks down and reveals "cracks" providing a hold for anyone wishing to get beyond these points'.[21]

What occurs at this unmediated junction between the specificity of a place and those occupying it? What opportunities does this offer to those occupying such a space and do such spaces provide a critical position from which to observe the city?

19 Ibid., p. 26.

20 Susan Buck-Morss, *The Dialectics of Seeing: Walter Benjamin and the Arcades Project* (London: MIT Press, 1989), p. 290.

21 Walter Benjamin, *Das Passagen-Werk*, ed. Rolf Tiedemann & Hermann Schweppenhäuser (Frankfurt am Main: Verlag, 1972) cited in Buck-Morss, *The Dialectics of Seeing*, p. 290.

The Space of Subculture

Subcultural groups usually find themselves differentiated from more mainstream culture by: ethnicity, occupation, leisure, sexual orientation, age, and other defining traits. In German, the word *subkultur* is commonly used, not just in sociological and anthropological contexts, but also to describe various forms of 'fringe' cultural production.[22] Sola-Morales' description of *terrain vague* as 'mentally exterior in the physical interior of the city', parallels the situation of subcultural groups within society. Subcultures often aspire to be, or are positioned by dominant culture as outside society; (Fig. 9).

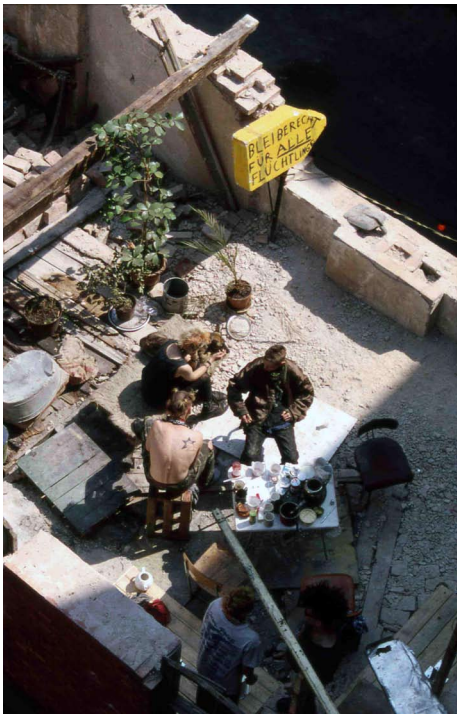

Fig. 9. Youth subculture, Brunnen Str 6&7. Photo: Dougal Sheridan, 1994-1996.

Subcultures are also characterised by situations in which cultural norms and traditions do not match lived experience. Dick Hebdige in his analysis of a series of case studies finds that 'each subcultural instance represents a solution to a specific set of circumstances, to particular problems.'[23] This explains the rapid evolution of subcultural groups when social, economic, cultural, and demographic conditions begin to change. The specificities defining subcultures are borne out of their attempts to 'resolve collectively experienced problems arising from contradictions in the social structure'.[24] Indeed subcultures tend to construct themselves more predominantly out of social and material experience than from the cultural baggage handed down by tradition. Therefore subcultures evolve at a more dynamic and reactive pace than established cultures and in many respects represent

22 *Basiskultur* or 'base culture' is also used in the media to describe these cultural events.

23 Dick Hebdige, *Subculture: The Meaning of Style* (London: Routledge, 1979), p. 81.

24 Mike Brake, *The Sociology of Youth Culture and Youth Subcultures* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1980), p. 11.

the marginalised edge of cultural change. These properties suggest that subcultural groups are potentially more responsive than 'mainstream culture' to the availability and specific qualities of the environments they occupy.

Subcultures often find themselves in the position of attempting to construct meaning without domicile over the forms, objects, language and spaces of the culture in which they are situated. They tend to be isolated from the productive apparatus maintaining the culture by which they are surrounded. This does not preclude subcultural construction of meaning but determines that its methods are indirect and liable to be 'deviant'. Subcultural groups construct meaning by taking those objects, signs, or forms from dominant culture and injecting them with their own meaning. This can be understood as an imbuing with meaning or an appropriation of existing cultural signs or artefacts with new or contradictory significance. This subversion or fracturing of existing identities is synonymous with generating more specific identities. Hebdige investigates this in relation to the cultural objects of fashion and compares Roland Barthes' activity of exposing the 'artificial, arbitrary nature' and 'ideological core' of dominant culture's constructions, to the way subcultures likewise interrupt the processes of normalisation;[25] (Fig. 10).

[25] Hebdige, *Subculture: The Meaning of Style*, p. 11.

Fig. 10. Subcultural appropriation of existing objects and spaces: Photo: Dougal Sheridan, 1994-1996.

However, it is apparent that these techniques are also applied at the scale of spaces and buildings within the city. Indeed bricolage, the juxtaposition of apparently incompatible realities, is pronounced in the occupation of spaces and objects within subculture. This is evident in examples like the visual confrontation between the architectural monument and mobile, self-built dwelling structures; the discarded objects that are assembled into art objects (like the bus wreck that becomes sculpture); and the found objects that have their original meanings and functions subverted (like the telephone box which has been turned into a toilet cubicle); (Fig. 11).

Fig. 11. Discarded objects assembled into art objects, services, and dwelling structures. Photo: Dougal Sheridan, 1994-1996.

The relationship between urban experience and the formation of subculture was formulated by Claude Fischer in his 'subcultural theory of urbanism'.[26] He states that 'the distinctive claim of subcultural theory remains that, all else equal, cities increase rather than diminish ethnic distinctiveness'.[27] He also frames this inversely, stating that, 'urbanism is correlated with unconventionality, in part because it stimulates development of subcultures.'[28] Countering arguments to this theory are based in the Wirth's theory of 'social breakdown'.[29] This theory explains the higher rates of unconventionality in cities in terms of 'the "breakdown" of social control and moral order', rather than, 'the emergence of innovative subcultures and the diffusion of their culture to others in the city.'[30] It is not surprising that public perceptions of the subcultural spaces associated with Berlin's indeterminate territories swing between these poles.

26 Claude Fischer, 'The Subcultural Theory of Urbanism', *American Journal of Sociology* 101(Nov) (1995).

27 Ibid, p. 556.

28 Ibid, p. 546.

29 Louis Wirth, 'Urbanism as a Way of Life', *American Journal of Sociology* 44 (July) (1938): 3-24.

30 Fischer, *Berlin The Biography of a City*, p. 560.

In relation to these theories of subcultural formation, it is apparent there are more factors than just the effects of population size and density stimulating subcultural formation or accumulation. The availability of accessible urban space for subcultural groups is a significant factor: this can be seen in the extraordinary circumstances of Kreuzberg's isolation by the wall from 1961 to 1989 and the correspondingly exaggerated nature of its social history; and likewise, the shift of the 'subcultural scene' into East Berlin directly after the removal of the wall to take advantage of its empty and undefined territories.

The nature and availability of urban space is indeed a factor that has been left outside the scope of Fisher's subcultural theory of urbanism. In fact, studies of subcultural groups often tend to concentrate on their cultural artefacts such as fashion, style, and music, but appear not to include their spatial environments.[31]

Acknowledging the relationship between the accumulation of subcultures and the availability of space prompts the question as to whether the nature of this space allows or affects the formation of subcultures. Do these spaces have a formative effect, or do they just provide space for existing subcultural groups? The understanding of indeterminate territories as spaces outside hegemony, offering the experience of urban fragments removed from the spatial and temporal continuum of the city, suggests that these spaces may indeed have a formative effect.

One could imagine that a subcultural space, like subcultural style, would involve both the occupation of some found form and its investment with new contradictive qualities and meanings. The ideology of the dominant culture, according to Hebdige, is often the most controlling yet unrecognised factor in physical structures. Social relations and processes are primarily understood by individuals through the structures in which they are represented to those individuals. This is particularly the case in buildings, where 'implicit ideological assumptions are literally structured into the architecture.'[32]

Case Study

We will now look at a case study that documents the occupation of an abandoned complex typical of Berlin's courtyard buildings. This *Besetztes Haus* – which literally translates as 'occupied house' – was documented by the author over the period of a year spent living there as a participant observer in the years from 1994 and 1996. As we move through the plans of these buildings I will describe the observations that were made. Colours and hatching have been used to map the different occupant groups and uses; (Fig. 12-16).

[31] Sarah Thornton, *Club Cultures: Music, Media and Subcultural Capital* (Cornwall: Polity Press, 1995). Sarah Thornton identifies and studies nightclubs as environments of subcultural groups (youth culture), but her observations are sociological rather than spatial.

[32] Hebdige, *Subculture: The Meaning of Style*, p. 12.

Private/Public Spatial Graduation

Individual Spaces	Bedrooms, Studies/Work spaces
Group Spaces	Kitchen, Eating, Social, Bathrooms, Toilets
Group Shared Spaces	Bathrooms, Laundries, TV room, Children's space
Complex (Used by all groups)	Computer/Photocopying room, Library, Workshops, Darkroom, Band rehearsal
Semi- public	*Unter Druck* theatre group, Latin American resource group

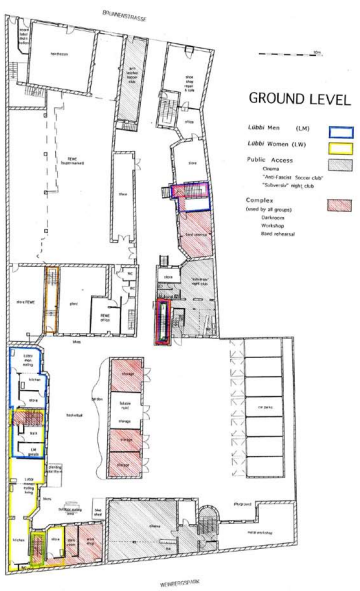

Fig. 12. The breakdown of spaces and facilities from private to public was highly graduated and complex. It ranged from an individual's space, to spaces shared between a few individuals, to group spaces, to spaces shared between groups, to spaces shared by the whole complex, to spaces accessible to a specific public, to spaces accessible to the general public. The courtyards were used as shared outdoor spaces and event spaces for parties, performances etc. both for building inhabitants and the public. Images: Dougal Sheridan, 1994-1996.

Fig. 13. Groups define themselves by characteristics such as gender, sexuality, ethnicity, youth subculture, but also by the description of the particular part of the building they occupy. For example Latin American women's group, Lubbi men, a men's group, a women and Lesbian group, a punk group, a Turkish group, and then Hinter Haus 'back house', Q-Haus 'cross house' groups. In these last two instances the names describe both the groups and the parts of the building they occupy. The more public or widely shared spaces find their logical locations in the lower levels of the buildings. The complex's shared facilities (library, computer room, workshop, darkroom etc) occur on the ground or first floor levels and public access spaces like the nightclub and café/ bar are on ground level. Images: Dougal Sheridan, 1994-1996.

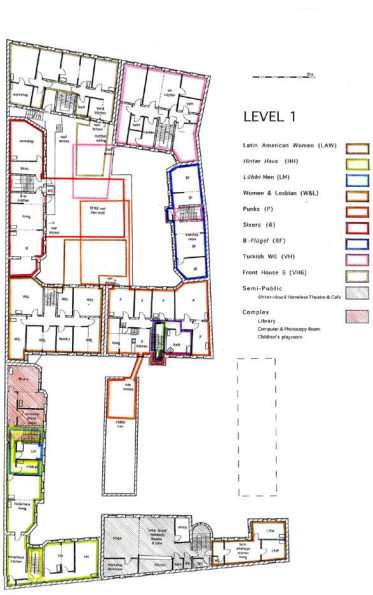

Fig. 14. The permeability of the building is increased and manipulated to suit changing needs. This involved the removal of walls and floors to make bigger social or individual spaces. This increased permeability allows the building to be traversed in numerous ways as more stairwells become interconnected. The threshold and usually the only securable door in a building is from the courtyard to a building's stair well. As a result the stair well becomes understood and treated more as an interior. In fact there tends to be no locks applied to any of the doors on the interior of the building. (In conventional occupancy the threshold point is between each stair landing and the individual apartment.) Shared services like telephones were located on stair landings, which became locations of much informal interaction. Images: Dougal Sheridan, 1994-1996.

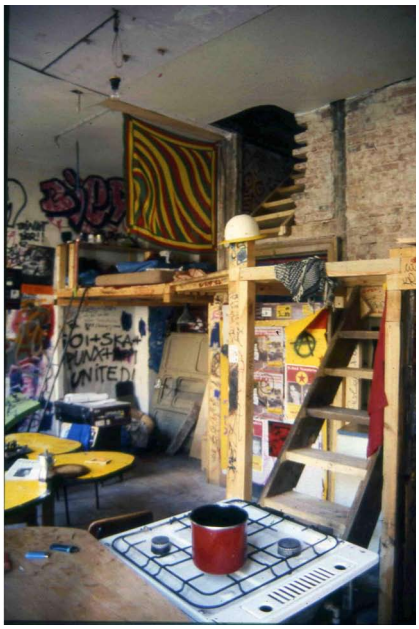

Fig. 15. The scale of various building sections influences group sizes and spaces. This means that the scale of occupancy is larger than single units, in many cases operating at the scale of an entire section of building. The Berlin courtyard building type is compatible with a complex and changing form of building occupation. The density of its arrangement, the even distribution of stairs wells, and its courtyard arrangement has a decisive influence on how the building is occupied. Images: Dougal Sheridan, 1994-1996.

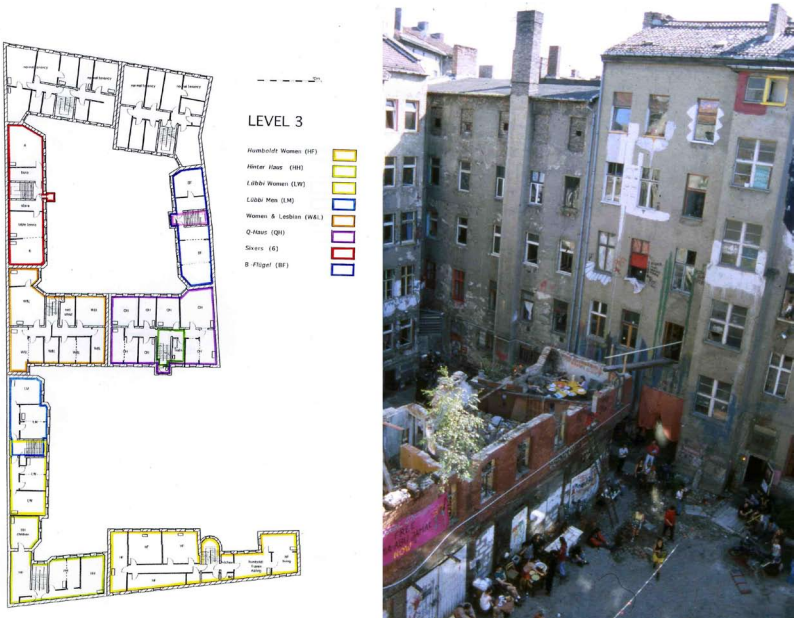

Fig. 16. The various spaces of a particular group from individual to shared/social will not always be directly adjacent to each other and may well have the circulation or shared spaces of other groups intersecting or overlapping their spaces. The extent and arrangement of a group's spaces are flexible and change as the group's size and spatial needs transform. Different territories expanding and contracting in the building may result from a change in occupancy or be due to an occupant forming living arrangements with a different group in the building. New sub-groups may also form and create new social spaces and facilities for themselves. In some cases new vertical connections were made by building new stairs up through the structure to connect specific rooms. Images: Dougal Sheridan, 1994-1996.

Conclusions

It is apparent that subcultural groups are exploiting the spatial opportunities observed in the case study and the spatial arrangements suiting these groups would often not be possible within the constraints of conventional building use. The occupants and building mutually influence each other to a degree not encountered in usual building occupancy. The occupants manipulate the fabric to suit their varied and changing needs and the building's form and arrangement affects the group's formations and usages. In fact, in some cases the building is incorporated into a group's identity.

Investigating the spatial environment of these groups sheds light on the objects and structures they are subverting or supplanting. This example of a *Besetztes Haus* is most illuminating when we compare the diagram of its occupation and use to that of the conventionally occupied building of the same type. We see the certainty and apparent permanence of a stratified division of space, compared to the more fluid and changing occupancy of the *Besetzte Haus*; (Fig. 17). Latent in the occupation of these indeterminate territories is the questioning of existing structures, be they material or ideological. The way in which the building is occupied and manipulated is similar to subculture's occupation, de-naturalisation, and re-inscription of cultural artefacts with new meaning.

