NATURE AND THE CITY. BEAUTY IS TAKING ON NEW FORM

Edited by Jale Erzen and Raffaele Milani

With the support of
Laboratory for Research on the City (University of Bologna)
International Association for Aesthetics
Department of Education Sciences "Giovanni Maria Bertin", University of Bologna

Grafica:
Roberto Satta, docente Accademia di Belle Arti “Mario Sironi” Sassari

Copertina:
Alessio Angioni, Accademia di Belle Arti “Mario Sironi” Sassari

Impaginazione:
Accademia di Belle Arti “Mario Sironi” Sassari, allievi corso di Grafica Editoriale 2012-2013

Allegato alla rivista parl n°22 - Luglio/dicembre 2012

Stampa:
TAS srl - Industria Grafica

EDIZIONE EDES, EDITRICE DEMOCRATICA SARDA
PIAZZALE ANTONIO SEGNI, 1 - 07100 SASSARI
TEL. 079 262221 - FAX 079 5623669 - WWW.EDESEDITRICE.COM
IN CO-PRODUZIONE CON ACCADEMIA DI BELLE ARTI “MARIO SIRONI”, SASSARI
## Index

**Preface by Raffaele Milani**  
12

**Editorial – Introduction by Jale Erzen**  
15

**Introduction by Joseph Margolis**  
*The Art of Landscape Reconceived*  
21

### I - City and Nature in Historical Examples

**Gao Jianping**  
*The Origin of Particular Characters of A City*  
35

**Haruhiko Fujita**  
*Nature and Architecture: in the City of God and the Land of the Gods*  
37

**B. Deniz Çalış Kural**  
*Real and Imaginary Paradise(s) on Earth: Manifestations of Nature in Islamic Cities*  
49

### II - World-Cities-Societies and Landscapes

**Patricia Lawler**  
*Sex and the City: The Rebirth of London and the Romance of Finance*  
61

**Mark Haywood**  
*Taming and simulating Nature in an African Metropolis*  
73
Rıfat Şahiner  
*Istanbul as a Stage/Landscape in the Process of Globalization* 81

Lydia Muthuma  
*Nairobi’s Identity* 89

Paul Cortois  
*Cities as Individual Essences - Lisbon’s Pessoas* 97

---

**III - URBAN LANDSCAPE AND NATURE**

Krystyna Wilkoszewska  
*Nature in the City. The Natural and the Artefactual* 113

Vladimir Mako  
*City, Landscape, Nature: Characters in the Aesthetic Scene of Cultivation* 123

Justine Balibar  
*The Natural Landscape Distant from the City, between Exclusion and Integration* 133

Liu Yuedi  
*Humanization-Culturalization of Nature and Chinese Everyday Aesthetics* 141

Paola Ardizzola d’Oltremare  
*The Definition of the Green as “Outside Living Space” by Bruno Taut: an Innovative Means for Shaping the Social Housing of the ‘20-’30 in Berlin* 155
IV - Garden and Nature in the City

Curtis Carter

Garden: Nature/City

Tae-seung Lim

Nature in the City: A Study on the Aesthetic Characteristic of East Asian Landscape Garden and its Practical Application to Urban Life

Helena Camara Lacé Brandao

Porch or Garden: Contemporary Habits at the City of Rio de Janeiro to have Contact to the Nature at Home Security

Bruce Elder

Garden Thoughts (On Filming the Garden): Memorial Reflections after my Film, What Troubles the Peace at Brandenburg?

Masahiro Hamashita

The Possibility of Contemplation in Postmodern City Life

V - City and Nature in Philosophical Discourse

Tom Rockmore

Remarks on Human Flourishing, Nature and Culture

Seunghye Sun

Confucian Scholars’ Aesthetical Experience in Hometown: Nine-Twist Views and Songs of Landscape in Korean Art

Katya Mandoki

Naturing Culture: Echoes of Mind, Nature and City

Mara Rubene

Kant’s City? Some Preliminary Reflections on Landscape and its Aesthetic Context
VI - Metaphysical Aspects of Urban Experience

Annu Wilenius - Tanja Rajanti  
*Travels in Time, Space and Intensity*  
249

Anthony Santora  
*The City: a Place of Places*  
261

Claudio Sgarbi  
*The Female Body of the City? Notes on Cities and Metaphors*  
267

VII - Art related to Nature and the City

Mary Wiseman  
*Reflections on Violence in Nature and Stillness in Art. An Essay in Several Parts*  
285

Hidemichi Tanaka  
*Nature and the City in Hokusai Landscapes*  
293

Andrea Baldini  
*Public Art and the Meaning of Landscapes*  
299

Tanja Plesivcnik  
*Environmental Art and Appreciation of the Environment*  
309

Yanqin Meng  
*The Paradise in Heart*  
319
VIII - CITY AS AESTHETIC OBJECT - CITY AS NATURE

Alan Shear
Cityscape as Aesthetic Object.
World Heritage Site Urban Vistas and Aesthetic Experience 325

Peng Feng
Is It Possible for Environmental Aesthetics to Take a “Transhuman Stance”? 339

Ebru Salah
“Sayfiye”: Reconceptualizing the Transformation of Nature into the City on the Anatolian Side of Istanbul 347

Olivier Gaudin
City as Nature: Urban Ecology and the Frames of Perception 361

Claudia Portioli
The World in a Skyscraper. Space, Function and Cultures 373

Aléxia Bretas
Paris, Capital of the 19th Century: Passages between Nature and History in Walter Benjamin 385

Joosik Min
City and Geomancy: Interpretation of Capital City Seoul from Fengshui Theory 395

IX - ECOLOGICAL AND AESTHETIC CONCERN

Gabriele Bersa
Megalopolis and Globalization 409

Silvia Minichino
Is Energy-Landscape a Useful Theoretical Tool for Thinking about Sprawl-City in Energy Transition? 415
INDEX

Hülya Toksöz Şahiner
The Working City as an Environmental Experience: the Case of Istanbul 427

Andreina Maahesen Milan
“The Garden of Eden”. Gartenstadt, Social Reformism and the Cult of Soil 435

X - THE SOCIAL ASPECTS OF THE CITY

Eva Man
Fashion, Female Body Aesthetics and the Colonial City of Hong Kong in the 1960s 449

Zoltán Somhegyi
From Domination to Respect. The Evaluation of Nature through its Representation From Enlightenment to Romanticism 457

BIographies 463
NATURE AND THE CITY
BEAUTY IS TAKING ON NEW FORM
We present, in this volume, the official documents of the international convention entitled “Nature and the City. Beauty is Taking on New Form” that was held in Bologna in June of 2012 with the sponsorship of the Laboratory for Research on the City, the ISS, the University of Bologna, the International Association for Aesthetics, and the Italian Society for Aesthetics. The city, too, is landscape. We can leave it by going into nature, thereby exchanging the urban for the rural, but we can also enter the city to live within its architecture and contemplate its forms.

Every architectural structure is a landscape and each promotes an educational or paedeumatic relationship between the spirit and the environment. Our gaze and our bodies activate a certain way of contemplating that promotes the interchange between the external perception of the physical world and an internal seeing. This internal seeing is the psychic perception of the visual image. There is a close relationship between the aesthetic experience of the natural environment and that of the urban landscape. In the same way that humankind lives on the earth so, too, it lives in the city.

The theme has been approached from various aesthetic perspectives: art, architecture, urban studies, philosophy, sociology, literature. Observing the landscape and city has inspired not only architects, but also many writers and painters to immerse themselves in a vision that amalgamates the world of reality with that of dreams. The forms of places, whether at daybreak or dusk, the alternation of day and night as well as the cycle of the seasons, have promoted a visionary sense of time and place. Here we find the splendor of the eternal flux of all things, a thought expressed across the many languages. People perceive the world as a common world, and simultaneously, as their own private world. People are the artificers of things that occur in the world. The external and the interior worlds collide and the intervention of the senses involves the dynamism of reason in a continuous process of exchange between the real and the ideal. The Conference has considered the idea of the forms of the city in comparison with the landscape and with nature. The range of papers on subjects such as City and Nature in Historical Examples, World-Cities-Societies and Landscapes, Urban Landscape and Nature, Garden and Nature in the City, City and Nature in Philosophical Discourse, Metaphysical Aspects of Urban Experience, Art related to Nature and the City, City as Aesthetic Object - City as Nature, Ecological and Aesthetic Concern, The Social
Aspects of the City, according to various case studies will reflect a strong interdisciplinary ethos.

After the death of the aura in art, and the following success of shock, provocation and the incessant pursuit of the new, the city is broken apart and begins to open new visions and perceptions of space and the environment. During the Twentieth Century we have been present for a great transformation. Now from the megacities of the world come many questions about how we can live on the earth. This convention attempts to examine the current situation in the hopes of forming a plan for the immediate future.
EDITORIAL - INTRODUCTION

Jale Nejdet Erzen

Bologna, this most wonderful and pleasant of cities is the perfect place to talk about city and nature. Bologna’s history is a chronicle of trials to adapt to the times and to new industries without eliminating nature. This has taken on many forms, like the arcades, the hidden gardens in the core of the urban fabric, and designing nature, adorning streets with magnolia and jinseng trees and seeing to it that the wild prunes shed their pink flowers under your feet on the pavements in May. These trees later turn a deep magenda which I am sure was also designed for their matching color with the ochres and sienas of the buildings. Every detail is designed according to its colour harmony with nature and its complementing atmosphere with the florid forms.

The theme of nature and environment has been on the agenda since about three decades. As nature seems to become more vulnerable and as the cities become unmanageable due to the uncontrollable growth, there seems to be an increasing interest in their discourse, whether in the hope of finding solutions or as a consolation of some kind. I am not sure which. But what I have notices with growing satisfaction in these last decades is that our discourse and awareness is not longer limited to western concepts which are often based on binary oppositions like nature/culture, mind/body, spirit/matter. I have observed in this conference very rich and diverse presentations of Eastern attitudes and philosophies which seemed to underlie an influence on the softening of western self-centred conceptions about man’s place in the universe. In this context, I think Professor Margolis’ paper was a serious reminder of the limitations of our egotistical constructs. As the first presentation, it opened our minds to the possibility of alternative views.

Although most would agree that today the main problems concerning cities lie in the city’s relation to nature, this conference has largely offered us views about the positive presence of nature in the city, both metaphorically and physically. Nature has been approached in the form of gardens, of gender and femininity, of ecology and energy, as urban landscape and in many other forms.

One aspect of urban nature was interpreted as its educative function. Olivier Gaudin shows how cities shape our ways of perceiving and teach us to recognize symbols and signs and forms of social habit, while Alan Shear describes the city
as a landscape that can be enjoyed for the aesthetic experience of its panorama. In Wilenus and Rajanti’s joint paper dwelling and travelling in the urban landscape is explained as creative of new visions and of thought adventures. One essential aspect of the city is seen by Claudio Scarbi to be its feminine nature. The author claims that this artful confusion of the city which is its feminine aspect has always been a target for masculine control while for Eva Man the way women’s clothing and fashion change is an important quality contributing to the city’s aesthetics.

According to Justine Balibar, the taste for nature and landscape historically arose in the city; the view of a landscape being most ideal from the vantage point in the city. Here Balibar has shown two different relations between the city and landscape of nature, according to a demarcation line or to a porous relationship which means the penetration of the city by nature. This penetration happens in most distinct manner with gardens, although gardens are relatively controlled pieces of nature. The conference has dealt with the idea of gardens in various ways, making us see that the garden is quite distinct from landscape in nature and that the garden is possible only within the city and attains special spiritual qualities. As Deniz Çalış showed with beautiful examples, in Islamic culture gardens were considered as real and imaginary paradise on earth. For Bruce Elder gardens have a special quality of silence which allow a spiritual clearing in the urban environment. Bradão’s paper illustrated how the porch, in the crowded city of Rio constituted a piece of nature and of security. The interaction of spaces and places create spiritual dwelling, according to Anthony Santora. For Tae Seung Lim traditional Korean landscape garden was an expression of visual ideology. On the other hand, Andreina Milan proposes the model of the garden-city as a solution to the separation between the rural and the urban.

For many scholars nature/culture dichotomy which appears in urban discourse as landscape versus urbanity is an artificial dichotomy. As Mary Wiseman reminds us in her text “the paintings of Vermeer and 19th century painters of the American West reveal a deep similarity between the interiority of the human mind and the sublimity of nature” suggesting “that the distinction between nature and culture—mind’s contribution to the ongoing of the world—is artificial.” In the first place, many urban environments are also parts of nature or are environments where nature is always in some ways present. In the first place, many urban environments are also parts of nature or are environments where nature is always in some ways present. Istanbul has a particular example in this relation, namely the Sayfiye, which means the vacation or natural resting environment on the outskirts of the city. This area is not really a suburban district nor exactly a vacation land; according to Ebru Aras it is where people go to relax in the hot months of the
summer, and where they can stay away from urban stress. Although the city is considered as an exclusion of nature, Krystyna Wilkoszevska claims that an ecological image of the city has to include nature. Katia Mandoki goes to the basis of the idea that culture and nature cannot be thought of as separate, because all that is understood as cultural is also present in the animal world. Therefore her claim is that it is nature which creates the basis for culture. The implication may be that cities that are cut from nature will eventually also lose their culture. On the other hand, as Mark Haywood claims, when nature is tried to be protected and brought to the city in the form of zoos, as is the case in South Africa, then we have a crooked idea of nature. Apparently in Eastern culture urban forms and nature are considered inseparable, Hokusai’s views of Mount Fuji show how the mountain is conserved as protective of the city, as Hidemichi Tanaka’s paper has shown. For Haruhiko Fujita who explained the idea of nature in Japanese culture, nature is the source of a spiritual insight. Japanese culture, as in the case of Tadao Ando’s work, seeks for an organic relationship between nature and architecture. Yanqin Meng argues that although in reality harmony between human life and nature may be impossible, it is attained in the heart and in the imagination. In this respect art works can be means for such a harmony. One of the means to approach nature without human egotism is suggested by Peng Feng as a ‘Transhuman’ stance. In this paper which refers to Wolfgang Welsch’s recent discourse on the ‘transhuman’, the question is whether Environmental Aesthetics can take such a position.

The question, is how to make cities liveable places. For some this is possible through the contribution of art and architecture. For Zoltan Somhegyi the main problem is to find a new relationship towards nature which should be one of respect and not of domination. Vladimir Mako claims that architecture has also scenic qualities and that the urban environment extends into the landscape. For some scholars a true relationship between nature and the urban culture is made possible through artworks; according to Plesivencnik the artists’ engagement with urban and rural environment creates a different way of seeing these. In fact for Andrea Baldini landscapes, environments and artworks are not so different, because we also see landscapes as changing entities. On the other hand, there are also negative aspects of the city, such as destroyed areas. Alexia Bretas talks of modernity and the modern urban environment as the mimesis of hell created by the revolt of nature against being besieged by technique. Gabriele Bersa asks what kind of aesthetic is possible in the contemporary city. To this inquiry, Rifat Şahiner’s paper can be taken as a response with the example of the postmodern esthetization of the city of İstanbul.

Naturally many ideas and images or the city have been created and are remembered through literary works. Paul Cortois considers the city as an individual and
refers to Lisbon’s book of disquiet in explaining how Lisbon is actually a literary creation and is experienced as a personality. Seunghye Sun refers to Views and Songs in the Korean Landscape and mentions how landscape is understood through songs that have gained popularity. Mara Rubene views the city of Riga on the shores of the river Dangava as related with Kant because Kant’s first two critiques were published in Riga, where the relationship of the city with the river creates a relation to nature and to the past. Patricia Lawler looks at London from the viewpoint of John Dryden’s Annus Mirabilis and views the city as a place of cosmopolitan romance, offering new experiences.

Practical investigations about the city and its physical forms have been dealt with according to architectural models, such as Paola Ardizzola’s paper which presents Bruno Taut’s housing project for Berlin as one which focused on ‘outside living space’ with the qualities of ‘Licht, Luft, Sonne’. Claudia Portioli’s investigation concerns the question of how skyscrapers affect people and the environment in which we live. While Gao Jianping looks at China’s new cities and their problems with critical stance, Hülya Toksöz brings the issue of conservation and renovation to the fore, issues which are extremely important today in relation to sustainability and world heritage questions.

On the whole the theme of nature and the city was approached mostly as dichotomies of nature and culture, of landscape and urban form and often seen through concepts of aesthetics and art. Gardens were approached as the most distinct forms of nature/culture, reality/illusion relations. Architecture and urban physicality was also tackled as important issues in the aesthetics of the city. Surprisingly there were few papers on ecological issues and new approaches to urban planning.

What is especially rewarding today in such international conferences, although eighty percent of the world cultures are still not represented, is the fact that we are learning about alternative and contrary views within which we thought to be the unified East. This conference has especially been rich in offering us new ideas of city and nature relationships, coming from China, Japan, Korea, India and Turkey. The idea of the ugly being more beautiful than designed nature, as Professor Lim mentioned, or the Sayfiye- the leisure neighbourhood of Istanbul’s Asian side – were novel concepts. I’d like to add another alternative model to the city-and nature synthesis: the ‘City without Stress’. This is the name of a project underway for the city of İzmir on the Aegean coast where the focus is on outdoors living, on spending more time on the sea, using the sea for transportation, etc.

As for my own thoughts on the relation fo the city to nature, I can see no opposition in the way we use these terms, because our general notion of nature only includes only what does not present any barriers or difficulties to our egoistical schemes, such as trees that can be cut down, flora that can be tamed. Certainly no
animals or no insects. Maybe the opposition is in the fact that the city is understood as a kind of machine and nature as a kind of chaos to be controlled. In my view, between the depths of the earth and the immensity of the sky, the city and all human habitation are just interfaces, ephemeral, easily becoming dust and shadow with the slightest trembling of Gaia and deposited as layers one on top of another, creating vast necropolis. The only viable solution to the whole earth becoming a limitless megalo-necropolis maybe to assume the eastern attitude of ego-abasement, choosing the ego-fugal, and letting the energy of nature revitalize our cities and our spirit.
When I was very young, I confess, I took a certain smug pleasure in *not ever* having smoked, a form of satisfaction perhaps only virgin girls would understand. I also recall a crisis of sorts, when I taught in Canada, when it proved impossible to refuse an after-dinner cigar offered by the Dean of the Graduate Faculty, a lovely man, after a perfectly splendid banquet: I had no idea how to savor a cigar—or smoke it for that matter—and I saw at once the stupid side of my rigidity. But what appalled me even more, years later, was the discovery, now hardly worth mentioning, that I’d always been a captive smoker, a smoker of “second-hand smoke.” I feel somewhat the same about viewing landscapes, though I admit, I’m a bit of a literate illiterate, having now read Milani’s delightful little book, *The Art of the Landscape*. I’m not clear at all about how to savor a landscape correctly, although, to be sure, I realize that I’ve been a second-hand smoker of landscapes all my life—and no doubt, at one time or another, a glib champion of some of the standard theories. But is there a proper way of viewing landscapes in our time that is more than mere nostalgia? I’m not sure.

I suppose I might be caught unawares, by chance vistas, by the picturesque or the romantic or the sublime or the baroque. They may have suited civilized amateurs somewhere between the seventeenth and the nineteenth centuries, but they now seem distinctly past their prime. I hardly think my own sensibilities can be paradigmatic for the race, of course. But I don’t seem to be able to recover the programmatic innocence of the art of the landscape any more than I can the purity of the Kantian aesthetic. Somewhere among the earthquakes of Bologna, the impending collision of the Milky Way and the Andromeda Galaxy, the salt water channels of Louisiana facilitating deep-water oilwells and polluting fresh water sources, English manufacturing towns of the Industrial Revolution, huge increases in the human population, new forests of uninhabited buildings, even entire cities, rising in China without a history of habitation, new Calcuttas oblivious of old Calcuttas—among such landscapes, I say—I find it more than difficult to state precisely what the art of landscape now signifies. That is, beyond nostalgia and social solidarity.

I want to resist the temptation of moral ecology. Ecology is a serious and necessary matter, I don’t deny. It must surely color the theory of landscape, if we are to escape being completely silly. But it overwhelms too easily the more fragile issue. And
sides, I am as skeptical, personally, of moral philosophy as I am of aesthetics. I think we must hold on to all the theories the world has spawned, and pay tribute to the grand examples of their favorite ages, where the classic specimens (or acceptable recent substitutes) can still be found. I think of the submergence of a visible part of ancient Egypt to allow for the Aswan Dam, the misfortunes of the Parthenon, the near-disappearance of the Hittite world, the destruction of Persepolis. We must give up at least as much as we preserve, whether of architecturally transformed human landscapes or of what we problematically call natural landscapes: sites like the Serengeti plain or Yellowstone or the Alps or the Grand Canyon or the Amazon.

There is, of course, no ready line of division between natural and human landscapes; furthermore, there’s an insuperable transience, continual transformation, conceptual exhaustion, and even irrelevance overtaking the principal theories of the “beauty” and “sublimity” of landscape. The beauty of the picturesque, for instance, is becoming ever scarcer, less important, less engrossing to the new populations that would have to be enlisted to preserve its considered influence; the romantic, conceived as the Geist of late 18th- and early 19th-century art and thought is still valid among its principal examples, but it no longer fulfills the role it once was thought to fit so well (a role with notable pretensions of providing stable statements of what (we may be sure) is essential in artistic expression and aspiration. The sublime, for instance, once so confidently linked to the Alps and the Himalayas, or reflections on Turner’s horizons and seascapes, or occasions of thrilled submission to the starry night—all familiarly routinized by now—has simply lost its power to supply compelling instances by which to confirm its grandest theories, or the importance of the disputes about such theories so dear to Kant and Burke and their admirers.

The habits of the leisure class have changed; the needs and interests of the human race have changed; technology and sheer discovery have changed; our conceptions of ourselves have changed. The destruction and exhaustion of the earth are now pedestrian concerns. The true immensity of the universe has only recently dawned on us from information packaged at an impossible distance in the Hubble’s photographs. We think of all this, now, in terms of the unliklihood of perpetual survival and the present and future limitations and promethean promise of our technologies. The universe is vaster and far more complex than we ever supposed, more violent, more dangerous, more uncontrollable; yet, for all that, precariously hospitable and almost too distant to be quite sublime in the familiar sense. We know it in a way that was never possible before. Nevertheless, it remains a perfectly honorable and humane policy to respect the conventions of beauty and sublimity so seriously favored in previous ages, especially where they still attract something of the old regard (and the old arguments) applied to their original specimens. But it’s more a matter now of creaturely loyalty to vestigial practices and sentiments (older than our own) than of actually resurrecting (by soldierly argument) the theories of landscape favored by figures like Goethe and Ruskin. The
classic theories now shuttle between theatricality and a balder understanding of nature’s vastness. No doubt the expanding universe is a conceptual wonder, but not, I think, sublime. We must get clearer about ourselves. Landscape, I suggest, will pass through a phase of courage and resignation, lightened perhaps by the allure of new forms of exploration. But, ultimately, there is little to engage the whole of mankind as compellingly as continual war and the care of its own under mortal threat—or both.

Polite chatter aside, we cannot speak of landscape in its most generous sense unless we are prepared to be explicit about our conception of the human being—that is, ourselves. And, there, I admit I’m rather taken with a slim paradox that may not impress you at all. As far as I can make out, the theory of landscape reaches its philosophical zenith in the 17th and 18th centuries, but the philosophical theory of the human person stationed in a distinctly human world barely begins to collect—and then only haltingly—its genuinely “modern modern” resources and intuitions in the middle of the 18th century.

It has, in fact, not yet come to any tolerably settled reckoning; of course, its best promise cannot have been glimpsed earlier than by way of post-Hegelian and post-Darwinian reflections, when biology, cultural anthropology, history, paleontology, philosophy, and the human sciences first find common cause in what we may call the definition of the self. That’s to say, not before Marx, Nietzsche, Dilthey, the Philosophical Anthropologists, the American pragmatists, the post-Husserlian phenomenologists, the early Frankfurt Critical school, or Cassirer—and, to be candid, barely even with these. That’s to say, hardly more than a hundred years ago.

I’m persuaded that the primitive quality of both aesthetics and the philosophy of art and moral and political philosophy is directly due to this surprising discrepancy. For all its glory, Western philosophy, from its ancient beginnings until the 18th century, was almost completely deprived of resources resembling modern conceptions of history and culture; and the 18th century itself, viewed in terms at least of the achievements of Kant and Hume, was scarcely aware of the dynamics of biology and chemistry and, notoriously, failed to produce an up-to-date theory of the human self. Surely a scandal.

My own view—I will not burden you with it—is that the self is a datable, contingent, hybrid artifact of conjointly biological and cultural evolution, the functional counterpart (the emergent site) of the gradual invention of true language and the conditions of its successful transmission and trans-generational mastery; hence, of the uniquely reflexive, agentive, productive, historicized powers of individual persons and human societies. Seen this way, the fortunes of the theory of landscape are not unreasonably or unfairly construed as reflections of the self’s own cultural evolution. There is, therefore, no unique, doctrinally correct orientation—whether moral or aesthetic—that the philosophy of landscape must adopt; but, given its actual history, it can hardly fail to be aware of its own need to address the normative concerns of contemporaneous societies, that is, regarding what they concede are their own and other societies’ interests,
examined under the artifactual, historicized conditions of knowledge and commitment under which all matters of objectivity and responsibility obtain.

Proceeding thus, the principal lessons I draw from philosophy’s trajectory, which are hardly undisputed but which seem to me to bear most pertinently on the reconfiguration of the theory of landscape art, include the following items: (i) that the subjective and the object-ive (written as hyphenated terms) are indissolubly intertwined, in a sense due chiefly to Kant’s and Hegel’s innovations, manifested for instance as the inseparability of realism and appropriate forms of post-Kantian Idealism de-transcendentalized and rendered *a posteriori* in the slimmest possible way; (ii) that all forms of cognitive privilege and foundationalism, necessitarianism, essentialism, rationalism and the like must be unconditionally abandoned; (iii) that the objective standing of the norms (*a fortiori*, the *teloi*) of human conduct, activity, knowledge, commitment, appreciation, judgment and the like belongs entirely (among the artifactualy transformed members of *Homo sapiens*) to the transformed features of the life of persons, though animal needs and values, however behaviorally expressed (lacking normative standing altogether), are indeed readily discernible among human infants and well-formed persons (as they are among non-human animals); and (iv) that moral and aesthetic or artistic norms, like cognitive and inferential norms, which cannot be defended in uniform ways, are, nevertheless, entirely subsidiary, dependent, or constructed within the self-ascribed norms and purposes of the holist life and practice of the apt members of societies of selves.

For sheer convenience, I treat this tally as a particularly lean expression of contemporary pragmatism, by no means restricted to the American variety; I would just as easily concede the tally (just given) to be a stripped-down, thoroughly naturalistic projection of a post-Hegelian and post-Darwinian picture of the specifically human world. Count that, perhaps, as item (v) in my conception. But if you allow it, then I think you must also ask yourself what the art of landscape could now mean in such an altered vision. Well, of course, it must begin with the flux of philosophy.

It would be too awkward to regard the contemplation of the self as, say, “an object all sublime.” But if we replaced sublimity with wonder regarding the entire sweep of human intelligence, then that’s precisely where our speculation would lead. And if it were indeed the self that was our principal and inexhaustible target, then it would be much easier to view landscape casually, as eccentric—as, also, the objectivity of morality and the aesthetic would be. But if we granted all that, we would find ourselves obliged to make comparable concessions regarding the sciences and the whole of practical life. And then, we would simply have stumbled on to the obvious reversal: that is, that if landscape encompassed both beauty and sublimity, incorporating both knowledge and our intimations of insuperable finitude, then, if we wished, we might as well say that everything is landscape, the inclusive order and totality of everything we espy, collected in the mind’s eye, holistically, however we happened to glimpse the world
in pieces, to be savored in more earth-bound ways. The art of landscape, then, may be conceived as a sort of microcosmic digest of the whole of philosophical cosmology presented as an album of compelling images of changing human habitation.

I think this signifies that we may be coming to the end of the naive assurance that the moral and the aesthetic and (I should add) the scientific and the historical and the critical were ever autonomous or self-sufficient disciplines. There is no assured way of fixing the true priorities of understanding in accord with any of these modalities. Every part of the periphery is part of the center, and the center is wherever we happen to begin.

This may explain why the least token of the picturesque is as precious as, say, that grandest jumble (represented but never perceived) that we call the Big Bang—and vice versa. It explains something of the comic significance of the aesthetic. For, of course, no one really knows precisely what the notion is intended to signify or exclude; and yet, it offsets the unconditional primacy of the moral (Kant’s executive deception); it offsets the primacy of science (the self-deception of contemporary deflationists and reductionists); and it offsets the primacy of the aesthetic itself (the deception of what is perceptually given: the most reckless and canny of all deceptions, the self-deception of the whole of mankind) by which what merely appears is spontaneously confounded with “what is,” and “what [thus] is” with what should be savored as “what [actually] is” and is thus [actually] presented. In risking these confessional remarks, I find myself approaching a freer discovery.