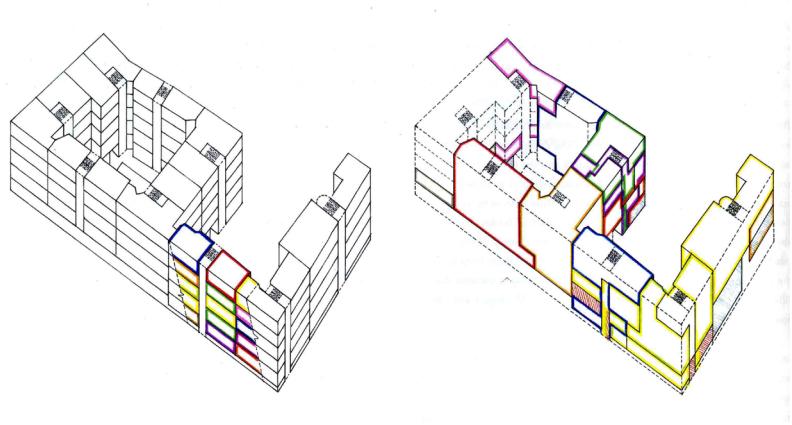

Fig. 17. Comparison of the spatial arrangement in Brunnen Str 6&7 and the conventional occupancy arrangement of a courtyard building. Areas are colour coded to match the case study's plans. Image: Dougal Sheridan, 1994-1996).

The absence of internal locks, potentially something 'architectonically insignificant', has an enormous effect on the space of these buildings. The resulting fluidity being equivalent to the de-institutionalisation of space where suddenly human judgement, tact, trust and communication

must accomplish the job usually done by the physical division of space. This opening up of space is further perpetrated by the removal of walls, resulting in an increased permeability and larger rooms. The application of locks to individual's rooms within the building is usually regarded as an indication of the disintegration of the community. The tasks of improving or repairing these buildings also necessitate a large degree of collective action and decision-making.

In the situations presented by these abandoned buildings, the rules of occupancy are not laid out to begin with, and the division and distribution of space and facilities are not necessarily predetermined. Thus the occupants are confronted with questions about living and the organisation of space that usually would not be encountered. As a result, normal assumptions about living arrangements may well be questioned and found to be inapplicable. Indeed, the building's nature may suggest a different type, or scale of living arrangement. The prompting of different or unconventional ideas or ways of living would indicate that these spaces could indeed have an effect on the formation of subcultural groups. Both these instances – that of the building affecting the social interaction of the inhabitants, and the inhabitants adaptation of the building to allow different social needs - suggest that occupant and building have a less mediated relationship than is usually encountered. This has already been described as the encounter with the specific potential of an urban fragment devoid of the city's usual ordering structures. The specific nature and fabric of the buildings becomes magnified by the absence of external deterministic forces. Such situations allow the occupant to interact with the built fabric as though it were a landscape that is settled rather than a structure where the rules of occupancy are pervasive. Observations made in the case study of this increased mutual influence between the urban fabric and those occupying it, revealed the formative effects of these indeterminate territories on subcultures.

Although not the focus of this study, it would be interesting to revisit the points I have elaborated here, in relation to Berlin today and other contemporary cities. Hebdige's observations are based on subcultural groups of the 70s and 80s and reflect the strong dichotomies of the ideologies of that time. Several of the points referred to above also reflect the opposing ideologies and intense contrasts and energy that defined Berlin's urban situation during the 90s, when this research was carried out.

However, since this time, the distinctions between mainstream and subcultural, controlled and indeterminate have become more nuanced both in the spaces and the pluralism of those who use them. This is evident

in Cupers and Miessens' *Spaces of Uncertainty*, which investigates life in these left over spaces of Berlin, within the broader discourse on public space. In the last decade some of these indeterminate spaces and the initiatives that took root in them have disappeared, while others have evolved into more formalised scenarios. It is hoped this essay provides an understanding of the circumstances that created these indeterminate spaces and the culture and history of their occupation.

The occupation and reinvention of disused or indeterminate areas of Berlin, described as the realm of subcultural groups in the 70s and 80s in Kreuzberg and the early 90s in East Berlin, has recently been termed the activity of 'urban pioneers' and recognised and championed by the Berlin Department of City Development (*Senatsverwaltung fur Stadtentwicklung*) in its publication of the same name.[33] Projects that range from alternative forms of living to leisure and cultural programmes are described as 'temporary use projects'. This has allowed the retrospective official acknowledgment and acceptance of many unconventional self-initiated projects while subtly asserting the permanence of landownership, by referring to them as temporary.

> Temporary use projects are increasingly of strategic importance for urban development, for space pioneers open up new development prospects at disused sites that defy the bounds of traditional urban planning.[34]

Fig. 18. Potsdammer Platz, 1994. Photo: Dougal Sheridan, 1994-1996.

33 Senatsverwaltung fur Stadtentwicklung, *Urban Pioneers: Temporary Use and Urban Development in Berlin* (Berlin: Jovis Verlag, 2007).

34 Ibid.

This publication goes on to document and provide a handbook of the processes and players involved in realising such projects. It contrasts ironically with the equivalent publications and agenda of the *Senatsverwaltung fur Stadtentwicklung* at the time that the 'urban pioneering' activities were perhaps at their most formative during the early 90s;[35] (Fig. 18). Needless to say the public spaces and informal cultural facilities that evolved out of the opportunities of indeterminacy remain less generic than those produced by the planned urban development of this period; (Fig. 19). And while many of these spaces have since moved to more peripheral areas, disappeared, or changed, the expectations and opportunities they offer continue to persist and evolve.

35 Senatsverwaltung fur Stadtentwicklung, *Ideen fur Berlin: Stadtebauliche und Landschaftsplanerische Wettbewerbe von 1991-1995* (Berlin: Kulturbuch-Verlag 1996).

Fig. 19. Berlin urban beach, 2006. Photo: Dougal Sheridan, 1994-1996.

field:
a free journal for architecture

120

ISSN: 1755-068
www.field-journal.org
vol.1 (1)
Architecture and Contingency

Architecture and Contingency

Jeremy Till

Contingency is, quite simply, the fact that things could be otherwise than they are.[1]

The paper makes the argument that architecture is through and through a contingent discipline, but that architects have to a large extent attempted to deny this contingency through a retreat to notions of order, beauty and cleanliness. This stance can be traced from the first principles of Vitruvius, with his simplistic, but pervasive call for coherence, through to Le Corbusier, with his cry for architecture to be rid of contingent presences. Using the arguments of Zygmunt Bauman, it becomes clear that this rejection of contingency is not a trait of architecture alone, but of modernity as a whole. From this it is clear that the denial of contingency is not simply an issue of aesthetics and visual order, but a much wider one of social control and cultural cleansing. Whilst architects might acknowledge the former, they are less good at dealing with the latter. The paper consciously mixes the high with the low in its sources and style, in a very partial prompt that architecture needs to open up to such transgressions. It is, as a reviewer of the paper rightly said, a bit of a rollercoaster ride.

[1] William Rasch, *Niklas Luhmann's Modernity: The Paradoxes of Differentiation* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2000) p. 52.

ISSN: 1755-066
www.field-journal.org
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New Labour Vitruvius

I have always had a problem with Vitruvius, the Roman author of the first treatise on architecture. Just because he was first does not necessarily make him right, but his shadow over architecture remains long. 'It is not too much to say,' writes Kojin Karatani, 'that (until the late 18C) the work of the architect was meant to fill in the margins of Vitruvian writing.'[2] In many ways the Vitruvian legacy has lasted beyond the late 18C. His triad of commodity, firmness and delight remains on the architectural rosary, even if the beads have been updated to reflect contemporary concerns with use/function, technology/tectonics and aesthetics/beauty. There is an uncritical, unthinking, acceptance of a baton being passed from century to century, a 'solace in the prescription'.[3] This is not to say that buildings should not be usable, stand up and generally be 'delightful' rather than miserable, but these qualities are so self-evident that they should be background beginnings rather than the foreground ends that the Vitruvian dogma suggests.

But my problem is not just with the blandness of the triad; it is more to do with the wider remit of the *Ten Books*. 'I decided,' Vitruvius writes with a certain immodesty, 'that it would be a worthy and most useful thing to bring the whole body of this great discipline to complete order.' The ambitious task of calling the discipline to complete order applies not just to the body of professionals – Vitruvius gives precise instructions as to what should be included in an architect's education – but extends to the products of that discipline. 'Architecture,' he writes, 'depends on *ordinatio,* the proper relation of parts of a work taken separately and the provision of proportions for overall symmetry.'[4] Here we have the first conflation of the values of profession, practice and product that is to be repeated throughout architectural history: a prescription of order that applies equally to the knowledge of the profession, the structure of practice and the appearance of buildings.

As Indra McEwen convincingly shows, the dominating metaphor in the *Ten Books* is that of the body ('the whole body of this great discipline') and the defining feature of the body is its coherence and unity. 'Bodies were wholes,' she notes, 'whose wholeness was, above all, a question of coherence. The agent of coherence — in the body of the world and in all the bodies in it — was *ratio*.'[5] Right from the beginning, then, we get the identification of the architecture as an act of imposing order, of taking the unruly and making it coherent. However, this is not an aesthetic act alone in terms of *ratio* and symmetry. Vitruvius had greater ambitions than simply defining taste. 'I realised,' he writes in the preface directed to the Emperor Augustus, 'that you had care not only for the common life of all

2 Kojin Karatani, *Architecture as Metaphor*, trans. Sabu Kohso (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1995), p. ix.

3 'It is not surprising that over the years many have found solace in the prescription "commodity, firmness, delight" as the clear account of what a building should incorporate leaving it to experienced designers and builders to interpret this within the tacit assumptions of a supposedly shared culture.' Steven Groak, *The Idea of Building* (London: E & FN Spon, 1992), p. 54.

4 The Vitruvius quotes are from the translations in Indra Kagis McEwen, *Vitruvius: Writing the Body of Architecture* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2003), pp. 17, 65. The sections in Vitruvius are Book 4, Pref and 1.1.2. *Ordinatio* means literally 'a setting in order'.

5 Ibid., p. 55.

men and the regulation of the commonwealth, but also for the fitness of public buildings – that even as, through you, the city was increased with provinces, so public buildings were to provide eminent guarantees for the majesty of empire.' McEwan brilliantly shows how this passage and others supporting it, indicate the wider pretensions of Vitruvius to tie his architectural approach into the imperial programme of expansion and authority: 'it was not architecture as such that initially attached Vitruvius to Julius Caesar's might. It was, rather, the connection of architecture to *imperium*.'[6] What is happening here is that under the more-or-less benign cloak of aesthetic codes, Vitruvius is slipping in a distinctly non-benign association with social reform and imperial power. The term 'ordering' all too easily conflates the visual with the political. As I have said, just because he was first does not necessarily make him right but it certainly makes Vitruvius influential, because the mistaken (and dangerous) conflation of visual order with social order continues to this day, with profound ethical consequences.

6 Ibid., p. 38.

My second year lecture series is called Architecture and Ideas. The first lecture starts with a quote from a critic writing about the house that Sarah and I designed and live in. The critic writes: 'It has too many ideas.' This is not a compliment. In architecture, having too many ideas is a signal of confusion, whereas one idea rigorously carried through is a mark of order and control.[7] *Where in other disciplines having ideas is the lifeblood, in architecture they are edited. To illustrate this intellectual conundrum, I put up a slide with Vitruvius's mantra on it. COMMODITY : FIRMNESS : DELIGHT. 'How dumb is that?' I ask. 'How empty of ideas is that?' Then, because the lecture is at the same time as the UK party political conferences, I add: 'It is so bland, so commonsensical, that it could be the Tory conference mission statement,' remembering when the Conservative party election manifesto was called 'Time for Common Sense'. I got a complaint for that — something to do with political bias — so next year I changed it to the Labour conference mission statement just to see what would happen, and made an appropriately corporate slide to go with it. No complaints this time, suggesting that the Vitruvian triad is closer to the emollient spin of New Labour's ordering centre.*

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7 Jeremy Till, 'Too Many Ideas' in *Research by Design* (Delft: Technical University Delft, 2001).

Rogue Objects

In *Civilization and its Discontents,* Sigmund Freud famously identifies beauty, cleanliness and order as occupying 'a special position among the requirements of civilization.'[8] We have just identified the combination of beauty and order in the Vitruvian legacy. Cleanliness adds another dimension: it denotes purity, the removal of waste, whiteness. It is not for nothing, therefore, that modernist architectural beauty is so often associated with pure forms, elimination of decoration, and white walls.[9] And it is not for nothing that this cleanliness is so often associated with some kind of moral order made possible by the actions of the architect/artist. This is a theme from Plato — 'The first thing that our artists must do [...] is to wipe the slate of human society and human habits clean [...] after that the first step will be to sketch in the outline of the social system'[10] — to Le Corbusier: 'COAT OF WHITEWASH. We would perform a moral act: *to love purity*! ... whitewash is extremely moral.'[11] In the rush of words, we overlook the offensiveness of the association of visual purity with social morality.

The three terms, beauty, cleanliness and order form a triangle; in fact a Bermuda triangle that eliminates anything that might threaten its formal (and social) perfection. Thus alien objects, dirt, the low, the supposed immoral are cast aside in the pursuit of purity. If we return to the Vitruvian metaphor of the body, then it is clear that the triangle will only tolerate the classical body. In their seminal book on transgression, Stallybrass and White identify the classical body as the abiding symbol of high order: 'the classical body was far more than an aesthetic standard or model. It structured [...] the characteristically "high" discourses of philosophy, statecraft, theology and law.'[12] The classical body signifies an ordered body of knowledge as well as an ordered system of form. The Vitruvian body, on which so much architecture still leans for support, is thus much more than a nice metaphor of coherence; it designates a 'closed, homogeneous, monumental, centred and symmetrical system'.[13]

If the classical body (of architecture, of knowledge) is to be ordered, then it must also in metaphorical terms be healthy. 'Order is the oldest concern of political philosophy,' Susan Sontag writes in *Illness as Metaphor*, 'and if it is plausible to compare the polis to an organism, then it is plausible to compare civil disorder with an illness.'[14] Any sign of illness is a threat to order, and as Sontag makes all too clear, the 'worst' illness of all is cancer. She shows how illness, and in particular cancer, is often used as a metaphor to describe the malaise of society. 'No specific political view seems to have a monopoly of this metaphor. Trotsky called Stalinism the cancer of Marxism', the Gang of Four were called the 'the cancer of

8 Sigmund Freud, *Civilization and Its Discontents* (London: Penguin, 2002), p. 40.

9 See Mark Wigley's exhaustive survey of whiteness, fashion and cleanliness in modern architecture: Mark Wigley, *White Walls, Designer Dresses* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1995).

10 Section 501a of The Republic: Plato, *The Republic*, trans. Desmond Lee (London: Penguin, 1974), p. 237.

11 Le Corbusier, *The Decorative Art of Today*, trans. James Dunnett (London: Architectural Press, 1987), pp. 188, 92.

12 Peter Stallybrass and Allon White, *The Politics and Poetics of Transgression* (London: Methuen, 1986), p. 22.

13 Loc. cit.

14 Susan Sontag, *Illness as Metaphor* (London: Penguin Books, 1979), p. 76.

China', and the 'standard metaphor of Arab polemics [...] is that Israel is "a cancer in the heart of the Arab world."'[15] For the person with cancer, this metaphor has the effect of casting them out as untouchable; cancer is seen as a kind of punishment. For society, the cancerous metaphor demands aggressive treatment in order for a cure to be effected. Cancer must be rid of for the healthy body to be re-established and so for order to be reconstructed.

And so when Le Corbusier declares in *Précisions,* that 'to create architecture is to put into order,'[16] it is no surprise to find that, at the same time, he likens the city (as the thing to be ordered) to a sick organism. Nor is it any surprise to note that the illness that Le Corbusier constantly evokes as metaphor for the sickness of the city, architecture, and the academy is cancer.[17] If the 'city has a biological life'[18] which has been infected by illness, then order can only be effected through radical surgery; the primary care of medicine will not suffice: '*in city planning "medical" solutions are a delusion; they resolve nothing, they are very expensive. Surgical solutions resolve.*'[19] Corbusier's metaphor is telling. The stigma of sickness must be eradicated, cancerous elements cut out, if a fresh start is to be made. Only then can the quest for ordered perfection be initiated. The Bermuda triangle again: purity, cleanliness and order eliminating and excluding the rogue objects. 'Orderly space is rule — governed space,' Zygmunt Bauman writes, and 'the rule is a rule in as far as it forbids and excludes.'[20]

Some time ago there was a wonderful television series called 'Sign of the Times'. In it the photographer Martin Parr and social commentator Nicholas Barker quietly observed the British in their homes. As the occupants talked about their design tastes, the camera froze on a single poignant feature, maybe a neo-rococo fireplace with gas flames ('I think we are looking for a look that is established warm, comfortable, traditional'), maybe a faux antique candelabra ('I'm put off real antiques because to me they look old and sort of spooky.') Generally the effect was too gentle to be mocking, but at times the scene slipped into pathos. One such moment is set in a sparse modernist interior. A woman, voice choked with emotion, is lamenting that her husband will not allow her to have 'normal' things such as curtains: the camera dwells on expanses of glazing. When her husband Henry appears, he despairs of the 'rogue objects' disturbing his ordered interior. 'To come home in the evening,' he says, 'and to find the kids have carried out their own form of anarchy is just about the last thing I can face.'[21]

The rogue objects are his children's toys.