I think we are entirely at home, though alien to ourselves and nature—at home as alien—in a universe completely indifferent to our existence, which we alone have any plausible claim to understand. If we were aware of another race of beings, in a galaxy impossible to reach, who, we realized, could understand us in a way that compared favorably with the way we find ourselves able to understand them, then all our moral and aesthetic convictions might be strengthened in being thus reconceived: but they would hardly change if we thought we were in no danger. They would still be coupled with a benign but insuperable skepticism.

Something of the sort, I suggest, is under way: I mean a change in confidence, though not a change of doctrine. Although, as far as we know, we are alone and find ourselves burdened with an immensely enlarged, rather recently acquired, suddenly more detailed but still poorly grasped knowledge of a universe made purposeful only (it seems) by our own projections of meaning. Would it be too much to say that the history of landscape art was indeed the history of the need to make the earth human in sentiment and purpose; so that, by the ubiquity of the aesthetic, we thereupon find the moral and the scientific confirmed as well? All our norms may be quite reasonable (as the constructions that they are), though, on our own say-so, we realize that we cannot confirm their validity because we cannot exceed the changing conditions on which we might hope to do so.
We have nearly erased all the sprites and demons and gods of ancient nature and we cannot now hide the fact that we are quite alone in a vast and indifferent world. Merely to acknowledge that the city is the principal place of human habitation within the whole of nature (that’s to say, the universe) is to explain in a single sentence what the purpose of landscape is: it is what we have made it, a practice designed to transform a sufficient sector of nature into various notably hospitable spaces suited for human dwelling, a city globally distributed, so to say, a sort of *civitas gentium*, within environing natural neighborhoods made suitably appealing.

I find it impossible to suppose that any such undertaking is at any time known to be grounded on valid moral or aesthetic norms—that is, on any judgment or policy determinately confirmed on just such grounds. Because the human city’s primary concern lies with its acknowledged needs, its practice in meeting such needs; its comfort, fluency, pride, reputation, power, affirmed taste, daring and invention, distinction among other cities, and the scruple of its administrators. How it answers its calling will assuredly be judged in terms of communities of known influence, funded taste, and partisan power.

There are no moral or aesthetic norms that do not finally rest, essentially, on thoroughly contingent societal practices and consensual tolerance. It’s quite enough that the peoples of the world should have had a care for remembered disputes regarding beauty and the like that have preceded their own undertakings. What more can we count on as a proper rule? The normative is little more than the pertinently consensual, subject to insuperable dispute. You see the force of my suggestion: the moral, the aesthetic, the scientific, the historical as well, are hardly more than the Troy of our intelligence: one city cobbled on the ruins of another, their links to beauty and sublimity and other would-be higher norms confirmed by their interpreted continuity with the thought and practice of the past. There is no other rule to be had, even if the objectives, say, of science and morality are of entirely different sorts. Think of rebuilding Nagasaki and Dresden for instance: we proceed in a way not altogether unlike consulting the ruins of positivism and (say) Mendeleev’s predictive successes in spite of his otherwise ruinous guesses. If we had to demonstrate, non-circularly, the validity of our judgments and commitments here, we would soon lose heart. We cannot claim to map the world, either descriptively or normatively; we model what, tolerably, we regard as the successful models of the past. Our theories of knowledge and right judgment support very little else. It’s in that spirit that I take the art of landscape to be a metaphor or metonym of practical life, deflected tactfully into the airy norms of beauty and the sublime.

I’m prepared to concede that the validity of our norms presupposes an answer to the question of life’s “meaning.” But the answer to that question is even easier than the answer to the question before us now. Because life is meaningful (whether we live well or ill) if we live it in spontaneous accord with the institutions that happen to prevail in the world we’ve entered: life confirms its meaning among the practices it finds es-
tablished, entrenched, altered, destroyed, rebuilt, and found to be sufficiently continuous and concordant with whatever went before. That is the ground, contingent, variable, normless though it may be, on which the changing values of what is beautiful and right depend; it’s also the ulterior, shifting ground of landscape’s function.

To put a name to it, landscape is a sign of our participating in a society’s life, belonging, being at home. Hence, the beautiful and the sublime are perfectly valid; but their validity (such as it is) is settled internally, so to say, prior to any objective critique—in expressing or reflecting, acceptably, a particular society’s form of life. The norms of art and moral life cannot fail to change with a society’s changing practices. Burke’s “beautiful” has almost no relevance now, and Kant’s “sublime” is hardly more than the vestige of a naive age. If Kant had been right, we would ourselves be confronted now with a surfeit of sublimity that no one could possibly bear. No, the primary values of landscape change as experience and technology change: a photograph of the Milky Way or of a black hole in a distant galaxy hardly compare with a Turner storm, though it implicates forces and magnitudes utterly beyond ordinary comprehension.

We are no longer drawn—well, perhaps no more than vestigially—to the beautiful and the sublime in the 18th-century sense. Within our adjusted terms, the quality of deliberate restoration—say, of the grand monuments and architecture of Rome and Paris—must be an entirely or largely subsidiary and disputatious matter. The first has to do with merely belonging to a determinate community of life, to some sector of a viable Lebensform, let us say; whereas the second has to do with the specific politics of taste and consensual tolerance that happens to prevail within our world. Even so, the second relies on a suitable response to the first; and the art of landscape ranges over both. Even answers to the most famous philosophical questions regarding moral and aesthetic norms require a measure of public approval to have any standing at all. If we abandoned all presumption of cognitive or rational or sentimental privilege, how could it be otherwise?

I find these adjustments well-nigh impossible to resist. They seem to be driven by the argument itself, by the pathos of landscape art (if you don’t mind a little purple), by the compelling conjecture that we are the most extraordinary creatures of the sentient world—natural artifacts (as it is said) that can account adequately for their own artifactual norms—that minister to their evolving needs only and entirely by their own historied contrivance; and that are perfectly aware (matter-of-factly) of the eventual demise of their sun, however distant that reckoning may be.

In our time, as we’ve been surprised to learn, contemplating the sun’s impending death lacks all sublimity: indeed, we have already witnessed (on television, on demand) the explosion of a supernova as an entirely pedestrian affair, and we now know quite a lot about the incredible cosmic hazards that await us, whether we survive or not.

For the time being, all this is beyond heroism and sublimity. We know that if we are to survive, we must collect all our talents and technology now. In fact, we’ve al-
ready made our first probes beyond the landscapes of our local world, beyond our
galaxy—without the least sign of disarray. One might almost suppose that our quotidian
wars bear witness to our equanimity. The destruction of our most intimate habitats is
as familiar a part of our landscape as the most vaunted beauties: Dresden and Paris for
example, Nagasaki and the Taj Mahal. And of course we lack the least clue as to how,
four billion years hence, the trick will have been turned: that is, to leave one earth, to
tavel to another! Can we, I must ask, still make sense of our current convictions?

The very idea of treasuring landscape seems to begin with a naive appreciation of
nature’s bounty and its unknown amplitude, however we may have to come to regard
ourselves as nature’s beneficiaries. If, symptomatically, you think of Locke’s theory
of property or liberalism in general, beyond the visions of the 18th century, you cannot
fail to see that, through nearly the whole of its history, the West has assumed a poten-
tially limitless space of human habitation and the proprietary standing of its advanta-
geous holdings. That’s increasingly difficult to defend now, though a very large part
of the same world (no longer confined to the West) remains remarkably spendthrift.

I’ve already suggested that our moral and aesthetic values are profoundly contin-
gent and subject to deep changes in the holist context of human life; hence, that, con-
trary to the immensely influential theories Kant advances, our norms are never
autonomous or fixed. Human nature cannot but be historied, variable, ideologically
labile, subject to distinct changes in interests, priorities, technological competence,
emerging experience, severe and shallow gains and losses in the environing world.
Landscape and habitat change therefore and we must move in accord with our doctrinal
tides. It’s the holism of human life that’s decisive, not the abstractly disjunctive objec-
tives of one kind of judgment or another. There’s the fatal weakness of Kant’s division
between science, morality, and the aesthetic.

By holism, I mean the effective unity of the shifting relata of judgment and com-
mitment that masquerade as argumentatively independent of one another or of other
interdependent considerations that are not usually named in similar ways. I venture to
name the nominal telos of the holist context of human life, conditions of flourishing.
Landscape and landscape art, I propose, are simply images of flourishing, small and
large. That’s why these categories change so drastically with drastic changes in holist
history; it’s also why it’s difficult to guess at what informs our appraisal of human
landscapes. Think of Aristotle’s eudaimonia as a holist notion that includes the moral
or ethical in a deeper totality of flourishing than as a merely holist version of the moral
itself. Latter-day Aristotelians, you realize, are obliged to compete with Kant. If I’m
right about this, then most of moral theory and nearly all of aesthetic theory has simply
missed its mark. What, after all, is a cathedral or a mosque or a palace or a mall—or
the outer wall of medieval Siena, for that matter? They all mark the larger spaces of
legible flourishing.

It’s but a step from there to grasp the mystery of the human. I find it close to capture
in that sector of the post-Darwinian literature that is, in part at least, distinctly anti-
Darwinian—a mixed literature that spans the curious views of Jakob von Uexküll and
the reactive conception of the so-called Philosophical Anthropologists, Helmuth Pless-
ner and Arnold Gehlen for instance and, I should add, the summary views of the Amer-
ican philosopher of biology, Marjorie Grene. The link between these figures and the
theorists of landscape art lies with the felt need of all of them to come to terms with
the meaning of the habitat of the human, the holist context of human flourishing. To
bring them together is to strengthen our sense of the hybrid transform that we name
“self” or “person” and its associated habitat, the “city” (as I’ve called it)—or “Umwelt”
(if I may draw, perhaps misleadingly, on Uexküll’s immensely problematic concept).
I must add, therefore, that, in invoking (may I say?) these hybrid anthropologists, I
also believe that none of them goes quite far enough in plumbing the mystery of the
human. Nevertheless, there are almost no other informed discussants to consult.

When I speak of the mystery of the human, I mean, precisely, to draw attention to
two specific issues that are separately quite puzzling as well as neglected, but that
prove to be marvelously illuminating when appropriately joined. The first centers on
the matter I’ve just been airing: namely, the curious fact that the treatment of landscape
as, essentially, a sort of aesthetic genre ignores the deeper sense in which the judgment
of landscape beauty is increasingly focused on a merely formal choice among alterna-
tive abstract categories, without sustained attention to the actual dynamics of the human
world. I’ve brought this to bear, you remember, on the extraordinarily telling fact that
what might have yielded a proliferation of close studies of the sublime in the 18th cen-
tury no longer elicits such studies in the 20th and 21st centuries. The explanation lies
with deep changes affecting the mode of human flourishing manifested in two very
different ages, which an abstract system of genres cannot rightly address when applied
formulaically across historical change. The second issue strikes me as the more im-
portant of the two, but it requires a greater tolerance for disputatious distinctions.

By and large, the Philosophical Anthropologists are struck by the fact that the
human infant is prematurely birthed by at least a year or more, and utterly undeveloped
for survival in any way that could meaningfully compare with the rapid development
of herd (or prey) animals for instance; and that, nevertheless, its lack of well-formed,
specialized abilities for coping with any particular environment, its unique and uncondi-
tional dependence on parental care, its distinctive sociability and intelligence, mal-
leable but never quite instinctively apt for survival in any familiar animal way, are
thought to constitute a decidedly counter-Darwinian evolutionary experiment, which
has proved incomparably successful but in ways that cannot be explained in biological
terms alone or primarily. In short, the ability of Homo sapiens sapiens to survive as a
species apparently depends on its complete lack of environmentally specialized apti-
tudes at birth and its compensating—most improbable ability, biologically consid-
ered—to learn to speak a socially invented language, which cannot itself be explained
primarily in biological terms but requires an exceptionally prolonged dependence that maximizes conditions for social learning not specifically directed at acquiring any survival skills already incipiently present at birth. Extraordinary!

In just this sense, *Homo sapiens* is a Darwinian anomaly, which I’ve suggested is best understood by construing self or person as a hybrid transform of the infant members of the species, culturally constituted by the actual mastery of language and of what language makes possible. *That* emergent being, the self, transformed, ontologically unique, *is* or has a history rather than a nature, or is a historied transform of the powers of its original biological nature. On the whole, the Anthropologists resist the transformative claim, tend to treat the members of *Homo sapiens* as creatures capable of extending their native talents by socially (artifactually) acquired skills. This is not the occasion for the obvious dispute. But the Anthropologists were intent on explicating the unique form of life that sets the human world apart from the rest of animal nature. In this regard, they rightly oppose Uexküll’s essential—but thoroughly misguided—intuition, which I’m coopting opportunistically in support of a radicalized account of landscape. One might almost say that the purpose of landscape is to transform the *Welt* into an all-purpose *Umwelt*. Quite a leap, I suppose, but I trust your patience will last a little longer.

Uexküll’s brilliant conjecture, teleologized in an impossible way, but also courageously (however wrongheadedly) opposed to Darwin’s vision, views the entire array of animal species as perfectly adapted to their normal environmental niches—very nearly symphonically coordinated through their entire diverse span. Uexküll’s detailed studies are original and compelling. However he commits a fatal mistake of decisive importance: he supposes that the human species occupies a niche like that of other animals though with much greater latitude and ingenuity. So he assigns a more vaguely conceived *Umwelt*, a less restrictive environing habitat, to the human species than to other animals; whereas the Anthropologists take it that human beings construct various concepts of their inclusive *Welt*, which answers to their uniquely evolving grasp of the true meaning of their own nature and purposive life. In that sense, the human *Welt* is certainly not an *Umwelt*. Correspondingly, landscape answers to our way of inhabiting the world, not a biologically pre-harmonized cycle of enabled life of any sort. The mystery of the human, then, rests with the fact that it teleologizes its own life and world reflexively, constructively, artifactually, diversely, disputatiously, though it completely lacks any naturally or biologically fixed *teloi* of the kind that belong to the animal *Umwelt*. To put the point more instructively—in the light of what I’ve already said—the human being is aware (subliminally at least) that the “city of man” is never more than a transient habitation in an alien and otherwise purposeless world, that manifests at best its own passing loyalties and taste. Landscape, then, is indeed the record of our own pathos tactfully deflected through its changing seasons.

What then is the lesson? We cannot give a firmer account of the rules or laws or
criteria of landscape if we cannot give a suitable account of the course of life itself; and we cannot do that if indeed we are the hybrid artifacts I claim we are. But we cannot be that sort of creature if we are not made loyal within the societies within which we first acquire language and are transformed by that feat. But then, although we grasp the deep contingency of the normic tendencies of our values and conformable behavior, we cannot completely deny their force. In the process of reflection, therefore, we test the possibility of distinguishing between the consensual thrust of normic practice and whatever we are persuaded may afford grounds enough for stronger claims of objective normativity. Nothing finally meets that test satisfactorily; what is more instructive is that our efforts almost always raise up some part of the values we have already adopted. The validity of our objective practices is, therefore, the acceptable reflection of our form of life and what, under conditions of historical change, we find we are prepared to accept or revise within the boundaries of dispute and, possibly, conflict. The landscape of the human world, the landscape of what I’ve called the city—earthly habitation—collects the most visible touchstones of that history: conditions of belonging and of flourishing (according to our lights). I cannot see how it can be more—or less.
I - CITY AND NATURE IN HISTORICAL EXAMPLES
In the past three decades, China has undergone a fundamental transformation from a typical agriculture country to an industrial one. A large number of people have poured from countryside into cities, which were being expanding rapidly. The population of a typical city in an eastern and economically advanced province would be doubled every ten years, meanwhile the residing area per capital also be doubled every ten years. This means that if a city in 1980 with population of 100,000 and the residing area 5 m² per capital, and thus altogether 500,000 m², now in 2010, it will become 32,000,000 m². A small city thus becomes a huge one, 64 times of the former.

With such a rapid expansion of city, many problems appear, one of which from aesthetic perspective is: city lose its particular characters and all cities becomes the same, or in Chinese way to put it: a thousand cities with same faces. Architectural materials and styles are similar, with city planning imitating and learning from each other.

The author will put three points in this paper: 1. If it is necessary for cities to differentiate with each other, and for who it is differentiated? 2. If it is necessary that city should follow an overall design, what the design means? How ancient overall design distinguishes with modern one. 3. The roles the natural landscape, geometrical conditions, history and culture played in the process of city growth. The author will conclude with the ideas of returning to a comparison of city with living body, its organic growth, and the home-feeling of the persons inhabited in the city.

The final version of the paper will appear end of March on:
www.laboratoriocitta.unibo.it
In the title of this paper, the ‘City of God’ and the ‘Land of the Gods’ are used rather vaguely to refer to European and Asian, particularly Japanese, cities respectively. Paradise is not germane to the theme. In the case of Japan, ‘nature’ and ‘natural’ are keywords in not only landscape gardening and painting but also art and architecture in general. Major encyclopaedias or dictionaries of art, for instance, describe the characteristics of traditional Japanese art using a number of such words as nature or natural. However, it was in the Meiji period (1868–1912) that the word shizen was first used in various texts as a translation of the Western word ‘nature’; shizen or jinen had been used with different meanings before this period. It is paradoxical that this country whose art is very often described as natural or related to nature was originally devoid of the idea of nature and experienced modern periods when the idea of nature was in confusion. This confusion was, however, not without meaning. A few architects and art philosophers seem to have developed important aspects of their own ideas of architecture and art from this confusion between or coexistence of the native shizen and the Western ‘nature’.

Ame-Tsuchi Versus ‘Nature’

Today, shizen is the Japanese equivalent for the English and French ‘nature’, the Italian ‘natura’, and the German ‘Natur’. However, it was first used as a translation of the Dutch ‘natuur’ in 1796, in a Dutch-Japanese dictionary based on a Dutch-French dictionary by F. Halma; it was then used as a translation for the English and other languages in the nineteenth century. An old Japanese word which was much closer to English ‘nature’ in its meaning was Ame-tsuchi, which means ‘heaven and earth’. In the early Heian period, there was a verse recited during calligraphy practice where each of the forty-eight symbols of the syllabary was used just once, as in, ‘Ame-tsuchi, hoshi-sora, yamakawa, mine-tani, kumo-kiri, muro-koke, hito-inu, ue-sue, yuwa-saru … ’. This implies ‘Heaven-earth, star-sky, mountain-river, peak-valley, cloud-fog, cellar-moss, man-dog, above-end, sulphur-monkey … ’. Each element of landscape has its name—‘star’, ‘sky’, ‘mountain’, ‘river’, etc.—but there was no name for the totality of them, such as the word ‘nature’ in Western languages. Nature is revered not so much as an abstract entity.
but more typically as the mountain or the river, or, more concretely, in terms of specific mountains, rivers, valleys, or trees in particular locales.

In China, we can find early usages of shizen (‘zi-rán’) in Lao-tzu’s Tao-teh-king (after the third century BC). It literally means, ‘from itself thus it is’; however, it signifies ‘self-like’ or ‘self-so’. Ancient Japanese introduced it as a word with such meanings as ‘from itself thus it is’ or ‘of itself’ or ‘by itself’ or ‘as it is’. In both the Chinese and Japanese worldviews, there is less distance between man and the divine than in the Judeo-Christian or Islamic monotheistic tradition. Unlike the Western ‘nature’, which was created by God, primordial ‘chaos’ was in a sense naturally divided into heaven and the earth. Both the eighth-century Kojiki (‘Records of Ancient Matters’) and the Nihon Shoki (‘Chronicles of Japan’) are partially based on a few Chinese classics such as the second-century BC Enanji (Huai-nan Tzu). We must also note that shizen was more like an adverb or adjective than a noun not only in Japan but in China as well. In the next translation, in 1833, from a Dutch dictionary by H. Doeff, shizen disappeared as a translation of ‘natuur’. Instead, we can find various usages of shizen in the explanation of the adverb ‘natuurlijk’, or a Japanese translation of shizen to for the Dutch phrase ‘uit de natuur’. However, the Japanese shizen gradually became a translation for Western nouns such as ‘nature’ ‘Natuur’ or ‘natura’ in the nineteenth century.

In the Book of Genesis, we read that ‘In the beginning when God created the heavens and the earth, the earth was a formless void and darkness covered the face of the deep, whereas a wind from God swept over the face of the waters’. In the Nihon Shoki, we read that ‘Heaven was therefore formed first, and earth was established subsequently. Thereafter, Divine Beings were produced between them’. The following description must be striking not only for most Westerners but perhaps also for some Chinese: ‘At this time a certain thing was produced between Heaven and Earth. Its form was like that of a reedshoot. Now this transformed into a God’. This kind of mythology is more akin to that of the South Pacific region. Although in monotheistic Europe, nature was created by God, in Japan, the phrase ‘Sansen-sōmoku-shikkai-jōbutsu’, which literally means ‘Everything from mountains and rivers to plants and trees will attain Buddhahood’, would later be taught in the Tendai sect of Buddhism; this Tendai teaching of innate enlightenment is susceptible to various interpretations, however.

Nature In Traditional Japanese Arts

Except for Ame-tsuchi or Ikitoshi-ikerumono, no other term like shizen, which is today’s Japanese equivalent to ‘natuur’, ‘nature’, ‘Natuur’, and ‘natura’, is found in ancient Japanese. The appreciation of nature has, however, played a very important role in the daily and religious life of the Japanese people. It is found in both Shintō and Buddhism, as well as in folk beliefs, and nature was a major source of inspiration in literature.
and the various arts. As already suggested, no Western term properly describes certain aspects of the appreciation of nature in Japan. The philosophical and religious ideas of the West should not be directly imposed upon the concrete details of the Japanese practice. This is because, unlike the Japanese, most Europeans place God above man and nature and tend to place man outside nature, and above nature in many cases. In Japan or East Asia, on the contrary, human beings are not considered to be superior or opposed to nature: They are indeed parts of nature.

Shizen has been used since modern ages as the translation of the Western word ‘nature’, although it is not a newly coined word. We can find the Chinese characters for ‘Shi-zen’ as far back as Lao-tze. We can also find the same words in some Japanese Buddhist writings, such as ‘Jinen-Hoji’ or ‘Jinen-Hon’ by Shinran (1173–1262); jinen is another Japanese reading of shizen—it can be defined as the power of spontaneous self-development and what results from that power.

Even before Chinese literary and philosophical traditions reached Japan in the early sixth century, some features of the Japanese appreciation of nature were already evident. From prehistoric times, the Japanese seem to have venerated the gods, which were seen as the sacred powers within nature. In Kojiki and Nihon Shoki, the gods are described as playing a central part in the creation of the Japanese archipelago. Religious celebration of the sacred power of nature was never separated from an aesthetic appreciation of nature. As early as the eighth century, the sacredness and beauty of mountains, streams, and other natural objects were lauded in the Manyôshû, the first anthology of Japanese verse. In the Tale of Genji, which is sometimes called the world’s first novel, the first modern novel, or the first psychological novel, sensitivity to the nuances of nature in its changing seasons is one of the major thematic factors.

The oldest examples of Japanese-style painting, Yamato-e, distinguished from Chinese Tang painting, Kara-e, seem to have been inspired by nature in the four seasons, famous sites, and mainly agricultural activities. These paintings were called Shiki-e, Meisho-e, and Tsukinami-e, respectively. The paintings of four seasons, Shiki-e, became popular at the Heian court around the turn of the ninth and tenth centuries with the burgeoning Japanese style of poetry called Waka, which relies on seasonal references to convey emotion and mood. Landscape painting has always enjoyed the highest reputation in Japan, as was the case in China. Not only the Taoist influence but also the Buddhist, particularly Zen, influence is seen in much of the painting and poetry extolling the sacred beauty of the natural landscape.

The shinden-zukuri style of residence stood in the midst of a large garden and was symmetrical in itself, and its rooms were connected with long hallways stretching along gardens — it allowed residents to enjoy seasonal events and the beauty of nature. Shoin-zukuri residences, partially derived from a Chinese style in the late Muromachi and Azuchi-Momoyama periods, became the basis for residential architecture in the Edo period. Shinden-zukuri residences were reserved for aristocratic families in the Heian
period, whereas shoin-zukuri residences derived from Zen Buddhist monastic dwellings and became popular in the Muromachi period; shoin means ‘learning’ or ‘study’. It was in the hall of ‘study’ where shoin-cha tea ceremony was held with expensive tea utensils from China. In sukiya-zukuri residences, developed from the shoin-zukuri and finally established in the Edo period, the most important inspirations are taken from nature. Their common features include greater use of natural materials, with untreated log and bark surfaces. Wabi-cha evolved from shoin-cha as part of a movement to appreciate local wares and simpler styles. The garden of the tea ceremony room gives the appearance of being completely natural. Suki is a refined taste mainly associated with poetry, tea, or flower-arrangement, and sukiya originally meant a tea hut or tearoom. Seeking richness in poverty and beauty in simplicity was a Japanese aesthetic.

Compared with Italy, where aristocrats and rich merchants built multi-story palazzos in the city and villas in the countryside, or Britain, where multi-story townhouses were built in the city and country houses in the countryside, Japanese cities did not differ very much from the countryside in terms of housing types. The low-rise houses of aristocrats or samurais were surrounded by the minka, houses of the people, which consisted of the machiya (townhouses) and various types of farmers’ or fishermen’s houses. All of these houses were built of wood and directly surrounded by nature or enclosed ‘small nature’, as in Japanese-style gardens, or very small nature, such as tsubo-niwa (inner garden); these inner gardens were basic components of the machiya not only in Kyoto but also in almost all cities and towns across the country.

Nature In Westernization/Industrialization/Colonization
Or The Lost Empire Of Texture

After the nineteenth century, when shizen also became a translation for Western words for nature, various difficulties arose. In fact, in the 1970s and 1980s, this was a topic of study by several writers and scholars, such as Yanabu Akira. He summarized the problems as follows:

The problem with translating the word shizen is, at first, the mingling of the meaning of the original Western word with the native Japanese word; above all, the important problem is that this mingling of the meaning is concealed, or difficult to understand for people using this word, owing to the peculiar effect of the translating word. The two meanings are sometimes so different that they even logically contradict each other, and because of the contradiction, the translating word shizen functions to conceal this contradiction.5

Although Yanabu’s study on which the first part of this paper is based is unique
and very detailed, it appears to have observed primarily negative aspects of the issue of the coexistence of shizen versus nature in modern Japan. It is a fact that the Japanese attitude toward ‘nature’ or shizen gradually changed after the Edo period. There was confusion at least in the usage of the word shizen, as systematically indicated by Yanabu.

It is significant, however, that the discovery or rediscovery of nature in Asian architecture was made by a few rebellious Japanese in the early 1920s, when their country was being rapidly industrialized and was colonizing its neighbouring countries after Western models. Having succeeded in its exceptionally early industrialization as an Asian country but suffering from various national and international problems caused by it, their country took an expansionist policy. Old farmhouses and domestic houses were rapidly disappearing in many places in Japan, replaced by Western or half-Western modern houses built for factory and office workers from the provinces. The so-called ‘German Renaissance’ government-general building in Seoul symbolized westernized Japan, which behaved as the only Western country in Asia. The government-general building in Seoul was, however, a true eyesore for conscientious Japanese such as Yanagi Muneyoshi (1889–1961) and Kon Wajirō (1888–1973). Both Kon and Yanagi presented the rediscovery of nature in the context of serious self-reflection or deep soul-searching as an Asian.

Although Japanese architecture is often considered more natural, as shown at the beginning of this paper, the dominance of Western architecture in the late nineteenth century and modern architecture in the early twentieth century disrupted the pre-existing harmony between nature and the man-made in Japanese architecture. By the early 1920s, however, calls to ‘reawaken nature’ were being raised by key radical thinkers. In April 1922, Kon Wajirō published his pioneering book on domestic architecture study in Japan, Japanese Minka (Nihon no Minka). Together with his colleagues, he also published a series of Pictorial Survey of Minka (Minka Zushū). By seeing it, the people must have noticed that they were losing rich texture of a culture. In Japanese Minka, Kon wrote as follows:

Space (or nature) is not for mankind to conquer. The power of space must be respected and we must never exploit it, because when we do force our will, the design will inevitably fail. In architecture, being completely utilitarian is unsatisfactory.\(^6\)

Nature in parentheses after space ‘Space (or nature)’ at the beginning of the first sentence is strange. However, judging from its context, Kon was perhaps attempting to convey two things: space is not for mankind to conquer and the power of space must be respected, and that nature is also not for mankind to conquer and its power also must be respected. Kon knew the word shizen (‘nature’) in both its Japanese and Western meanings. In 1917, five years before the publication of his Japanese Minka, he
wrote an article entitled ‘Fundamental Meaning of Urban Reconstruction’ for the Journal of the Institute of Japanese Architects. Commenting on workers’ housing in a northern suburb of Tokyo, he wrote as follows: ‘Urban houses which are remote from the bosom of nature should have rich interior decoration and gardens’. He was at that time very influenced by the British Arts and Crafts and Garden City movements. The ‘bosom of nature’, shizen no futokoro in Japanese, had become a conventional expression used in this kind of context in Japan by around this time. The subtitle of Japanese Minka was ‘Houses for Suburban Dwellers’.