Henry is an architect.

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15 Ibid., p. 84.

16 Le Corbusier, *Précisions*, trans. Edith Schreiber Aujame (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1991), p. 68.

17 'The cancerous germ is coming up against the fine young, vigorous germ', he writes of decadent art. 'In biology, it is a dreadful disease, cancer, which kills by strangling', of sensualists. 'The dilemma is in the heart of the School [...] like cancer which establishes itself comfortably around the pylorus of the stomach, or around the heart. The cancer is in excellent health', of Beaux Art academies. See respectively: Ibid., p. 32, Le Corbusier, *The Decorative Art of Today*, p. 207, Le Corbusier, *When the Cathedrals Were White: A Journey to the Country of the Timid People*, trans. Francis Hyslop (London: Routledge, 1947), p. 116.

18 Le Corbusier, *When the Cathedrals,* p. 50.

19 Le Corbusier, *Précisions*, p. 172.

20 Zygmunt Bauman, *Wasted Lives* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2004), p. 31.

21 All quotes from: Martin Parr and Nicholas Barker, *Signs of the Times* (Manchester: Cornerhouse Publications, 1992).

Bauman's Order

Now is a good time to introduce Zygmunt Bauman. I came across Bauman in one of those moments of scavenging amongst footnotes, a happy accident of reading that brings what has been at the periphery of one's vision right to the centre. Of course, he should probably have been central all along: 'One of the world's leading social theorists,' reads the blurb on the book, and everyone that I now mention him to returns a pitying look as if to say: 'Where have you *beeeeen* (pinhead).' Everyone, that is, except architects and architectural theorists.[22] This group tends to bypass the foothills of skirmishes with reality, and move towards the higher ground of battles with ideals (or their deconstruction), ignoring on the way Dewey's warning that the 'construction of ideals in general and their sentimental glorification is easy; the responsibilities of studious thought and action are shirked'.[23] There is an intellectual elitism at work here, with the supposedly superior status of philosophical thought being used to prop up the fragile constructions of architectural idea(l)s. Contemporary architectural theory is thus littered with references to philosophical texts with hardly a nod to current social theory. I suspect that architectural theorists have largely ignored Bauman's territory because it is too damn real. It reminds us too constantly of our own fragility, our bodies, our politics. It reminds us, crucially, of others and our responsibilities to them. In the realm of this sociology there is no room for autonomy, indeed the whole idea of architecture as an autonomous discipline would be treated with the disdain it deserves.

Bauman is too prolific a thinker and writer to summarise here. He has produced almost a book a year for the past fifteen years and I came to each new one with a mixture of dread and anticipation. Dread that my schedule was going to be knocked still further as I would have to take on board yet more ideas; anticipation that those ideas would, as they so often did, locate my small architectural world into a much wider social and political context. Bauman gave me confidence and for this I became an unabashed fan; maybe not the best way to write a book (academics are meant to assume an air of detachment), but at least you now know. Time and time again I would find Bauman articulating ideas that appeared to me to have parallels to, and implications for, architectural production.[24] It is not just that he directly addresses issues of contingency, but that he sees contingency as part of a wider condition of modernity, and so the argument that I was beginning to develop suddenly made sense in terms of its broader social and intellectual context.

Thus when Bauman refers to the 'surgical stance which throughout the modern age characterised the attitudes and policies of institutionalised

22 One of the few contemporary architectural theorists to acknowledge Bauman is Kim Dovey, who employs Bauman's concept of 'Liquid Modernity' in Kim Dovey, *Fluid Cities* (London: Routledge, 2005).

23 John Dewey, *The Quest for Certainty* (London: George Allen & Unwin, 1930), p. 268.

24 Some commentators have noted that Bauman's daughter, Irena, is an architect and this may account for some of the architectural threads in his work. See Peter Beilharz (ed.), *The Bauman Reader* (Oxford: Blackwell, 2001).

powers,'[25] we can begin to understand that Le Corbusier's excising proclamations are not just the rantings of a self-promoting polemicist but part of more general attitude. Le Corbusier is seen in the wider picture not as the inventor of modernism, but as an inevitable consequence of modernity.[26] He is a symptom not a cause. This simple truth comes as something of a shock to the inhabitants of the black box of architecture, brought up as they are on a determinist diet of cause and effect, in which architectural progress is announced in relation to previous architectural moments. Take for example the presumed baton passing of William Morris to Voysey to van de Velde to Mackintosh to Wright to Loos to Behrens to Gropius: these are Pevsner's Pioneers of the Modern Movement, a sequence of falling dominos that creates the effect of a completely self-contained world.[27] When Marx says that 'men make history but not in circumstances of their own choosing,' I am sure that he did not mean to exclude architects, and yet so many of the standard texts of architectural history remain within the tramlines of a self-referential architectural world, ignoring the other circumstances that frame architectural production. Bauman and other social theorists allow us to see that what we may have assumed as an architectural necessity, is in fact contingent on a much more powerful pattern of circumstances; they lever us into an acknowledgment of the contingency of architecture. And so to repeat, just to shake the inhabitants from their reverie: Le Corbusier and the others are not a cause of modernism; they are symptoms of modernity.

In this light what is striking is the way that the principles of architectural modernism, fit the more general pattern of the will to order that Bauman identifies as a central feature of modernity. Of all the 'impossible tasks that modernity set itself [...] the task of order (more precisely and most importantly, of order as task) stands out'.[28] Thus Bauman's argument that 'the typically modern practice [...] is the effort to exterminate ambivalence,'[29] puts into context Le Corbusier's Law of Ripolin with its 'elimination of the equivocal'.[30] It is not just Le Corbusier who fits this pattern, though he is used by Bauman to illustrate certain tendencies in modernism as an expression of the condition of modernity.[31] Bauman describes the modern age as one that has a 'vision of an orderly universe [...] the vision was of a hierarchical harmony reflected, as in a mirror, in the uncontested and incontestable pronouncements of reason'.[32] In a striking metaphor, Bauman describes the modern state as a gardening state,[33] bringing the unruly, the chaotic and the fearful (as represented by nature) under the rule of order, regularity and control (as represented by the garden). It is a metaphor that chimes with Zola's caustic dismissal of a new public square in Paris: 'It looks like a bit of nature did something wrong and was put into prison.'[34] The ordering of space can thus be seen as

25 Zygmunt Bauman, *Modernity and Ambivalence* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1991), p. 99.

26 Hilde Heynen's explanation of the difference between modernity (as a societal condition) and modernism (as an artistic and intellectual expression) is useful here: 'Modernity here is used in reference to a condition of living imposed upon individuals by the socio-economic process of modernisation. The experience of modernity involves a rupture with tradition and has a profound impact on ways of life and daily habits. The effects of this rupture are manifold. They are reflected in modernism, the body of artistic and intellectual ideas and movements that deal with the process of modernisation and with the experience of modernity.' Hilde Heynen, *Architecture and Modernity: A Critique* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1999), p. 1. The terms are also explored in Marshall Berman, *All That Is Solid Melts into Air: The Experience of Modernity* (New York: Viking Penguin, 1988), p. 16.

27 Nikolaus Pevsner, *Pioneers of Modern Design, from William Morris to Walter Gropius*, *Pelican Books* (London: Penguin Books, 1975).

28 Bauman, *Modernity and Ambivalence,* p. 4.

29 Ibid., p. 7.

30 Le Corbusier, *The Decorative Art of Today*, p. 192.

31 Zygmunt Bauman, *Globalization: The Human Consequences* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1998), pp. 41-43.

32 Zygmunt Bauman, *Intimations of Postmodernity* (London: Routledge, 1992), p. xiii.

33 i.e. in Bauman, *Modernity and Ambivalence,* p. 30.

34 From Zola, 'Les Squares'. As quoted in Denis Hollier, *Against Architecture: The Writings of Georges Bataille*, trans. Betsy Wing (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1989), p. xv.

part of a much wider ordering of society. Depending on whose argument you follow, architects are mere pawns in an overwhelming regime of power and control, or else architects are active agents in the execution of this power and control.[35] Either way, they are firmly situated in the real conditions that modernity throws up and not to be seen in some idealised set-apart space.

[35] The first approach is broadly that of Foucault, the second that of Lefebvre.

There are two key, and interrelated, aspects of Bauman's analysis of modernity and its ordering tendencies. On the one hand he argues that the will to order arose out of a fear of disorder. 'The kind of society that, retrospectively, came to be called modern,' he writes, 'emerged out of the discovery that human order is vulnerable, contingent and devoid of reliable foundations. That discovery was shocking. The response to the shock was a dream and an effort to make order solid, obligatory and reliably founded.'[36] The important word here is 'dream'. The possibility of establishing order over and above the flux of modernity is an illusion. It is an illusion because of the second aspect of his argument, namely that to achieve order one has to eliminate the other of order, but the other of order can never be fully erased.

[36] Bauman, *Intimations of Postmodernity*, p. xi.

> The struggle for order is not a fight of one definition against another, of one way of articulating reality against a competitive proposal. It is a fight of determination against ambiguity, of semantic precision against ambivalence, of transparency against obscurity, clarity against fuzziness. The other of order is not another order: chaos is its only alternative. The other of order is the miasma of the indeterminate and unpredictable. The other is the uncertainty, that source and archetype of all fear.[37]

[37] Bauman, *Modernity and Ambivalence*, p. 7.

The gardener gets rids of weeds as part of the controlling of nature. As we shall see with architecture, as with any project of the modern age, the more one attempts to eliminate the other of the order, the more it comes back to haunt one. Weeds always come back. The whiter the wall, the quicker it succumbs to dirt. In their pursuit of an idea (and an ideal) of order, architects have to operate in a state of permanent denial of the residual power of the other of order.

Order can thus only really exist as a form of knowledge from which will issue a series of abstracted procedures such as design, manipulation, management and engineering (these being core activities of the modern age for Bauman).[38] As a form of knowledge, order is subjected to the modern tests of truth and reason and in a self-legitimating manner passes them with flying colours. Order is seen as rational and logical because it has been created out of the rules of reason and logic. Nietzsche is very clear about the limits of this closed circuit: 'if somebody hides a thing behind a bush, seeks it out and finds it in the self-same place, then there is not much to boast of respecting this seeking and finding; thus, however, matters stand with the pursuit of seeking and finding "truth" within the realm of reason.'[39] The tests of truth and reason are carried out in a sterile

[38] Ibid.

[39] Friedrich Nietzsche, 'On Truth and Falsity in Their Extramoral Sense' in W. Shibles (ed.), *Essays on Metaphor* (Whitewater: The Language Press, 1972), p. 7.

laboratory, doors sealed against the contaminations that the world would inflict. Herein lies the problem that is associated with the autonomy of architecture. 'Truth found inside a tightly sealed room,' as Lev Shevstov notes, 'is hardly of any use outside; judgements made inside a room which, for fear of draught is never aired, are blown away with the first gust of wind.'[40] Ideas developed away from the world may achieve a semblance of purity — of truth and reason — but this purity will always be tormented by the fact that the knowledge has arisen from within the world and eventually will have to return to the world. Agnes Heller summarises the paradox: 'One is confronted with the task of obtaining *true knowledge* about a *world,* whilst being aware that this knowledge is situated in that world.'[41] Her solution gives no solace: 'in order to overcome this paradox an *Archimedean point outside contemporaneity* must be found. However, this is exactly what cannot be done: the prisonhouse of the present day only allows for illusory escape.'[42] We are left with the illusion of order but closer inspection reveals that the underlying reality is rapidly unravelling that semblance.

40 As quoted in Bauman, *Modernity and Ambivalence*, p. 82.

41 Agnes Heller, 'From Hermeneutics in Social Science toward a Hermeneutics of Social Science', *Theory and Society* (18) (1989): 291.

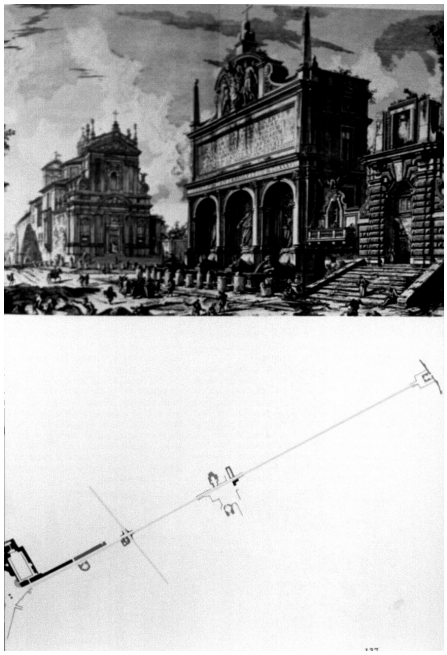
42 Ibid., p. 292.

Our architect Henry, the one who saw toys as rogue objects, clearly found architecture too unorderly and too unorderable, and so he stopped practising. Instead he set up a company that manufactures fireplaces, the Platonic Fireplace Company. He finds peace in the controllable gas flame playing over little stone cubes, spheres and pyramids in a semblance of order.

The Ridding of Contingency

In Edmund Bacon's classic work on town planning, *The Design of Cities*, the titles of the sections are explicit in summarising the ordering thrust of the argument. Passing through chapters entitled *Imposition of Order, Development of Order* and *Stirrings of a New Order* one arrives at a page that clearly presents the issues at stake.[43] On it there are two illustrations of Rome. At the top is one of Piranesi's *Vedute di Roma* etchings. The detail of drawing almost overwhelms one in its inclusion of low life, weather, fragments, mess, broken roads, event and vegetating cornices. Each time one looks at it one finds something new. Below is Bacon's interpretation of the same site. A few sparse colour-coded lines connecting up isolated monuments; all is understandable in a glance. One can almost sense Bacon's relief in making the drawing, in his ruthless editing of the contingent. Out of sight, out of mind. The world, emptied of uncertainty, is now controlled and controllable. Order all round.

43 Edmund Bacon, *Design of Cities* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1967), p. 137.



Bacon's two drawings make explicit a general architectural tendency, that of ridding the world of contingency so as to better manipulate that world into (a semblance of) order. In a telling passage in *When the Cathedrals Were White* Le Corbusier is waiting at Bordeaux railway station and notes down what he sees: 'The station is disgusting. Not an employee on the crowded platform. An official with a gilded insignia does not know when the Paris train will arrive. At the office of the stationmaster they are evasive, no one knows exactly. General uproar, offensive filthiness, the floor is black, broken up, the immense windows are black. At 9.00pm the express stops at platform no 4 completely cluttered with boxes of vegetables, fish, fruit, hats, returned empty bags.' This short description tells us all we need to know of Le Corbusier's fears, of his 'other'. Dirt, unruly crowds, broken time, inexact responses, damaged construction, the lack of white, and the contamination of categories (food with clothing). Chaos and transgression all around. But what is really revealing is that Le Corbusier then slyly hints as to why he is in Bordeaux station. He is on his way to Pessac, the new modern quarter that he has designed for Henry Frugès in the suburbs of Bordeaux. It is as if on his journey from the station to the suburb, Le Corbusier casts off the contingent presences and so arrives at Pessac cleansed. The buildings there are pure, ordered, clean, progressive — everything that Bordeaux station is not. He has accomplished 'the miracle of ineffable space [...] a boundless depth opens up (which) drives away contingent presences'.[44] Well, he has accomplished this in his head. Once he turns his back, as we shall see, things begin to unravel.

It is important, however, not to see Bacon and Le Corbusier as fringe figures waging lonely wars against disorder. They are part of a much broader trend. If the will to order is an identifying feature of the modern project, then the means to that end lies in the elimination of the other of order; it lies in the ridding of contingency. For Bauman, contingency is the twin of order: 'Awareness of the world's contingency and the idea of order as the goal and the outcome of the practice of ordering were born together, as twins; perhaps even Siamese twins.' The reason is simple: one does not

44 Le Corbusier, *The Modulor*, trans. Peter De Francia and Anna Bostock (London: Faber and Faber, 1961), p. 30.

have the need for order unless one has experienced disorder, 'one does not conceive of regularity unless one is buffeted by the unexpected [...] Contingency was discovered together with the realisation that if one wants things and events to be regular, repeatable and predictable, one needs to do something about it; they won't be such on their own.'[45] And what one does is to act as the surgeon, separating the Siamese twins, knowing that one will probably be sacrificed so that the privileged one, the one with the better structure, can survive. Contingency cannot be tolerated in the modern project, be it architectural, political, social or philosophical.

Philosophically, contingency has been demeaned ever since the initial pairing by Aristotle of contingency with necessity.[46] As one of his modal categories, contingency becomes the 'not necessary', and in the history of ideas subsequently becomes associated with, at best, the 'limitation of reason'[47] or, at worst, with the other of reason, irrationality. If a contingent event is 'an element of reality impervious to full rationalisation,'[48] then it is not surprising that in the realm of reason, which typifies the modern project, the contingent event is dismissed as beneath the dignity of explanation. It is consistent therefore for a philosopher of reason such as Jürgen Habermas to talk of 'paralysing experiences with contingency.'[49]

Contingency must be suppressed as a philosophical category if it is not to undermine the authority of reason. Probably the most subtle working of this argument is in Hegel. In order to achieve 'the essential task' of his *Science of Logic,* which is 'to *overcome* the contingency,'[50] Hegel first introduces the *need* for contingency, which he beautifully describes as the 'unity of actuality and possibility'.[51] Contingency adds a certain concreteness to reality which avoids the pitfalls of abstracted thinking.[52] 'For Hegel reality would not be self-sufficient if it did not contain its own irrationality.'[53] He therefore allows contingency to come to the surface in order to better push it down in the establishment of the rule of logic.

I introduce this philosophical interlude of the ridding of contingency not to show off, but as the polished intellectual tip of a much bigger iceberg. For Bauman modern times are 'an era of bitter and relentless war against ambivalence'.[54] His most intense example of the war on ambivalence is the Holocaust.[55] This genocide was the elimination of the other, but this terrible act was made possible, in the first instance, by the dehumanising of the world brought about by, among other factors, the suppression of ambivalence and contingency in the pursuit of a more ordered and 'progressive' society. Bauman's argument is that we should resist the temptation to identify the Holocaust as a one-off event, circumscribed

45 Bauman, *Intimations of Postmodernity*, p. xii.

46 In Aristotle, *De Interpretatione*, 22 b11 ff.

47 'In classical metaphysics contingency has always denoted a limitation of reason.' George di Giovanni, 'The Category of Contingency in Hegelian Logic' in Lawrence S. Stepelevich (ed.) *Selected Essays on G.W.F. Hegel* (Atlantic Highlands, NJ: Humanities Press, 1993), p. 42.

48 Ibid.

49 Jürgen Habermas, *Postmetaphysical Thinking: Philosophical Essays* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1992), p. 141.

50 di Giovanni, 'The Category of Contingency', p. 46.

51 Issues of contingency are discussed in *Science of Logic*, Vol. 1, Book2, Section 3, Chapter 2A. The quote is from G.W.F Hegel, *Science of Logic*, trans. A.V Miller (London: George Allen & Unwin, 1969), p. 545.

52 'Hegel always demanded specificity or what he called concreteness... Few philosophers have been so critical of the type of abstract claims that lack deteminateness or specificity. This is the primary defect of knowledge that Hegel called understanding which is to be contrasted with the concrete determinate knowledge of reason (Verkunft).' Richard J. Bernstein, 'Why Hegel Now?' in *Philosophical Profiles : Essays in a Pragmatic Mode* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1986), pp. 157-158.

53 di Giovanni, 'The Category of Contingency', p. 56.

54 Bauman, *Modernity and Ambivalence*, p. 3.

55 Zygmunt Bauman, *Modernity and the Holocaust* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1989).

by its very 'Germanness' and the so-called Jewish problem. Nor should we believe that progressive and supposedly liberalising tendencies will banish the possibility of such genocide ever happening again. Instead we should see the Holocaust as a consequence of the patterns and processes of modernity, in particular the way that the modern world distances us from taking moral responsibility for our actions.

To go to the furthest shores of humanity (but shores that Bauman argues are maybe not that far from normal life after all) is to begin to understand that the war on ambivalence and the ridding of contingency are not benign processes. It might appear that the normalising pursuit of order, and certainty and order is self-evidently sensible. Surely the abolishment of uncertainty must mean that our lives are more certain? Surely the collective and measured agreement of morals is better than the subjective response of impulsive individuals? Surely it is better to share common goals than to promote fracturing contradictions? But in fact the normalising disguises a stealthy process of marginalisation of difference, as William Connolly so convincingly argues in his *Politics and Ambiguity*. 'The irony of a normalising democracy,' he writes, 'is that it [...] tends to be accompanied by the marginalisation of new sectors of the population or newly defined sectors of the self [...] and the suppression of this ambiguity tends to license the insidious extension of normalisation into new corners of life.'[56] What is normal to one group may be abnormal to another. The problem is that the definitions of the normal are controlled by the powerful and, as generations of feminists have reminded us, this leads to the suppression of various sectors of society under the guise of rational ordering. The ridding of contingency, in whatever field, thus inevitably brings political consequences with it, in so much it is predicated on the establishment of a certain set of values that smother the cacophony of different voices beneath; Le Corbusier's abhorrence of the 'general uproar' is the other side of his will to impose his value system. However, all is not lost, because the driving out of contingent presences is not the once and for all act that Le Corbusier and many others would have us believe.

[56] William Connolly, *Politics and Ambiguity* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1987), pp. 8-9.

I am on a visit to the McLaren headquarters designed by Norman Foster to house the production facilities, offices and associated spin-off companies of the Formula One racing group. Many people are saying that this is Foster's ideal project. A heady mix of technology transfer, undisclosed (i.e. huge) budget, speed, minimal tolerances, vorsprung durch technik, *male hormones and a client (Ron Dennis) who is famously perfectionist and famously demanding. There was a danger that he and Norman (who is thought to share these qualities) might clash, but they are now firm friends (the building is a success). The two even share the same birthday. How spooky is that? They make cars here, but do not think grease monkeys and porn calendars. Think white gloves sterile laboratories with sealed doors. I joke that the specification for the cleaning contract must be longer than that for the building contract, but am met with stony faces. Neither do I get many laughs either when a group of silhouetted muscles in black uniforms approach us and I ask if they have come off the production line as well. I was beginning to lose patience by then, a decline hastened by a remote control soap dispenser that had gone berserk and sprayed liquid soap over my expensive new shirt. It was not just my suppressed anger at the senseless waste of the whole operation, boys with toys in a sport that effectively sanctioned global warming. It was not just that the exhibited cars had a better view than the workers. It was more that there was something deeply disturbing about the silence, the absolute control and the regime of power that the architecture asserted. 'Don't the engineers mind being seen and watched?' I ask, referring to the huge windows that put the whole process on display. 'They get used to it,' comes the terse reply that for once eschews the techno-corporate spin used to justify the rest of the building ('Ronspeak' as petrolheads affectionately call it).*

Counting Sheep

If Le Corbusier had returned to Pessac in 1964, he would have found a very different vision of modern life to the one he had left for the incoming tenants some thirty-five years before. Open terraces had been filled in.

Steel strip windows replaced with divided timber ones complete with vernacular shutters. Pitched roofs added over leaky flat ones. Stick on bricks, Moorish features, window cills and other forms of decoration applied over the original stripped walls. All in all a straightforward defilement of the master's guiding principles by an ungrateful, even unworthy, public. Or is it?

Philippe Boudon, in his meticulous documentation of the inhabitation of Pessac, argues that the combination of Le Corbusier's initial design and the inhabitants' irrepressible DIY tendencies, led to a certain inevitability that the purity of the original would be overwhelmed by the urges of everyday life. 'The fact of the matter,' writes Henri Lefebvre, the philosopher of the everyday, in his introduction to Boudon's book, 'is that in Pessac Le Corbusier produced a kind of architecture that lent itself to conversion and sculptural ornamentation [...] And what did the occupants add? Their needs.'[57]

Their needs. As simple as that. In fact so simple as to make one wonder why a great philosopher should feel the need to note it. But it is necessary to state it with full philosophical force in order to acknowledge that architecture can never fully control the actions of users. In Architecture, as it wants to be, needs are cajoled into functions and thus subjected to normalising control. Functions (mathematical, scientific and linear) are, however, very different from needs (full as they are of desires, differences and life), and in the end of course the needs of the inhabitants at Pessac would well up to claim the architecture. The distance between functions and needs is just one of the many rifts that contribute to the gap between architecture as it wants to be and architecture as it is. I have already fallen foul of this gap in my use of just the architectural 'greats' and their writings to introduce my argument. I am effectively setting them up, better to make them fall into the gap. Clearly not all architects or architecture accord to the tenets of these greats, but to a large extent architectural culture has been shaped by them. So whilst it may be easy to parody these writings, I do it not out of mere dismissal, but in order to 'break up the ordered surfaces' that we might have taken for granted, and in so doing, more positively reconstruct alternatives.[58]

The gap between architecture as described in these writings and architecture as it exists in time, partially arises out of the crucial mistake of confusing architecture as metaphor with architecture as reality. There is a long tradition of philosophers using the *figure* of the architect to denote rational authority. The '*architeckton*' is used by Aristotle to illustrate the commanding relationship of theory and practice.[59] In the architect, Plato 'discovered a figure who under the aegis of "making" is able to withstand "becoming"'.[60] And, most forcefully, there is Descartes who argues 'that

57 Philippe Boudon, *Lived-in Architecture*, trans. Gerald Onn (London: Lund Humphries, 1972), pp. i-ii. A visit in 2003 revealed that the changes documented by Boudon are now themselves being ripped out as the project is 'restored' back to its original state. Inevitably, many of the new inhabitants appeared to be architects or designers.

58 I am absolutely aware that in the exploitation of this parody, I sometimes make sweeping generalisations; 'architecture' tends to stand for everyone when there are clearly architects operating out there who do not fit my description of the profession. However, I am trying to use parody knowingly. I do not simply employ it in its negative conception as a mocking dismissal of ludicrous or outmoded rituals. For more on the various ways in which parody has been used, both negatively and positively see Margaret Rose, *Parody: Ancient, Modern, and Postmodern* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), pp. 186-90. As she argues 'the restriction of parody to the more negative term in some modern or late-modern theories and uses has now been superceded by a "post-modern" understanding of both its complex meta-fictional and comic aspects (which) may mean that it will be given some even more complex and positive functions in the future.'

59 For instance in the *Metaphysics,* Book III, Part 2 and the *Nicomachaean Ethics*, Book VI, Part 4.

60 Karatani, *Architecture as Metaphor*, p. 6.

buildings undertaken and completed by a single architect are usually more attractive and better planned than those which several have tried to patch up by adapting old walls built for different purposes [...] the latter of which [...] you would say it is chance rather than the will of man using reason that placed them so'.[61] The banishment of chance, the authority of the individual, the triumph of the rational, the building of the new on cleared ground — these are identified by Descartes as the defining attributes of the architect, and so by analogy are then assumed as the attributes of the philosopher as rational subject. It is an alliance of mutual convenience. For the philosopher there is a necessity to reflect the metaphysical in the physical, because without the material world as grounding the immaterial remains just that — immaterial. So the analogous actions of the architect (as originator of stable constructions) serve as a useful source of legitimation for philosophical discourse. For the architect the reflection of the philosopher (and in particular the Cartesian philosopher of the rational) is a means of establishing authority through establishing a supposedly detached, objective knowledge base. And so the figure of architect/philosopher is created.

In reading Descartes, one might assume that he is referring to the actual actions of the architect and thus that the figure of the architect/philosopher is based on some kind of worldly reality. It may be necessary for both sides to maintain at least an illusion of this reality — without this illusion the figure loses credence — but it is in fact a conceit. The figure of the architect/philosopher is simply a convenient metaphor. This is revealed most clearly in the relationship being constituted around the common use of language. The terms of architecture are used to underpin the foundations of metaphysics — to structure knowledge. Thus when Descartes begins the *First Meditation* with the words, '*to start again from the foundations,*'[62] it is made clear that the new philosophy of reason is to be demonstrated in terms of a new construction. Later Heidegger will describe Kant's project in terms of the building trade, with Kant (as architect) laying the foundations from which the construction of metaphysics is projected as a building plan. Kant 'draws and sketches' reason's 'outline' whose 'essential moment' is the 'architectonic, the blueprint projected as the essential structure of pure reason.'[63]

In these examples, and many others, the language of architecture is being used *metaphorically*. It is the apparent stability and the presumed logic of architecture that appeals to the foundational aspirations of traditional metaphysics, providing a form of legitimation for the construction of a philosophy. The power of this association is such that Heidegger can begin to effect a critique of Western metaphysics through an exposure of the weaknesses of its architectural metaphors. The architectural image of stability disguises an inherent weakness in metaphysics, which in fact

61 Descartes, *Discourse*, Part II, Paragraph 1.

62 Descartes, *Meditations*, Meditation 1, Paragraph 1.

63 Martin Heidegger, *Kant and the Problem of Metaphysics* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1990), p. 2.

is not built on *terra firma* but an abyss.[64] As Mark Wigley rightly notes, in this context 'architecture is a cover and philosophy takes cover in architecture.'[65]

This is not to suggest that architects actually read all this difficult stuff and thereby get a deluded sense of their own importance as the mirrors of rational thought. But it is to suggest that the metaphor of architecture as a stable authority is so powerful, as to make one believe that this is also the reality of architecture. The danger is not so much when philosophers come to believe in the myths that this metaphor promotes; it is when architects do. The Japanese philosopher Kojin Karatani argues that this has happened, 'architecture as a metaphor dominated [...] even architecture itself [...]'[66] It is the *metaphorical* will to order *and no more than that*. We have already seen what happens when one starts to confuse the metaphorical for the real: the deluded belief that architecture can be autonomous; the resulting self-referentiality; the actual will to order; the concomitant suppression of the contingent. To criticise, as I have done, these aspects of architectural culture is to take easy pickings, like kicking a man when he is down, because such architectural culture conceived in all its purity can put up no resistance to the dirty realism of my boot. In the end what I am criticising is not really architecture, but a fiction of it — a fiction that is so powerful that we would all wish to believe it, but a fiction nonetheless. This pure stuff is not architecture, because architecture is to the core contingent.[67]

In one of his early books, Della tranquillita dell'animo, the Renaissance architect and theorist Leon Battista Alberti recommends that to settle oneself in times of stress or anxiety one can find solace in architectural reverie: 'and sometimes it has happened that not only have I grown calm in my restlessness of spirit, but I have thought of things most rare and memorable. Sometimes I have designed and built finely proportioned buildings in my mind ... and I have occupied myself with constructions of this kind until overcome with sleep.'[68] Normal people resort to counting sheep to get to sleep. Renaissance architects resort to architectural proportion. Sheep (for urban dwellers) and fine architecture both sit in that twilight zone between day and night, reality and dream — and when one wakes in the morning one is left with no more than a chimeric memory, revealing the perfection of form as a mirage never to be attained.

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64 Martin Heidegger, *An Introduction to Metaphysics* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1959), p. 93.

65 Wigley, *White Walls, Designer Dresses*, p. 39.

66 Karatani, *Architecture as Metaphor*, p. xxxii.

67 One of the reviewers of this paper made some extremely perceptive comments. The first was that I had not framed what I meant by contingency so that 'contingency might become anything – disorder, dirt, new empiricism, accidents, materiality, informe...'. The other was that in pairing contingency with order there is the danger 'that their relationship is governed by a complex overdetermination'. Both of these points are right and, to some extent, I attempt to address them in my forthcoming book, *Architecture Depends* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2008), of which this paper is an early chapter.

68 quoted in Franco Borsi, *Leon Battista Alberti*, trans. Rudolf Carpanini (Oxford: Phaidon, 1977), p. 13. Borsi goes on to note that: 'The nights of the fifteenth century were populated with images: Paolo di Dono lay awake at night thinking of "sweet perspective" and Leonardo was to praise 'the straying of the imagination over the superficial features of forms when you lie in bed in the dark.'

field:
a free journal for architecture

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ISSN: 1755-068
www.field-journal.org
vol.1 (1)
A quick conversation about architecture

A quick conversation about the theory and practice of control, authorship and creativity in architecture

Kim Trogal & Leo Care

In mainstream architectural practice in the UK, we find that most architects are largely concerned with the issues of 'determination' and 'definition'. At each stage of the process aspects of the project become increasingly identified, categorised and specified. In this context indeterminacy is a negative term, synonymous with weakness; understood as creating a risk for the legal, financial and professional position of the individual. As such, architects seek to eradicate indeterminacy from their work.

The adoption of certain tools and processes serve to limit and fix aspects of the project and the nature of the relationships that create it. We suggest that these processes are adopted within a particular and established context that often escapes questioning. It is to this we turn our attention, and through the form of dialogue, we examine critically some of the tools and languages of traditional practice and suggest some alternatives.

Foreword

At the conference from which this publication developed, our intention was to encourage our student audience to consider what the topic of the conference might mean for them as future practicing architects. We wanted to use the opportunity to pose the question, both to ourselves and to our audience, 'How might ideas of indeterminacy alter how we go abut practicing architecture?' Through our conversation, we wanted to emphasise that the work presented by speakers should not be taken as isolated theory that is abstractly 'applied' to practice, rather it should be understood as something that can transform our way of thinking and working. By reflecting on our recent experiences and questioning established processes in practice, we wanted to use the opportunity to think about how we might begin to practice differently.