However, Kon had already begun using much more time and energy for the fieldwork of studying traditional Japanese houses than for the bookish study of these British movements; Japanese Minka went through many printings in the 1920s, 1930s, and 1940s, and even after the Second World War. This popularity had much less to do with his urging of Garden City ideas than his descriptions and illustrations of traditional Japanese houses themselves. Kon’s book likely met the expectations of Japanese readers in the 1920s and 1930s. Most of them came from provinces to work at factories and offices in Tokyo and Osaka, dreaming of having decent houses in the suburbs and leaving traditional farmhouses in their native grassy villages. Japanese Minka perhaps recalled to many readers’ minds their own native villages and reawakened their natural conditions. Although Kon’s starting point might have been the British Garden City movement, he became a leader of minka studies rather than of city planning. When he published the book’s second and enlarged edition, after the Great Kantō earthquake which had struck Tokyo and its surrounding areas in 1923, its subtitle, ‘Houses for Suburban Dwellers’, was eliminated. With his colleagues, Kon also produced a series of Survey of Minka in 1930-31.

In the field of art, philosopher Yanagi Muneyoshi was a precursor in this regard. Yanagi began his career as an art critic and the introducer of Rodin’s sculpture and post-impressionist paintings to Japan, but he moved from Western modern art to traditional Asian craft rather than art around 1920. In the summer of 1922, Yanagi wrote an article for a Japanese magazine and a Korean newspaper entitled ‘For a Korean architecture on the verge of demolition’ with views that resonated with those of Kon Wajirō:

Do not discard, even if it is no longer of current value. Art is beyond utility. Protect what embodies beauty.7

Yanagi’s article was in protest against the planned demolition of a major historical gate, the Gwanghwamun, in Seoul’s main palace, the Gyeongbokgung, by the Japanese Empire’s government-general in Korea. He continued as follows:

Nature protects architecture, while architecture embellishes nature. Man should never hastily destroy this organic relationship. Alas, however, this harmony between
nature and the manmade is being destroyed by those who do not understand its virtues.\(^8\)

By ‘those who do not understand its virtues’, Yanagi meant the general staff of the Japanese Empire’s government-general in Korea. In those days, this kind of criticism against the empire and its general staff was extremely difficult. Fearing strict censorship or imprisonment, most intellectuals did not say anything. Following Yanagi’s daring criticism, however, Kon straightforwardly criticized the new government-general building in Seoul in an architectural magazine. Yanagi and Kon were very exceptional Japanese in those days. An unfamiliar idea in the West, ‘nature protects architecture’ was in a sense based on the feng shui tradition in East Asia. However, Yanagi wished to suggest a more organic and essential relationship between architecture or the city and the people, who are a part of nature.

Even in the usage of shizen (‘nature’) by such intellectual activists as Kon or Yanagi, we find the ‘mingling of the meaning of the original Western word with the native Japanese word’, which was noted by Yanabu. Kon described various forms of farmhouses as natural or as architectural, meaning man-made, inventions. Yanagi declared that ‘nature protects architecture’. Both these ideas sound contradictory in Western contexts and meanings of nature and of architecture, which was and is considered to protect its dwellers from nature in the West.

However, what Kon attempted to convey with ‘nature is not for mankind to conquer’ and what Yanagi did with ‘nature protects architecture’ was respect not only for nature in its Western meaning but also for the condition ‘of itself’ or ‘from itself thus it is’. Yanagi continues that man must never hastily destroy this organic relationship between nature, which includes human beings in Asia, and man-made, meaning architecture or the city as a whole.

Although both Kon and Yanagi are intellectuals, their usage of shizen (‘nature’) is rather contradictory; however, we do see a rather significant mixture in their cases. Their thoughts about nature and architecture or the city seem to be very significant in the history of modern architecture and city planning in the 1920s, when functionalist, rationalist, or utilitarian ideas prevailed in Europe and North America. Such debates on re-evaluating nature in Japanese and Asian architecture by radical thinkers, who were first devotees of Western art and architecture but later reverted to Eastern values, are worth further investigation.

In Japanese culture, subject and object become fused into one reality in nature. This explains the frequent use in poetry of the various seasonal flowers, animals, and birds, as I described in the second part of this paper. It was only after the beginning of the Meiji period that the Western concept of ‘nature’, signifying the natural order, came to be attached to shizen. For both Kon and Yanagi, the rediscovery of nature was made as a serious self-reflection or deep soul-searching as an Asian rather than a Japanese.
Their rediscovery of nature was perhaps attained by a deeper understanding of their own shizen or jinen and the Western meaning of ‘nature’ as well.

**Nature In Contemporary Architecture And The City**

Among contemporary architects in Japan, Ando Tadao (1941–) is one who repeatedly refers to nature when he talks about his own architecture. His architecture is often considered very Japanese, and its simplicity is often associated with Japanese culture. Even his usage of concrete is interpreted as an architectural expression infused with a Japanese sense of nature. However, it appears very contradictory to hear about nature from an architect who almost always uses exposed-concrete walls in stern geometric forms without any natural or semi-natural surface finishing such as the wood or red brick of Alvar Aalto. Ando thinks, however, that nature is the essence of Japanese culture and life as well as of his own architecture. He wrote an essay entitled ‘Materials, Geometry and Nature’ for his own monograph; this essay was published in 1990.

I believe three elements are necessary for the crystallization of architecture. The first is authentic materials, that is, materials of substances such as exposed concrete or unpainted wood. The second is pure geometry, as in the Pantheon. This is the base or framework that endows architecture with presence. It might be a volume such as a Platonic solid, but it is often a three-dimensional frame, because I feel the latter to be in keeping with pure geometry. The last element is nature. I do not mean raw nature but rather domesticated nature, nature that has been endowed by man with order and is in contrast with chaotic nature. Perhaps one can call it order abstracted from nature: light, sky, and water that have been rendered abstract. When such a nature is introduced into a work of architecture composed, as I have said, of materials and geometry, architecture itself is made abstract by nature. Architecture comes to possess power and becomes radiant only when these three elements come together. Man is then moved by a vision that is possible, as in the Pantheon, only with architecture.9

Ando begins this essay with his first experience of architectural space, at the Pantheon in Rome. He explains that the Pantheon is composed of a semi-spherical dome with a diameter of 43.2 meters and that its height is also 43.2 meters, so that the structure may be said to be composed of a huge sphere with an oculus of 9 meters in diameter at the top of the dome. When this structure is illuminated by sunlight from the top opening, Ando writes that, ‘architectural space truly becomes manifest’. He adds, ‘A condition such as this cannot be experienced in nature. It is only in architecture that one encounter such a vision. It was this power of architecture that moved me’.
Starting from this introduction, Ando concludes the essay by saying that ‘Man is then moved by a vision that is possible, as in the Pantheon, only with architecture’. Although he is describing a man-made piece of architecture and writing that ‘this cannot be experienced in nature’, he is also talking about nature by touching upon a huge sphere with an oculus at the top of the dome illuminated by sunlight and the sky through the oculus as well. Ando is an architect with a very Western sense of nature. He was perhaps experiencing architecture endowed by man with material and order, but with order abstracted certainly from nature, particularly in the case of the Pantheon; therefore, he was moved.

From another perspective, however, Ando’s ‘domesticated nature’ or ‘nature endowed by man with order’ is different from the nature of the West or of Christianity, where it refers to the ‘phenomena of the physical world collectively, including plants, animals, the landscape and other features and products of the earth, as opposed to humans or human creations’ (New Oxford Advanced Learner’s Dictionary, Oxford University Press, 2005).

Ando describes that ‘perhaps one can call it order abstracted from nature: light, sky, and water that have been rendered abstract’. If there is a precedent to this kind of nature, it is the Ame-tsuchi (‘heaven-earth’) verse recited during calligraphy practice in the early Heian period, that is, ‘heaven-earth, star-sky, mountain-river’, etc. Nature is revered not so much as an entity but more typically as the mountain or the river, or, more concretely, in terms of specific mountains or rivers. When such ‘nature’ as the sky or water is introduced into Ando’s work composed of materials and geometry, his ‘architecture itself is made abstract by nature’.

However, it is not my intention to conclude that Ando is an architect with a Japanese sense of nature. He is an architect who knows both Western and Japanese senses of nature, although he is neither a scholar nor an almighty architect. Having both Western and Eastern senses of nature is different from mingling of the meanings of the original Western word with the native Japanese word. In fact, Ando clearly articulates his word shizen (‘nature’). In some cases, we may observe and describe a kind of naturalness in the surface of his exposed-concrete walls with the term ‘unfinished reinforced concrete’; I suppose that his exposed concrete is inseparably connected with his taste for nature. However, Ando rarely uses the word nature or natural for this—he of course knows that his concrete buildings are artificial. In his lecture entitled ‘Architecture in Harmony with Nature’ or ‘Thinking about our Environment in the 21st Century’, at the award ceremony for the Kyoto Prize Laureate in Arts and Philosophy in 2002, he admitted as much:

The construction of buildings and the protection of the environment are contradictory, and the fact that they both exist in a state of conflict within me makes things difficult.\(^{10}\)
He spent almost two-thirds of his speech on nature, or restoring nature through tree planting projects, etc., and, in fact, Ando is the leader of various tree-planting projects around the world. This lecture was in a sense a declaration of defeat from an architect who designs buildings all around the world. At the same time, however, there is a clear articulation of nature in his practice and social activities, and nature is an element of architectural expressions in his individual building projects. At the scale of city planning, nature is not only an element of expression but also an essential factor of its ecological design. Ando’s architecture is not exactly applicable to the scale of a city, although I have never seen any ideal architect whose design is applicable to that scale. As Victor Hugo put it, ‘time is the architect, the people are the builder’.11 This maxim is especially true in the scale of the city. Ando is trying to be a builder or carpenter in his architecture and a farmer or planter in the city.

Conclusion

Although the Japanese shizen is used as the translation of the word ‘nature’, shizen is not exactly the same as ‘nature’. Above all, the more important problem is that this mingling of the meaning is concealed by translation, and it is certainly a serious problem of translation. On the other hand, however, it is not satisfactory to find only the negative in the translation of foreign languages and the introduction of foreign ideas. As the cases of Yanagi, Kon, and Ando show us, endeavours to reconcile native ideas with similar but originally foreign and different ideas sometimes result in the creation of new ideas that are not just new but significantly novel, if the task of reconciliation is extremely difficult and the endeavours are earnest best efforts.

Although both Yanagi and Kon were rebellious, acquainting oneself with Western culture was, not a rebellion against Eastern ideas but rather, according to Yanagi, ‘a necessary process for gaining awareness of one’s self.’ He believed that ‘one must separate from one’s self if one wishes to reflect on one’s self.’12 As many Asians attempted to accept the Western or monotheistic ‘nature’ while keeping their own ‘nature’ as it was in the nineteenth and twenties centuries, the Asian idea of ‘nature’, which includes human beings as they are, seems to be gradually understood outside Asia as well. For the present and the future of our lives, mutual understanding of essential ideas such as ‘nature’ or shizen is certainly important.
Notes

1 The Britannica Online Encyclopaedia, for example, describes one of the characteristics of traditional Japanese art as follows (author’s italics):

‘Another pervasive characteristic of Japanese art is an understanding of the natural world as a source of spiritual insight and an instructive mirror of human emotion. An indigenous religious sensibility that long preceded Buddhism perceived that a spiritual realm was manifest in nature. Rock outcroppings, waterfalls, and gnarled old trees were viewed as the abodes of spirits and were understood as their personification. This belief system endowed much of nature with numinous qualities. It nurtured, in turn, a sense of proximity to and intimacy with the world of spirit as well as a trust in nature’s general benevolence. The cycle of the seasons was deeply instructive and revealed, for example, that immutability and transcendent perfection were not natural norms. Everything was understood as subject to a cycle of birth, fruition, death, and decay. Imported Buddhist notions of transience were thus merged with the indigenous tendency to seek instruction from nature. Attentive proximity to nature developed and reinforced an aesthetic that generally avoided artifice. In the production of works of art, the natural qualities of constitutive materials were given special prominence and understood as integral to whatever total meaning a work professed. When, for example, Japanese Buddhist sculpture of the 9th century moved from the stucco or bronze Tang models and turned for a time to natural, unpolychromed woods, already ancient iconographic forms were melded with a pre-existing and multilevel respect for wood. Union with the natural was also an element of Japanese architecture. Architecture seemed to conform to nature.’ In Japanese gardens, ‘nature predominated over man-made symmetry’. (Britannica Online Encyclopaedia)

2 Another Japanese word was Ikitoshi-ikerumono, which meant ‘all living things’.


6 Wajirō Kon, Nihon no Minka: Den-en Seikatsu no Sumika, Suzuki Shoten, Tokyo, 1922.


8 Ibid.


11 Victor Hugo, Notre-Dame de Paris, 1482, LIVRE TROISIÈME, 1832, Pocket, 1989, p. 150. ‘Le temps est l’architecte, le peuple est le maçon.’

MANIFESTATIONS OF NATURE IN ISLAMIC CITIES

B. Deniz Çalış Kural

From Moorish Spain to India, cities of Islamic culture has been flourished with gardens, or represented as Paradise(s) on Earth. In each one of the cities, from Delhi to Ottoman Istanbul, gardens provided real and imaginary visions of the Heavens both for the imperial rulers and the common public. However, nature has been manifested not only in gardens and garden cities, but also within the conception and representation of the human body as a Garden itself. Thus, cities became rich sources of inspiration and stimulation – as “pools of imagination” for the aesthetic appreciation of nature in different scales and various mediums.

In different cultures who have adopted Islam, gardens and garden imagery have become a medium to think, to imagine, to experience both in real and imaginary mediums; both terrestrial and metaphysical terms. Thus, gardens and garden imagery furnished all mediums of cultural production and became the most important and essential element of all kinds of communication.

Gardens present the most exhilarating stimuli and the most powerful experience for the individual experience. From Granada to Kashmir, in various geographic regions with different climatic conditions under diverse rulers; Islamic gardens are all private havens; fragments of the Paradise Garden planted on earth. Enclosed with walls, inaccessible to outsiders, Islamic gardens were designed as private spaces where utility and symbolism amalgamate in an aesthetic vision of Islam. Regardless of scale, problems of hydraulics engineering, agricultural and horticultural productions were met with utmost care and envisioned in fine detailing; transforming these walled enclosures to spaces reflecting heavenly beauty and paradisiacal fertility. Water is the most important element and the most common feature of design in all Islamic gardens. Representing the Rivers of Paradise, abundant waters in gardens irrigated and refreshed the oasis, whether in form of a canal, pool, fountain, or, cascades.

Both real and imaginary gardens make up an important part of the Islamic culture. Functionally, gardens were imperative to daily life. Gardens nurtured daily life, since they were fertile grounds providing food and serene retreats offering shade, from the Mediterranean countries to the sub-tropical India; from the steppes of Anatolia to the deserts of North Africa. The most significant characteristic of Islamic gardens was that they satisfied all kinds of sensory experience, stimulating the visitors in diverse ways.
The cooling breeze relieving the body, sounds of the gushing water mixing with nightingales singing - delightful to the ear; smell of flowers and fragrant herbs; colorful sights of blossoming vegetation and fresh fruits on branches were all delightful experiences. While delivering a visual festivity to the eyes of the guest; they provided delicacy to taste.

Not only the gardens themselves, but representation of imaginary gardens also granted endless ways of stimulation for the Islamic imagination in arts, especially in painting and in poetry. The abundance of vibrant flowers, the prosperity of agricultural produces and the blessing water presented the wealth of the Islamic Paradise Garden bestowed to the subjects of the Lord. Metaphorically, gardens were considered to be intermediary spaces where the Lord meets his subjects. Furnished with all the blessed creations of the Lord; gardens were spaces of contemplation and enlightenment, reciting the beauty of Creation. Symbolically, gardens embraced all existence, physical and metaphysical. They were spaces of theophanic vision and revelation.

Gardens also became agents for the construction of urban environments furnishing existing and new cities with imperial glory displaying paradisical visions. Timur built a serious of gardens around Samarqand and named them after the major cities of the Islamic world; Cairo, Damascus, Baghdad, Shiraz, Sultanïye… to represent his achievements. Babur, the Mughal ruler of the 16th c. even laid out gardens on beautiful sites during his military campaigns, like Bagh-ı Safa. Ottomans built garden pavilions to mark their conquests. Ottoman gardens were used to display war trophies. The garden kiosks and pavilions of the Topkapı Palace each symbolize a conquered nation or a conquered city. As Julian Raby emphasizes: “Mehmed the Conqueror built in the gardens of the Saray three pavilions or palazzo, one in the Persian-karaman style, another alla-turchesa and a third alla-Greca.”

Gardens made cities of Samarqand, Heart, Isfahan, Shiraz, Istanbul and Granada unforgettable. In the 14th century 1200 gardens had been built around Delhi. It has been documented.
that garden design and planting had become an issue of competition among common
count, and Mughal rulers supported the competing individuals by bestowing land to
those who built adorabele gardens.

The 16th c. Safavid Isfahan has become a garden-city during the reign of Shah
Abbas. There were numerous gardens built along a new axis each thematically named
after populist images; Garden of Eight Paradises, Vizier’s Garden, Garden of Dervish,
Garden of Mulberries, Garden of Donkey, Garden of Nightingale, Iram Gardens, and
others; created a city of gardens like a fairy tale recognized for those traveling in the
city, gardens are named under thematic names recalling common themes, metaphors
and characters from Islamic and Near Eastern imagery.

In the 16th c., there were thirty-nine imperial gardens, in the 17th century there
were sixty-one imperial gardens and thirty destinations recognized as public parks in
Istanbul. (Figure 1)

Poetic manifestations of Islamic mysticism and garden tradition

In Islamic mysticism, garden is portrayed as a place to see the truth. The Paradise
garden is the last abode before total illumination. The Koran also cites the Paradise
Garden as a screen between the Divine and the human sight. It is this screen that dif-
ferentiates between the divine and the human existence. It is depicted as the only place
where the vision of God himself is available. ¹ Arabi also compares the cosmos to an
image on the screen; which stands between the God, as the creator, and subject as the
viewer. This representation is similar to the depiction of the Garden as a veil between
the Real and the subject. ² Arabi discusses the concept of garden as such:

Know my brother—may God take charge of you with his mercy— that the Garden that
is reached in the last world by those who are its folk is witnessed by you today in
respect of its form. Within it you undergo fluctuations in your states, but you do
not know that you are within it, because the form within which it discloses itself to
you veils you. The folk of unveiling, who perceive that from which the people are
absent, see that locus, if it is a Garden, as a green garden plot. If it is a Gehanna,
they see it in keeping with the descriptions that are within it—its bitter cold and its
burning heat— and what God has prepared within it. Most of the folk unveiling see
this at the beginning of the path. The Shariah has called attention to this with the
Prophet’s words, “Between my grave and my pulpit is one of the gardenplots of the
Garden (paradise garden).” The folk of unveiling see it as a garden plot as he said.
They see the Nile, the Euphrates, the Sarus, and the Pyramus as rivers of honey,
water, wine and milk, as they are in the Garden. After all, the Prophet reported that
these rivers belong to the Garden. When God has not unveiled someone’s eyesight
and he remains in the blindness of his veil, he does not perceive this and is like a
blind man in a rose garden. He is not absent from it in his essence, but he does not see it. The fact that he does not see it does not necessitate that he is not within it. No, he is within it. The vision of God does not take place through seeking and is not reached through recompense, in contrast to the blessings in the Garden.

In another argument ‘Arabî explains real garden(s), originally part(s) of the heavenly Paradise Garden as bestowed gift(s) to the human world. Then the garden originally a divine creation is given as an ornament to decorate the mundane world. In this argument, ‘Arabî stresses the symbolic value of the real garden as a reflection of the Heavenly Paradise. The multiplicity of different kinds of gardens on earth, all refer to the Original Paradise Garden:

Hence from the heaven, becomes manifest the earth’s ornament. Thus the heaven draped the earth with its reckoning, and the heaven stripped its ornament from it through its reckoning. From the earth’s ornament, its names became many, because of the various classes of fruits, trees, and flowers within it. But from its becoming stripped and cleared, its name was made one. Its names disappeared within the disappearance of its ornament. Surely we have appointed whatever is on earth as an ornament for it. In the metaphorical interpretation, the earth is nothing but what is called “creation” and its ornament is what is named “Real.” Hence through the Real it is ornamented, and through the Real it is cleared and stripped of the garments of number and it becomes manifest in the attribute of the One.

Thus, contemplation of gardens would reveal knowledge about the Paradise garden. (Figure 2).

Ideal gardens are ideal places where essence meets epiphanic forms. They enable construction of knowledge in idea-images. Real gardens are repository of signs, which enables deconstruction of idea-images as embodied beyond the apparent visualization of the sign. Forms are either manifested in dreams, or by imagination. They reside in the “pool of imagination” or at the
“Market of the Garden.” ‘Arabî refers to spaces occupied with bodies, or signs are called as the “Market of the Garden.”

Garden party, poetry and mystic love are common themes in Persian garden culture. In a 16th c. Persian miniature from Sultan Ibrahim Mizra’s *Haft Awrang*, there are several illustrations of mystic love and its expressions by poets. First one depicts a garden party. A prince converses with his father about the essence of love. In the background, a poet is painted on the walls of the garden pavilion. The verses that accompany the figure of the poet explain the “pain of love” since union with the beloved is not possible:

I have written on the door and wall of every house about the grief of my love for you.
That perhaps you might pass one day and read the explanation of my condition.

In another folio from the same album, poetry is described as a medium to attain divine knowledge. The poet attains divine knowledge by revelation, through angelic illumination (Figure 2). The painting conveys the idea that poets “have the capacity to create works of great spirituality and assuage the doubts of those seeking enlightenment.” The painting depicts the poet as a mystic lover, and his abode as the garden of paradise. On the door of the garden pavilion in which the poet Sa’dî is composing a new poem, the below verse from Koran (Koran 38:50) is written:

Gardens of Eden, whereof the gates are opened for them

Ottoman Sultan Süleyman I’s Anthology of his own poems signed by his pen name Muhibbî is also a good example to illustrate the close connection between poetry, mystic love and gardens. The below verses from *Muhibbî Divani* (İÜK T5476) is an expression of the Sultan’s mystic love and quest:

I am the Sultan of Love, a glass of wine will do for a crown on my head,
And the brigade of my sighs might well serve as the dragon’s fire-breathing troops.
The bed room that’s best for you, my love, is a bed of roses,
For me, a bed and a pillow carved out of rock will do.
My love, take a golden cup in your hand and drink wine in the rose garden;
As for me, to sip blood from my heart, it is enough to have the goblets of your eyes.

*Muhibbî Divani* as a book combines poetry and gardens. The poems are on pages which represent gardens planted with tulips, violets, poppies, iris, roses, peonies, hyacinths, calendula, and cypress trees.
Comparison: Gardens between heavens and earth

The best example to illustrate the association of the different orders of the cosmological order is a Persian miniature painting from the 16th c. Divan of Hafiz (Figure 3). The painting titled “The Allegory of Drunkenness” (Private collection, TL 17443-5) illustrates a “ceremonial ritual” of the mystics in a garden. While the intoxicated mystics are dancing, playing music and conversing in the garden below, the angels are enjoying themselves and getting intoxicated at the roof terrace above the garden. Both the mystics and angels quest for the divine knowledge, and, both of the spaces that they reside, the garden and the skies can be compared to one another.

This intertextual association and comparison of different interior spaces of different hierarchical levels done by calling attention to similarities is called *tashbîh*. In mysticism, it stands for the act of attaining divine knowledge through studying the similarities of all the creation. Ibn ʿArabi explains *tashbîh* as a means to draw similarities between the unity of True Knowledge, and its reflections in the multiplicity of things created.¹²

Contrast: Gardens and Cities

Where *tashbîh* is comparison with respect to similarities, *tanzîh* is comparison with respect to differences. *Tanzîh* is also a common term used in mystic philosophy. *Tashbîh* admits that all things are reflections of the divine being, and thus their qualities can be compared. However, the arts of *tanzîh* practice the differences between things created and the divine being asserting their dissimilarity and incomparability. ʿArabi explains *tanzîh* as a means to attain knowledge by studying its opposites.¹³ Thus divine knowledge can be attained both by means of *tashbîh* and *tanzîh*. ʿArabi identifies the intermediary realm of the garden as a curtain that veils divine knowledge. Thus contemplating the images on this veil to understand what it veils is called *tashbîh*. However the images reflected on this metaphorical curtain does not actually stand for what is behind it. This consciousness is called *tanzîh*.¹⁴

His words are correct that there is “what no eye has seen” in the “Garden,” that is, in the “curtain” –on the basis of the metaphorical interpretation, not exegesis. Were an eye to see it, it would not be curtained. Were someone to see it, he would speak about it and it would be “heard.” Were it heard, it would be limited. Were it limited, it would pass into his heart and be known.

This is an affair that veils us from Him through a veil that is not known, for He is in the curtain called “the Garden.” Since his Entity is identical with the curtain, nothing veils us save the fact that we see a curtain, so our aspiration attaches itself to what is behind the curtain, that is, the curtained.
The best example to illustrate the association of the opposing domains of the cosmological hierarchy is a painting from the 16th c. Persian miniatures from Sultan Ibrahim Mizra’s Haft Awrang. This painting portrays the interior-exterior duality explicitly. (Figure 4)

The painting shows a garden enclosed by high brick walls. Inside the walls there is a blissful garden planted with cypresses, fruit trees and all kinds of flowers. Exterior, the painting depicts a beggar who represents the misery of the outside world. The owner of the garden invites a “city-dweller” to his garden to attend a garden party. In the background, beautiful young boys enjoy a garden party. The city-dweller who is surprised by the beauty of the garden gets jealous. Instead of attending the garden party, he damages the garden. He tries to tear down the trees and breaks their branches. The city-dweller is dressed as a vulgar person, while the owner of the garden is well-dressed and elegant. This painting clearly portrays the two opposite domains of the cosmological hierarchy, the interior and the exterior. The interior realm is symbolized by a paradise like garden and it houses all the blissful and superior qualities. The inte-
ior world is prosperous. The ones inside the garden are well-mannered and beautiful. The exterior realm is symbolized by the deprived city and it houses all the deprived and inferior qualities. The ones in the exterior realm are bad-mannered and hideous.

Figure 5: “Princely vision of Gardens”: Wall painting from the Safavid Imperial Garden Pavillion of Chehel Sotun in Isfahan. Photo by the author.

Conclusion: Real and Imaginary Paradise(s) within the Islamic City

Gardens were also associated with imperial power in different scales. The imperial costumes ornamented with floral motifs represented the body of the Ruler as a Paradise garden metaphorically. Imperial palaces of the Islamic world were designed and illustrated within gardens; as the princely adobes themselves became reflected images of the Paradise on earth (Figure 5). Cities, like the Ottoman Istanbul of Süleyman the Great; or the Safavid Isfahan of Shah Abbas were imagined, designed and depicted as gardens. Thus, imperial capitals - political centers of Islamic rule represented themselves as Heavens on this world. At times, gardens and garden traditions had also become metaphors in the depiction of civilized life. At times, cities were represented as paradises on earth, or, as anti-thesis of heavenly gardens.

Selected Bibliography


Mughal Gardens: Sources, Places, Representations, and Prospects, edited by James L. Wescoat and


**Recommended Websites**

www.middleeastgarden.com

www.mughalgardens.org

**Biography of the Author**

Specialized in Ottoman garden and landscape traditions as a scholar, B. Deniz Çalış is an architect and designer. She received her Bachelor’s Degree from Middle East Technical University (METU) in 1995; Master’s Degree from Pratt Institute, Brooklyn, NY in 1998; and her Ph.D. in Architecture from METU in 2004. For her graduate studies, she was granted TUBITAK NATO Scholarship (1996-2004) and Harvard University Dumbarton Oaks Fellowship (2003-2004). Her critical study of the 18th century Ottoman public open space - “Kagithane Commons” published by Dumbarton Oaks Press, received recognition award by the Turkish Academy of Sciences in 2007; and, she received Hamad Bin Khalifa Fellowship in 2007. Taught at University of Virginia School of Architecture, as an Assistant professor she is currently teaching design and history at Istanbul Bilgi University Faculty of Architecture; and preparing a book on 18th c. Ottoman Public Gardens. Çalış is also the editor of the www.middleeastgarden.com website.

**Notes**

1 Arabi quoted in Chittick, *The self-disclosure of God.*, 393 n. 16.


3 Chittick interprets Arabi’s interpretation on the creation of the earth (the witnessed world/ the mundane world of the human beings) both as “corruption” (*arada* in Arabic means a woodworm damaging the pages of a book), and as an ornament (*sūs*); Chittick, *The self-disclosure of God*, 254-255.


13 Chittick, *The self-disclosure of God*, 12; 16; 91; 149; 169; *The Sufi Path*, 68-76.


II - World-Cities-Societies and Landscapes
SEX AND THE CITY: THE REBIRTH OF LONDON AND THE ROMANCE OF FINANCE

Patricia Lawler

In this paper, I explore the link between the aesthetic attractions of a new City of London, and the birth of a modern global economic order. Written in the wake of the destructions of the English Civil War and the Great London Fire of 1666, John Dryden’s *Annus Mirabilis* reimagines a Cosmopolitan future in which global relations are reorganized around a reborn London as their beautiful and desirable center. This rise of “the City” – a metonym for London, but also for the financial district that still stands as its economic center – constitutes the founding event of this new Romance, in which Lady London’s beautiful figure draws innumerable adventurers from around the globe, to throw themselves and their riches at her feet. I will consider *Annus Mirabilis*’s final vision, which seems to predict the financial future in 1667, as the product of the poet’s historically situated and politically oriented aesthetic practice, which transforms outworn figures along with their latent forces, and refashions an imaginary order of the future, as a means to bringing that future about.

In the years following the English Civil War, also known as the Republican Revolution, Dryden’s poetry shows a political world in which repeated hopes for a more successful order end again and again in failure, even disaster. The successful overthrow and execution of King Charles I by Parliamentary forces deprived the political order of its central and centrifugal figure. Republicans faced the difficult task of making and popularizing a new representational order. In his *Heroic Stanzas*, written on the 1658 death of Oliver Cromwell, the leader of Parliament’s New Model Army and then of the new Commonwealth government, Dryden imagines a new political universe, with Cromwell as a kind of anti-Sovereign Sun orbited by ‘Common’ satellites (i.e., Parliament) as significant as their center, and thickly surrounded by military victories like so many bright stars. Yet by the poem’s end, Cromwell’s figure “collapses” under the weight of his own success, and his own weighty name – the last touch a seeming nod to the suspiciously sovereign *gravitas* of Cromwell’s ultimate title, “Lord Protector for life.” This image of collapse, strangely ominous for an elegy, is a sign of bad things to come for the young republic.

The unpopular reign of Cromwell’s son Richard lasted less than a year, setting the stage for the Royalist’s successful restoration of the Stuart monarchy. Dryden’s poems in celebration of Charles II’s 1660 return from exile in France reveled in the represen-
tational potential of this true Sovereign Sun, whose light and heat dispels England’s “damps” (or collective misery), as it solidifies the postdiluvian ground for his own spectacular return. The “powerful influence” of his glorious sovereign figure also clears the air of previous era’s highest-rising “vapours” – lines which suggest that the Sun-King’s representational task is to expiate the past, and to “vanish” all traces (or ghosts) of the last regime’s most popular figures. Yet the returning King struggled to salvage a weakened economy and an international position undermined by England’s internal upheavals. He also struggled to unite and win over “collective” sentiment with regard to his unenviable task of distributing rewards and punishments, both legal and economic, to members of a national body recently (and to a large extent, still) divided against itself.

By the time Dryden writes *Annus Mirabilis* in 1667, a poetic account of the terrible events of the year 1666, a dark shadow has fallen upon hopes that Charles’s return signifies the dawning of a new golden age of English peace and prosperity. The diminishing power of his Restoration figure is evident in the poem’s opening lines, in which the King and his merchants are in the passive position of being (or having been) “courted” and “awed” by an aggressive and personified Holland. This imagined scenario of relative power sets up Holland’s terrible yet impressive command of the global economy: “Trade, which, like blood, should circularly flow, Stopp’d in their channels, found its freedom lost: Thither the wealth of all the world did go, And seem’d but shipwreck’d on so base a coast.”

If the idea of a courted King is not remarkable in itself, Charles’ opening position marks a decisive change from his more active power in earlier poems as a returning Sovereign Sun. And this opening passivity clings to his figure throughout the poem. According to an early stanza, his newly passive ruling character, generally figured as reflective and peaceful, is to be “counterbalanced” by his “martial people.” (Such “counterbalance” is also the well-known aesthetic ideal of the heroic couplet, popularized by Dryden as a formal model for literature of the so-called “Augustan” age, especially the poetry of Alexander Pope.) Yet the poem’s explicit set-up of an ideal “counterbalance” proves terribly false as the action unfolds. Under Charles’s (in this case, inadequate) command, England’s vicious and unrestrained burning and pillaging of the Dutch fleet provokes Divine Retribution, in the form of London’s Great Fire.

Appearing in the poem in order to lay a proud and violent England low, the Fire emerges as Charles’ most formidable foe, and one with unmistakable ties to England’s violent and seemingly irrepressible past. A monstrous specter, walking “boldly upright with exalted head” to threaten King and Country alike, the Fire also conjures up the spirits of revolutionaries hung as traitors from London Bridge, who descend from their posts to dance among the flames. The Fire even draws a direct comparison to that unforgettable scourge and usurper, Cromwell himself. Dryden’s anthropomorphized and politically charged representation of the Fire suggests that London is being punished
for her sins not only against others, but also against herself.

The Fire is finally extinquished via a miraculously reflective solution. Charles rescues his people with a heartfelt, visible display of repentance, triggering a remarkable sympathetic response: he cries; his people see him crying and cry in turn; and God in his mercy sends down a crystalline pyramid, like a single, petrified tear, to put out the flames. In the face of catastrophe, Charles II's passive figure is effectively reborn as a watered-down version of Charles I's martyr figure, an image codified and popularized in the *Eikon Basilike*, a posthumous book of the King's poems and prayers, which famously opened with a picture of Charles kneeling with a crown of thorns, and anointed by divine light.

Yet Charles II's second-generation reign as *Annus Mirabilis*'s sympathetic center doesn't last long, which suggests that the mystical solution arising from his repentant figure is ultimately insufficient for a poem that (according to the preface) is as much "historical" as "heroic." In the poem's final scene, a new figure emerges to provide a more earthly, material solution to the problem of circulation:

Methinks already, from this chemic flame,
I see a city of more precious mould;
Rich as the town which gives the Indies name,
With silver paved, and all divine with gold.

Already, labouring with a mighty fate,
She shakes the rubbish from her mounting brow,
And seems to have renewed her charter's date,
Which heav'n will to the death of time allow.

More great than human, now, and more august,
New deified she from her fire does rise:
Her widening streets on new foundations trust,
And, opening, into larger parts she flies…

As I will suggest, Dryden’s vision projects London as the iconic center of a new world order, displacing a Sovereign figure whose *potentas* has reached its limit. This reading offers a subtle but significant variation on the more common interpretation that the poet’s final vision reveals his ideological investment in what Blair Hoxby describes as the “cooperative union of court and city.” In the poem’s prefatory dedication (to the great “Metropolis” herself – but undoubtedly written to impress other, Royal eyes and ears as well), Dryden describes London and Charles as “matchless lovers,” kept apart by “fortunes” and those “rivals” who had “violently ravished and withheld” the City from her King. Yet this opening set-up with its “traditional” implications of
man and wife seems inadequate to the symbolic developments of the poem’s final vision of the future. (Earlier in the poem, a warship named “London” does indeed appear as a more traditional “rich bride,” sent to a best-loved king by his loyal city. But the results of this initial pairing of Charles and “London” did not turn out so well in the end, as we have seen.)

In the poem’s final vision, the “London” of the future is no mere marital helpmeet, nor a defenseless sexual victim in need of rescue. She is rather a singular, powerful icon – an explicitly “maiden” Queen – who eclipses the figure of the reigning King. Once she appears, we never see the King again. She even usurps the traditional metaphor of sovereign continuity: the mythical Phoenix, which gives birth to a new self at the very moment of its fiery death. (The King is dead. Long live the King.) This symbolic takeover signals London’s potential displacement of the Sovereign as the central representative figure of England as a stable, unified and lasting people. Having starred as a phoenix Son in Restoration iconography, Charles II is now more like a lame (if sympathetic) duck: relegated to the position of a still-living yet superseded Father bird, whose job is to “hatch” and watch over his progeny from behind the scenes.

What does this displacement of the Sovereign by the City accomplish? For one thing, it re-solves the problem of economic imbalance, figured in the opening stanzas as poor or unfavorable “circulation.” Early in the poem, Charles foresees that blowing up the Dutch ships will favorably return in golden showers from the sky, and so declares war, or “assert[s] the watery ball.” This uniquely Sovereign vision – Charles is described as “surveying the charge with careful eyes, / Which none but mighty monarchs could maintain” – ultimately proves both true and false. In addition to riches, golden flames will also rain down on England as a divine return on her acts of aggression. In the poem’s final counter-vision, instead of chasing and plundering, a new and improved “London” will draw the wealth of the world to herself: “Now, like a maiden queen, she will behold / From her high turrets hourly suitors come: / The East with incense and the West with gold / Will stand like suppliants to receive her doom” (1185–1188). By successfully seducing both East and West into casting their riches at her feet, her irresistible beauty even promises an end to war itself: “Our pow’rful navy shall no longer meet / The wealth of France or Holland to invade; / The beauty of this town, without a fleet, / From all the world shall vindicate her trade” (1201–1204). In other words, England’s future growth and prosperity is envisioned as a modern “Pax Augusta,” but one ruled over by the “august” Imperial City herself.

A crucial factor in this future reordering of forces is London’s attractiveness, which appears as an art of feminine self-fashioning. Whereas London of old was like a “shepherdess,” “rude and low,” her new, nobler frame is served well by the “beauteous arts of modern pride” (1181–1184). Yet the comparison of London’s reconstruction to the Lady’s extended sitting at the dressing table – the infamous setting of the start of the
action in Pope’s mock-heroic *Rape of the Lock* – seems, in 1667, less a mark of common assumptions about the artificial wiles of the “fairer” sex, than an active appropriation of the self-decoration and display, with all its attendant sexual interests and pleasures, associated with the men and women of Charles II’s Court, with the King himself serving as the iconic pinnacle of aesthetic desire and attraction. A broad ranging re-aestheticization was a central element of Restoration’s Sovereign promise after the austerity of the Commonwealth. Here, we find the torch of aesthetic restoration passed on to the figure of the City herself.

Serving as a new model center of collective attraction, the aestheticized City also displays the contours of a new ideal Woman. Neither loyal Wife nor innocent Virgin, the Cosmopolitan Lady’s arts are those of seduction, and this one seems to know just what she’s doing. Interestingly, both Cromwell and Charles appeared in Dryden’s earlier poems as explicitly feminine – and ultimately failed – “virgin” figures. In the *Heroic Stanzas*, Cromwell begins brightly as a pure, perfect, unbroken circle, but ends as a second Tarpeia, the vestal virgin who betrayed the Roman republic: seduced by the promise of the Sabine soldiers’ golden bracelets, she was crushed for her troubles by their shields instead. In Dryden’s Restoration poetry, Charles II was heralded as a new Astrea, the Roman goddess of Purity and Justice whose return carried the promise of a new Golden Age – except that determining post-War justice proved highly problematic, and young Charles was hardly a model of purity. Yet if, contrary to these models of purity, a powerful seductiveness is necessary to the Lady’s figurative function in the poem, its “model” relation to any real women (or political actors, male or female) seems rather murky. Although seemingly more inclined to Royal than to Puritan tastes, Lady London’s attractive power is undoubtedly allowed to display itself unchecked, *precisely because* she represents an abstraction – the City itself – instead of an actual Queen (or King), who is still expected to abide by more restrictive notions of “virtuous” behavior, in addition to fulfilling her collective symbolic function.

Returning again to the question of her collective function, we can ask, what difference does the City’s feminine figure make, for an attempt to recreate a stable, long-lasting, and desirable order? We can see that her emergence effectively intervenes in an international field of relations between men that have progressed disastrously from the poem’s opening lines. If Charles’s passivity seems in some sense to draw out the overly-active responses of others – not only of his foreign aggressors, but also of own militant people – London’s final displacement of the Sovereign figure allows for a different kind of Courtly order: the epic Romance, in which the Lady’s dazzling beauty is the infinite and painfully pleasurable source of her power to draw others on a perpetual quest. The final vision’s explicitly hetero-sexed Romance replaces the masculine forces of heroic action and attraction – where passive and aggressive relations culminate in rapine, pillage and general disaster – with a more pleasurable scene of seduction, in which foreign suitors freely give up their goods in exchange for the bliss of
simple proximity to their envisioned object of desire. In this scenario, the action is
driven by Lady London’s new kind of force, luring active participants to sail ambiva-
ently under her and/or their own power, to a seeming loss that feels like a victory.

This brings to the City’s romantic counterparts, the numerous merchant adventurers
of indeterminate origins. If London’s bright future seems guaranteed, the fate (or
“doom”) of her global suitors seems more ambiguous. For while her mode of attracting
wealth is more peaceful than the game of war, there is an uneasy and unmistakable
dark side to her art. In a remarkable mash-up of the Odyssey’s plot, the world’s mer-
chants appear as so many Suitors to London’s splendidous Siren. Having originally
planned to sail far beyond her shores, these adventurers find themselves charmed in-
stead into unloading their riches at her feet, and staying forever: “The vent’rous mer-
chant, who designed more far / And touches on our hospitable shore, / Charmed with
the splendor of this northern star, / Shall here unlade him and depart no more.” What
happens to those who cast their fortunes at her feet? Do they become part of her
charmed circle, and realize personal success? Or do they waste away, like the doomed
human prey of the mythical Sirens? Once landed, these figures are subsumed within
the shadow of London’s towering figure, and (like the Sovereign) are not seen again.

As Victoria Kahn notes, Romance was a favorite genre for idealizing seventeenth-
century Royal behavior, which was supposed to pursue Love, Honor, and Glory, rather
than merely economic or “base” self-interests. Yet the Romance of the future that
emerges in Annus Mirabilis to replace the failed Epic Heroism of the past does not
look backward to a supposed time before the coming of new money, nor does it uphold
selfless nobility as its ultimate value. Its new heroes are not “noble” – neither Royal,
nor uninterested in riches – but rather profit-seeking adventurers who are unwittingly
drawn off their pecuniary course in pursuit of alternative interests, or desires. And their
supposed lack or loss of self-interest in the face of London (again, maybe self-inter-
ested or maybe not, depending on how you imagine their final fate) is only a means to
the Cosmopolitan order’s ultimately self-interested end, or Good. For “London” herself
– and thus (potentially) all of her people by representative extension – will materially
benefit from the suitors’ ambiguously foolhardy/wise behavior. This vision of private
interests and desires converging with the public good prefigures those 18th century ar-
guments, described by A.O. Hirschman, which extol the power of a new market econ-
omy to “harness” the passions and vices in service of a better order, instead of
fruitlessly trying to counteract and repress them. Moreover, as Enlightenment writers
like Bernard Mandeville will explore, aesthetic seductions of all sorts (including e.g.
the luxury trade in women’s fashion) are a significant aspect of the new order and its
necessary attendant harnessings.

In 1688, the Stuart king James II was chased off the throne by the Dutch-born
William of Orange with support from Parliament – a second, more successful, “Glo-
rious” Revolution that limited Sovereign power, solidified Parliament’s, and ushered
in dramatic changes in political economy. The Financial Revolution of the 1690’s saw
the reformation of government policy in the service of merchant and manufacturing
interests, the relaxation of monopoly and other trade regulations, and the creation of
England’s first national bank in 1694: a public institution backed by private wealth
which provided necessary financial liquidity in the service of new projects for inter-
national expansion. (In 1672, Charles II had infamously ‘stopped’ the Exchequer and
seized all of its private funds; in 1694, a more limitedly powerful William had to ask
the City of London for a loan, and only had his fiscal needs met with the successful
creation of the Bank, after the Dutch model of 1609).

As Steven Pincus argues, in the decades between the Civil War and the Glorious
Revolution, public arguments in support of the “advancement of trade” were self-con-
scious of the public nature of their task: namely, to represent the new model economy
simply and persuasively, both to the reigning political powers and to a more general
readership, in order to create a “more commercially inclined state” and “a more com-
mercially informed public.” As the 17th century economic writer Carew Raynell writes,
the contours of the new economy must be made clear, if men are to be made to desire,
support and participate in its new order. Enabling men to grasp the “mysteries of ex-
change” is necessary, he insists, for the development of a “public spirit,” which would
give “countenances to brave actions, and industrious men,” and motivate men to pursue
the “business of trade” as eagerly as they pursue “pleasures and luxury.”

In sum, realizing the promise of a “massive increase of English wealth, and con-
sequently English power” required concerted efforts to frame and motivate economic
actors’ imaginary and material investments. Men had to be encouraged to lend their
trust (and their money) to its new institutions, in the wake of a widespread crisis of
confidence in the usual political suspects. In Dryden’s vision, the figure of the City in-
spires just such a spirit of loyalty and devotion, while at the same time depicting the
active, self-sustaining, self-regulating principle of the new economy’s “massive in-
crease.” Giving birth to herself by opening wide – “Her widening streets on new foun-
dations trust, / And, opening, into larger parts she flies” – the City grows via a process
of exponential aggregation. The more men and money she attracts, the poem suggests,
the more powerfully attractive she becomes, and so on – and the more everybody
within her increasingly large circle (again, potentially) wins.

Reading between the lines, we can also easily grasp the external material require-
ments elided by the poem. The City’s virtuous circle of self-propelling growth requires
a concerted investment in the reconstruction of her beautiful Image, in order to seed
her capacity to draw all riches to her shores. Showing London’s glorious future to
men’s imaginations is thus at heart an aesthetic appeal: not only to a general public re-
garding the material benefits of art’s pleasures (and luxuries), but also to a sovereign
power whose financial, legislative, and aesthetic support for London’s revitalization
will allow her to support Herself – and the Sovereign who stands behind her, as well.
In other words, when Charles “open[s] wide / His stores,” he should do more than simply feed the poor. He must also invest in London’s image, as an image that might (and indeed, should) dramatically eclipse his own, if England is to feed more richly in the future, on the fruits of the City’s self-perpetuating success.

The transformation of the City in *Annus Mirabilis* also transforms her counterparts, those innumerable merchant adventurers who will freely and pleasurably – but also, inevitably and predictably – follow the paths of their hearts’ desire, thereby guaranteeing England’s power and glory. In the ‘present’ of 1666, the “Merchant Adventurers” were one of the most powerful and longstanding export monopolies in England, a hold strengthened by the Navigation Acts of 1660 and 1663, which required all imports be transported in English “bottoms” manned by English seamen. In direct contrast, the “merchant adventurers” who will bring their goods to Dryden’s new London are indeterminately foreign-born; they are also free, governed primarily by their own motivations, which are (moreover) as much romantic as economic. In this last respect, the suitors conjure a different historical instantiation of the “Merchant Adventurer”: namely, the intrepid members of “The Mystery, Company, and Fellowship of Merchant Adventurers for the Discovery of Regions, Dominions, Islands, and Places Unknown,” which set out from London in search of new lands, goods, and markets in 1553. Later renamed the Muscovy Company, these “Ad-venturers” – i.e., both sailors and their investors, or capital “Venturers” – comprised the first major chartered joint-stock company, paving the way for later joint-stock ventures like the East India Company, which economically and politically ruled the British Ocean during the 18th- and 19th-century reign of “free” trade. (As the last stanzas of *Annus Mirabilis* make clear, there is still war to be made, as we collectively focus our attentions on the telos vision of a world of men and motions, both predictable and free, in the peaceful service of the City’s economic and aesthetic reign.)

The transformation of the City even entails the symbolic transformation of London’s topography, as the necessary material and imaginary foundation of her collective relations. Earlier in the poem, the river Thames had appeared as an “Old Father,” beaten back by the unleashed fury of the Fire: “Old Father Thames raised up his reverend head / But feared the fate of Simeois would return: / Deep in his ooze he sought his sedgy bed / And shrunk his waters back into his urn.” Initially, even the Thames is governed by the false principles of heroic epic, in which ancient, animating gods square off against (only slightly newer) wrathful and half-divine heroes in endless cycle of violence leading to general destruction. In the final vision, London’s primary waterway is reborn in a softer, more attractive, feminine fashion, like the Cosmopolitan Lady from which it flows: now, “The silver Thames, her own domestic flood, / Shall bear her vessels, like a sweeping train” (1189–1190).

*Annus Mirabilis’* final vision, in which commerce “makes one city of the universe, / Where some may gain and all may be supplied,” is significantly indebted to the City’s
feminine figure, as a potent and moving Form entailing rich conceptual possibilities. Instead of an ideally closed system of circulating money, as the life-blood contained by the national body (as in Dryden’s previous poems), we find a feminized flood or “flux” which regularly flows out from England – and, imaginatively, back in again, drawing men and their interests into her charmed and ever-expanding circle. Surpassing the pious but materially insufficient flow of Charles’s Sovereign tears, which had to be augmented by divine intervention, the watery road that seeps from the City’s feminized figure is substantial enough to support the economic weight of the world, and supple enough to draw it back to its own source, as all money’s ultimate end. Beyond the straight, bare, and ultimately brittle lines of Puritan austerity idealized in Dryden’s eulogy for Cromwell, and beyond the solid ground needed to support the taxing gravitas of Sovereign pomp in Dryden’s Restoration poems, *Annus Mirabilis*’s “City” of the future keeps herself afloat via a powerful and regular fluidity, or liquidity, which follows the contours of a feminine refashioning toward a more proper and desirable global redistribution. Beyond the battle of chaste republic versus profligate kingdom, beyond the trials and tribulations of republican Rome and biblical Sodom, the City of London emerges as a Cosmopolitan Siren, whose knowing and decidedly modern call lures the world to her shores – and to its own blissful doom. (And beyond Republican Red and Royal Purple, the color of the new City is decidedly pink.)

Summing up, I have suggested that the birth of the City of the Future can be understood as an aesthetic act with profound material implications. In the preface to *Annus Mirabilis*, Dryden famously outlines the poet’s aesthetic task, to “set before your eyes” absent objects “as perfectly and more delightfully than nature,” or we might say, to present certain objects in their “ideal” and “most desirable” form. His interest in art’s idealizing, attractive function – a function that seems clearly not only for the sake of art – attends carefully to the power and vicissitudes of Form. In *Annus Mirabilis*, he singles out aesthetic attention to form as the means to discovering and making a new world order:

The ebbs of tides and their mysterious flow
We as art’s elements shall understand
And as by line upon the ocean go,
Whose paths shall be familiar as the land.

Instructed ships shall sail to quick commerce,
By which remotest regions are allied,
Which makes one city of the universe,
Where some may gain and all may be supplied.

Then we upon our globe’s last verge shall go
And view the ocean leaning on the sky;
From thence our rolling neighbors we shall know
And on the lunar world securely pry. (645–652)

If older modes of divining searched the stars for answers, assigning victories and
defeats to various visions and prophecies regarding the will of the God(s), the “lines”
and “paths” of Dryden’s brave new world are discovered by a new kind of “vision”: an
aesthetic vision, underpinning advances in both Art and Science, and enabling men
to master and redesign the world’s collective systems and their operations. In other
words, the desired Future depends on man’s collective ability to discover Form’s prin-
ciples, and harness its effects – effects that are not only scientific and technological,
but also conceptual and passionate. Allowing men to discern the tides and master the
winds of trade, these new formal principles also have the power to capture the atten-
tions, shape the dreams, orient the desires, and motivate the actions of modern man.

Midway through Annus Mirabilis, Dryden writes of the practical importance of re-
reflecting on nature’s forms: “By viewing nature, nature’s handmaid, art. / Makes mighty
things from small beginnings grow. / Thus fishes first to shipping did impart / Their
tail the rudder and their head the prow.” If the form of the fish inspires insight into the
mechanical principles of nautical design, the form of the Lady inspires much more. Her
seductive figure allows her reader-imaginers (as potential ad-venturers) to envision
and grasp new principles of collective organization, while exerting a forceful influence
on the passions that orient and motivate men’s actions. Dryden’s vision of a Universal
Future plots a new course for England, driven by a new kind of force or Action – one
that pulls (and is pulled) instead of pushing and penetrating – and extolling the knowing
and civilized virtues of Seduction against celebrations of the Rape of its enemies and
the Earth itself. In lines borrowed from Petronius’s Satyricon, Dryden laments the re-
peated bad endings of the “proud designs” of human kind: “And so we suffer shipwreck
every where! Alas, what port can such a pilot find, / Who in the night of fate must
blindly steer!” (137–140). To reverse the fortunes of the English ship of state, Dryden
gives up attending to the representational needs of yet another blind Pilot, and (ex-
ploiting the sexual implications of the nautical figure) focuses instead on the imaginary
potential of her primary “Port.”

Dryden’s ability to read the writing on the wall, and to see a new global economy
arising out of the aftermath of revolution, is a specific effect of his attentions to Form.
His vision of a new London neither reflects his historical moment as it is, nor shows
us the not-so-distant future as it “must necessarily be,” as one historicist critic suggests.
Rather, his poetic construction actively contributes to new efforts to frame the collect-
tive imagination at a moment of widespread representational crisis, allowing his readers
to grasp a freer, more beautiful, more productive and more desirable order, centered
on the City, which they might be more inclined to follow. As Marx writes at the start
of *The Eighteenth Brumiere*, “Men make their own history, but not just as they please. They do not choose the circumstances for themselves, but have to work upon circumstances as they find them, have to fashion the material handed down by the past.” Understanding the birth of “the City” as an event dependent on such efforts to refashion the forms, figures, and forces the past into a new and more attractive order of collective relations, helps illuminate the historical origins of contemporary appeals to either (as a recent cover of *The Economist* begged) “Save the City” – or else to bring about something altogether new to take its place, if we (like Dryden) wish to avoid a future filled with unending and disastrous repetitions of the same.
TAMING AND SIMULATING NATURE IN AN AFRICAN METROPOLIS.

Mark Haywood

In February 2008 the United Nations’ *Revision of World Urbanization Prospects* predicted by the end of that year, for the first time in human history, more than half the world’s population would be living in urban, rather than rural locations. Hania Zlotnik, Director of the Population Division of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs (DESA), which prepared the report, noted, ‘Although Asia and Africa are the least urbanized areas, they account for most of the urban population of the world.’

It is increasingly predicted the archetypal city of the twenty-first century will be the non-Western (or southern hemisphere) megalopolis. In light of this scenario we will consider the changing roles of two urban zoos in the burgeoning South African metropolitan area of Gauteng. Though by far the smallest of the country’s provinces, is not only its most densely populated, but also has the highest population (currently estimated at around eleven million people).

South Africa has many internationally famous game reserves and National Parks, but many foreigners may be surprised to learn that the Johannesburg/Pretoria conurbation of which Gauteng is comprised, is also home to two large urban zoos. Over the past century or so, these institutions have evolved a narrative of interplay between ‘nature’ and urbanisation. The process began with colonial taxonomies and mastery over nature, that evolved into simulation and re-evaluation, before now perhaps suggesting the future possibility of hybridised urban spaces for animal/human interaction.

Our account will consider a series of distinct chapters in this narrative. The first is from the turn of the last century when Johannesburg Zoo was founded in the new
suburb of Saxonburg, which had recently been Europeanised by the mass planting of trees imported from Germany. The second phase began in the 1930s when Pretoria’s National Zoological Gardens expanded by enclosing adjoining indigenous bush veld. Finally we will consider the present day function of Johannesburg Zoo, which has become a safe recreational haven in a city which has one of the world’s highest crime rates, inner city collapse and a dearth of safe public space. However, it is this third seemingly desparate situation, that also suggests a possible new future for metropolitan zoos, not just in South Arica, but elsewhere.

Johannesburg was founded in 1886 and so is one of the world’s youngest major cities. It is also probably the largest not sited on a navigable body of water; the location was instead determined by the discovery of rich gold deposits beneath the Highveld, a vast inland savannah plateau with an average altitude of over 1,750 metres. The city has been described as ‘the nineteenth century’s last great boomtown’, for in only ten years a few small mining camps grew to become an urban area of over 100,000 people who had been drawn there from all over the world. From the outset Johannesburg developed chaotically and, though its centre retains the original grid pattern, little of the historic architecture has survived. In recent years even the modernist Central Business District has been abandoned by big business and the Stock Exchange, who have retreated to the safety of the suburbs. Johannesburg Zoo is one of the city’s last public institutions still in its original location, a late nineteenth century inner suburb called Saxonwold, that is one of the few older to remain comparatively unchanged. To the south-west Saxonwold’s skyline is dominated by the palatial cliff-top mansions of the so-called Rand Lords who, a century ago drove the young city’s astonishing burgeoning. The Zoo lies at the foot of this cliff and its parkland is bisected by the wide Memorial Boulevard which leads the eye to Sir Edwin Lutyens’ imposing Anglo-Boer War Memorial on the far edge of the Zoo.