We approached the conference from two differing personal positions. Having shared our architectural education together at Sheffield University a few years ago, we have each worked for different architects, but shared similar concerns over our modes of practice; in search of something more ethical, transforming and creative. In the last year, Leo has completed the professional practice course (Part 3) and Kim has begun a research degree (PhD). We were interested in allowing these contrasting experiences to meet in an informal and inquisitive way, over our shared concerns. We were the final speakers of the day and so in this position we chose to begin a dialogue, to initiate questioning and debate; specifically around the political potential of indeterminacy in relation to how we go about doing things as architects.

In the introduction to her essay, 'The Invisible Mask', Andrea Khan argues that architecture 'divides, organises and manages' and as such constitutes a form of control and power. This she argues is achieved through enclosure, that is to say, through the delineation of particular spaces for particular uses and this she argues, is 'the political nature of architecture'.[1] In a similar way, we might view that within the architectural field, intellectual property and knowledge is defined and maintained through the establishment of different boundaries within the process. As the delineation of spaces for particular uses constitutes a form of control, so does the delineation of various activities and duties, by specific groups or individuals, within a process. This delineation is a means of controlling the process and hence invariably leads to a control of its architectural product. This is also then, part of the 'political nature of architecture'.

[1] Andrea Kahn 'The Invisible Mask', in Andrea Kahn (ed.) *Drawing, Building Text: Essays in Architectural Theory* (New York: Princeton Architectural Press, 1991), pp. 85-106.

Along similar lines, and following the work of David Harvey, Katherine Shonfield connects the fixed delineation of space, architecture and its associated process directly to the development of capitalism. She writes:

> The regular delineation of space — whether at the micro scale of a component, as in the post war building industry, or at the macro scale of the city — smoothes the way to the commodification of space allowing it to be bought or sold as other products.[2]

Again, we can extend this argument to consider architecture's associated processes, and it is here that tension arises between architectural education, training and the profession. Jeremy Till has written:

> There is a familiar complaint from the architectural profession about architectural education: 'You are not preparing students for practice' to which I reply 'which practice?' Underlying the question is an assumption that there is a single model of practice to which the profession aspires and it is the task of education to supply students who will passively serve and support this model.[3]

In our dialogue. we wanted to suggest that the delineation of architectural education is also a significant issue, and that the Part 3 course serves as professional training at the expense of a more critical practice. By taking indeterminacy as a specific example, we wanted to highlight the division of theory and practice in architectural pedagogical structures, and moreover to suggest indeterminacy has a radical implication for architectural processes, education and our ideas of professionalism. By discussing our own experiences of education and the profession, we wanted to highlight how indeterminacy in architectural processes is perceived as a weakness rather than a potential strength. In fact in this context, indeterminacy is something that we as architects usually try to rid ourselves of as we continually seek to define aspects of a project. Indeterminacy is seen as a risk and increasingly so as a project develops.

The mechanisms and tools we develop as architects, generally reflect the idea that indeterminacy is a weakness. The formal delineation and determination of architectural processes, acts to control cost, design authorship and built quality of a building. In this arena, indeterminacy is understood to create a risk to the legal, financial and professional position of the individual. As such, architects adopt standard tools and processes to safeguard themselves, and thus seek to eradicate indeterminacy from their work. Francesca Hughes writes:

> We go to great lengths to both separate ourselves from and control the act of making buildings. These lengths, the production of complex documentation in order to direct construction by others... define the architect [...] like all forms of discipline, the less effective it is, the more

[2] Katherine Shonfield, 'The Use of Fiction to Reinterpret Architectural and Urban Space' in Iain Borden and Jane Rendell (eds.) *Intersections: Architectural Histories and Critical Theories* (London: Routledge, 2000), p. 310.

[3] Jeremy Till, 'Five Questions for Architectural Education' paper presented to the RIBA, UK (1997).

> excessively it is employed and the more unbending, frequent and extreme its application is likely to be.[4]

At each stage of the process, be it development of the brief, initial designs or the production of working drawings, aspects of the project become increasingly identified, categorised and specified. The tools employed by architects in practice within this process, such as the RIBA stages of work, the establishment of tender processes and the adoption of standard contracts, serve to limit and fix aspects of the project and the nature of the relationships it takes to create it.

The tools adopted by practice are chosen within a particular and established economic and political context, and it is precisely this context we sought to question here. We wanted to emphasise that to work with indeterminacy requires new tools, new ways of working and ultimately requires a rethinking our professional roles.[5] We began with the premise that rather than posing a risk to practice, indeterminacy is essential in creative processes. We felt that in order to be creative, we need to be open to things, places and people. In considering indeterminacy and architectural processes, we associate indeterminacy with openness and generosity to others.

We felt that if we, and our audience, were to take the ideas of the conference into our working lives we will have to learn to make space for it.

Kim Trogal: Leo, after 10 years, you are now officially a fully qualified architect. Congratulations. To reflect on our experiences, I have the feeling that in the UK we are stuck with the idea that part 2 is 'about theory', and therefore irrelevant to practice, but part 3 is something completely different; it's 'about practice' and therefore irrelevant to the rest of the school of architecture.[6] And so it constructs the idea that theory and practice are divorced from each other. Do you feel your experience reflects this?

Leo Care: To help me answer that I had a small diagram, which was very crude, but it was essentially somebody stood at the beginning of a series of paths and that was to try to represent how this course — the Part 2 course — is all about finding your own way; its about people offering you opportunities. Situations arise and you choose to follow, to explore different avenues. My feeling doing the part 3 course, was that all those avenues that had opened up to you suddenly converged; they came together to form a single route that you had to go down. So, in a sense the possibility of making space for indeterminacy was completely taken away from you. I think this goes back to what Jeremy[7] said this morning, about the profession and architects yearning for simplicity and not opening our eyes to the muckiness of life, or affording people the chance to look more openly at situations.

4 Francesca Hughes, 'Stabat Mater: on standing in for matter' in Doina Petrescu (ed.) *Altering Practices: Feminine Politics and Poetics of Space* (London: Routledge, 2007), p. 267.

5 Katie Lloyd Thomas has drawn a connection between the establishment of particular architectural drawings in the process and their connection to the profession. She writes: 'Although it is often said that architectural drawings allows communication between the architect and the builder, historically it has produced a separation [...] The standardisation of architectural drawing [...] coincides with the emergence of the profession.' Katie Lloyd Thomas 'Building While Being In It: Notes on drawing "otherhow"', in Petrescu (ed.) *Altering Practices*, pp. 89-112.

6 In the UK, the title 'Architect' is legally protected, for which the Part 3 qualification is a legal requirement: you cannot call yourself an architect without it. Currently, 'Part 2' is a postgraduate course, usually 2 years full-time accredited by the RIBA (Royal Institute of British Architects). 'Part 3' also refers to the professional practice course, usually a part-time course undertaken over a year at a University, whilst the student is in full-time employment in an architectural practice.

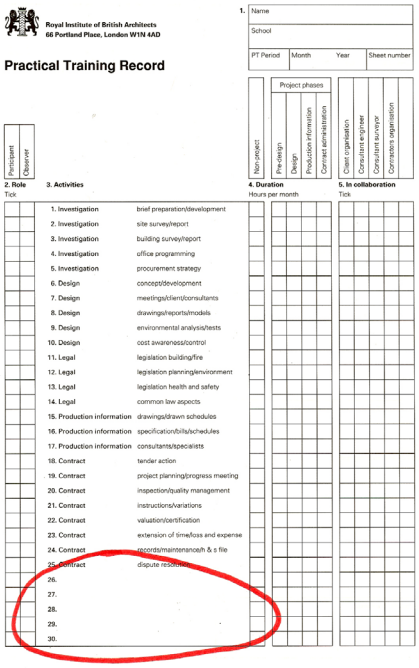
7 Jeremy Till, 'Architecture and Contingency', *field:*, 1(1) (2007): 124-140.

KT: Do you think the Part 3 course reflects a view that indeterminacy is synonymous with weakness? Or that it cannot accept indeterminacy in practice?

LC: Yes. I think it does. The Part 3 course is all about learning a set of protocols. It's about learning the way that you should work and that is a very established way of working in practice. The course doesn't recognise different ways of working; it is very set and very linear. I found that very difficult to cope with; there not being the opportunity to try different things or explore different possibilities.

KT: Maybe we can talk about the dreaded log sheets? (Fig. 1). They raise questions about the way we categorise and regulate our experience. I don't know about you, but I would say a lot of my experience doesn't fit with those forms. The forms had a series of categories that break down the process of how you go about doing an architectural project.

LC: There are 26 categories and then four blank stages at the end. It's a linear process, a very defined package of things, with boxes you've got to tick off to prove that you've had enough experience, and the four little segments at the bottom that you are allowed to fill in are your only chance to express something.



Royal Institute of British Architects
66 Portland Place, London W1N 4AD

Practical Training Record

1. Name
School
PT Period | Month | Year | Sheet number

2. Role (Tick)		3. Activities		4. Duration (Hours per month)					5. In collaboration (Tick)				
Participant	Observer			Non-project	Project phases: Pre-design	Design	Production information	Contract administration	Client organisation	Consultant engineer	Consultant surveyor	Contractor organisation	
		1. Investigation	brief preparation/development										
		2. Investigation	site survey/report										
		3. Investigation	building survey/report										
		4. Investigation	office programming										
		5. Investigation	procurement strategy										
		6. Design	concept/development										
		7. Design	meetings/client/consultants										
		8. Design	drawings/reports/models										
		9. Design	environmental analysis/tests										
		10. Design	cost awareness/control										
		11. Legal	legislation building/fire										
		12. Legal	legislation planning/environment										
		13. Legal	legislation health and safety										
		14. Legal	common law aspects										
		15. Production information	drawings/drawn schedules										
		16. Production information	specification/bills/schedules										
		17. Production information	consultants/specialists										
		18. Contract	tender action										
		19. Contract	project planning/progress meeting										
		20. Contract	inspection/quality management										
		21. Contract	instructions/variations										
		22. Contract	valuation/certification										
		23. Contract	extension of time/loss and expense										
		24. Contract	records/maintenance/h & s file										
		25. Contract	dispute resolution										
		26.											
		27.											
		28.											
		29.											
		30.											

Fig.1. Kim's sample Practical Training Log Sheet. Image: Kim Trogal.

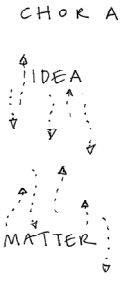
KT: The fact that they're at the end … implies they're not related to any of the other stages. I used to work for a practice called 'fluid' and I would say much of my experience there would not be considered, lets say 'valid', in terms of that way of measuring and assessing your experience. I was looking at masterplanning for areas that required regeneration, where you design the brief for the project and the proposal with members of the community. So a lot of my work was about designing a process rather than a thing; designing processes of research, of ways to work with people, or working on other more art-based projects. A lot of people would put that into a different category and say as a profession its not part of our work. Yet we are architects doing these things, and there is no space for it on those forms — I would still call it architecture, part of architecture.

Currently I work in a traditional private practice, and … I think what's strikingly obvious, is that there is an attempt to establish everything in advance, to fix everything as quickly as you can before you even know who's going to build it with you … it shows the desire in formal processes to avoid uncertainty …

One thing I did was to draw a diagram,[8] that was a bit naïve to draw … about the idea of 'chora' from Plato, describing the relationship of ideas and matter; let's say theory and practice and the relationship between the two. Between these two he describes a space, which he calls 'chora' … the unbounded, undefined, limitless, formless, indeterminate space, the space in between these two things, where you are moving from one to the other, and it is precisely in this space where things change, where things are transformed and come into being.[9]

Alongside this, for effect, we place the RIBA stages of work. Stages A-L, where you have a completely linear process, where you move from idea to matter in one direction only and at each stage you determine more and more what you are trying to do. Jeremy referred to an ordering tendency we have, and I think that applies to process as well as a desire to order physical space.[10] I'd suggest that the way to deal with contingency or indeterminacy is, for us at least, an issue of process. So at each stage you are determining things, but all in advance. As a model of working, it can't accommodate participative processes very well, for instance.

One project we did together, when we were students, looked at language and architectural processes. We proposed a double analogy; we took a recipe for a cake and re-wrote it to read as a recipe for site-mixed concrete, and then we took a part of the National Building Specification site work standards for concrete, and re-wrote them to read as instructions for making a cake. We were trying to critique the language we use in industry, to show how abstract it is (and in places absurd) and that it assumes a certain process. The specification is a legally binding document from an architect to a contractor, and so by using that tool you are assuming and setting up, deliberately or otherwise, a very particular relationship and a very particular way of working. So we thought that other forms of communication, like the recipe, can offer the opportunity to leave gaps or openings, for people, for input on the side of the maker, or for someone other than the author or the architect. It incorporates indeterminacy.[11]



8 Diagram of 'chora'; Kim Trogal.

9 'For Plato, chora is that which, lacking any substance or identity of its own, falls between the ideal and the material; it is the receptacle or nurse that brings material into being, without being material [...] the space of the in between is that which is not a space, a space without boundaries of its own [...] The space of the in between is the locus for social, cultural and natural transformations.' Elizabeth Grosz, *Architecture from the Outside: Essays in Virtual and Real Space* (London: MIT Press, 2002), pp. 91-92.

10 Till, 'Architecture and Contingency'.

11 See also Kim Trogal, 'Open Kitchen' in Doina Petrescu (ed.) *Altering Practices: Feminine Politics and Poetics of Space* (London: Routledge, 2007), pp. 167-188.

If you want to work with indeterminacy, you can't readily use the existing tools and processes of standard practice. You'll need to radically alter them or invent your own.

Leo … do you find that you often have to invent new tools?

LC: Yes, I just wanted to talk about a very small project that we undertook, to create a very modest piece of architecture essentially, which is a temporary youth shelter in a heritage park in Sheffield. On this project, we tried to change the way that we work and the way we authored … the project in order to create space for other people to be involved, and we did that in a number of ways.

Firstly, by working directly with people interested in using the youth shelter, which were local young people in the area. We went through a simple consultation process (Fig. 2) that involved actually building things, which I think is something people rarely do nowadays, young or old … Established systems of process can actually stop people being involved but its something we believe in. That's the first stage.

Fig.2. Abbeyfield Park Shelter Project, consultation. Image: Bureau of Design Research.

Then, this project wasn't to be built by a contractor but at the same time it had to conform to building regulations and pass planning approval as well. But we weren't sure who was going to make and build the project and that's something maybe we're not used to in practice. The person who had commissioned the work was a park ranger, who has a certain skill in creating things, but he wasn't a contractor. Therefore the language that we used, the way we communicated with him and others had to be different.

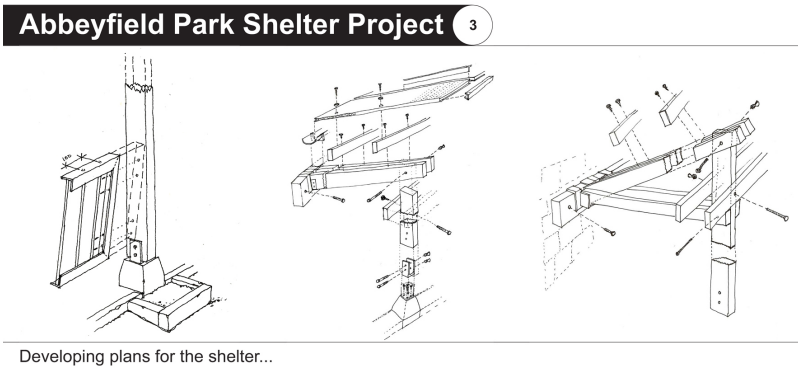


Fig. 3. Abbeyfield Park Shelter Project, DIY drawings. Image: Bureau of Design Research.

So we developed different techniques, more a kind of DIY series of drawings, in order to allow different people to come in and to be involved in the creation of the project (Fig. 3). We were discussing these images last night, one is an invitation to join in with the building (Fig. 4) and that's not something we suggested, that's not an invitation from the architects; that was from the person building it. It was an invitation to anybody passing by to get involved in the project.

Fig. 4. Abbeyfield Park Shelter Project, a modest invitation. Image: Bureau of Design Research.

Again, I think it's something that happens very rarely and you could argue that on a more complex, bigger building it might not be possible, but I think on a small-scale it really changes the roles people play, and particularly the role we played as architect, is removed and no longer the sole author of the project. We don't have complete control over what's created.

It was really nice — I went to visit the site at one point and a group of young people walked past and did join in with the project. They didn't know what was going on, the person constructing it introduced them to what was happening, told them about the tools they were using, and they simply got on and joined in. It's something that rarely happens and is quite unique in architecture.

KT: One thing I thought, was is this only possible because it's so small and a basic structure? You explained to me how everything had to come from a DIY shop and so in its very nature, because it is small.

LC: What we were trying to do is to say, ok we'll design the whole thing, but try to create space for people to be involved at different stages along the way. So there was flexibility and the whole thing could have changed. There was indeterminacy built into the process.

It does seem a bit like a prison with the metal gates. The idea was that part of it would be open during a festival at the park, and different materials would be woven into the screens in order for people to take ownership and inhabit the space. I suppose in a small way and on a small-scale, it is similar to having housing units that people can move into and adapt.

KT: I think what you have said about role is important. That you are not the sole author and I think that's a key thing about indeterminacy. That within a process, it suggests some generosity to others, whether that's by you stepping away earlier or making space for continued involvement … by suspending the definition of things, what they are and how they're used, you're leaving space for other people.

I think the idea of indeterminacy, shifts the more traditional role of how 'the architect' is working, and I think for the profession it's probably quite a destabilising notion.

So, the question is how to be generous? And how to be generous with roles people can take up in a process.

One thing I noticed in my experience is that getting people involved was very much about asking questions … . But how do you know what to ask people? Whether you are canvassing in the street or researching into an area, how do you know that you are asking the right questions? Questions can be leading and you are coming from a position with your own preconceptions. At 'fluid's' office we discussed a lot how you might engage people in the process, and lots of us were quite preoccupied by the tools and media … particularly text messaging, the internet or using other digital media. Of course technology is relevant, but whatever tools you're using to engage people, the main thing itself is the question you are asking them and that's the way you can make an opening for people.

Fig. 5. Abbeyfield Park Shelter Project, nearly finished. Image: Bureau of Design Research.

I think Doina's paper is suggesting that it's beyond language, so maybe I need to rethink my position.[12] *If you are investigating a city or talking about the regeneration of an area and you ask, 'what are the three things you would change about this place?', it's the most useless question you can ask, because they'll tell you the three things you already know, like the street lighting is rubbish. It doesn't tell you anything about the place. One question 'fluid' might ask would be, 'if Sheffield was a piece of music, what piece of music would it be?' — you get an idea about a person's attachment to a place without asking directly about it. I think that's also what Doina is suggesting, that you are getting beyond what you already know.*

So our openings to you:

How have you made space for indeterminacy?
Do you think in your work in practice there has been space for indeterminacy? Would you have wanted there to be? Do you think it's important? How do you think you could change your work in practice?

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[12] See Doina Petrescu, 'The Indeterminate Mapping of the Common', *field:* 1(1) (2007): 91-99.

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www.field-journal.org
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Games of Skill and Chance

Renata Tyszczuk

An introductory note

The theme of the Forum, University of Sheffield, November 2006 and of this inaugural issue of *field*: *Architecture and Indeterminacy*, gave me the opportunity to reflect on games, stories and experiments as alternative ways of thinking architecture. This paper was originally presented along with a three-screen digital video work: *l'hombre*. The video stems from my work in exploring film in relation to the architectural imaginary. I do this through writing, teaching and researching as well as through making: both digital and 16mm, (the work can't be neatly summarised but has evolved into what I term the aphoristic documentary – 'aphodoc', and the experimental home movie – 'expovie').

Some of the themes presented in this paper are new, some are old, and some are current obsessions. They are presented in this paper as 'same-text stories' not privileging any particular discourse. If I have not kept within disciplinary boundaries it is because I do not see them; if I have not prioritised architecture enough in the discussion it is because I didn't notice. Architecture to me is about the stuff of life and the glimpses we have of it; it is as indeterminate as the next thing.

One more thing to add.

This paper is in part constructed from my notes and in part from the transcript of the recording of my presentation at Architecture and Indeterminacy. It is an unfinished experiment in academic writing as an analogue, companion or subtext to the presented 'Games of Skill and Chance': where the game of skill involved the composed, crafted and referenced notes and that of chance, what I actually ended up saying. The purpose of the paper was not to specify or promote a way of writing or doing things according to skill or chance, but to explore indeterminacy as the basis for thinking and learning that extends through to architectural discourse and practice. Games of skill and chance concern architecture, its paradoxes and entanglements.

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It takes one minute to read this story.

A composer friend of mine

who spent some time in a mental rehabilitation center

was

encouraged to do a good deal of bridge playing.

After one game,

his

partner was criticizing his play

of an ace

on a trick

which had

already been

won.

My friend stood up

and said,

"If you

think I came to the loony bin

to learn

to play bridge,

you're crazy."[1]

[1] John Cage, transcript of story 56 from *Indeterminacy*, http://www.ledf.org/indeterminacy. The site contains 186 stories taken from two of Cage's books: *Silence* and *A Year from Monday* and from the Folkways recording of Cage reading 90 of his stories in 90 minutes accompanied by David Tudor on piano: John Cage and David Tudor, *Indeterminacy: New Aspect of Form in Instrumental and Electronic Music* (1959), (Smithsonian: Folkways Recordings, 1992), 55'00" to 56'00". For this story see also 'Indeterminacy' in John Cage, *Silence: Lectures and Writings by John Cage* (Middletown, Connecticut: Wesleyan University Press, 1973), p. 56.

Puzzles and Stories

I often think of architecture as a game of skill and chance, party to certain rules (and rule bending), prone to subterfuge, conceit, the thrilling and the unexpected. And you can't tell architects – who by turns accept chance and deploy skill, to different degrees and in different ways – how to play the game. With architecture, it seems, chance is never alone, demanding always the gloss of its more stringent bedfellow. Indeterminacy has a different allure. But its place in relation to architecture needs to be approached carefully, remembering what has been referred to as the contemporary *Zeitgeist* which, with 'a generalised vocabulary of contingency, unpredictability, chance effects and indeterminacy', parades itself as a kind of rebellion against the 'excesses' of 'the modern'.[2]

When I first presented these thoughts I started by playing a few minutes of John Cage's stories, recordings from *Indeterminacy*; (the door in the corridor was banging, I shuffled my papers, someone was whispering; we heard the one about the… the one that… and the one where…).[3] Cage's stories deal with the unplanned and the complexity of being. At the same time they call up the ambivalence of telling tales and the double or contested meaning of fiction. Cage explains:

> [In oral delivery of this lecture] I tell one story a minute. If it's a short one, I have to spread it out; when I come to a long one, I have to speak as rapidly as I can. The continuity of the stories as recorded was not planned … my intention in putting the stories together in an unplanned way was to suggest that all things – stories, incidental sounds from the environment, and, by extension beings – are related, and that this complexity is more evident when it is not oversimplified by an idea of relationship in one person's mind.[4]

Puzzles and stories. I turned to Cage's writings and recordings when I was beginning to think about what I could present at *Architecture and Indeterminacy*. I was trying to think of something that would both explain my understanding of indeterminacy and something of what I do – or what architecture does, and that was difficult and puzzling. But then I started to see indeterminacy everywhere. Perhaps it's obvious really, but it took me some time to realise that I could turn the tables on the received wisdom, where the indeterminate bits, 'the general ontological uncertainty' are either not there, or at best, a fiction. Indeterminacy is ontologically pervasive (in fact): what it is possible to realise is that it is the fully determinate, the permanent or the discrete that has problematic ontological status, because these are idealised abstractions or definitions and not ontological ultimates. Determinations are there with effort, but indeterminacy, simply *is*. And so it is with architecture too, where the language (or jargon) itself is indicative of an obsession with determination:

2 Doreen Massey, *For Space* (London: Sage, 2005), p. 116.

3 I played the first six minutes of Part 1, John Cage and David Tudor, *Indeterminacy* (Recordings, 1992). These stories included the one about Isamu Noguchi's visit, followed by the one that began 'You probably know the one about the two monks but I'll tell it anyway […]', then the one about 'several of us driving up to Boston […]', about Christian Wolff playing the piano, about the mechanised pen on Hollywood Boulevard; and then I stopped the disc playing after the one about the anechoic chamber.

4 'Indeterminacy' in Cage, *Silence*, p. 260. John Cage introduced 'Indeterminacy' into musical vocabulary in the 1950's, using it as a compositional dimension with regard to performance.

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we have projects, models, specifications, details, efficiency: all is determined, but nevertheless indeterminacy *is*.

What Cage draws attention to is, not only that there are related things that cannot be expressed in words or images but that this indeterminacy itself should not be understood as empty: '[T]here is no such thing as an empty space or an empty time. There is always something to hear. In fact try as we may, to make a silence we cannot.'[5] In both the drawn 'Garden of Emptiness'[6] and the performed 'empty' or 'Silent Piece', (4'33'), Cage explored found environments, their potential for chance occurrences, as well as their possible expression or notation. What is interesting to note, however, is that for Cage indeterminacy alluded to a particular kind of performative compositional practice that was distinct from either improvisation, which relied on taste and habit, or the chance operations which he often deployed to determine his compositions. Cage's 'indeterminate' pieces asked the composer or designer to take responsibility for, or engage with, a situation not under their control. For Cage indeterminacy always happened in duration, in both his stories and performances, and not in momentary episodes, a throw of the dice, discrete slices of time or a succession of 'nows'.[7] His work thus suggests an understanding of the indeterminate as neither a silent void nor a tragic hiatus (that would feed those jarring and troubled space/time dualisms), but instead as an open field of possibilities and potentialities with no need for distinctions or competition for space or time.[8] This then, I thought, might provide a good, or more appropriate start for thinking about architecture; a move away from formalist approaches to 'occupying' space and time – filling their supposed 'emptiness'. Following Cage then, perhaps the complexity and relatedness of 'all things' that pertains also to architecture, could be more evident when 'not oversimplified by an idea of relationship in one person's mind'. In other words to determine architecture, could mean losing it and its creative possibilities. How much more rewarding it might be to complicate things a bit, not for the 'glorious random mixity of it all'[9], nor for the sake of muddying the waters, but to provoke a rethinking of categories, terms and assumptions. If indeterminacy is difficult to pin down, that might not be such a bad thing.

> [...] for it is claimed that any experiments that are made precede the steps that are finally taken with determination, and that this determination is knowing, having , in fact, a particular, if unconventional ordering of the elements used in view. These objections are clearly justifiable but only where, [as among contemporary evidences in serial music], it remains a question of making a thing upon the boundaries, structure, and expression of which attention is focused. Where on the other hand, attention moves towards the observation and audition of many things at once, including those that are environmental

5 'Experimental Music' in Cage, *Silence*, p. 8.

6 John Cage did a series of drawings, 'Garden of Emptiness' (1991) of the Ryoanhi monastery garden dating from 1499. See Corinna Thieroff, 'Sudden Images: The Ryoanhi Drawings of John Cage' in Joachim Kaak and Corinna Thieroff, *Hanne Darboven, John Cage: A Dialogue of Artworks* (Munich: Hatje Kantz Publishers, 2000). Cage developed 'indeterminate' processes and graphic notation systems for his music that were influenced by his adherence to the principles of I Ching. See also Yeoryia Manolopoulou, 'Drawing on Chance: extracts from *Drafting Pier 40*' in The Journal of Architecture Volume 11 (5): 303–314; pp. 304–305.

7 Cage's interest in duration and the experimental as the continual elaboration of the new, and the coexistence of past and present, ties in to Bergson's notion of time as 'indetermination itself'. See Henri Bergson, *The Creative Mind: An Introduction to Metaphysics*, trans. Mabelle L. Adison (New York: Citadel Press, 1992), p. 193.

8 For an account of the space/time tension and the tendency to characterise 'postmodern' times as 'spatial rather than temporal', see Massey, *For Space*. pp. 147 ff., where she cites Bruno Latour: 'I have a feeling that we are slowly shifting from an obsession with time to an obsession with space.' *Pandora's Hope: Essays on the Reality of Science Studies* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1999) p. 14. She discusses her reservations with this formulation and argues instead for a temporality integral to the spatial, a heterogeneity of practices and processes, and a relational politics of the spatial.

9 As Massey says, 'It is popular today to revel in the glorious random mixity of it all.' She is speaking about the compensatory tendencies for the determinist 'excesses' of 'the modern'. Ibid. p. 111; and, she continues, (p. 12) 'The language of order and chance has become loose and problematical.'

> – becomes, that is, inclusive rather than exclusive – no question of making, in the sense of forming understandable structures, can arise (one is tourist), and here the word 'experimental' is apt, providing it is understood not as descriptive of an act to be later judged in terms of success and failure, but simply as of an act the outcome of which is unknown. What has been determined?[10]

This brings me to experiment. The word experimental is sometimes misconstrued as to do with the causal or procedural, but what Cage suggests is an interpretation of the experimental where it defies understandable structures by being about unknown outcomes and 'many things at once'. Could there be an experimental architecture whereby inclusive might mean inventing ever-shifting categories, thus including the known with the unknown, the useful with the non-useful? It would suggest openness to experimental process in architecture, which could not be fixed, as this would reduce its multiplicity and heterogeneity. However hard we try, however good our foresight, our risk-aversion strategies, it is not possible to make a list of all the things we might consider in a design and then to 'deal with them'. Architecture is not an exhaustive project (and nor is it sustainable); instead, recourse to the experimental suggests a recognition of this difficulty and ambivalence, and challenges the prevalent determinism in architectural thinking. What can be determined? (If anything?) Cage approaches this question through his stories – stories that are suggestive of both puzzling cases and second-hand fables (thought experiments and re-tellings).[11] Cage's approach to indeterminacy and his ambition to take stock of, to relate 'stories, incidental sounds from the environment, and, by extension beings' parallels the potential for ethical engagement in any story. And after all is not the 'fruitful fable' also the ground for invention, for experimentation?

> To leave an enormous amount open seems to belong to the essence of a *fruitful fable* and to myth. Precisely thanks to its own indeterminacy myth is able to produce constant new invention from within itself with the thematic horizon continuously shifting in different directions.[12]

Architectural discourse and expression however, tends to avoid indeterminacy, bar one or two oft-cited examples such as Tschumi's 'undecideable' *Folies* or Van Eyck's spaces of 'labyrinthine clarity'.[13] This is not surprising; how could one – in rhetorically convincing ways – make 'indeterminate' areas appear in the design and be understood as indeterminate without losing the authority of the designer or the control/command of the interlocutor? For the most part designs that confront indeterminacy or chance have resorted to convoluted formal combinations that are meant to speak of complexity or have simply left 'room' – an allocated space – for the unexpected (where is the surprise in that?). It is similarly difficult to give an account of indeterminacy *per se*. How can anything remain as indeterminate once it has been explained, coerced into

[10] 'Experimental Music: Doctrine' in Cage, *Silence: Lectures and Writings*, p. 13.

[11] I have explored thought experiments and their relation to architecture in 'The Laboratory and the Imaginary: How Real is that?' in Renata Tyszczuk (ed.) *Architecture and Interdependence: Mappings and Explorations by Studio Six* (Cambridge: Shed, 2007).

[12] Hans-Georg Gadamer, *Truth and Method* (London: Sheed & Ward 1989) p. 454.

[13] The relation of architecture to indeterminacy has been the subject of renewed interest. For example, Doreen Massey describes a number of instances where indeterminacy has been used as a 'device' in an approach to architecture, (*For Space*, pp. 112–114). She refers to Tschumi, Van Eyck and the influence of the French Situationists. It is not my intention to pursue this inquiry here with extensive examples from architectural design; what is important to note is that in architecture's meeting with indeterminacy designs have tended either to mimic the 'chaotic' or act as a taming.

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neat lines, an ordered delivery, a written paper? The problem occurs in attempting to render, draw out, the unrepresentable. I struggled to write this down at all – and it works much better as a conversation, a play with words, or a game. This brings me (back) to the notion of *lexis*. The capacity to place some past event or person vividly before the reader's mind was identified by Aristotle in the *Rhetoric* as *lexis*, or locution (usually translated as diction or 'style', but more precisely a way of saying things to do with a particular situation), a way of making things visible *as if* they were present.[14] Evidently this is what designers also attempt to do when communicating projects: they try to place their audience *as if* they were there. It is not surprising therefore that they are attracted to stories. The *as-if* is the essential component of any story, as Cage demonstrates (so we can be on Hollywood Boulevard and in the mental institution with him). However, stories are, after all, where indeterminacy is allowed to coexist with the determined and even enhance and validate it. In stories, villains and the grubby, unexpected, tangential and inconclusive, rub shoulders with heroes and fairy-tale endings.