Saxonwold’s name provides an improbable hint to its circumstances of origin. In the late nineteenth century the area was a cattle farm called Bramfontein that was speculatively purchased by Hermann Eckstein, President of the Johannesburg Chamber of Mines. In 1891 after failing to find any gold beneath the farm Eckstein replaced the original veld with a huge commercial plantation of three million European trees imported from the Black Forest. He named the area Sachsenwald after Bismarck’s estate in Lower Saxony and the first manager of his plantation had previously held a similar post with the Iron Chancellor.

Eckstein died in 1893 and, in the following years as the city grew, the company he had founded subdivided the plantation into building plots. In 1904 a two hundred acres site which today comprises the Zoo and its adjoining lake was ceded as a Deed of Gift ‘in trust for the inhabitants of Johannesburg...to be used for the purpose of a public park’. It was requested the area be known as the Hermann Eckstein Memorial Park, but over the following years the suburb’s name became anglicised to ‘Saxonwold’, a
formal park was laid out, and the small animal collection that had been housed there became the Johannesburg Zoological Gardens.\(^6\)

Thus an area of the Highveld, which as late as the 1880s had been rich in indigenous fauna and flora was turned into European urban parkland. In the years after the Second Anglo-Boer War (1899–1902) the Zoo was created in its midst as an ordered imperial heterotopia. The form and content was modelled on the London Zoo; it was planted with European trees and dotted with whimsical buildings that housed mainly indigenous African animals such as lions, elephants and rhinoceros. Geometries of spatial control were imposed on the site through the creation of straight formal avenues and the dominant Memorial Boulevard whose axis created a sightline linking Sir Edward Lutyan’s imposing Anglo-Boer War Memorial to the Westcliff mansions of the colonial Rand Lords (who had funded the neoclassical monument).

We will return to the Johannesburg Zoo of the present day after a second, contrasting study of the expansion of Pretoria’s National Zoological Gardens during the 1930s. The two institutions are of similar age, but their cities are very different, Johannesburg is brash and cosmopolitan, whereas Pretoria is conservative and still dominated by its sober Afrikaner culture. Pretoria was the older city, but grew far more slowly and its zoo borders the city centre. The NZG’s first Director, Dr Jan Boudewyn Gunning was very progressive and familiar with the contemporary European movement led by Carl Hagenbeck. In Hagenbeck 1898 had created an ‘Animal Paradise’ at the Berlin Zoological Gardens by replacing some cages and buildings with moated outdoor enclosures in which animals were displayed against tiered, artificial cliffs made of cement.\(^7\)

In 1902 Gunning initiated the purchase of thirty acres of pristine hilly bush veldt bordering the Apies River, which at that time was the Zoo’s northern boundary.\(^8\) The land then remained undeveloped for several decades whilst the city grew and encircled it. In 1938 sufficient funds were finally in place to formally incorporate the river, its far bank and the hills beyond into the Zoo, whilst leaving as much as possible of the original landscape intact. The new development was known as the Northern Extension...
and its animal enclosures were each about an acre in size, which made them the largest in the world at that time.\(^9\)

This innovative strategy for incorporating indigenous landscape and flora into the zoo environment led to Pretoria being ranked among the world’s top urban zoos. It was also an historic shift from zoos consisting of architecture that housed animals for display, to environments with adjoining quasi-natural structures from which humans could look out to observe animals. We might term the latter ‘non-architecture’ as animal enclosures that visually and environmentally simulated the ‘natural world’ superceded the ideological and overtly physical architecture of the colonial and modernist periods.

Our final study is set in an era when, as ever increasing numbers of foreign tourists are experiencing South African wildlife in what remains of its natural environment, much of Johannesburg’s rapidly rising urban population have replaced their forebears’ traditional understandings of indigenous animals with ones gleaned from school and family visits to the Zoo. In recent years Johannesburg has become known as one of the world’s more dangerous cities. It is tempting to contrast the imperial order of our first study with the today’s chaos and lawlessness. However, this might be misleading, as early Johannesburg has been described in the following emphatic terms.

Conceived in avarice, the young city nurtured every species of vice. Banks and boarding houses jostled for space with more than five hundred saloons. Criminal syndicates with roots in New York City and London found fertile soil in Johannesburg. The predominantly male population provided a robust market for prostitution. ‘Ancient Ninevah and Babylon have been revived,’ a visiting journalist wrote in 1913. ‘Johannesburg is their twentieth century prototype. It is a city of unbridled squalor and unfathomable squander.’\(^10\)

While Johannesburg has always had enormous disparities of wealth distribution, in recent decades the social fabric of the city has deteriorated further. There is little safe public space other than in suburban shopping malls and few of its citizens walk anywhere by choice. All but the poor live behind high walls topped by spikes and six or eight strands of electrified wire. In these circumstances, the city’s zoo has become a popular haven from the dangerous urban jungle that surrounds it. Entry charges were introduced in 1961 as an economic necessity, but the resultant restrictions have in recent years made the Zoo appear a rare, safe environment, that has been transformed from an open public park into a secure and popular week-end haven.

Our account began towards the end of the nineteenth century when the origins of the Johannesburg Zoo made it a microcosmic reflection of the stages of the colonial project. Indigenous bush became a European livestock farm, which was then purchased with the speculative intention of exploiting its mineral wealth. After this venture proved futile the landscape underwent a second stage of Europeanisation with the creation of the Sachsenwald plantation. Finally urban geometries of spatial control were imposed upon the site and it became a public pleasure garden populated with indigenous species.
that had once roamed wild.

Our second study saw the preservation and subsequent museumification of an indigenous landscape within a colonial urban environment. Initially this continued to resemble the original biome through its display of indigenous species, but it later became hybridised with the introduction of animals from other continents, such as Indian tigers and Kodiak bears from Alaska.

Finally we viewed a situation where the city authorities are no longer in control of the burgeoning urban environment. The African mega-city is perceived by its inhabitants as a dangerous human jungle and the European parkland of Johannesburg Zoos has become not just a sanctuary for endangered indigenous species, such as the wild dog, but also a safe haven for the city’s ever expanding human population.

We first encountered this last phenomenon some years ago while researching rewilded South African landscapes or hyperwildernesses, so-called on account of their simulation of wilderness.11 It is worth noting in passing that international discussion of concepts such as ‘wild’ and ‘landscape’ is sometimes hindered by these words of Northern European origin lacking precise succinct equivalents in many Romance languages. In this respect it is worth mentioning the ecologist George Peterken’s term ‘condition of future naturalness’12 as a synonym for re-wilding and in time it might become appropriate to describe a future use of urban zoos. The current informal social role of Johannesburg Zoo prompted reflection on the possible future purpose of the urban zoo, an institution we had previously viewed as lacking any redeeming features.

At the time of their emergence in the early nineteenth century zoos were aligned with other public educational institutions such as libraries and art galleries. However, over the course of the twentieth century urban zoos have increasingly struggled to maintain this status. One of their biggest problems is that collections are traditionally centred around ‘charismatic assemblies of large mammals’13 who are unable to sustain their normal social behaviour and frequently display symptoms of psychosis. It is hard to see what educational benefit may be gained from viewing such animals; indeed the situation has uncomfortable parallels with London’s former Bedlam Hospital for the mentally ill, whose seventeenth and eighteenth cen-
turies inmates provided entertainment for fee-paying spectators.

Perhaps, instead of thinking of the zoo as a place to view captive animals, it could be perceived as a historically constructed human environment that has had a series of shifting relationship with the animal kingdom. Researchers at the Charles University in Prague recently noted that although the city’s zoo is very popular, visitors not only average only a few seconds looking at individual animals, but also simply ignore much of the collection.\(^{14}\) However, many of Prague’s other residents use the zoo as a convenient, very pleasant recreational space, for activities such as walking, or jogging because it can be easily accessed with inexpensive annual passes.

In recent years some large non-urban zoos have developed immersive viewing environments and perhaps one could achieve something similar in an urban zoo by removing large mammals, dangerous carnivores and exotic species. The site would remain comparatively enclosed\(^ {15}\), but be re-wilded, or ‘revert to some previous condition’. (Peterken 1996, 13) The result would be a fairly controllable ‘natural’ environment in which small, formerly indigenous wildlife might only be glimpsed fleetingly, but encounters would be all the more prized by those who took the time and care to look.

Sources


SAPRA (Saxonwold & Parkwood Residents Association of Johannesburg) Joburg Zoo


van den Berg, Phillip and Ingrid, Hopkins, Pat (2000) The First Hundred Years: National Zoological Gardens of South Africa (Centurion, Zoroaster)

Notes

1 UN News Centre.
2 Campbell 2010.
3 Haywood-Britz 2008.
4 ibid.
5 SAPRA, 2011
7 Rothfels 2002,165.
8 van den Berg and Hopkins 2000, 34.
9 ibid. 42-5.
10 Campbell 2010.
13 Taylor 2005, 73.
14 Conversations with Petr Gibas, Karolína Pauknerová and Marco Stella of the Center for Theoretical Study, The Charles University in Prague, June, 2102.
15 The sylvan environs of the Johannesburg Zoo and Saxonwold are already a popular resting place for migrating flocks of wild birds.
ISTANBUL AS A STAGE/LANDSCAPE IN THE PROCESS OF GLOBALIZATION

Rıfat Şahiner

If we define city as a cultural site, we get into the boundaries of modernism, since we presume that the city is a culture-creating venue in addition to its other properties. However, here arises one vague question: does what we call the city’s formation mean a cultural product of never ending complex process itself, or does the city contribute to the creation of a new culture by establishing new conditions, borders and rules? In other words, is the city itself a created/generated culture, or is it an infrastructure for culture creation?

If we consider the city through the prism of modernist parameters, it is a site that organizes cultural creation. However, this cultural creation can often be viewed as a system produced by a central consideration with an authoritarian approach. Yet, this system is not pleased at all with the organic cultural creations produced within. On the other hand, it might be argued that the postmodern city has been generating a consumer-oriented system of socialization, rather than a culture-oriented one. If one focuses on the city particularly during the current process of globalization, one might observe that rather than functioning as a system where cultural creation takes place, the city serves as a site that can be directly consumed and is constantly subject to aesthetization. In these terms, the city might be regarded as a collection of signs to be consumed, rather than being a site that organizes cultural creation.

The variation and expansion of consumption in the postmodern era has had a great impact not only on everyday life but also on aesthetization. Now, government agencies, corporations and non-governmental organizations all collaborate to organize festivals in order to promote direct shopping and mass consumption of goods. The whole world
has turned into an experience that can be consumed. Not only Walter Benjamin’si passages, shops, museums and exhibitions but also the city itself is offered for consumption to those who can pay a certain amount of fee. As the capital becomes more and more globalized, the beautification of the cities is designed to serve new purposes. Artistic creativity is utilized not only for the creation of cultural products, but also for the purpose of packaging and marketing the city, as well as turning it into a successful show.

The increase in the number of outstanding museums, gigantic exhibitions, biennials and festivals over the last 20-30 years, is not unrelated to urban transformation processes. For instance, the urban transformation of the district in Istanbul where biennials and festivals are cramped proves this point to a great extent. Both the Istanbul Biennial, covering the most important places of the “Historic Peninsula” with its partially restored cute structures, and the Sultanahmet district, which has been made attractive for tourists and other visitors serve as typical examples. Nowadays, Taksim’s İstiklal Street whose cobblestones are gotten rid of and ‘modernized(!), and Eminönü, which was subject to transformation as vigorously as Sultanahmet, represent public domains serving as showcases of Istanbul. The importance of Istanbul stems not only from its being Turkey’s financial centre, but also its being the only city with the potential to link Turkey to the global capital as a global metropolitan city. Thus, the city is transformed into a gigantic stage on which a large number of acts are played, rather than it embracing certain events with festivalism. Today, with many public art shows, and with its historical as well as modern structures, Istanbul appears to have become the center for various artistic events.
The process of aestetization that has begun with the city now envelopes everyday life, and the body, sexuality, fashion all turn into elements of this consumer show: everything starts to function as an economic infrastructure; everything starts to exist as images to be exchanged from one hand to another. This is represented by corporate sponsors that seek to associate themselves with culture and increase their prestige by investing in festivals and biennials. In this respect, one should analyze the theories of organization and the administrative devices driving culture. According to Scott Lash, the aestetization of everyday life points out two parallel developments. The first is the transformation of every kind of institution into a cultural character. ii This is best demonstrated in the theories of organization that have recently put special emphasis on such areas as “the art of management/the art in management” or “organizational aesthetics.”

On the other hand, with its center and economically important districts becoming subject to gentrification, Istanbul is viewed as an area that can be watched and consumed, and thus forced to become transformed through the demolition of every social structure threatening its appearance. As its certain districts become increasingly valuable, the poor communities residing in these districts are being forcefully moved away from the center to the outer suburbs.

These transfers show signs of the processes that take place in the execution of urban regeneration projects in Istanbul. In these urban regenaration districts, Sulukule (The Roman neighborhood), Tarlabası, Ayazma, Fener-Balat, and many more, the habitants wake up one morning with warning at their door telling them to leave their house within a certain period and start to live some kilometers away from their neighborhood. One of the requirements for the global city is the need to market it for the purposes
of culture and congress tourism. The 2010 European Capital of Culture Istanbul commercial pronounced The Stage is Yours Istanbul and addressed crowds from all over the world as well as from Istanbul. In the city’s history the stage lights had probably not ever been as glamorous as those days. We were witnessing an impressive investment drive in culture industries. The success of the Istanbul Biennial in the world (the support Biennial gets from the most powerful holdings in Turkey), the art museums initiated by the private sector, the fact that Istanbul is the European Capital of Culture in 2010 and the advertisements of all these events on the streets proved that state and private funding made the city’s culture and art sector world-widely known.

The Unsettled

In their book “Capitalism and Schizophrenia” Deleuze and Guattari argued that capitalism was to lead to a complete deterritorialization; i.e. individuals were to become totally deterritorialized with all pre-capitalist institutions and values that had been culturally created and that they had belonged to before destroyed. This was to form a gap and this gap was to be bridged by capitalism itself. Since capitalism is a system by itself, it calls for the presence of certain social groupings to sustain itself. That is why it generates new social group forms such as “modern family”, “new state”, “modern education”, “moderate Islam”, etc.

In this context, let’s examine the case of Turkey, where a social transformation has taken place since a neo-liberal program was introduced in 1980. Beginning in the 1950s a rural migration to big cities has gained a huge momentum and the population influx has been directed to manufacturing regions, leading to the emergence of new cultural and sociological structures. With a focus of the outsiders on the presence of insiders. The new system has led to new cultural codes and made a new style of expression visible in the everyday urban life, in the patterns of cultural tastes, and in the increasingly private, multi-channel television and radio broadcasts. The evolution of consumption culture in Turkey that gained momentum in the mid-1980s reached its peak in the early 1990s. During this period a heavy rural migration was directed to big cities, especially to Istanbul, where the shabby suburbs surrounding the city center multiplied, and new regions with densely-populated slums emerged. Thus, with political consent, masses have started wandering along their new social routes without direction and moving on to the next level of their reterritorialization.

By this method, capitalism allows the formation of new social constructions, eg. it draws the boundaries within which new reterritorialization. All cultures end up being destroyed, while they are being transformed by capitalism. Moreover, all this transformation takes place at the same time, resulting in all the cultural references and identity forms becoming shaky and the established order harmed, destroyed, and forgotten.
through a ruinous energy. This transformation applies to the rural migrants of the urban regions as well. Due to diverse and heterogeneous socialization, the “others,” having broken into the urban areas and reshaping them in accordance with their own wishes, rather than adapting themselves to the established urban identity, appear more than willing to experience this transformation whose political background has already been laid out. By doing the things they could not in their home village where the customs and traditions restrict actions, they are aware that they have now found a new playground where legal disobedience reigns.

Capitalism allows the new social constructions within drawn boundaries. On the one hand all cultures crash, on the other hand, they are re-configured to a capitalist state. Moreover, all these transformations are happening at the same time.

To illustrate, at the weekends the masses in the city suburbs use the coastlines of Istanbul, which have been recently turned into free public-accessible areas, as their own recreational and picnic areas. Here, are talking about the fact that the city government has turned the city and its public areas into free consumption goods. One might even argue that the masses flocking to these areas perform some sort of a ‘slum ritual’. The democratization here is considered by many as the democracy by “the others,” but the local residents in these coastal areas, faced with the illegal actions of “the others” who have their own personal, conservative and threatening code of ethics, feel alienated and encircled within their own living spaces and obliged to cope with this troublesome situation.

One must interpret the approach of these not-so-oppressed and not-poor-any-more “new nomads” of Istanbul who define its urban facade as a kind of “new rural-urban sociology.” This socialization makes it visible the destruction of the unwritten social contract of the modern defining center and the creation of a new social construction whereby “the others”, rather than replacing the modern with their own authentic life styles, impose their own cultural acceptances onto others. The fact that the money has changed hands, and that one has reached the boundaries of the other’s living space, and that one has defeated, scared, and choked the other whom he had always envied and wanted to take down, as well as the fact that the “old” other has come into the crossroads with that which he had always preferred to ignore, and with that whose reality he had always been unwilling to accept have also become evident...

This intersection brings side by side the once-luxurious residences and the cloth
shades (a kind of temporary home) at the borderline. A new form of co-existence ... One accommodation is permanent and established, while the other is mobile and daily... On the one side are the old-facade residences overlooking the sea and signifying wealth, whereas next to them and attached to trees are the portable cover homes that can be constructed any time... This location, at the symbolic level, pits the settled against the mobile. Thus, similar to the city having been deconstructed, cultural codes are also being deconstructed.

Looking at Turkey, particularly Istanbul, one can realize that the newly-modernizing nomads, with their cultural demands (Moderate Islam), clothing styles, seek to define their own areas of existence, while they seem to have problems with the parameters of modernization at the same time. They try to modernize, while they also reckon with the institutional presence of modernism and ultimately wish to wipe it out after utilizing it as a tool powering their own transformation.

As the process of deterritorialization takes place with the process of reterritorialization, the codes of the old established forms are ruthlessly being eliminated. In this regard, the concepts and phenomena such as state, family, country, and city are restructured anew in various other ways. When all of this is happening, the general offensive of capitalism is being justified with social, ethic, and even legal codes.

Conclusion

In the process of globalization, Istanbul is subject to various transformations. The first is the transformation of the city into some sort of a sightseeing, as required by the global economy. This intervention is concerned with the city’s aestheticization and marketability as a tourist attraction. As a result, the city is being transformed into an experience that can be consumed and a stage that can be viewed. It is thus necessary that the poor classes living downtown and every group of people threatening the scenery of the city need to be moved out of the city center so that a social network of global circulation can be created with various cultural and artistic organizations. For this purpose the gentrification and urban regeneration projects come into life. In this process, it is not important to consider how these poor social groups, once residing downtown, will survive in the areas they have been expelled to and deal with the conditions under which they now have to live. They are being pushed into some kind of
an ambiguity, and they are being unsettled.

The second transformation is the movement of the social groups clustered in the slums of the city. These groups, the majority of which comprises the working class and small-to-medium business owners, have set out on an unreturnable path and become embedded into the city. While the skyscrapers symbolizing the wealthy business world have been constructed in the Silicon Valley of Levent and Maslak, this sector of the population, which is trying to move up into the higher class, flock to the parks at the beach that are open to the public over the weekends both because they cannot go back to their villages and because they cannot avoid the city’s atmosphere enveloping them. Just as they have changed the silhouette of the city with their illegally constructed slums, they also tentatively transform the park areas on the coastal strip into slums. By heavily imposing its own existence, this intervention has an invasive character. At the weekends, the city’s coastline is invaded, so to speak, by these people coming from the slums around the city, and the scenery and texture of the city is transformed by these actions.

İstanbul has a cosmopolitan structure offering different landscapes at the intersection of different socializations. With its historical value and economic potential, it is necessary to consider Istanbul as a large plateau on which various staging methods are being tried, while it is paying the price of its distorted structure with its population increasing day to day.

Notes

1 Slum-building ritual: Just like their migration to urban areas; like their illegal building of a slum overnight and moving into it the next day, they who have a picnic with their indifferent attitude, surround these areas with various clothes and covers, and thus make isolated “cover houses.”


3 Scott Lash, “Replies and Critiques, Expert Systems or Situated Interpretation? Culture and Institutions in Disorganized Capitalism”, Ulrich Beck, Antony Giddens and Scott Lash(ed), Reflective Modernization,


RIFAT ŞAHİNER
Nairobi: Symbol and Metaphor of Government

Lydia Muthuma

Nairobi and its symbols

The city is a symbol and metaphor of government; the spatial symbol of political power. It’s public/civic buildings declare who rules Nairobi—and Kenya as well—making the central business district site (CBD) an avenue of communication. Successive governments have inscribed themselves onto this site. By erecting public buildings, they have ‘etched’ their identity into the city. They have assigned these buildings the role of speaking for them. They have made them into metaphors of political identity. It can be said that each epoch of power has selected a representative architectural style which style is explored and related to the corresponding reign. It is read as a metaphor and symbol of the particular reign that oversaw its coming to be.

City as symbol and metaphor

Nairobi can be decoded as cultural symbol and metaphor. The city, as culture, is symbolic because its significance lies in the meaning it holds for people. And its ubiquitous context, like that of any other entity, is simply space. Space, of and by itself, has no culture; it is not (yet) a place-of-belonging for this only happens when people invest the space with meaning and value.

Nairobi’s ubiquitous context—Nairobi space—has been the backdrop of a particular human culture. And this culture, with the symbolic meaning it has assigned Nairobi’s space, is responsible for the city’s identity. Symbolic meaning is expressed in a variety of art forms. Among this variety, I have picked out the built environment. I investigate Nairobi’s central space; the CBD to discover the dominant built forms with their attached symbolic meaning.

Civic buildings in the CBD are paid for by successive political authority. Because the patron—of a building or any work of art—is associated with its meaning; because the person who pays for the building is related to its meaning; and because he is also related to the meaning others assign it, I have singled out political authority as a clue
to the meaning and identity of public buildings in Nairobi.

Identity expresses that which makes an entity singular, unique and clearly distinct from others. It declares intimately what comprises an entity. The city of Nairobi came to be as administrative centre, it is therefore opportune—in searching for its identity—to study the character engraved upon it by its respective administrators. And the administrators taken into account are the senior-most political rulers.

Political authority, though not always the most cohesive factor, is significant in creating a city’s identity. It can be decisive in forging a *civitas*—a social-political entity that bears a (somewhat) unifying culture. After all, modern African nation states—as we know them today—were created out of a political meeting: the Berlin conference of 1884/85 which carved out the continent into colonies and protectorates. After this conference, diverse peoples were perceived as homogenous units. Apparently, they acquired a common identity overnight and were governed without their consent. The mere penciling of lines onto a map converted them into nations! Political authority’s role may not be the sole force in binding people together, but to overlook its contribution would be an oversight. Politics is responsible, to no small degree, for moulding a polity out of diverse peoples, making it legitimate to investigate the identity it imparts not just on a nation but also on a city.

The focus is on the built symbols as they were designed by the rulers of Nairobi; the organisation of space by political rulers. And why would political authority impress its identity onto space? Why fabricate a tangible image to speak for it? Put another way, what relationship exists (if any) between spatial symbols and political identity?

Politicians may want to ‘brand’ space in order to:

- declare ownership of that space and whatever appertains to it
- impress their mandate (licit or illicit) upon the local population
- ward off possible competitors who are interested in the same space and power.

The information in this paper is divided according to the changing political authority yielding:
1. the era of the Railways’ authority (from 1898)
2. colonial central government (from 1902)
3. and colonial local government (from 1920)
4. the first post-colonial period (from 1963)
5. the second post-colonial period (from 1978)

Being analogous to the written word, identity-image (or identity symbol) is designed to serve the needs of communication without which any language would lack meaning. Symbols of political identity exist in order to communicate. Political authority addresses ‘another’ through the image it constructs. This other can be the local pop-
ulation or/and the possible or actual competitor to the same space and power.

It would be interesting to know how this ‘built-message’ was received by the contemporary ‘other’. It would be equally interesting to ‘see’ this spatial identity through the eyes of that powers’ contemporaneous competitor.

However, in decoding the messages encapsulated in these symbols, we can only be guided by conjecture and by the built environment itself, keeping in mind that our judgements are necessarily a little out of ‘actual’ historical context. This is because we cannot bring to life the past city, we can only get to know it—and selectively at that—in the present. LIFE and knowledge are not identical; one is actual (belongs to the order of reality) the other hypothetical (belonging to the order of the mind).

Some definitions

What is a city?

How does mere ubiquity -space- become a city? How does space become specific place; place-of-belonging? While space refers to whereness -the ubiquitous context of any entity- place is the delimited and ‘claimed’ whereness i.e. specific geographical location with its physical structure –natural and man-made. The physical structure (more so the man-made one) is imbued with meaning and value –what we call culture.

And culture is symbolic; its significance lies in the meaning it holds for people. It is the agent that transforms mere space into place-of-belonging; into place-of-identity. Culture is a broad term encompassing behaviour, values, norms, artefacts, language. This paper focuses on material culture specifically the built environment. What meaning and value is woven into Nairobi’s built environment? Because of its symbolic meaning, built environment, has a crucial role in defining a city. How has the built environment in Nairobi defined this city?

What about history?

Life is not experienced as a complete and constant NOW. It unfolds in succession as time progresses; it is constructed and shaped by the physical and social environment. Succession and change, or ‘history’ is opposed to the eternal NOW. Human experience –culture– changes as time passes; it is fluid not fixed. And thanks to its fluidity, we have history. Any city exists within history; within that change over time. Nairobi exists within a history. In this paper I discuss the city between the years 1899 and 2000; from its founding to the penultimate post-colonial era.

And Nature?

It can refer to two phenomena. There is nature as ‘manner’ of being; that which
delimits the act of being. If a city IS -it exists or has the act of TO BE- and so do other entities. What makes it a city and not something else? To rephrase it, what is a city’s essence; its way of being, its nature? A city’s essence,

for instance Nairobi, is determined by the meaning and value attached to it; human value transforms spatial context into specific place-of-belonging.

Nature can also be understood as the opposite of man-made; of entities that are ‘nature-given’ rather than fabricated by human hands. It can imply life or experience without or with minimum human interventions -in our case, life outside the physically constructed city, outside the urbs, the extra-urban or otherwise rural setting. But Nairobi exists within the confines of deliberate man-made structures.

A chronology of symbolic buildings in Nairobi’s CBD

Fig 1: geographical boundaries of Nairobi (from the city’s inception to date) Central area (area of study) highlighted. source: compiled by author

Fig 2: Aerial photo of CBD. Area within the red boundary corresponds to central area in figure 1 (above) source: Regional Centre for Mapping of Resources and Development (RCRMD) Nairobi, Kenya

Fig 3: Railway Headquarters in 1929 This was the largest building in CBD at the time. The columns, arched doors and grand scale contribute to the neo classical style.

source: Railway Museum, Nairobi, Kenya
The colonial government (and the Railways) chose a neo classical style. Figure 3, 4 and 5.

The British built out of so deep a tradition as to indelibly imprint their rule on the face of Nairobi. Western civilisation —which the British are part of— claims to be built on the ruins of Rome. So vast was Rome’s dominion and so powerful its influence that until the 18th century, Rome was the exemplar of power and wealth. The British appear to have aimed at creating a 19th century Roman-style empire.

A clue to the Roman’s success was their flair for blending the utilitarian with the æsthetic in creating *colossus* and *grandeur* out of humdrum military acquisitions. For in their proverbial empire building, the Romans harnessed art to politics for propaganda purposes. Likewise the British harnessed architecture to politics in their imperial expansion. They used a specific style in public buildings —a style which we could call *colonial architecture*— to proclaim imperial rule. This style became the standard bearer of British political dominance.

And as the Romans adopted and modified the Greek temple for civic functions; as they used architecture as a vehicle for proclaiming *Pax Romana*, so did the British employ the same building vocabulary to articulate *Pax Britannica*. The ethos were from classical Rome in an effort to re-create a (neo) classical British dominion.

British rule was made physically tangible by scattering classical architecture over CBD. Thus was *Pax Britannica* symbolised, manifested and actualised in Nairobi’s space. Like the August Cæsar who established his celebrated *Pax Romana* among the peoples he conquered, the British crown sought to establish ‘British peace’ among conquered...
peoples. Nairobi became an annex of the British Empire not solely in name but also in symbolic architecture. The role of these buildings is similar to a flag — the Union Jack — in asserting British claims of possession and dominion.

These monumental buildings, in Nairobi, are crystallisations of a whole social order. Colonial architecture can be seen as a dead stereotype of another culture. It is not an expression of present-day Nairobi. It is not engendered like buildings.

A nationalist, post-colonial Nairobi was to be nurtured out of colonial space; an inclusive symbol, to counter the contested and exclusive colonial space. On the very same site, a nuanced re-articulation, a re-articulation of the existing social-historical references, those that anoint ubiquity with a current sense of authenticity, continue to be forged and negotiated to this day. It is within these ongoing complexities and contradictions, that the deconstruction of collective identity is carried out; the reshaping of the iconic landscape in conformity with contemporaneous political voices.

Jomo Kenyatta (Kenya’s first indigenous president) installed himself in City Square making it his own. To City Hall and the High Court, he added an imposing obelisk-like building — the Kenyatta International Conference Centre (KICC). This building is like a tower — of independence? — or a spear planted in one’s homestead. It has dominated Nairobi’s skyline, both literally and culturally, for many years. KICC emerges as a symbol
of indigenous re-possession of CBD, a re-possession of Nairobi, a re-possession of the country.

It is as curvilinear as the classical High Court and City Hall (erected during colonial times) are rectilinear. And lacking the *post-beam-pediment* construction, it stands in stark contrast to them. KICC’s stylistic distinctiveness marks a clean break from previous government architecture. It is a bold statement declaring a major change in Nairobi’s (and Kenya’s) governance.

Fig 6: Statue of Jomo Kenyatta in Nairobi’s city square. To the right (on paper and in situ) the Kenyatta International Conference Centre (KICC)
photos: author

Fig 7: Times Tower is said to be East Africa’s tallest building (135m) with 35 floors.
Four decades after political independence, the country is now concentrating on economic independence. This is a monument to the Kenya Revenue Authority and it symbolizes the country’s ability to manage itself economically.
photo: author
Conclusion

Although the confine discussed is fairly modest – the site being only about 2.5 km² – its social political associations are significant because Nairobi’s (and Kenya’s) collective identity is anchored upon them. It has provide an opportunity to deconstruct public space into the deliberate play of visual elements employed to articulate society’s expectations in regard to place — the metaphorical moulding of ubiquity into specific place-of-belonging. In the forging of collective identity, attention has been drawn to visual experience’s centrality in the urban setting.

The architecture of civic buildings, in Nairobi’s central space, particularly their façades, plays a role in constructing collective identity because public buildings are more than merely functional; they articulate social meaning and value, they provide the spatial foundation for imagining-and-imaging notions of identity. They answer the need for a tangible expression of affiliation to space; they help create an illusion – for a community – of inalienable belonging.

Showcase buildings in Nairobi’s space engage, through their architectural vocabulary and style, various social-political histories and memories providing a forum for examining the construction, negotiation and re-negotiation of collective identity.
1. Persons, cities, and names

Do cities have souls? What, if anything, could such a question mean, and what could it mean today?

Wittgenstein asked himself what it could mean to say, about a person, that I saw her or him as a soul. Is that any different from seeing her or him just as a person? To see a human individual as a person already seems to bring along a lot of radical interpretive consequences. Such consequences concern ascriptions of properties, to be sure, but, at least as much, specific ways of treating the being in question and entertaining specific attitudes towards him or her. Now, whatever it could mean that a human individual is seen or ought to be seen as a person, it seems possible to interpret that view in the same sense, though in a ‘different language’, as in the phrase that this individual is the carrier of a ‘soul’. That she has, or is – ‘a soul’. We cannot very well explain what the latter phrase would mean, or carry as a surplus meaning, but we do have the feeling that it expresses a significant, be it metaphorical, truth.

Whether or not ascriptions of soul-likeness to human individuals are justified, there is another issue about legitimate or illegitimate extensions of the usual vocabulary on persons. If human individuals are to be seen as persons, and not just organisms with space-time continuity, are they the only kinds of beings that can be so viewed? Might not other individuals or organisms and ‘creatures’ that possess the particularity of an individual mode of being, also rightly be seen as ‘persons’, or even as souls, in that case? Leaving aside animals and other biological organisms, there are things that have proper names, just like persons in the ordinary sense, and that possess life in an extended and symbolic sense; topoi, places, churches and other monuments, artworks, or natural entities identifiable in their spatial location like mountains or rivers; places that are less obviously connected with a name even, like houses, perhaps. In particular, in our case, might not cities be called individual beings – perhaps artificial organisms – that carry something like a personal identity or a ‘soul’? Perhaps cities are even strange mixtures between cultural and natural life, developing as they do against the background of moving borders and surroundings. If this is so, the case for cities might even be made more strongly than for individualized entities that don’t change over time and don’t possess
the same degree of resemblance to organic life.

Introducing next the notion of personal identity, the question is, again, whether this move is innocuous, or rather does import special supplementary meanings. What makes a person the carrier of a form of identity throughout the changing appearances and characteristics? And if a person in the usual sense possesses a kind of identity, is it then not the case that also a place and in particular a city might be seen as carriers of an analogous kind of identity? How far does this personal or close-to-personal identity go? Does it have anything special to do with the name it carries? In a recent contribution to a volume on the philosophy of culture, I suggested an affirmative answer to the latter question. There I sketched what I think is a substantive relation between proper names and identity of such a personal or quasi-personal kind. This relation may be developed in a number of ways, two of which were privileged in that contribution: the Cassirerean and the Kripkean view of proper names, including also a way to see the link between these at first sight completely diverging theories. For this purpose I built on remarks of Peter Geach’s and Arnold Burms concerning the connection between proper names, thus conceived, and what could roughly be termed magical symbols (such as relics). Here I will focus on the consequences of such a view on the relation between names and identity (a relation I will briefly characterize but the analysis of which I will leave aside). Next, I want to show how personal identity and personal identity problems (for example lack of identity, the tension between personalities or selves within a person) are applicable in the analogy between persons and cities. That will be done through a case study of Lisbon and its affinity with the identity or identities of one of its most important poets: Fernando Pessoa — and, in his company, some of his best known fellow alter egos.

2. Essences, souls, and names

I first want to grasp intuitively what we mean when we say that someone or something is a person or has/is a soul. ‘We’, that is, a culture that does not believe in metaphysical entities with properties such as separate existence and personal immortality. Here I think it might suffice to say that we call someone a person in the strict sense when she or he is a human being, and being considered as such, i.e. as a member of our moral community, and furthermore as bearing something like a ‘life of his/her own’. The latter includes the notion of an organic development, growth and eventual decline over time, in a biological and also in a psychological and perhaps moral sense, while supposedly maintaining a certain complex kind of continuity in an organic and possibly also more than organic sense, the nature of which remains difficult to analyze, and even more difficult to agree upon. Nevertheless, the notion of an organically self-developing individual human coinciding somehow with herself (her own body and history) through some kind of continuity overarching change over time might be a minimal characterization: this
might be a neutral rendering of the notion of a ‘life of its own’, a ‘proper life’.

In a second step, I ask the reader to grant me for now that this characterization may be applied in a figurative way to things like cities, as I suggested before. Many features of the person that are spontaneously applied to a human person would have to be dropped, to be sure, such as the requirement that a person is a self, also in the sense of possessing at least some minimal capacity for self-reflection and self-feeling.

What, if anything, would, in a further step, be added by applying the notion of a soul to the idea of a person? I suggest that adding that a person in a strict or in an extended sense (a city, an artwork…) may be viewed as a soul catches the idea that, beyond leading a proper life, the being is carrying something like an essence. However, what could the reference to an essence mean today? Well, not, perhaps, the notion of a set of necessary properties (as metaphysicians from Aristotle to Kripke would have it), or universals, but rather, on the contrary, the idea of an individual essence – that there is something to this individual being A that is so much proper to it that it is seen as constitutive for its being A. The tendency to say that this is ‘seen’ as such suggests that individual essence in this sense is not a matter of objective properties, let alone descriptive properties; much more, what may be called essential is so idiosyncratic for A that it is not to be described in explicit and general terms. Furthermore, the tendency to speak in terms of ‘being seen as constitutive’ suggests that individual essence is experienced as belonging to the relation between the viewer and the viewed (what one would call a response-dependent characteristic), rather than belonging to the object in itself. This is rather a non-metaphysical notion of seeing a person in terms of souls or individual essences; and in this way also, it might be acceptable to apply this notion to cities, and to other individuals such as places, houses, and artworks.

Both aspects, resistance to description and response-dependence, suggest, moreover, major reasons why the name is so important in expressing this constitutive relation. Ineptness for description is not the same as inexpressibility. First, the relation of identity of a person (or a city, for that matter) coinciding with itself in terms of the individual essence is so much unreachable through descriptive properties and in that sense emptied of content, that only the name seems to be able to fix it and capture its ongoing individual life while at the same time respecting all the shifting features of a self. This self may even become divided among itself (as in the example discussed below). It may even be that whatever remains fixed about the soul in question, or our relation to it, results from the names being and remaining attached to it: a bit like in Leonard Cohen’s ‘love calls you by your name’. And indeed, in the second place, the proper name is able to express this ‘empty’ essence of the person or soul – on the condition that the speaker stands in a specific psychological relationship towards the name’s bearer – and the bearer’s name; for instance, in a relationship of deep attachment. Only under special conditions of non-neutrality, so to say, can the name do the office of ‘taking the place’ of the essence – evoking it, bringing it to manifestation without disclosing discursively its presumed basis.
Rather than trying to analyze this complex state of affairs or argue for it here in abstract ways, I will summarize its result via a fragment on persons and their names in a text by Roger Scruton.

Not every way of conceptualizing the world can offer reasons for action. Take love, for example. When John loves Mary, he loves her for the particular person that she is — irreplaceable. Her being Mary conditions the intentionality of his feelings, and provides him with reasons for all that he does for her. It is because she is Mary that he sends her flowers, courts her, desires her and marries her. But this idea of a ‘particular person,’ whose dominant feature is precisely that she is who she is, is not countenanced by science. A science of human behavior would do its best to rid the human world of such a description, so as to find the real cause of John’s infatuation. [Here comes a passage on how science (biology and/or human science) would see this:] He loves Mary because of her smell, or because of some other feature that she shares with Jane, Rosemary or Inez. Even if the quality that draws him to Mary is not shared by any other woman, it is still the quality, not the individual, that draws him. Science recognizes no such thing as an ‘individual essence’. [Opposed to this is the vision in terms of persons:] The descriptions under which Mary is perceived by John make essential reference to her name, and to the individuality that is captured in it. The descriptions are not false. They are non-scientific truths. But they cannot feature in the scientific world-view. Science, if given exclusive sovereignty over truth, threatens the aims of love.5

Of course, only in a non-scientific, say a manifest image of the world, does it make sense to ascribe souls to persons and cities, or rather: to talk in terms of their having or being a soul. Nobody perhaps evoked the idea of persons as well as places being charged with essence through their names in a more powerful way than Proust: in the chapters “Noms de pays: le nom” and “Noms de pays: le pays” of La Recherche, the narrator formulates his insights on the performative power of proper names as they take effect in the act of creating or recreating for him the places he evokes (mainly cities: Venice, Florence, Balbec…) as essences. These are places, by the way, the young man would never have been able to travel to in the real world (due to his ‘congenital defects’). But somehow he has captured their souls, or has been captured by them, be it in a dreamlike state (that could perhaps be called imagination involontaire?). It is possible to be more specific about the content of such utterances: they are metaphorical, but not just metaphors. To show in what way a place and more particularly a city, or a place within a city, may be essence-bound, or possessor of a soul, it is proper to ask oneself whether one would consider all places, or rather all regions in space or space-time, to be loci of a soul or an essence; briefly put, to be truly places. If the answer were affirmative, the notion of a city with a soul, being everywhere realized, would also be pretty trivialized. The question
has been posed and answered, however, with amazing poignancy by the French anthropologist Marc Augé, in his 1992 book *Non-lieux: introduction à une anthropologie de la surmodernité*. There are lots of spaces, according to Augé, that definitely lack whatever it takes to be called a place, *un lieu*. Whoever has spent time in these non-places that are overabundant in what Augé calls the ‘surmodern’ or perhaps hypermodern world, will immediately recognize what he is talking about: his main examples are supermarkets, airport spaces, hotels belonging to hotel chains, boardings for advertising, highways and their *aires*, roundabouts and cloverleaves, information and service screens, but also transit camps for passengers and refugees. They are interchangeable spaces the passing human being is not indwelling but at best entertaining a relation of consumption with. They are not crossroads of human encounters. They do not mix the novel with the ancient; the past is only present as a ‘quote’ along the highway panes, mentioning a local attraction for the tourist. There is no *genius loci* here, although one may imagine that these nonplaces could be integrated or rather displaced into contemporary artworks in the figure of a *genius nonloci*, staged for example as an estrangement from the location one suddenly finds oneself in. So, by contraposition, the notion of what is involved in being a place, an inhabitable quarter for example, becomes more palpable. There is a poem by Tomas Tranströmer called “The Name” that mixes in an unexpected way the two *topoi* we are dealing with, *topoi* and *non-topoi*, and the name: the loss of place and identity of a person disappearing in the hole of being that a non-place is, and the possibility of regaining some of one’s self and one’s place through the name, nothing but the name.

I grow sleepy during the car journey and I drive in under the trees at the side of the road. I curl up in the back seat and sleep. For how long? Hours. Dusk has fallen.

Suddenly I’m awake and don’t know where I am. Wide awake, but it doesn’t help. Where am I? WHO am I? I am something that wakens in a back seat, twists about in panic like a cat in a sack. Who?

At last my life returns. My name appears like an angel. Outside the walls a trumpet signal blows (as in the *Leonora* Overture) and the rescuing footsteps come down the overlong stairway. It is I! It is I!

But impossible to forget the fifteen-second struggle in the hell of oblivion, a few meters from the main road, where the traffic drives past with its lights on.
3. Lisboa and Pessoa

In the remainder of this contribution, and within the limits of its framework, I would like to extend the considerations about individual essences as applied to cities by making a suggestion on the identity a city acquires for its lovers (happy or unhappy). The analogy between cities and persons, indeed, may be strengthened by the fact that processes of identification with literal persons that stand in a highly symbolic relation to that city, are superimposed on identifying one’s own life with the city itself, thus contributing to the personal character that cities acquire for us. Thus the physiognomic character of the city is paralleled by and becomes more strongly embodied by the physiognomic character of the symbolically important persons and res gestae inextricably associated with it. In this case I am referring to writers and their creations, fiction, poetry. In particular, I want to focus on a city, the identity of which is, more perhaps than any other city, determined by writers, literature, and fiction: Lisbon. If the identity of Lisbon is predicated on fiction, the identity of Lisbon must itself have the character of a literary creation – a fiction. Writers may play a crucial role in creating the productive fiction of the identity – the symbolic identity – of a city. For whoever has sauntered around the Lisbon streets, squares and parks, it is more than obvious: this is the city that exists and subsists only through writing and being written about. Which is testified not only by the bookshops and antiquaries that have been meeting, babbling and drinking places ever since the creation of the City (Olisipo, obviously founded by Ulysses) if not of the world, but by all the writers’ statues as well as inscriptions in stone all around. It is obvious that this city would have been drowned long ago by the River and the Ocean, swallowed by the throat of the Estuary, were it not for the Writers and their Statues towering above the flood. Take away the anchors of their images (and text lines) in stone, and Lisbon would remain a web of merely sensuous ephemerides and figments. Lisbon is not a real city in pursuit of literature: she is a fiction materializing in her literary appearance. So it must be possible to read a city such as Lisbon through novels and poems evoking and enacting her; the more so since, conversely, some of the texts in question were written as captions and creations of an image of the city. They were destined to bring about identification – and, equally, to bring about the feeling of loss, and the impossibility to come to terms with both identity and loss. Think of Eça de Queirós’ saga Os Maias (1888) where this struggle for and loss of identity (e.g., as an old capital in old Europe, as a capital of a lost world) are both painfully and satirically exposed.

Along with this identificatory role of writers and writings, I would also have to evoke the much more complex feeling associated with multiple identities a city may display through an analogy with writing and writers of fiction and poetry and their works. Thus I want to suggest that the way Lisbon is perceived as the One and at the same time as the carrier of a divided soul, is reflected in the persona and personae of
Pessoa, Lisbon’s most important writer of the 20th century. Fernando Pessoa’s souls throw a light on Lisbon and Lisbon’s faces throw a light on Pessoa. It is not possible to penetrate Pessoa without having in person wasted quite some time in this city, and I don’t mean on the pavement of *A Brasileira*. And it is only possible to get a grasp and feeling of the Lisbon of 1900 and later while having read her writers, including Pessoa, but also Pessoa’s predecessors, among whom Eça de Queirós, Antero de Quental, Cesario Verde, and his contemporaries and successors such as António Lobo Antunes, Herberto Helder, José Saramago and many others.

My guide in this essay (that can be no more than a sketch of an attempt at beginning an inquiry) will be the great Dutch Pessoa scholar and translator August Willemsen. In a book edited by him (in Dutch) and devoted to the Lisbon of writers, there are a lot of notes on Pessoa and examples taken from his work. One of the guiding questions is whether something like a Lisbon of Pessoa may be said to exist.

Assuming that for Pessoa reality was so problematic, the question arises: which Lisbon do we recover in Fernando Pessoa? Is there some such thing as a Lisbon of Pessoa, just as there is a Prague of Kafka, a Dublin of Joyce, a Macondo of García Márquez, a Curitiba of Trevisan? And what do we mean when we use such formulas? What do we imagine when we speak of Svevo’s Trieste? Is the Rome of Fellini any different from any Roman’s Rome?

What inspires the formula is the fact that we are dealing with a city in an artwork, in and through which the artist is ‘doing’ something to the city (...). The artist picks out a certain aspect and he magnifies it to symbolic dimensions. As such Fellini’s Rome is the city of mastodontic whores and of all the things we imagine in the image of a dolce vita; Svevo’s Trieste is a collection of houses of commerce in the center of the town, infected by sickness and feverish eroticism (...) the Macondo of García Márquez, with its old-testamentic plagues of rain, love, moths and butterflies, is a fantastic magnifying glass above a real continent.

There exists an extensive literature on the import of and relations between Pessoa and his main heteronyms (*Alberto Caeiro*, *Ricardo Reis* and *Alvaro de Campos*). The same holds for Pessoa’s heteronymous branchings as they relate to each other. They are writing prefaces, comments and reviews on each others’ works, sometimes devastating ones, while at the same time *Reis* and *de Campos* refer to *Caeiro* as their ‘Master’ (who appeared in 1914 and deceased in 1915…). Moreover, there is the orthonymous poet *Fernando Pessoa*, designated by Pessoa as ‘Pessoa-himself’, who does not coincide with the person Fernando Pessoa but embodies characteristics of Pessoa that are not branched off from him in the way that is characteristic for the main heteronyms. He seems to be Pessoa’s most intellectual and analytic poetic *persona*; the one who seems to bear close resemblance to the manifest personality of the real Pessoa, if one
may say so. That is not all, however. Some seventy-five small pseudonyms of Pessoa’s have surfaced up to now, most of whom occur sporadically, for instance as reviewers, but also as authors of very early poems of Pessoa’s. And foremost, there is also the important semi-heteronym *Bernardo Soares*, – ‘semi’ because he is ‘almost like’ Pessoa, or rather, to quote *Pessoa-himself*: “because his personality, without being mine, also does not differ from mine” – who played an ever growing role in Pessoa’s literary life, and who writes only prose.

A heteronym is not a pseudonym: a pseudonym is another name for one’s own ego, a heteronym is another ego’s own name. This other ego has been branched off from the proper ego and has gone off living a literary-biographical life of his own out there. This doesn’t imply, as has already been said, that the orthonymous writer should coincide with the personality of the writer (whoever or whatever that may be). A semi-heteronym, finally, coincides in part with the personality of the writer (or possibly of the orthonymous author) – but only in part. I don’t want to pronounce on the psycho-biographical complexities that, in Pessoa’s case, must have played a preponderant role as a background for the play of heteronyms.

All these relations and their dramatization have been well studied by now, among others by August Willemsen in his postfaced translations. He also commented on the mystifications Pessoa has woven around his *personae*. Thus, there is the myth of the first apparition of *Caeiro* manifesting himself to Pessoa on a precisely dated night, March 8, 1914. In the course of this epiphany *Caeiro* would have revealed and dictated to Pessoa some thirty poems one after another, out of the blue. Or so the story has been handed down.

Most interesting of all, Willemsen has asked himself in “*De voorbijganger aan zichzelf*” how the several faces and branchings of Pessoa relate to their city. It appears we are confronted with an equally laborious and tense affair as the one(s) Pessoa has with himself, with life, with his life – or lives. We could try to carry the study one step further and inquire what, if anything, the different names of Pessoa’s reveal about the soul or souls of the city – or at least of Lisbon as his city. A few remarks on a few exemplary places and faces should suffice here as a sample of what the heteronyms and semi-heteronyms disclose on the city and its parts. And on its counterparts: *Caeiro*, for instance, is a “guardador de rebanhos”, a “keeper of herds”, and so belongs to the anti-city – the landscape behind, the *Hinterland*. *Caeiro* is the somewhat simple-minded bucolic who refuses all ‘metaphysics’ and sees only what there is to see. He is in several respects the anti-Pessoa. By coincidence he also finds it appropriate to utter a disavowal of the city that belongs to his counterpart Pessoa. The only reason to do this seems to be that the city belongs to ‘that guy’; the more so, it is foreign to his own home place. Thus he compares the mighty Tagus to the river, unnamed, that flows through his home village. And it is the nameless one who wins:

The Tagus is more beautiful than the river which flows through my village,
But the Tagus is not more beautiful than the river which flows through my village
Because the Tagus is not the river which flows through my village.

... The Tagus comes down from Spain
And the Tagus flows into the sea off Portugal
Everyone knows that.
But few know about my village river
Or whence it goes
Or whence it comes.
And so, because it belongs to fewer people,
My village river is freer and greater.¹²

This is the poem the first lines of which are painted on the city boards of the Tagus
at the Cais do Sodré:

O Tejo é mais belo que o rio que corre pela minha aldeia,
Mas o Tejo não é mais belo que o rio que corre pelo minha aldeia
Porque o Tejo não é o rio que corre pela minha aldeia.

However, just as the anti-intellectual anti-Pessoa is part of Pessoa, this nameless
village, let us call it Anti-Lisbon, is part of Lisbon. Indeed, in another poem that echoes
this one and that surprisingly enough is published not by Caeiro but by Pessoa-himself,
we read:

O church bell of my village
Each of your plaintive tolls
Filling the calm evening
Rings inside my soul

Part or counterpart? In a letter to Gaspar Simões, Pessoa later wrote: ‘The church bell of my village is the one of the Martyrs’ Church at the Chiado. My home village was the Largo de São Carlos”.

The imaginary countryside where so-called Alberto Caeiro is supposed to be born and where he definitely belongs, is nothing else than the city in the guise of its antipode – is nothing else than Lisbon in and through the denial of Lisbon. Why is this so? Probably, to find out, we need another detour through the Lisbon of other heteronyms. Álvaro de Campos begins his career as an unbounded modernist, even futurist, before turning into a more or less extraverted version of the self-tormenting and tormented Pessoa. As a city poet he started out singing the metropole:

Hé-la the streets, Hé-la the squares, Hé-la-ho la foule!
All the passersby stopping at the display-windows!
Businessmen, vagrants, exaggeratedly well-dressed crooks;
Evident members of aristocratic clubs;
Squalid dubious figures; paterfamilias, vaguely happy
And paternal down to the gold chain crossing their vests
From pocket to pocket!
Everything going by, everything going by and never going by!

*The Triumphal Ode*[^1] 13

Does not such exuberance mask the maximum of estrangement? In the *Ode Triunfal*, the image of the city is ‘sensationist’, but in fact ratiocinative (or would-be ratiocinative), in line with futuristic connotations, and appealing to the metropolis side of Lisbon as just one of the many embodiments of the idea of the anonymous modern city.[^14] But then, the other, metaphysical de Campos comes in with two poems, both entitled (originally in English!) *Lisbon Revisited* (1923 and 1926). They reveal more about the nature of this estrangement while putting it in a more personalized setting. Here are two fragments:

O blue sky – the same one I knew as a child –
Perfect and empty eternal truth!
O gentle, silent, ancestral Tagus,
Tiny truth in which the sky is mirrored!
O sorrow revisited, Lisbon of bygone days today!
You give me nothing, you take nothing from me, you’re nothing I feel is me.

(1923)
Once more I see you,
City of my horrifyingly lost childhood…
Happy and sad city, once more I dream here…
I? Is it one and the same I who lived here, and came back,
And came back again, and again,
And yet again have come back?
Or are we—all the I’s that I was here or that were here—
A series of bead-beings joined together by a string of memory,
A series of dreams about me dreamed by someone outside me?

Once more I see you,
With a heart that’s more distant, a soul that’s less mine.
Once more I see you—Lisbon, the Tagus and the rest—
A useless onlooker of you and of myself,
A foreigner here like everywhere else,
Incidental in life as in my soul

(1926)

Here it becomes clear why the image of Pessoa’s Lisbon is so distorted, and disso-
ciated; much as the image of Lisbon’s Pessoa is. The Lisbon that is so bitterly associ-
ated with homelessness, perhaps even with nonplacedness, is the “second Lisbon” –
as Willemsen calls it. When Pessoa was five, his father died, then also his younger
brother. His mother remarried and at the age of seven, the family emigrated to Durban,
where Pessoa was in school, and started writing – under pseudonyms, in English. Aged
seventeen, he came back from South Africa, alone, to become a student, then a small
employee and also writer. Never did he leave Lisbon anymore, where he lived at fifteen
places in fifteen years and then stayed at one place for another fifteen years, until his
death in 1935. Relevant or irrelevant as a psychobiography may appear, it remains de-
cisive that Pessoa’s texts heavily suggest a “first Lisbon” as the Lisbon of childhood
that once was lost and remained forever lost. As an adolescent he found back Lisbon,
but it wasn’t the same Lisbon as the dreamed one, whether or not remembered. The
“second Lisbon” of the adult could never aspire to bring the first Lisbon back, while
at the same time it always recalled it. Were the memories within reach? The so-called
village of Alberto Caeiro ‘really’ is the first Lisbon (at the Largo de São Carlos), seen
through the eyes of the flâneur of the second Lisbon. That’s why it has to remain name-
less, as so many places that are presumed present in the verses remain nameless. “What
Pessoa could have mentioned as concrete Lisbon details – the places of his childhood
in the heart of town – he does replace by the imaginary village. He does not describe,
he mythologizes. And what he mythologizes in the first Lisbon, is not the city, but his
childhood, that (...) becomes The Childhood, just as the Tagus becomes The River,
the quay becomes The Quay, and the sea The Sea.’ 15 Once this is seen, it becomes almost obvious why Pessoa’s work, in so far as it refers to this theme and these places and times, may be experienced, in all its coldness and sharpness, as fascinating by persons possessed with a certain attraction for times and places bygone. Lisbon is mentioned as a heavily charged place-name, places within that Place are left in the dark – since they are associated with the encompassing loss of meaning. The soul of Lisbon is the reminiscence of a lost Lisbon, the Lisbon of a Past that is imagined and that can never be recovered. This is the imaginary Lisbon that is being created and recreated in the work of writers. The paradox of the distant onlooker is about recognizing his inability to participate in the game, while the children that he watches playing before his eyes are figments of his own imagined memory. Lisbon, the place, the memory, is the moving target in Pessoa’s verses as they enact him dancing around his void. It remains a task for further understanding and interpretation how the escape into a system of heteronyms could have been one way to come terms with this predicament. Maybe the passage from name to name and from character to character parallels the query for a lost lieu among the procession of non-lieux.

Did Pessoa and Pessoa’s Lisbon forever remain in this predicament of impossibility to find their place and rest their soul, while the poet was at the same time incapable of leaving the enclosed space that once was or might have been his place? The case is different for the late semi-heteronym Bernardo Soares. Contrasting to de Campos, here we find the rather opposed ‘homely’ view of the fragmented chronicle in prose The Book of Disquiet [O Livro do Desassossego]. This happens to be the one name, ironically, that brings some peace in the disquiet, that is, acceptance of a life, symbolized by the city and the quarter of Lisbon Pessoa inhabits. This is the dominant feeling, even if estrangement and paradox can never be removed even from that view: Bernardo Soares is the Lisbon flâneur, the one writer inventing Pessoa’s Lisbon as a home. The loss of meaning is compensated in regained identification of and with specific places, houses, streets. They are recovered in the specific names they acquire, or reacquire, all circling around the Rua dos Douradores, and Soares’ Boss at the office, Senhor Vasques. Maybe this imagined ordinary place, somehow appropriated by its occupant, is a ‘third Lisbon’, where some kind of re-identification or covering of the second Lisbon with fragments of the first has finally been found.