This attraction to the *as-if,* to the story, is by no means new, but what is interesting is how since the seventeenth century this attraction has transpired as a *fictional contingency*[15], an urge or compulsion to resort to, or to harness the experience of life – as you get in any story – to reconfigure or to compensate for the vacuity of an appropriated temporal/spatial vision such as the utopia. When reality, as is so often the case, is considered uncertain, contingent, ridden with accidents, unexplainable, stories harness those rogue or chance elements. This has transpired in many different areas of culture – the storyteller saving the case for the scientist or engineer (and often being one and the same) whether in the writing of utopias or in the construction of gated communities.[16] Architects continue to sneak stories in, with considerable skill, and often by the back door, in a kind of 'smuggling-in of experience', a legacy of the 'common 'imaginative project' that arose in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.[17]

Invariably it works. Shifting between fact and fiction, the domain of the *as-if* has acquired the character of an exchange between the conceptual order of theory/practice and the experiential order of the 'inner life'.[18] In a world understood as contingent, 'experience' is drawn upon in order to either substantiate or to counter the claims of the theory, project or scientific experiment. It is then considered a skill – and 'proof', that one is after all, 'experienced'. Good or bad, self-reflexive or not, such a conflation of experience and rational thought has often been capable of provoking an inevitable, if unexpected, engagement with the world, in all its hazy reality and indeterminacy. The key element of any story is that the modes of discourse, reasoning and experience, whether analysis, conversation,

[14] Cage's stories can be explained as an example of poetic invention: presentation of a self in terms of another *ethos* (character, the ethical argument) with appropriate *lexis* (diction) and *melopeoia* (rhythm and song).

[15] A term I used to explore the eighteenth century attraction to the story with reference to the utopian discourse of the period. See Renata Tyszczuk, '*in spem melioris aevi*: The Architecture and Writings of Stanislas Leszczynski, roi bienfaisant, 1737–1766' (PhD thesis, Cambridge, 1998); published as *The Story of an Architect King*: Stanislas Leszczynski in Lorraine 1737–1766 (Oxford: Peter Lang, 2007).

[16] Elizabeth Grosz' discussion of utopian discourse also draws attention to this admixture of fantasy and theory, what she calls the theoretical doubling of utopic texts: 'texts with composites, amalgams, with a self-contained fictional representation, which is explained and justified through a theoretical addendum, commonly a text written after the more speculative and fanciful account.' She writes that the philosopher Michele Le Doeuff's explanation of this 'awkward but prevalent coupling of theory and vision [...] is that the theoretical or analytical doublet is written in part to contain the ambiguity or as she calls it, the polysemic quality, of the visionary text in an attempt to fix its meaning, to provide it a guaranteed reading.' Elizabeth Grosz, Chapter 15, 'The Time of Architecture' in Bingaman, Sanders and Zorach (eds.) *Embodied Utopias: Gender, Social Change and the Modern Metropolis*, (London and New York: Routledge, 2003) pp. 265–278; p. 270.

[17] 'It was the nature of the common "imaginative project" that guaranteed the close affinity of eighteenth century art, architecture and science. That modern aesthetics could be a science of artistic experience was conceivable only in this imaginative project.' See Dalibor Vesely, *Architecture in the Age of Divided Representation: The Question of Creativity in the Shadow of Production* (Cambridge, MA and London: MIT Press, 2004) p. 443, note 49.

witnessing or evidence, memory, imagination, skill or chance, impinge on each other. Here we have come full circle: 'dealing' with our aversion to or confusion with indeterminacy and ambivalence requires the reassurances of storytelling; and stories, lead us back, by way of imaginative and resolute detours, to indeterminacy.

[18] See Charles Taylor, *Sources of the Self: The Making of the Modern Identity* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992), p. 163.

Fig. 1. Film stills from *Remote Worlds in Four Parts* (R. Tyszczuk, dv, 12 mins, 2004). In Georges Perec's *La Vie mode d'emploi*; *Life a User's Manual: Fictions*, trans. David Bellos (London: Vintage, 2003), the main character Percival Bartlebooth spends his life making and unmaking puzzles.

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Aphodoc and Expovie

I'll try a different way in to the question of *Architecture and Indeterminacy*. I have started to explore the relationship between story, experiment and play in a series of experimental films and writings. The aim of this work has been to develop a way of thinking and communicating architectural ideas that are difficult to describe in either words or images. It suggests the mutability of film as a way of exploring the situational and relational nature of architecture. Conventional architectural representation attempts to describe reality uniformly and consistently. Working through the medium of film suggests an alternative approach to the poetics of praxis where design imagination and poetic thinking can intersect with the mutuality of necessity and chance. The work falls into two new 'categories': the 'aphodoc' - the aphoristic documentary or the 'expovie' - the experimental home movie, (and thus an exposure of life). These are modes of description that defy their own logic (documentaries aren't usually 'in brief'; home movies aren't meant to be more than that).[19]

The films are used as quick sketches, short-lived experiments that share characteristics with aphorisms and their exploration of paradoxical relationships. The essence of an aphorism is paradox.[20] The power of the paradox, or why I find the notion of it compelling, is in its ability to affirm all the directions of sense at the same time: good sense, common sense, best sense and nonsense.[21] In other words the paradox can be a short story where the 'many things at once' take place, not simply in a synthesising mode however, but in one that engages and questions. This kind of story is the ground for rethinking categories, of adding complications to oversimplified frameworks; it offers respite from theoretically elaborate concepts where thought is considered to be already grounded. Paradoxes pull the ground from under your feet. The aphodoc and the expovie are necessarily open-ended in their presentation of life situations: they resist the fixation of meaning; they do not function as illustrations to their own conceptualisation. I prefer to think of them in relation to the notion of a story at its limiting case, (if not exact limits) or at its most concise. This story won't take a long time to tell.

The film *l'hombre* is one of a series of 'expovies' I have made that explore the real and imagined territories present in a simple domestic setting. *L'hombre* began as an accidental fragment of moving image, or 'found

19 This is part of ongoing work that explores the architectural imaginary in relation to documentary and film. See for example, Renata Tyszczuk 'we don't know when it's coming in' (www.interdependance.co.uk), an essay which describes the video piece of the same title (Tyszczuk, Guy Greaves, dv, 10 mins, 2006).

20 'Aphorism is the most paradoxical mode of discourse, and, like any paradox, it is a formulation of a partial or ostensible contradiction that originates from a particular experience and elicits an abundant range of further insights. The paradoxical nature of aphorism has its source in life situations, from which it also receives its meaning.' Vesely, *The Question of Creativity*, p. 453, note 10.

21 See Gilles Deleuze, *The Logic of Sense* (*Logique du Sens*) ed. Constantin V. Boundas, trans. Mark Lester and Charles Stivale (London and New York: Continuum, 2004), pp. 3–5; on the relation of paradox to Stoic thought, where it was 'used both as an instrument for analysing language and as a means of synthesising events', see pp. 10 – 11.

footage', which could not have been predicted in the planning of the piece. The relationship between what can be said in a verbal presentation, and the visual and spatial installation of the film work is understood as complementary but indeterminate. I did not attempt to legitimate the visual work with the words – (this would simply have rehearsed the problem of theory and practice as a single planned set of relations, that is, a theory set up as a blueprint that seeks to govern the practice). Instead I prefer to think of the making, speaking, listening and watching as a layering or assemblage of different interpretations and approaches in imaginative variations. I have borrowed the phrase 'imaginative variations' from Ricoeur, which he explains as 'the deployment of an imaginary space for thought experiments that allows the *play* of fantasy and praxis.'[22] The *play* emphasises movement as a thinking mode for architectural variations: as thought experiments or puzzles analogous to the stories, always negotiating the discord between the actual and the possible. Playing here means not simply revelling in the commonplace but paying attention to what is conventionally hidden. It is not about aesthetics – a distant view, but about taking note and an engagement with the world. Thinking about indeterminacy suggests alternative ways of encountering the world neither defined by a specific set of skills, techniques and actions, nor privileging a certain kind of discourse. Instead it suggests an inventive or experimental relation with the world that fosters potentialities and possibilities.

> Bringing about indeterminacy is bringing about a situation in which things could happen that are not under my control. Chance operations can guide me to a specific result, like the *Music of Changes*. An example of indeterminacy is any one of the pieces in a series called *Variations* which resemble cameras that don't tell you what picture to take but enable you to take a picture [...][23]

Fig. 2. 16mm film reel returned by Soho Images; photo: R. Tyszczuk.

22 The phrase 'imaginative variations' is from Paul Ricouer's discussion of literary narrative in *Oneself as Another*, trans. Kathleen Blamey (University of Chicago Press, 1992) p. 159; (my emphasis). Ricouer's orientation is to writing but I would argue that the recourse to the *as-if*, to mimetics as a constant negotiation between the dramatic *as-if* and the 'hypothetical *as-if*' is not confined to literature or narrative.

23 John Cage, cf. D. Campana 'Interview with Cage' 'Form and Structure in the Music of John Cage, (PhD, Northwestern University Evanston, 1985), p. 109.

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Games and Shadows

> Just as the pleasure derived from a game of *l'hombre* consists in a kind of suspension mixed with curiosity of the three possible outcomes – winning, placing another bet, or losing; in the theatre we are left hanging and uncertain not knowing what is about to happen and such is the effect of our imagination.[24]

The game of *l'hombre*[25] was a game of skill and chance. It was extremely popular in the eighteenth century where life was considered a game of the imagination – a 'suspension mixed with curiosity' and thus also compared to the experience of theatre. Montesquieu's *Essai sur le Goût* expresses the essential parity between theatre and game playing. The meaningful difference between play in the theatre and in the game, however, was the autotelic nature of the game; where in effect, the significant audience was that of the player himself. Game playing provided the arena for the irresolvable differences of the self and of the imagination, (the dichotomies of the Enlightenment) to be both revealed and explored. Game playing has a far-reaching history where it has been understood as an essential element of human beings' ontological make-up, a basic existential phenomenon often expressed as 'life is a game'.[26] It is not surprising therefore that Wittgenstein chose the example of a 'game' when trying to explain what he meant by a 'concept with blurred edges'.[27] Life has blurred edges. The play of the world is inevitably blurred.

In the eighteenth century, *l'hombre* was a three-handed trick-taking card game with its own terminology and one of the first games to introduce bidding. One player was the declarer or *l'hombre* and the other players cooperated to prevent this player from making a contract. It thus demonstrated a considerable element of both skill and chance. The most popular games in those days tended to be divided between the *jeux de commerce* (games of skill such as chess, draughts, and billiards), and the *jeux de hasard* (games involving chance such as the majority of card games). In practice, however the distinction was irrelevant: and in any case the games of skill usually served as a cover for the games of chance that attracted most players to the *academies des jeux* or *tripots*, the venues for gambling and games.[28] The following remark from Diderot indicates what was at stake with the world itself taken as a gambling den and life as a game:

> The world is the domain of the strongest: I won't know until the end what I have lost or won in this vast gambling house, where I have spent sixty years, cup in hand shaking dice.[29]

The prevailing attitude towards *le hazard* or 'chance' understood it as a function of ignorance, or as a 'fiction'.[30] Recognition of the presence of

24 'Comme le plaisir du jeu de l'hombre consiste dans une certaine suspension mêlée de curiosité des trois événements qui peuvent arriver, la partie pouvant être gagnée, remise, ou perdue codille; ainsi, dans nos pièces de théatre, nous sommes tellement suspendus et incertains, que nous ne savons ce qui arrivera; et tel est l'effet de notre imagination.' Montesquieu, 'Essai sur le Goût' in *Oeuvres Complètes*, II, ed. Roger Caillois (Paris: Bibliothèque de la Pléiade, Éditions Gallimard, 1951) p. 1263; (my translation).

25 The game of *l'hombre* was developed in Spain in the early seventeenth century and was originally called 'Hombre Renegado'. In England it was called 'Ombre'.

26 For studies on games and play see Johan Huizinga, *Homo Ludens: A Study of the Play Element in Culture* (London: 1949); Roger Caillois, *Les jeux et les hommes, Le masque et le vertige* (Paris: 1967).

27 'One might say that the concept "game" is a concept with blurred edges.–"But is a blurred concept a concept at all?"– Is an indistinct photograph a picture of a person at all? Is it even always an advantage to replace an indistinct picture by a sharp one? Isn't the indistinct one often exactly what we need?' Ludwig Wittgenstein, *Philosophical Investigations* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1998) 71, p. 34; for his discussion of games see 66–71, pp. 31–34.

28 For studies of gambling in the eighteenth century, which was *toleré mais non permis* and permeated all sections of society, see John Dunkley, *Gambling in France: a social and moral problem in France, 1685–1792*, *SVEC* 235 (Oxford, 1985); Thomas M. Kavanagh, *Enlightenment and the Shadows of Chance: The Novel and the Culture of Gambling in Eighteenth Century France* (Baltimore and London: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1993).

29 'Le monde est la maison du plus fort: je ne saurai qu'à la fin ce que j'aurai perdu ou gagné dans ce vaste tripot, où j'aurai passé une soixantaine d'années le cornet à la main *tesseras agitans*.' Diderot, 'Eléments de physiologie', in *Oeuvres*, Tome I: Philosophie, ed. Laurent Versini (Paris: Laffont, 1994) p. 1317; (my translation).

chance implied an inability to reason toward, and become part of any natural order or determination; thus indicating the limits of reason as a faculty that ultimately reflected its own presuppositions. Game playing, with its permissive attitude to superstition and luck, reflected the area of mystery or domain of ambiguity diffused through life in general that was being culturally and institutionally silenced. The reduction of the world to a series of abstract phenomena in a didactic space, as presented for example, in the entries of the *Encyclopédie*, induced a situation where one could all too easily find oneself having to deal with 'too many in the hand at one time'. Chance came to be understood as corresponding simply to the unsettling nature of life and reality, and was no longer the domain of *Fortuna*, which had stood for indeterminacy, the incommensurable and the endlessly iterable.[31] Chance was to be controlled and this is where skill in a confusing array of method, deft movements, manoeuvres, and trickery came in.

The experimental video *l'hombre* re-presents both the play of a card game and a play on the words *l'homme* (man) and *l'ombre* (shadow). *L'hombre* is an experiment with the use of both negative and positive images and the correlation of light and movement inherent within the mechanics of film. Movement, image and time coalesce.[32] In this work the failing light entering the 16mm film camera has determined the erratic motion of the game on film, expressing human gestures as an exchange between the mechanical and the ephemeral. A game of cards with its distinctive and repetitive actions was shot at home at dusk on a single reel of colour film stock. The game had involved two card players sitting at a table (and a third player with a camera). The film was returned by the lab as a negative, its processing incomplete. It looked like a mistake to the technicians. The card game, which had been just visible in the half-light, had been captured as a fluttering of shadows that duplicated the exaggerated mechanical movements of the two players (laying down cards and regaining others). The 'found' footage of retrieved chance images, like Cage's found environments, was not fully designed; the fledgling structure allowed for the unexpected.

The enigma of the work is partly created by the fragility of the medium (and partly by the cranky 16mm *Krasnogorsk* camera). The film endured chance exposure, projection and digitisation, where the matter of the film itself was eroded and reformulated (from three-handed trick taking into three-screened digital trickery). It suggests a world of luminous and virtual matter as well as the phantasmagoria of the new magic lantern shows. Equally, it calls up an undefinable place that has lost its contours but remains vivid – what Deleuze named 'any-space-whatever'.[33] Chance is about shadows. The history of probability (*verisimile* – the appearance

30 See the article 'Jeu' in Diderot et D'Alembert, *Encyclopédie: où Dictionnaire raisonne des sciences, des arts et des métiers* (Paris: Chéz Briasson, 1761–1772); Facsimile edition, 5 vols (New York: Readex, 1969), pp. 531–532.

31 On *Fortuna* as simultaneously a symbol of the iteratability of all occurrence and of the incommensurable, see Reinhart Koselleck, *Futures Past: On the Semantics of Historical Time*, trans. Keith Tribe (Cambridge MA and London: MIT Press, 1985) pp. 117–119.

32 Deleuze's writing on cinema sought to abolish the distinction between the physical world of movement and the psychological world of the image. 'All things considered, movement-images divide into three sorts of images, when they are related to a centre of indetermination as to a special image: perception images, action-images and affection-images. And each one of us, the special image or the contingent centre, is nothing but an assemblage of three images, a consolidation of perception images, action-images and affection-images.' Gilles Deleuze, *Cinema 1: The Movement-Image*, trans. H. Tomlinson and B. Habberjam (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1986).

33 'Any-space-whatever is not an abstract universal, in all times, in all places. It is a perfectly singular space, which has merely lost its homogeneity, that is, the principle of its metric relations or the connection of its own parts, so that the linkages can be made in an infinite number of ways. It is a space of virtual conjunction, grasped as pure locus of the possible.' Deleuze, *Cinema 1*, p. 109.

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of the apparently true) is inextricably linked with that of the metaphorics of light.[34] In the film, the play of interfering images and shadows which are always there and not quite, of figure and ground, merge in confused perspectives, amidst the doubling of the documentary surface and the shallow screen. The shadows are all characters or players but you can't quite make them out; strangely familiar, they dwell in an unspecified room and an open time. Shadows are made in the process of habitation – 'to live is to leave shadows' (in a paraphrase of Benjamin's 'to live is to leave traces'[35]). And yet the ambiguity of the shadow, *l'ombre* – the trace that leaves no trace – and its relation to chance occurrences and fleeting memories provokes a play of variations that resist representation. The shadow is neither coincidence nor estrangement: it is both familiar and other, suggestive of unacknowledged worlds and indeterminacy.