‘Here, finally, comes a Lisbon that seems to be real. And the marvelous descriptions testify to the extent of the love of Pessoa/Soares: ‘Oh Lisbon, my home!’ In Pessoa’s total œuvre perhaps only The Book of Disquiet contains passages that allow of the predicate ‘moving’. But while Alberto Caeiro is writing ‘his prose in verse’, Bernardo Soares is writing his poetry in prose: whether he likes it or not, he is a poet, and real as his Lisbon may appear, under his pen, what is concrete becomes unreal, and what is unreal – a symbol. And this way the everyday magic and lived reality of the Rua dos Douradores (the street which ‘also contains a place for the Universe’), the street
of Soares’ accountancy office and home, is transfigured into a metaphor of human existence”.16

Ah, now I understand! Senhor Vasques is Life; Life, monotonous and necessary, commanding and unknowable. This banal man represents the banality of Life. On the surface he is everything to me, just as, on the surface, Life is everything to me. And while the office in the Rua dos Douradores represents Life to me, the second floor room I live in on that selfsame street represents Art for me. Yes, Art, residing at the same street as Life, but in a different place; Art, which offers relief from life without offering relief from living; Art, which is as monotonous as the selfsame life, but just takes place in a different room. Yes, for me that Rua dos Douradores wholly contains the sense of things, the solution for all enigmas, except for the very existence of enigmas, which is the one enigma that can have no solution.17

_The Book of Disquiet_, fragment of March 1930.

**Notes**


4 The list is not exhaustive, of course. One could include among the places or place-and-time bound entities countries, regions, and among history-bound entities languages and folks, perhaps, mutually mixed as they may be in real time and real life.


7 Recall Maurice Halbwachs’ notion of “le permanent” in that other book that is highly relevant for the study of places and moments, _La mémoire collective_ (1950): it is defined as the presence of the past in the present.


9 August Willemsen (ed.), _O Lissabon, mijn thuis_. [= _O Lisbon, my home_]. Bas Lubberhuizen, (Stedenreeks [City series]), Amsterdam, 2003). Apart from Pessoa, the writers treated are Camões, Cesário Verde, de Queirós, Mário de Sá-Carneiro, José de Almada Negreiros, Antonio Tabucchi, Cardoso Pires, Saramago, Lobo Antunes, as well as the Lisbon dwellers or addicts J. Slauerhoff, William Beckford, Robert Southey and Lord Byron, and F.C. Terborgh.


11 Such as, for example, _Fernando Pessoa – Gedichten_. De Arbeiderspers. Amsterdam – Antwerpen, 1978 (2009); and _Alberto Caeiro [Fernando Pessoa] – De hoeder van kudden_. De Arbeiderspers. Amsterdam


13 Transl. R. Zenith.

14 Think, of course, of Simmel’s “Die Großstädte und das Geistesleben” (“The Metropolis and Mental Life”) (1903).

15 Willemsen, a.c., p.191 (my translation).

16 A. Willemsen, a.c., p. 199-200 (my translation).

III - Urban Landscape and Nature
Let us begin by stating some conceptual distinctions. First of all, we used to apply the opposition of the concepts of nature versus culture. At present we are more aware of a certain naivety laying at the fundamentals of such conceptual polarization. What does ‘nature’ mean, and what does it mean when contrasted to ‘culture’? In this relationship it most probably means ‘nature as nature’: wild, innocent, untouched and undisturbed by men. This gives birth to the conclusion that the opposition nature-culture is grounded on the another conceptual opposition: nonhuman as opposed to human.

But how can we know and characterize ‘nature as nature’ in its untouched and undisturbed state, since none of us have ever experienced it? The ‘nature as nature’ is a rather retrospective concept. Within human experience we have always had access to ‘nature as culture’, to the nature which has been practically, theoretically, artistically etc. artifactualized.

Our environment, the one that surrounds us and within which we exist is filled with human products that are partly natural and partly artefactual. There are some products in which the material of nature has been transformed only to a little extent, and there are others in which the way they are produced comes to the foreground while the highly transformed natural material that constitutes their foundation loses the importance of its origin. Since the proportion of nature within artifacts has a gradual character, and with the development of civilization its content rather decreases, it becomes obvious that the idea of the pure nature, nature as nature, was created as a sign of our nostalgia and yearning for something primary and innocent. Nature as nature is a construct of human beings that should not be understood literally. It rather represents a myth of Nature, where nature is idealized to an irrationally high extent, an extent not fit for a primary state placed in some remote past time. We feel the urge for such a concept of nature, because it satisfies our vital need: the longing for something primal and intact.

The nature as nature does not exist and has never existed. The concept of nature as nature is fully a product originating in culture. It assumes the existence of culture and intuitively seeks to contrast it, creating a hypothetical opposite. Such thinking, based on constructing polarized oppositions, is not very accurate. Polar oppositions are not a starting point, as we may believe, but artificial constructs of our mind expressing the
longing for something theoretically lost, but practically never experienced.1

Our contemporary understanding of natural landscape is formed according to this idea of nature as nature. Eagerly accepting the illusion, we are ready to ignore all traces of human activity that are present in the so called natural landscape.

According to dictionary entries a landscape is an expanse of scenery that can be seen in a single view, or an extensive area of land regarded as being visually distinct. Thus, a landscape is to be witnessed with our eyes. It should be admired for its beauty by looking at it from a distance. The concept of landscape has highly positive valorization. This is why we applied it to the urban or even industrial areas. Obviously, we like to watch a city from afar, from a distant hill or the highest floor of a skyscraper.

At this moment I would like to present the Chinese contemporary artist, Weng Fen (Weng Peijun). His work encompasses video-art, installation, and large-scale photography. His pictures were exhibited in Poland in 2009 under the title “Fataurbana”. The exhibition is divided into two clear parts. The first one shows photos documenting rapid urban development in China, that is pushing out natural landscape, leading to irreversible changes. Chinese teenagers, mostly girls, bear witness to this process. In the photographs we usually see them from behind, as they observe the changing landscape. The second part of the exhibition shows pictures from the author’s visit to England, and depict the Lake District - scenery of lovely mountain and lake views. These photographs constitute the antithesis of urban landscape. The author himself claims that staying within natural surroundings is a vital aspect of human life. He says that the moment comes when we feel a strong urge to leave the city and indulge in natural scenery. He is able to find such scenery in a civilized European country, and claims that slow European urbanization did not destroy the element of the natural, unlike China, whose hastily modernization lacks awareness of protection and cultivation of natural landscape. Perhaps this is what the teenagers from the photos are thinking about as they watch. We cannot be sure, as their facial expressions are concealed.

Weng Fen’s work, founded on the opposition of untouched nature and a nature-free
city, accompanied by nostalgia for the prior, well exemplifies everything that I have said so far, and that was to serve as introduction.

Let me now go over to the second part of my presentation, in which I would like to substitute the term landscape with the concept of environment. As has been said, the landscape is meant for the eyes, for looking from afar, but the environment is not for observing, and it does not constitute a view. We are submerged in the surrounding environment, and in a sense we are part of it. To grasp our connection with the environment it is best to substitute the metaphor of eye, the metaphor of sight, with the metaphor of touch, of direct contact. We remain embraced with our environment.

While looking from a distance, we may omit some unpleasant or even unsavory details, but being submerged into an environment we have no choice but to interact with everything that is part of it and thus, do to closeness and direct contact, impossible to ignore.

In what way is nature present in the city, not in the sense of urban landscape, but as an environment? The city is an artefactual environment. It is itself a huge artifact, a creation of men. The artifacts that fill urban space were created from materials derived from nature, even though the degree of natural elements, and even more our awareness of their presence may vary for various artifacts. When, for example, we come into contact with a wooden table, we immediately associate the wood with a tree, and even recognize the kind of the tree used, saying: this is an oak-wood, or this is a pinewood table. But when associate with a glass table, we rather do not think about sand, although it is the raw material for glass. City parks exist in our awareness as objects of nature, although they have been mastered by people and adjusted to fulfill both practical and recreational functions.

We may now introduce the following gradation of human products, according to their...
origin: the natural, the artefactual, the artificial. The instructive illustration for this gradation may be a Christmas tree. As long as a fir or spruce grows within an area intended for them they appear to us as fully natural. After they have been cut down, taken to our home and decorated, they become artefactual, but still retain their natural element, since we can differentiate them from the plastic imitations that seem totally artificial to us (sometimes a testimony of eyes is not sufficient, we then touch or smell).

Speaking of nature in the urban environment I will pay extra attention to the artefacts that still appear to us as “live nature”. I will try to investigate the problem on the biological, zoological and anthropological level, presenting some examples:

The plants:

Only as a reminder let me address French gardens, with their strongly geometrical structure based on ratio, so contrary to the ‘nature’ of the plants themselves.

For they were court gardens, and not urban gardens. A urban public garden is exemplified most directly by a park, which also features a rational ordering of lanes and planned positioning of plants.
Increasing overcrowding of modern cities and limitations of free space often call upon new solutions, for example vertical, or hanging gardens.
As far as private space is concerned, house-gardens in cities have a tendency to reduce in number throughout recent years. Instead, our flats and balconies are filled with pot plants and bouquets of cut flowers. They are artefactual to some degree, which does not stop us from considering them elements of ‘nature’. They are often grafted plants for decorative purposes

(cactus), and sometimes their cultivation takes on drastic forms.

Trimming defines the growth and final shape of a bonsai. Through trimming we give the tree its characteristic look in accordance with bonsai style rules. Right next to the cut shoot, a new one grows, increasing the density of foliage. The cutting is done with scissors, but tearing off with fingers is also advised, as scissors tend to cause dryness of the cut shoots. To stop the tree from growing upwards a wire is used to force branches to grow horizontally. The wire should be stainless steel, and one should never
allow the wire to grow into the tree.) Vegetable plants are grown in cities almost exclusively as food, available for stores or your home fridge. Sometimes herbs are grown as pot plants on the window-ledge or on the balcony.

Generally speaking attitudes towards plants in the city are highly positive and friendly, even full of gratefulness for the beauty and the oxygen they deliver, even more since in the city they do not need weeding.

The animals:

In the city environment we have to do with: zoological gardens; city rats, cockroaches; pets – cats and dogs (on artificial food, groomed in pet beauty salons, dressed up, adorned with bows or medals, trained and spoiled), birds, aquarium fish, guinea pigs, mice, sometimes exotic reptiles and amphibians.

(The beauty standards for various breeds require for example the Schnauzer to have his ears and tail cut, most of his body closely shaved except for the head, that should retain long hair, including a fringe dropping over the animal’s eyes.)

Human beings:

Human beings are also “made” from the material of nature. Human bodies also take part in the lasting process of artefactualization and also in their case this process is accelerating significantly thanks to new methods of making the body more fit and/or beautiful (plastic surgery, liposuction, sculpturing the body in fitness clubs, excessively high heels, tattoos, piercing etc).
Conclusion

We remain in the state of longing - adopting a romantic, sentimental and nostalgic stance - after ‘nature as nature’, confident that it is given to us in the form of natural landscape. We praise the city by talking of urban landscape or city panorama. This is why we do not pay sufficient attention to ‘nature as culture’, so artefactual nature, shaped by man according to his needs and expectations. Within the urban environment it is this kind of nature that we come in contact with most.

Presented examples seem to show clearly that the need for a more reflexive attitude towards nature in an urban environment is underestimated. This situation may be improved, and a lot has been done to do so, e.g. by so called ecological sensitivity.

In his considerations regarding the relation between city and nature Gernot Böhme indicates an initial opposition, where the city is understood as a negation of nature and nature is situated outside the city. The gradual introduction of nature into the city has not overcome the distance, since the attitude towards nature as something external has
turned into a superficial relation. This term is used in its pejorative meaning – and although in the modern history of urban development the relation to nature underwent transformations, Bӧhme eventually reduces all its forms – even the famous idea of a garden city by Ebenezer Howard, which has become a model of modern urban design – to a superficial relation.

There were attempts at realizing the concept of a garden city in the early 20th century, also in Poland.

Il. 28. Satellite city – Jeziorna, Poland

Bӧhme hopes that the attitude towards nature in the city will become an internal relation, which he illustrates with an example of an ecological image of a “city as nature”. It is the ecological vision of a city, which contains nature and is nature at the same time. Nevertheless the author himself admits that his considerations are rather abstract. Indeed, his ecological project of the city as having and being nature is very close to Howard’s ideas and it is hard to understand how a “city as nature” were to build a desirable sort of internal relations.

In my opinion total visions of the city as a garden are inevitably utopian. Perhaps it is better to turn our attention to artefactual objects of nature present in the urban environment, that demand more sensibility from the human observer.

Note

The aim of this paper is to explore the idea which held sway from the Renaissance onwards according to which two aesthetic aspects closely linked to the process of developing the sense of urban scenery existed.

The first aspect is related to the psychological characterization of architecture, used primarily as a tool for defining the level of urban cultivation, presented as a scenic quality.

The second aspect is based on the idea of existence of a process by which the sense of a cultivated urban environment is extended to landscape and natural sites in general. This process has transformed the perception of the natural environment according to the principles of psychological characterization used to define an urban environmental quality.

Before we start with our exploration, it is important to emphasize the notion of the term character. In our analysis we will use a notion of the term defined by Ackerman as a structuring force quite distinct from that of form – one that induces the observer to focus upon the elements of design through ideas and memories. Using Whately’s observation from 1770, Ackerman is close to reaching the essential meaning of the term as used at the end of a long development of new ideas in art and architecture from Renaissance up to the end of the eighteenth century. By showing that character and association are inseparable and that the former stimulates the latter in the individual consciousness, Ackerman is giving us a tool for understanding processes and ideas of importance for our topic.1

With reference to the first aspect, we should emphasize that the imagined scenic quality of a city, although generally related to the practice of stage scenery, cannot be equated with it. In this context, the art of the city is dealing more with the cultivated atmosphere than with the narration, which is essential form of expression in theatrical play.2 The basic line of thinking defining the scenic quality of an urban structure is actually involved in a broader development of the social and cultural ideas that were developed from mediaeval times onwards. These ideas concern a vision of the city scenery in which many cultural attributes of the citizens are evident, such as beautified upbringing, good taste, learned conversations, being well read, purity of language, precise thinking, noble deeds, and righteousness. These attributes, emphasized in the eighteenth
century as the essence of urbanity, are also the fundamental qualities of cultivated men. Theatricality as a fundamental concept in renaissance city has been already emphasized by Tafuri. However, theatricality as a social quality gives us a window onto how architectural and urban structure can be perceived and experienced. In this context a close link between the social character of the citizens and the perceptual quality of architecture is evident. Thus, the scenic quality which can be recognized as an aesthetic aspect of a city, provides insight into the creative process modeling the human character by cultural and social environment. Furthermore, it can show how this process is reflected in architectural features. However, a few examples of stage scenery created by architects during the Renaissance and in later centuries help us to elucidate this process.

In Alberti’s writings, aside from the rationally defined concept of creative process, and aspects of aesthetic experience and evaluation based on the Vitruvian tradition, one can also see the presence of another approach to these important issues. This approach is based on the precept according to which aesthetic experience also belongs to the metaphorically interpreted scenic values of architecture and urban visions. In this sense, through a few of his theatrical plays, Alberti established a scene for a philosophic interpretation of human, social and divine virtues and their metaphoric appearance. Thus, he developed an idealistic interpretation of a society based on a vision of the city in which the philosophy of Polis, the personification of the Virtue and divine Harmony are in a proportional link, building a structure which plays an integral part in the cultivation of men. This concept was transported into architectural and urban visions in which the ethic and aesthetic forms of a philosophic interpretation of human characters were emphasized.

A similar idea exists also in the work of Filarete, particularly in the fourth chapter of his treatise, in which we can find the bond between the perfect geometric harmony of the city and the perfectly modeled character of its citizens. The idea of the ideal city was now emphasized by the *civil pride and human dignity*. Again, the city is a scene, not only for a positive development of social and cultural relationships between the citizens, but also for transformation of architecture from a solely material structure into the metaphor of positive human character, thereby becoming model for cultivated society.

It would seem that examples of stage scenery presented in Serlio’s treatise, are the most important for exploration of our topic. His urban scenes for comedy and tragedy are based on the idea that different architectural expressions can create an urban form expressing metaphorical meanings. For Serlio, a meaningful scene is in fact a complex urban vision, defining and expressing different human psychological characters.

According to his comments regarding the rules establishing stage set, one notes a principle by which the character of architecture is closely linked to the psychological features of figures in the play. However, through embedding the architecture into the character of the play, Serlio was essentially establishing the feature of the presented
city, or its particular parts. This approach develops the psychological totality of the imagined event presented in the play. The comic scene has been imagined as a collection of buildings belonging to the citizens of a lower social class that is the merchants, lawyers, parasites and other similar characters. Above all there should be a bawd's house and an Inn. A temple is absolutely essential. The use of low rank characters in the play, providing the opportunity for the critique of the questionable moral, hypocrisy, intrigue and other vices, has been supplemented by architectural and urban vision giving the feeling of dilapidation and claustrophobia. It reflected in the psychological features of the figures. The view is closed, and the difference in the height of the buildings and the character of the urban vision proves the feeling of social discrepancy in many ways. Mediaeval architectural elements intensify the feeling of long-lasting characters of moral decay. (Fig.1)

In contrast to the urban vision in the comedy stage scene, architecture used for structuring the tragic stage scene reflects the character of citizens of high social rank. Explaining his choice of architecture Serlio emphasizes that it should belong to those of characters of high rank, because disastrous love affairs, unforeseen events and violent and gruesome deaths (as far as one reads in ancient tragedies, not to mention modern ones) always occur in the houses of noblemen, Dukes, great Princes or even Kings. In this context, Serlio proposes architecture based on Renaissance and Mannerist elements, with a ruined building from antiquity and triumphal arch as a backdrop, opening the view onto an obelisk, pyramid and the distant horizon. It seems that use of antique architecture, which Serlio fitted into a modern architectural context, has its particular purpose. It allows the stage to be used for both ancient and modern plays. In that way, Serlio directly links architectural types with the characters and the narrative essence of the play. (Fig.2)

There is a particular issue arising from this analysis of the architecture of Serlio’s
stage scenery and its psychological features. One might indicate the possibility of using such a creative process in designing real buildings and urban structures in the Renaissance cities and in later periods. It seems that Serlio’s characterization of architecture and urban scenery find its reflection in the real building practices of that time. Maybe the answer to this question can be found indirectly, and in that sense one of the architectural visions of Baldassarre Lanci can help. The architect established the scenery using the real buildings of Florence, but structuralizing a different urban view. This example indicates that Lanci, like Serlio, recognized psychological characters in particular architectural types, but these were now based on real historical buildings which he used in structuralizing ideal urban scenery. In this sense, it should be remembered that Renaissance architects believed there was no differentiation between the imagined buildings of stage scenery and the real ones, at least not as a tool for expressing particular social and cultural issues of that time (Fig.3)

Of course, in comparing the perception of a real urban structure and idealistic stage scenery, one should be aware of the fundamental difference between them, for experiencing a real urban structure is a process in time. It is based on collecting a number of impressions over a period of time, and their mental recollection forming an experienced whole. It appears that this process influenced Palladio’s opinions relating to the aesthetic perception and evaluation of city.9 However, Palladio was developing an idea according to which the aesthetic evaluation of an urban whole could be based on the perception of one or a few of its parts. His idea was if a visitor to a city would see the beautiful façades in the main street, he would imagine the whole urban structure designed that way (even if the smaller streets were not adequately designed).

Moreover, according to Palladio, the aesthetic evaluation of a city is equated with the viewer’s cultural level, which comes into play when the contact with the city as a highly cultivated environment is achieved. The aesthetic evaluation of the city is based on the viewer’s mental recollection of a number of experienced buildings erected in a particular manner, which in the mind of the observer, integrates into a whole. Interestingly, the town of Vicenza where Palladio built main of his urban palaces and other buildings, can be experienced in such a way.

The most striking example proving Palladio’s ideas regarding the experience of aesthetic cultivation of a city can be found in his stage scenery in the Teatro Olimpico.
The architecture of stage scenery has the same height and is designed according to a unified stylistic expression. Stage scenery is filled with a coherent urban vision providing the feeling that the architect had joined together all important city places, thereby providing the opportunity for one single view of the urban whole. In this way, Palladio’s stage scenery becomes a memory of a real aesthetic urban experience. (Fig. 4)

Let us now briefly consider the first aspect within our topic, the characterization of architecture. We should mention two more architects of the seventeenth century, with a view to further development of presented ideas. The stage scenery and other urban visions of Innigo Jones and Joseph Furttenbach provide a useful illustration how the idea of Italian Renaissance architects continued in the seventeenth century.

Furttenbach was strongly influenced by the Italian Renaissance and Mannerist architecture. His architectural illustrations continue to present ideal visions of stage and urban scenery. The prints from his book *Architectura Civilis* visualize urban scenery with architecture which does not reveal any social or cultural discrepancies between the inhabitants. The vision is more than just architectural, and it refers to the ideal of perfect harmony between urban character and the cultural level of the citizens. Even his stage scenery reflects a longing for this kind of ideal urban vision. Probably, Furttenbach was obsessed with the idea of presenting to the Germans the cultural ideal of the Italian Renaissance, which incorporated not only a particular architectural expression but also the ideal of urban structure as a cultivated harmonic whole. (Fig. 5)

However, Furttenbach’s vision lacks a reflection on human characters developed in the
ideal of Italian architects, which one can find in Innigo Jones’s stage scenery for the masque *Albion’s Triumph*. In the drawing which shows an impressive architectural view, the character of sublime triumph was expressed, corresponding to the nobility of the main character in the play and to the grandeur of his deeds. (Fig. 6)

The second aspect of our topic is related to the possible influence which the cultivated urban environment had on landscape and nature. In that sense, we can use Paetzold’s statement that *landscape and cityscape have to be conceptualized not as pure givens, in the sense of natural phenomena, but rather as cultural phenomena*. In that context *landscape is constituted by a culturally shaped subjectivity.* According to Paetzold, in this field one will encounter at least two main approaches to the appreciation of environment: the cultural landscape and the natural environment.

At the beginning of our brief examination of these aspects, we must analyze the third example of stage scenery presented in the Serlio’s book, which discusses a satiric play. In his text, Serlio explains that the setting of dilapidated rustic houses in a wild forest allows us to see mainly criminal characters *that live dissolute and devil-may-care lives*. (Fig. 7) This explanation refers to opinion prevalent in medieval times onwards that environment outside the city walls was hostile and dangerous. It shows the difference between the cultivated urban environment and the uncultivated outside world. However, this opinion does not refer to nature per se. In the second part of his text, Serlio discusses the scenic presentation of pure nature which is highly appreciated. As the work of God, pure nature reflects the absolute beauty which can be metaphorically equated with the spiritual lifting of intellectually cultivated men, as shown at the end of Castiglione’s book of the *Courtier*.13

Thus, negative reflection on the en-
vironment outside the city refers to what one might call cultural environment or cultural landscape. As the place where people’s good or criminal behavior is manifested, landscape could be appreciated in different ways, as beautiful or hostile. Similar opinion can be found in one of the chapters of Furtenbach’s treatise, where a description of a country villa is given. Furtenbach appreciates the cultivated life in the country, but at the same time recommends a stronger control over the entrance into a villa. His comment that in the Italy of his time, criminal activity was an everyday event shows the actual reasons for developing hostile feeling regarding country, which overcomes the appreciation of nature’s beauty.14

Important for our topic, is the comment by Charles Burroudh that the symbolic landscape of late medieval Italy was structured largely through the interrelationships on a regional scale of major centers of economic and ritual activity and social intercourse and the highways and waterways that connected them, is introducing a process whereby such a cultural landscape and urban space can be thought as essentially linked.15 It refers to an idea that urban space reflected regional space, and vice versa. The concept is actually based on the premise that the cultural character of the region or an urban structure can be recognized by the layout of particular monuments and places of historical significance. Here, we should address Adorno’s statement that the cultural landscape can be considered beautiful through historical works related to a particular geographical setting. Moreover, he emphasized that the beauty of a cultural landscape resides in historical remembrance.16

Even in our time the continuous urban structures, or rather, the essence of cultivated urbanity, is equated with the presence of monuments. Recognition of the cultivated urbanity or landscape is connected with the observer’s historical culture and life within the built-up landscape, as Aldo Rossi has emphasized.17 In that sense, the cultural identification of a region or a city becomes a tool of aesthetic appreciation in the process of the cultivation of the human environment. This kind of aesthetic appreciation and evaluation takes into account the same perceptual aspects as analyzed in Palladio’s ideas. The number of monuments arranged in a cultural landscape has the same value as the number of buildings in a city, becoming a mental collection of valuable impressions in the space.

It seems that this idea guided the practice according to which the first regional and city maps where drawn up. They present the arrangement of monuments around a region or in a city. (Fig.8) Furthermore, these were first guides for a number of European intel-

![Fig.8 A map with local monuments](image-url)
lectuals, who visited important monuments and sites. In a few maps of the city of Rome monuments erected in a modern manner are differentiated from those of antiquity. (Figs. 9, 10) In this way the aesthetic appreciation of architecture develops a structural complexity but this would be the topic for another discussion. However, it seems that the interest for research into the cultural matrix of historical monuments of a region, transforms the perception of the uncultivated, dangerous environment into a socially acceptable place of cultivated memory.

However, the process of developing a cultivated landscape seems to have its scenic counterparts as well. Going back to the Furttenbach’s proposal for a grand villa, we can see how the idea of cultivating the environment has been increased gradually. In the huge fortified section behind the villa, three different parts can be distinguished. The first section concerns the beauty of pure nature, a massive zoo simulating a view of wild nature with forest and river. The second section refers to a cultivated rustic landscape, containing a small country villa, a cottage on the hill with the forest behind, and a build artificial cave full of mythological figures, providing a feeling of primordial beauty. Finally, there is a cultivated park, which is picture of urban regularity and art objects. Altogether, the sections are presented as a harmonious whole, since they comprise a large stage, as the scenery for the final play of cultivating the human environment. The highest values of each of the three kinds of environment has been chosen and depicted under the umbrella of aesthetic vision of a harmonious world. (Fig. 11)

However, the idea of harmonizing the
wildness and the elevated human spirit seems to find its foremost expression in the vision of an artificial cave. As in Furttenbach’s example, in the stage scenery for the masque *Oberon, the Fairy Prince*, Inigo Jones presents Oberon’s palace as a dreamland castle in the cave and rocks. This vision refers to the feeling that the primordial world, as the spring of every life, belongs also in its mystical way to the lifted spirits. Belonging to the both worlds - to the mysterious underground and a cultivated spiritual world- these spirits harmonize the natural and human world. In this way, the scene of cultivation expresses only one character, the equilibrium of forces which govern nature and the human longing for harmony. (Fig.12)

It seems that this longing has been actually achieved through individual experiences of the cultural landscape of the sixteenth and seventeenth century. In the narrative on his travel experience, Alviso Cornaro was expressing his exaltation with many new artistic achievements that can be seen in the towns of Veneto, produced by his friends. After enjoying the intellectual conversation with them, he goes on to contemplate the beauty of the countryside full of palaces, gardens, and antiquities. The aesthetic experience of the cultural landscape is transformed into a high poetic vision, a memory full of subjective expressions of joy and harmony. It shows the very essence of what in this brief exploration we have attempted to identify as cultural environment in its complexity.
Notes


3 Encyclopedie-dictionnaire raisonne des sciences des arts et des meties, Geneve 1778, pp. 447-450.


6 Alberti, de re Aedificatoria, (IV-1), (VI-2), (VII-1)


8 Serlio Sebastiano on Architecture, V. one, Books I-V of Tutte l’Opere d’Architettura et Prospetiva, Translated from the Italian with an Introduction and Commentary by Vaughan Hart and Peter Hicks, New Haven & London: Yale University Press, 1996, Treatise on Stage Scenery [64v (44r)].


10 Josephum Furttenbach, Architectura Civilis, Jonam Saurn, Ulm 1628, Plate 12, pp. 28, 29.


12 Serlio, op.cit., pp. 90, 91.


14 Furttenbach, op.cit., pp. 48-52.


18 Furttenbach, op.cit., Plate. 13, pp. 31-34.


*This paper is the result of a broader research project Studying climate change and its influence on environment: impacts, adaptation and migration, financed by the Ministry of education and science of the Republic of Serbia.
THE NATURAL LANDSCAPE DISTANT FROM THE CITY, BETWEEN EXCLUSION AND INTEGRATION

Justine Balibar

In this paper I will develop an aspect of my PhD thesis in philosophy on the aesthetics of natural landscape. I intend to show how the natural landscape can be defined in relation to the city, according to the type of border by which it is either linked to or separated from the city. After a brief explanation of the expression “natural landscape”, I will consider the essential link that connects the natural landscape to the city. I will then go on to show that this link between natural landscape and the city can take two distinct forms, depending on whether it integrates the landscape to the city (connecting them to one another) or excludes it from it (isolating them from one another). Finally I will identify to main types of landscapes, corresponding to those two types of links between natural landscapes and cities: the landscape-environment and the landscape-perspective.