The digital reworking of the original material (from 16mm –ve to digital and +ve) reinforces the repetitiveness of the original game. Negative and positive are revealed to be of equal importance as the figures and the space merge ambiguously with the moving shadows. Although the viewer's perception is challenged and brought into play, the briefest sketch of a room and table along with the to-and-fro movement of almost-bodies provoke some kind of recognition: we fill out the story according to experience. The film reveals a past that cannot be captured but only glimpsed at random, and in unpredictable intervals in an exchange of scattered references between memory and home movies. It is an expovie: an exposure of life and experimental tinkering – a game of life. The presence of the game of cards and its blurred setting becomes more discernible the longer one stays with the work; and the experience depends also on repetition and presentation.[36] Yet the experimental nature of the work mitigates against the usually determined and directed interventions of the film, video, or documentary maker and their construction of scenarios and scenes. Instead, the expovie builds on the accidental, barely noticeable images of cardplay and the paradoxical interplay of possible references.

I showed the work, not for the sake of illustration, nor to fix its meaning but as a visual analogue for speaking about games of skill and chance, and also about indeterminacy. The game with its recourse to chance and indeterminacy can be construed as a laboratory for probing the meanings of the relations of the world, the self, to things, to others and shadows. Yet games readily caricature or act as a counterpart to all those activities (like architecture) that adhere to principles, from rules, via hypotheses (what if?) to distribution and results:

34 The history of 'probability' demonstrates the ambivalence in the change of meaning of *verisimile*. Originally, the 'appearance of the apparently true' is entirely appearance as the pale reflection of the proximity of truth. For Descartes 'appearance' means possible deception; the apparently true (probable) is only something that looks like the true and must therefore be methodologically 'bracketed'. Until an object can be confirmed by *clare et distincte percipere*, it is without significance for truth. The idea that one could hit upon the truth by 'chance' is a previously unthinkable thought. From this time 'method' takes the annoying element of chance by the hand and puts it at man's disposal.

35 Walter Benjamin, 'Paris: Capital of the Nineteenth Century', in *Reflections*, trans. Edmund Jephcott (New York: Schocken Books, 1986), pp. 155156; cf. Beatriz Colomina, 'The Split Wall: Domestic Voyeurism' in Beatriz Colomina (ed.), *Sexuality and Space* (New York: Princeton University Press, 1992), p. 74.

36 The film has been presented in a number of different ways: as a three part film that tracks the digital transformation of the original 16mm projection from negative to positive, as a simultaneous digital play across three screens that lasts just over 2 minutes; as an installation which includes the original 16mm reel, the three part film, a table covered in green baize, and the play of shadows; and finally as the backdrop and topic of this paper. Previously screened at Cambridge Arts Picturehouse, April 2006, Experimental Video Art Workshop funded by Arts Council and Kettles Yard Gallery, Cambridge.

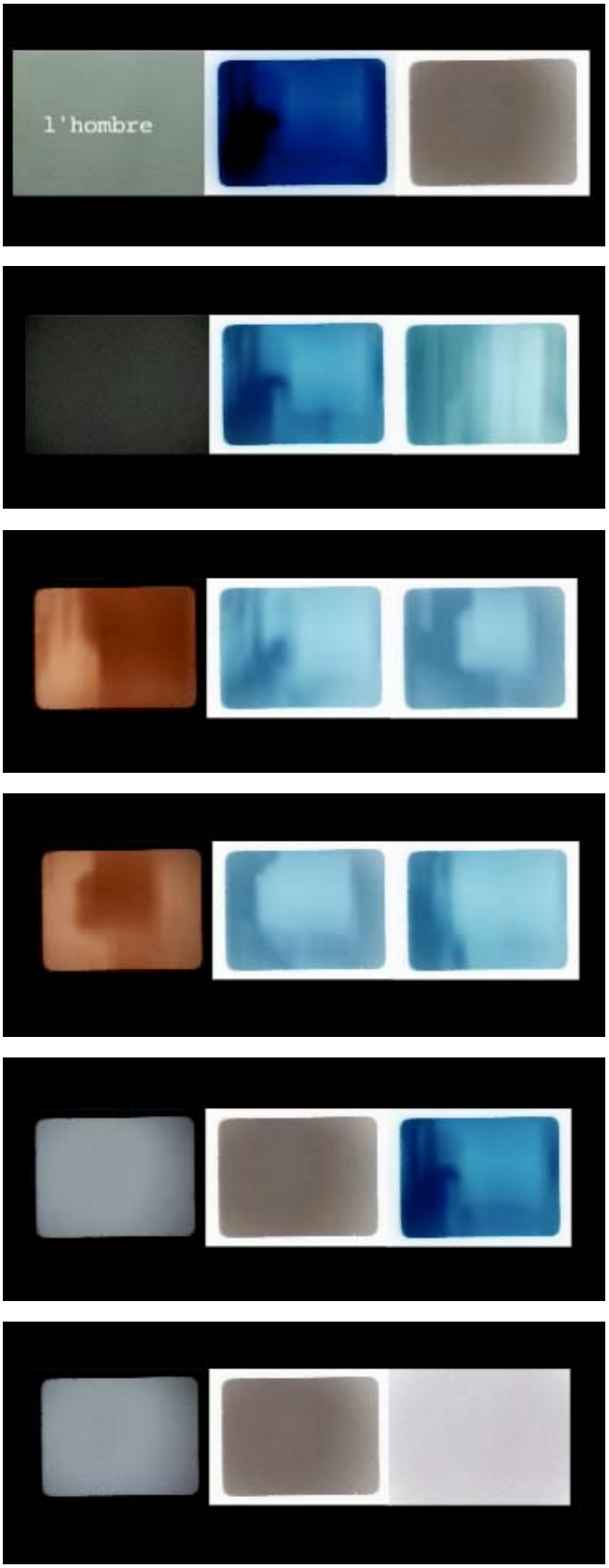

Fig. 3. Film stills from *l'hombre* (R. Tyszczuk, 16mm/dv, (3 x) >2 mins, 2006).

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> Whether it be Pascal's gambling man or Leibniz's chess-playing God, the game is explicitly taken as a model only because it has implicit models which are not games: the moral model of the Good or the Best, the economic model of causes and effects, or of means and ends.[37]

[37] Deleuze, *The Logic of Sense*, p. 70.

Riddles and Questions

Todays games of skill and chance tend to propping up those coercive environments where the motives and rewards are decided by the designers or the players themselves, and yet it is impossible to create a game or a story, or for that matter architecture, in which the possibilities for success or failure are as unpredictable as real life. We can still see the same fictional contingency at work: the need to deliver palpable stories to cope with the world's systemic contradictions. Bauman following George Steiner, describes the current mode of being-in-the-world as '*casino culture*: each game is short, games replace each other in quick succession, the stakes of the game change with a lightning speed and often devalue before the game is over.'[38] Each game is a self-enclosed episode such that 'life patched together by a casino culture reads as a collection of short stories, not a novel.'[39]

[38] Zygmunt Bauman, 'As Seen on TV'; http://www.politeia-conferentie.be/viewpic.php?LAN=E&TABLE+DOCS&ID+120.

[39] 'The casino culture of instantaneity and episodicity portends the end of 'politics as we know it'. Loc. cit.

Before we get carried away with the metaphor, forever consigned to see the world as a gambling den of suspense or iniquity – is this supposed to be a win or lose situation? Or should architecture succumb to the interplay between the aesthetics of order and near chaos as in Constant's ludic New Babylon.[40] Architecture is too frequently seen simply as a game of episodic quick starts and restarts, an aesthetic or technological achievement, as the object or container for cultural, political, economic aspirations, as the carrier of function over meaning, as an end in itself. Surely it cannot be enough to simply ask questions about success or failure in architecture? To begin to ask more or less, or rather differently of architecture, it is time to ask a riddle:

[40] See Catherine de Zegher and Mark Wigley, *The Activist Drawing: Retracing Situationist Architectures from Constant's New Babylon to Beyond* (New York and Cambridge MA: MIT Press, 2001).

> Which of all things in the world is at once the longest and the shortest, the quickest and the slowest, the most divisible and the most continuous, the most squandered and the most regretted, something about which nothing can be done, which obliterates what is small and gives life to what is great?
>
> [...] Some said the answer to the riddle was fortune, some said the earth, and others light. Zadig said it was time.[41]

[41] Voltaire, *Candide and Other Stories*, trans. Roger Pearson (London: Everyman, 1992); *Zadig*, p. 179. The scene of contests and riddles in the Babylonian court of Voltaire's *Zadig* reveals the ludic activities of the eighteenth century as a play with the socialised perfection of court life.

The answer is obvious (or is it – given that there were other possible answers: fortune, earth, light –?) and it only makes sense *in the story* – in another Babylon – as told in *Zadig* – not in abstraction (not space for the sake of space, nor time for the sake of time). Indeterminacy? – Maybe,

but not for the sake of indeterminacy, that is, not when used as a device or a formal construct. Indeterminacy *is*. Indeterminacy is space *and* time, regardless of space and time, as perhaps understood best in a narrative imagination, in the telling of stories and in their capacity for the complex interweavings of an unfinished world. In a narrative imagination, the relationship between ethics and poetics can converge. It is in stories that the imagination can be both more provisional and more approximate; and the conviction of theory and efficiency can be dissolved in favour of indeterminacy and experimental openness. The play, the meeting-up of different stories, the 'many things at once', and the experiment, are characteristics that make art or architecture at once real, and at the same time capable of challenging presuppositions about the world:

> This game is reserved then for thought and art. In it there is nothing but victories for those who know how to play, that is how to affirm and ramify chance, instead of dividing it *in order to* dominate it, *in order to* wager, *in order to* win. This game which can only exist in thought and which has no other result than the work of art, is also that by which thought and art are real and disturbing reality, morality, and the economy of the world.[42]

[42] Deleuze, *The Logic of Sense*, p. 71.

Affirming chance here suggests thinking through indeterminacy. My own design strategy for architecture, melding storytelling and experiment, and occasionally involving some 'indeterminate-non-linear-indistinct-moving-image-time-based-spatial-sketches', is necessarily inconclusive. It is one of inexact explanations and roughly drawn boundaries. And to borrow Wittgenstein's words again, 'Yes: why shouldn't we call it "inexact"?'[43] In one sense this design practice contests pre-determined notions of time/space/sound etc. and the uniform and consistent descriptions of architecture, as well as the all too frequent calls for authenticity, style, technological prowess. At the same time it is all too aware of the irony of doing so. Games of skill and chance inevitably go together; they are in need of each other, they are games that are familiar yet apprehensive in each others company. Likewise with games of skill and chance, distinction is difficult only the rules differ. The rules occasionally require a more disciplined more coherent more exacting path, but even then, 'it is not everywhere circumscribed by rules.'[44] The same tension (of skill and chance) is present in the elements of architectural discourse and practice, with an underlying hope and assumption (which therefore constantly needs to be questioned), that skill, audacity and daring can win and that the element of chance can be harnessed and enjoyed critically and aesthetically. In this context chance seems doomed to be forever methodologically bracketed. Indeterminacy however, *is*. It does not reside in an ideal nor can it simply be a mode of operating in the world. In a sense *thinking indeterminacy* provides its own guarantee, which prevents the reduction of reality to what is then privileged as stable, real or representable. It obliges us to keep questioning. What I am suggesting

[43] Wittgenstein (*Philosophical Investigations* 88, p. 41) 'If I tell someone "stand roughly here" – may not this explanation work perfectly? And cannot every other one fail too? But isn't it an inexact explanation? – Yes; why shouldn't we call it "inexact"?'

[44] (Ibid 68, p. 33) '"But then the use of the word is unregulated, the 'game' we play with it is unregulated." – It is not everywhere circumscribed by rules; but no more are there any rules for how high one throws the ball in tennis, or how hard; yet tennis is a game for all that and has rules too.'

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ISSN: 1755-066
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therefore is that the task for architecture may well be that of experiment. In the words of Elizabeth Grosz:

> [T]he radical role of the architect is best developed in architectural exploration and invention, in recognition of architecture's and knowledge's roles as experimental practices. Philosophy, architecture, science are not disciplines which produce answers or solutions, but fields which pose questions, and whose questions never yield the solutions they seek but which lead to the production of ever more inventive questions. Architecture, along with life itself, moves alongside of, is the ongoing process of negotiating, habitable spaces.[45]

Grosz asks many questions: 'what are the possibilities of inhabiting otherwise?'[46] Interrogating architecture suggests a recognition of the kinds of experimental practices and processes that allow for a rethinking of how 'architecture' is 'constructed' and 'produced' as well as 'inhabited'. There are many practices that draw on indeterminacy, or might be described as having an indeterminate approach to architecture that need to be acknowledged. These range from types of critique that open up alternatives within normative architectural practice, to inventive modes of participatory action that cultivate change by working directly with people to disclose new potentialities, to the deployment of alternative imaginations of the economic that play the part of anomalies within the privileged macroeconomic structure.[47] Architectural practice could also refer to the unfinished and the unknown. Experiments in architecture are not about presenting completed pieces of work but about encouraging the possible paths that lead beyond the text, the work, the story. With an awareness however, that the moment your attention slips from the task at hand, or the demands of the project and the particular skills it requires, just as if momentarily distracted from the text in front of you, the rest of the world uncontrollably and inevitably comes flooding back in. Indeterminacy *is*.

Fig. 4. Film still from *Remote Worlds* in Four Parts (R.Tyszczuk, dv, 12 mins, 2004).

45 Grosz, 'The Time of Architecture', pp. 275276.

46 Elizabeth Grosz, 'Embodied Utopias, The Time of Architecture', in *Architecture from the Outside: Essays on Real and Virtual Space* (Cambridge MA: MIT Press, 2001), p. 130.

47 This is only scratching the surface, as what I would include in the term 'architectural practice' is purposefully heterogeneous. See, for example, Doina Petrescu (ed.) *Altering Practices: Feminist Politics and Poetics of Space* (London: Routledge, 2007); and the *Alternate Currents* Symposium at the University of Sheffield, 2007, *field* (2) 1, 2008 (forthcoming).

My thanks to all the participants, students and speakers at the Architecture and Indeterminacy Forum, the University of Sheffield November 2006, when these thoughts were first presented. I am also grateful for the comments of Doina Petrescu, Tatjana Schneider and two anonymous reviewers, on an earlier draft of this paper.

ISSN: 1755-068
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Doron has taught design and history & theory of architecture at the Universities of Brighton, Greenwich, East London and London Metropolitan University. His work has been published widely in, for example, Architectural Design (AD), Archis, BluePrint, Building Design, City, and Um-Bau, and recently in the book Franck/Stevens (eds.), *Loose Space: Possibility and Diversity in Urban Life*, (London: Routledge, 2006).
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Peter Mörtenböck is Visiting Fellow at Goldsmiths, University of London and Professor of Visual Culture at Vienna University of Technology. His recent work has focused on spatial conflict, urban informality, models of networking and relational theories. Peter has been visiting professor at Linz University of Art (2000) and University of Paderborn (2002). He is one of the founder members of ThinkArchitecture and author of numerous articles and books including *Die virtuelle Dimension: Architektur, Subjektivität und Cyberspace* (2001), *Visuelle Kultur: Körper-Räume-Medien* (co-ed., 2003) and the forthcoming *Networked Cultures* (2008).

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Leo Care currently divides his time between architecture practice with Prue Chiles Architects, Research at the Bureau of Design Research and tutoring in both Degree and March. schools at the University of Sheffield. His particular interests lie in engaging communities and specifically young people in the process of design, construction and localised regeneration. Leo is a founding member of Playce, an international network of architects, designers and educationalists that have come together to improve awareness and encourage learning of the built environment, through design and play. The group was established in Finland at the Alvar Aalto International Symposium 2003. The group aims to undertake workshops with young people in different countries, celebrating cultural and architectural diversity.

Renata Tyszczuk is lecturer in Architecture at the University of Sheffield. Her research interests explore the contemporary city and the role of imagination and experiment in architectural design and practice. She has participated in interdisciplinary research projects on questions about globalisation, environmental change and creative approaches to sustainability. This links to her involvement in the development of the Interdependence Day project (www.interdependenceday.co.uk). She is the author of *The Story of an Architect King: Stanislas Leszczynski in Lorraine 1737-1766* (Oxford: Peter Lang, 2007) and editor of *Architecture and Interdependence: Mappings and Explorations by Studio Six* (Cambridge: Shed, 2007). Together with Doina Petrescu she is the founder editor of *field:*

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