1. What does “natural landscape” mean?

Let me first explain what I mean by the expression “natural landscape”. The landscapes I will focus on are “natural landscapes”, in the sense that they differ both from artistic representations of landscapes and from urban landscapes. The expression “natural landscape” may sound problematic so I would like to justify my choice of using it. By “natural landscape” I first mean a thing, an entity, as opposed to a representation: a real, full-scale landscape, as one experiences it in the physical world, and not a visual representation of landscape (like a drawing, a painting, a photograph, a film or a postcard), nor a description of landscape (be it prosaic or literary). “Natural” refers to a particular medium, constituted of physical elements such as earth, vegetation, rock, water, light and air. Being natural does not prevent the landscapes from being cultivated, designed and modified by human action: a landscape may include cultivated fields, paths drawn by man, rivers whose course has been modified, planted trees, and so on. A natural landscape can include artificial elements: nature can be cultivated and is not necessarily wild. A natural landscape is also cultural and can, to some extent, be marked by human activity. This human activity must however maintain some proximity with the basic natural elements we have just mentioned. The expression “natural landscape” can thus include, for example, the wilderness landscapes to be found in American National Parks, as well as the partially artificial landscapes that have been cultivated and designed by
man for centuries in the Tuscan countryside.

However, the raw material remains that which is offered by the natural world. In this sense, a natural landscape is also distinct from an urban landscape, where the material itself (brick, stone, concrete, metal, glass…) is artificial, processed by man, and does not exist as such in nature. This type of material may be find in natural landscapes, as long as their presence is limited, localized: a road in tarmac, a railroad, electric cables, a building can be included in a natural landscape as long as they do not totally invade it to the point of constituting an other landscape system, an urban or suburban landscape. I will thus talk about natural landscapes, i.e. about landscapes that nature, be it wild or cultivated, offers to our perception, rather than about urban landscapes. I intend to reveal another link between city and landscape. My point here is not how the city can be a landscape, but how natural landscapes are linked to the city.

2. A historical connection between natural landscapes and cities

There is indeed a deep connection between landscapes and cities, as I will show now. This connection is primarily historical: the taste for natural landscapes was first born and cultivated in cities. As soon as the history of landscape began, during pre-modernity, the taste for natural landscapes was established as an urban taste, amidst an educated society living in the cities. As Alain Roger puts it in his *Court Traité du paysage*, the landscape is a certain, aesthetical way of looking at the land or country that surrounds us, and this aesthetical view cannot be achieved but at a certain distance from the land. The peasant closely related to his land in a practical and utilitarian mode does not see a landscape. He cannot say that his land is beautiful, merely that it is good. On the contrary, the city dweller is not related to his land by practical action, therefore he is able to aestheticize it, to transform it into a landscape, into what Italian people calls a “*bel paese*”. The aesthetical relation to the object requires a certain distance which, in the case of natural landscapes, is produced by the fact of living in a city.

*Aesthetical’ direi aesthetic ogni volta*

The taste for landscape is therefore an urban taste, as all the important steps of the history of landscape testify, starting with the moment of its emergence. As Anne Cauquelin shows in *L’Invention du paysage*, the taste for landscape was invented during the Renaissance, under the influence of painting, in the landscapes that artists generally represented on the back of their paintings. I am thinking about very famous examples such as Ambrogio Lorenzetti’s *Effetti del buon governo in campagna* (1340, Ciclo di affreschi della Sala della Pace, Palazzo Pubblico, Siena) – which actually is a whole
landscape and not a background. Or about Van Eyck’s *Madonna of Chancelor Rolin* (1435, Louvre, Paris), or Giorgione’s *Tempest* (1508, Gallerie dell’Accademia, Venice). One might also recall the examples cited by Piero Camporesi in *Le Belle Contrade. Nascità del paesaggio italiano* : Mantegna’s *Agonia nel giardino* (1455 National Gallery, London) and *Madonna delle cave* (1488-90 Uffizi, Firenze); Giovanni di Paolo’s two *Madonna dell’umiltà* (1435 Pinacoteca di Siena and 1442 Museum of fine arts Boston); Giovanni Bellini’s *S. Francesco in estasi* (1480 Frick coll. New York). Of course all these painters lived in city, in the great courts and republics of Italy and Northern Europe. Their view of landscape was eminently urban. This phenomenon remained unchanged throughout the 18th and 19th centuries, when natural landscape and the sense of nature were glorified by philosophers, writers and artists who, again, inhabited the capital cities of Europe – mainly France, Great Britain and Germany, where urbanization had been accelerated by the first industrial revolution. I am thinking in particular of aesthetic philosophers of the 18th Century (Shaftesbury, Hutcheson, Burke, Rousseau and Kant), and Romantic writers and painters from Great Britain, Germany and France - names which would be too numerous for the present paper.

Lastly one can find this phenomenon during the affirmation of the taste for a new type of landscape, that of the American wilderness. As Roderick Nash shows in *Wilderness and the American Mind*, the first ones to enjoy wilderness landscapes were not the pioneers, who struggled against nature day after day in order to extend the frontier of civilization further west, but the city dwellers living distant from wilderness. First came some 18th Century Europeans, such as Tocqueville and Chateaubriand; then the educated elite of the East Coast, already strongly urbanized and distant from wilderness. Some famous examples were the transcendentalists Emerson and Thoreau; writers like Edgar Poe, Fenimore Cooper, Nathaniel Hawthorne, Washington Irving; the painter Thomas Cole along with the other members of the Hudson River School. As long as one lived tied to nature by vital interests, one was not able to detect landscapes and build an aesthetic experience. Only when the space where one lived was sufficiently urbanized could one begin to appreciate nature and the landscapes in it.

3. Two ways of connecting natural landscapes and cities: integration or exclusion

I will now present the two ways of connecting natural landscapes and cities: integration or exclusion.

As we suggested, natural landscape is appreciated in the city inasmuch as it is distinct from the city, outside the city, considered as the outside or the other of the city. The natural landscape is the vast expanse of country one can see outside the city. The
relation between landscape and city is therefore somewhat ambiguous, insofar as on the one hand the taste for natural landscape was born in an urban context and on the other hand the meaning of landscape has to do with being the other of the city (this otherness could be, as Michael Jakob proposes in *Le Paysage*, what we have lost when we became city dwellers, and also the suitable antidote to urban pressures). However, there seem to be two different ways for a natural landscape to be outside the city, as I will now show. Either the natural landscape is located in the fringes of the city, surrounding and continuing it, so that it can be viewed from the city; either it is radically cut off from the city, so that one needs to leave the city to see the landscape. In other words, the limit that separates landscape and city can either integrate them to one another (making them run into one another), or exclude them from one another. A landscape integrated to the city is for example the countryside or the cultivated fields immediately surrounding, the mountains or sea one can distinguish at a distance. To the city, such a landscape can be either a domain or territory, or scenery or background. Paradigmatic of this type of landscape is that which one can see in Tuscany from the inside of cities such as Siena, Volterra, San Gimignano, Arezzo, Cortona, Pienza, Montalcino, and so on. Those cities allow for openings towards the surrounding countryside, which is hilly and generally cultivated. Conversely, natural preserves, deserts, forests or mountain masses are examples of landscapes cut off and excluded from the city: they must be seen from the inside, one needs to step into them and go across them in order to experience them. I am thinking in particular of the great National Parks of the American West (Yellowstone, Yosemite, Grand Canyon, Zion, Bryce Canyon, Arches, and so on), which are precisely designed as little independent worlds, isolated from cities and suburbs, and where one immerses oneself for a set period. One could cite many other examples for these two types of landscapes, but the ones I have given are particularly telling – they work as paradigms, also because they were elaborated as such and are the product of a long and complex history. Of course, there are also plenty of intermediary situations, where cities allow for glimpses at distant landscapes but without so marked an impression of proximity and integration as it is the case in Tuscan cities – thus from Las Vegas one can see the Silver Mountains of Nevada; and from Naples the Tyrrenhian sea, the islands of Capri, Ischia and Procida, the Vesuvius, the Sorrentine peninsula. But in both cases the natural landscape seems more distant, less accessible from the city, maybe because of the greater dimensions or denser network of the city. Yet, because of time limits, I chose to focus on these two paradigmatic opposites: the National Parks of the American West and the Tuscan countryside. Tuscan landscapes as we see them nowadays are the artificial fruit of a man-made transformation over centuries centuries-long transformation, responding to a both aesthetical and practical aim: to harmoniously integrate countryside and cities, allowing for circulation networks and spaces of cultivation and farming in order to supply the cities. In the same way, and though their
history is more recent, the American National Parks responded to the desire, formulated as early as the 19th Century, to preserve isolated spaces of wilderness, distant from human civilization (be it industrial, agricultural or urban), while at the same time provide access by roads according to touristic purpose. Here again the landscape is designed and partially transformed in order to satisfy the tastes and needs of city dwellers – though, unlike Tuscany, the idea is to allow city dwellers to enjoy the landscape while making it easier for them to flee from the city. Those two main types of landscapes require a distance from the city, but this distance is not the same in both cases. The configuration linking the subject, city and landscape is not the same, and it produces two distinct aesthetic attitudes. In the first case, the subject is located in the city and sees, from the city, a distant landscape. The landscape is distant from the city (though reasonably, so that we can still see it). In the second case, the subject is located in the landscape and is so distant from the city that the latter is not visible any more (here again I chose to focus on the two extreme cases, without considering intermediary situations). In both cases, there is a sort of escape to the outside of the city the city. However, in the first case, the escape is only visual and relies on the idea that the landscape is distant, whereas in the second case the whole body escapes from the city, the escape is real (though temporary) and relies on the desire to move away from the city in order to draw closer to the landscape and immerse oneself in it. We are therefore facing two distinct aesthetic attitudes: an attitude of detachment consisting in looking, from the city, towards a distant landscape; and an attitude of immersion consisting in absorbing oneself in the landscape, far from the city. These two attitudes are related to two distinct organizations of the world where one lives. In the first case, the landscape is still part of our world, it acts as a background to our world, it is seen through the frame of our world. It can even be seen as the reflection of our world, as Salvatore Settis puts it in *Paesaggio, Costituzione, Cemento*: the relation between city and countryside in Italy, and in particular in Tuscany, was historically a reflexive relation, where the countryside functioned as an image of the city and vice versa. A striking example is Lorenzetti’s fresco in Siena, which was for centuries one of the most important models to guide town and country planning: the effects of good government on the country reduplicate those of city, the country appearing to be the natural double of the city. In the second case – the American National Parks –, the landscape functions as a world distinct from ours, two concurrent worlds are being juxtaposed, without communication: one can go successively from the one to the other, but they do not share the same temporality, so one cannot be at the same time in both worlds. This second mode of organization raises the problem of the intermediary spaces created by the gap between city and nature. Not only is the city not reflected by the landscape, but there is also a third space, stranger to both city and nature.
4. The two types of landscapes: landscape-perspective and landscape-environment.

I would now like to explain the nature of the two types of landscapes related to those two ways of organizing the relations between city and landscape. For reasons that I will expound on presently, I have chosen to name these two landscapes “perspective-landscape” and “environment-landscape”. The two ways of organizing the relations between natural landscape and city have important consequences on the aspect of landscape. In the first case, the landscape is in front of us, one looks at it from a fixed point of view, looking ahead, across the space. Generally, some urban elements act as a frame for our perception: thus a window, a space between two buildings, a belvedere. Thus he experience of landscape consists mostly in a vision. This vision is fixed and framed by the point of view, and it expands in depth. Such a perception recalls of course perspective painting, in particular as it was practiced during the Renaissance. This is why I have chosen to name this first type of landscape “perspective-landscape”. Rather than reducing natural landscape to landscape painting (which would be the theory of Alain Roger), I intend to underline the deep affinity existing between this type of landscape and Renaissance painting, the fact that they belong to a same perspective model, a same visual discipline. Both are ways of perceiving the space that evolved during the same period in the same places. Indeed, as Antonio Paolucci states in his article « Lo scempio del giardino d’Europa », it is no accident that the art of perspective in painting was born in cities opening on such landscapes. The will to allow space, inside Tuscan cities, for visual openings towards beautiful landscape prospects, that is to say towards spaces likely to create an impression of depth (owing in particular to their variety, their relief, the progressivity of their composition), responds to the same sense of space that had governed the elaboration of perspective in painting. It is to this perceptual model that the more recent art of photography also belongs.

In the second type of landscape, we no longer face a “perspective-landscape”, but rather what we could call an “environment-landscape”. The landscape is no longer in front of us, but all around us. The point of view is now mobile instead of fixed. The eyes move, the body moves, we turn around and cross the space to feel surrounded by the landscape. We do not perceive the landscape through the framework of the city, on the contrary the city vanishes and the landscape is no longer framed (or at least the frames keep changing continually). If our perception were to be limited, it would not be by the frames of the city but by the landscape itself. Whereas in the perspective-landscape the limit was before the landscape, between the landscape and us, in the environment-landscape there is no limit between the landscape and us, and the landscape is the limit beyond which stands an invisible city. This type of landscape was to come later: in the 18th Century and not in the Renaissance, under the influence of authors...
like Rousseau. Indeed Rousseau was one of the first to describe precisely, in the *Rêveries du promeneur solitaire* and in the *Nouvelle Héloïse*, the situation of a subject surrounded by a landscape and moving within it. This new landscape attitude was taken up by European Romanticism (in particular in the description of the Alps) and by American Romanticism, as for example in Thoreau’s *Walden*; in Poe’s *Landor’s Cottage* or *Domain of Arnheim*. We could find other examples in Whitman, Melville, Dickinson or Hawthorne. This aesthetic attitude has a practical outcome in the creation of American National Parks at the end of the 19th Century (Yellowstone 1872). These parks were among other things designed to favor an aesthetic immersion into natural landscapes. They would lend themselves rather to comparison with architecture than with painting or photography, inasmuch as one moves inside a landscape as well as inside a building. The pictorial or picturesque dimension of certain landscapes often omits the fact that some other landscapes are very close to architecture, even though a great aestheteic philosopher like Kant had been acutely aware of this affinity: indeed, the only works of art he compares with landscapes, in the *Critique of Judgment*, are not paintings but monuments. I am referring to the §26 of the “Analytic of the sublime”, where Kant evokes successively, as sources of sublime, St. Peter’s Basilica in Rome and the landscape in “rude nature”.

**Conclusion**

To conclude, depending on whether the natural landscape is integrated into or excluded from the city, the attitude of the subject and the form of the landscape differ: on the one hand we have a perspective-landscape perceived with aesthetic detachment from an urban point of view, as in the rural landscapes perceived from Tuscan cities; on the other hand we have an environment-landscape, in which one immerses oneself by leaving the city, as in the landscapes of the American National Parks.

Those two types of landscape are dependent on the stages of western urbanization: the first one results from a phase of urbanization that took place during the Renaissance, between the Middle Ages and Modernity, and characterized by relations of harmony and reciprocity between city and nature; the second type of landscape begins with the first industrial Revolution and results from a modern stage of urbanization, characterized by a gap between city and nature.

Those two types of landscapes also embody a very different idea of nature: the idea of nature that governs the Tuscan model of perspective-landscape is that of a close and cultivated nature, integrated to human life and in particular to an urban lifestyle; on the contrary, the idea of nature that governs the American model is that of a wild virgin nature, a nature we almost lost when achieving the conquest and civilization of North America, and whose precious remains we try to preserve by isolating them far from
the cities. Therefore, the Tuscan model is utopian and forward-looking: nature is a prospect, one has access to it, one appropriates it and takes care of it, integrating it to the city and to daily routine life. On the contrary, the American model is one of Romantic inspiration and nostalgia, harking back to the pioneers’ wilderness, or even further back to the state of nature in the 18th Century – that of the “noble savage”. This nature is wild, cut off from the human and urban lifestyle. Ironically enough, these days, landscape integrated to the city as illustrated by the Tuscan model has almost become an exception, to the point that it tends to become the object of a nostalgic attitude. Indeed, when visiting a Tuscan town one has the impression that the very whole formed by the city and its landscape from now on functions as a small world isolated from the rest of the urbanized world.

Bibliography

HUMANIZATION-CULTURALIZATION
OF NATURE AND CHINESE EVERYDAY AESTHETICS

Liu Yuedi

1. The Selection of “the Most Beautiful Places in China”, Sponsored by
Chinese National Geography

In 2005, to celebrate its 55th anniversary, the famous magazine Chinese National Geography launched a competition of “the most beautiful places in China”, an important event involving thirty-four news media from across China, as well as many experts from five national professional societies, namely: the Geographical Society of China, the Geological Society of China, the Chinese Society of Landscape Architecture, the Appraisal Committee of China’s Forest Landscape Resources, and the Chinese Society of Tourism Geography and Geopark. As Chinese National Geography announced, the panel of judges included nearly 100 experts from fields of geography, geomorphology, geology, and aesthetics, so the results could be said to be “authoritative.”

But the fact is that, out of the 14-member “General Jury” that had the right to a final vote, eleven members were academics from the Chinese Academy of Sciences: Shi Yafeng and Wu Chuanjun are famous geographers; Wu Liangyong, albeit a scholar with a marked aesthetic sensibility, is an expert in architecture; the other eight, including Sun Honglie, Liu Dongsheng, Chen Shupeng, Liu Jialin, Lu Yaoru, Li Wenhua, Feng Zongwei, and Ren Jizhou, are also natural scientists. Only three members did not belong to the circle of natural sciences: Shao Dazhen, an historian, and Fan Di’an, an art critic, are from China Central Academy of Fine Arts; and Nie Zhenbin, an old colleague of mine is from the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences, and the Chinese Society of Aesthetics. It is clear that the final vote is in fact a competition between 11 natural scientists and 3 scholars from the Humanities.

The panel of judges had their explanations. To choose “the most beautiful mountains”, they had five “general criteria”, each with a different percentage grade: 1) whether it has a particular decorative value (40%); 2) whether it has a high scientific value, with typical features of the landform of its kind (20%); 3) whether it has a relative taller than 1000 meters, with the presence of numerous natural belts in large numbers (20%); 4) whether it has a high humanistic value (10%); 5) whether it hasn’t preferable: ‘has been’ overdeveloped by man (10%). For “the most beautiful sea islands”, the criteria are as follows: “whether the water around the island is pure and unpolluted”, “whether the rocks on the island are aesthetically good”, “whether there is unique or rare geological and geomorphological landscapes”, “whether it has geological scientific value”, etc. Likewise, “the most beautiful” glaciers, lakes, grasslands, deserts, waterfalls, forests, spectacular caves, coasts, and so on, all have their criteria.

After Chinese National Geography announced the results of the competition, they were largely treated with skepticism by the Chinese media. But they limited themselves to asking superficial questions such as “Why are traditional beautiful landscapes not on the list?” or “Why are so many unknown landscapes on the list?”, though in reality a deeper question could be raised from the perspective of aesthetics. One was able to read in news reports much doubt over the fact that “in Beijing only Shi Cha Hai was included among ‘the most beautiful city zones of China.’ While the little known Mt. Namche Mawa is on the top of the list ‘Ten Most Beautiful Mountains’, traditional famous mountains disappear from the list with the exceptions of Mt. Huang, Mt. Tai, and Mt. Emei. Of the ‘Five Most Beautiful Lakes’, the West Lake occupies the last position, while the ‘Six Most Beautiful Waterfalls’, Huangguoshu come last is in the last place. Of the ‘Ten Most Beautiful Forests’, the Bamboo Sea in Southern Sichuan is in the last place, the preceding 9 forests remaining undeveloped.”

In reacting to the skepticism as such, China National Geography maintained once again that the selection was “authoritative”. However, in supporting the “scientific criteria”, they neglected the “aesthetic criteria”, which should have played a crucial role in the selection. Indeed, they disregarded the essential differences between Chinese and Western cultures, in particular, between Chinese and Western natural aesthetics.

2. Differences between Chinese and Western Natural Aesthetics as Revealed by the Selection

2.1 Aesthetic Criteria, or Scientific Criteria?

It seems a paradox that aesthetic criteria are overshadowed by scientific criteria in the selection of “the most beautiful places in China.”

Basically, the selective criteria are drawn up according to a scientific principles. For example, the selection criteria for “the most beautiful mountains” fall into two
groups, namely: “hard quota” and “soft quota”. Among them, “a high scientific value, with typical features of the landform of its kind”, and “a relative height of over 1000 meters, with outstanding vertical natural belts in large numbers”, clearly belong to scientific criteria and accordingly, hard quota. Both occupy 20% in the 100-mark system. Another criterion—“whether a mountain is undeveloped”—occupies 10% and also belongs to the hard quota. “Non-scientific” criteria appear to occupy 50%. The “distinctive decorative worth” in particular, amounts to 40%. Ostensibly this is a purely aesthetic criterion, and it may remind us that the selection is one of “the most beautiful places.” However, the emphasis on peculiarity does not necessarily entail “the most beautiful”, but on the contrary, it often means a kind of “rare beauty”, understandable only by adventurers or scientific explorers.

A case in point is the so-called “Ten Most Beautiful Mountains.” With the exceptions of Mt. Huang, Mt. Tai, and Mt. Emei, they are all snow-capped. The leading Namjagbarwa Mountain is even unknown to the public. Of course, the panel of judges omitted “humanized and cultured criteria”, while the criterion of “a high humanistic value” that occupies 10%. However, a “soft” criteria as such is not easily quantified, and thus cannot play a decisive role. As far as the “judges” are concerned, they were mostly natural scientists in the fields of geology, geography, and geomorphology, etc. As a consequence, when they explained the beauty (of the snow line of the mountains, for example), they were likely to depend on their expertise consciously or unconsciously in making an aesthetic judgment.

2.2 Humanized and Cultured Criteria, or Natural Criteria?

As stated by *China National Geography*, the selection of “the most beautiful places in China” marks a shift of interest in mainstream Chinese aesthetic culture, and furthermore, the advent of a new aesthetic era. However, the criteria they adopted reveal the deeper differences between Chinese and Western aesthetic cultures. That is more important than nature, dominates nature, is an inherent part of European intellectual thinking. Chinese traditional aesthetics holds that “heaven”, “earth”, and “man” coexist in a harmonious relationship. Man does not dominate; rather, man, heaven, and earth make form a triad a triad, thereby making their due contributions to movement, change and the development of all things.

Let us limit our discussion to the beauty of natural scenery. What criteria should be adopted then, natural criteria, or humanized-cultured criteria? In other words, should we see “nature as nature”, or see it as “humanized and cultured”? According to *China National Geography*, Mt. Huang, Mt. Tai, and Mt. Emei in ancient times were not included in “Wu Yue” (Five Sacred Mountains), the five most famous mountains named by Chinese scholars, because, unlike Mt. Tai and Mt. Heng, they were located far from
the earliest Chinese settlement, and thus failed to enter mainstream Chinese culture. With human activities reaching out into more areas, it is inevitable that more mountains, especially those in Western China, become well-known. But as the “Ten Most Beautiful Mountains” are mostly snow-capped mountains on plateaus and they are very far from the Central Plains region of China, it cannot be denied that the judges are fond of “untraversed” places, so a basic criterion is whether the candidates have been overdeveloped.

Ostensibly, the selection complies with “natural criteria.” But in reality, when experts look at nature from a scientific perspective, they are in reality adhering to the principle of “humanization and culturalization.” It is true that Chinese traditional aesthetics emphasizes acting upon the law of nature, but nature here is suffused with a profound “awareness of humanization and culturalization.” The Chinese traditional idea, that “man with Heaven and Earth forms a ternion”, points to the harmony and cooperation between man, Heaven, and Earth. As such, the beauty advocated by Chinese traditional aesthetics in reality lies in the connection between nature and humanity, and furthermore, in a dynamic balance between these. Here, “humanized and cultured criteria” rather than “natural criteria” are decisive. However, the mode of thinking on aesthetics in the west is different.

2.3 “Popular Criteria” or “Experts Criteria?”

It is also worthy of note that, in the selection of “the most beautiful places in China,” the experts and the masses display a striking difference in their appreciation of beauty. For example, the “most beautiful places” chosen by the experts are mostly little known places, rather than popular “beautiful places.” Answers and questions arises as to whether the selection guided by the aesthetic standards of a few elites or by those of the masses.

Ever since the publication of the final results, many people have expressed passive constraction more elegant here: of the “Ten Most Beautiful Mountains,” three are snow-covered mountains on Qinghai-Tibet Plateau. In this case, the beauty of these snow-capped mountains differs radically from that of traditional mountains in that they do not have a high aesthetic or tourist value for the general public. Others protest that the “Six Most Beautiful Ancient Villages and Towns” do not even include the famous “Six Water Towns South of the Yangtze River”, nor do they include the villages on the UNESCO World Cultural Heritage list, such as Hongcun Village and Xidi Village. Instead, in the first four places are remote towns. So, they ask, do these newly-elected villages and towns really have incomparable beauty? Are they really more beautiful than those well-known? Does “beauty” really consist in “novelty” and “rarity”, or should the term be used as it is normally used?

These questions are well-grounded. Clearly, the experts from different backgrounds
form a unique “aesthetic community.” As their decisions are either based on their scientific knowledge, or on their personal taste, it is not surprising that they reject what the masses see as beautiful. But the problem is whether “the most beautiful places” should be selected by a few elites, or by the majority of people. In an era of “aesthetic overflowing,” is it still appropriate for a few elites to speak for the whole society? Should beauty be acknowledged by the masses, or should it be limited to exclusive examination?

2.4 Local Criteria, or Westernized Criteria?

It is important to emphasize that, since the selection aims at “the most beautiful places in China,” the places chosen must possess “local” character: that is, their beauty should not be determined by “western” standards; rather, it should come from the “aesthetic” judgment of the Chinese people themselves. It is true that the Chinese sense of beauty has been influenced by western aesthetics, but it is still important for the Chinese to maintain a local “cultural identity.”

Wherein lies the reason? This can be attributed to the differences between Chinese and Western natural aesthetics. For historical and geographical reasons, Chinese traditional natural aesthetics has focussed on the aesthetic culture of Central China, especially of the majority Han nationality. In contrast, the remote lands in the West, in particular, the ethnic minority areas, have attracted little attention. It is accountable to say that in the Chinese history its “beholders” who create sceneries and make them part of the Great Culture. A case in point is the frontier poetry that prevailed in Tang Dynasty, where the poets in taking down their frontier life reproduced such a view as the “solitary smoke plume rising from wastelands.”

However, the presence of “western” mode of aesthetic appreciation in the selection of “the most beautiful places in China” is readily perceptible as is acknowledged in “The Distribution of Beautiful Sceneries in China”, the preamble to the issue of *China National Geography* that contains the results of the selection: “The most concentrated area of beautiful sceneries singular is Southwest China, particularly Hengduan Mountains Range, where Sichuan, Yunnan, and Tibet meet…The other concentrated area is Tianshan Mountains in The Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Region…Hence, the distribution of natural beauty is as follows: it is not in densely populated areas, not is it in areas with mainstream culture, but instead in areas inhabited by few people or by ethnic minority nationalities.” This indicates that traditional the Chinese sense of beauty is giving way to its western counterpart.

Indeed, the selection sponsored by *China National Geography* can be said to have ushered in a new era of appreciating snowy mountains and glaciers, which was not the original intention in Chinese traditional aesthetics. This is definitely a welcome expansion, but it comes as the expense of the sacrifice of the Chinese aesthetic tradition.
2.5 Where on Earth are “the Most Beautiful Places” in China?

As mentioned above, the selection of “the most beautiful places in China” has involved questions as follows: 1) should it adopt “aesthetic criteria”, or “scientific criteria”? 2) Should it adopt “humanized and cultured criteria”, or “natural criteria”? 3) Should it adopt “popular criteria”, or “experts’ criteria”? 4) In the final analysis, should it adopt “local criteria”, or “western criteria”?

The selection in question ought not to depend unduly on western standards, which tend to be “scientific”, “specialized”, and “naturalized.” Rather, the selection is likely to appeal to Chinese standards that are “aestheticized”, “popularized”, and “humanized and cultured.” It is well-known that China has a terraced pattern in geography; while the East is densely populated, the West is sparsely populated; while the East is mostly plain, the West embraces a long range of mountains including Qinghai-Tibet Plateau, with the Himalayas as the highest peak of the world. Correspondingly, in ancient times especially, the cultural tradition of the East dominated, and the natural aesthetics of the East constituted the mainstream. But, with the West attracting more and more attention nowadays, new conceptions have arisen as a challenge to the old ones.

However, since increasing attention has been paid to the West, new concepts are beginning to challenge to the old ones.

It is equally rewarding to consider the results of the selection by placing them in a chart with pairs of opposing criteria: scientific vs. aesthetic, western vs. local, expert vs. popular and natural vs. humanistic. By doing this, we may discover which criteria dominated were prevalent in the selection.

3. Chinese Aesthetic Concept of “Humanized and Cultured Nature”

3.1 Agricultural Civilization and Industrial Civilization: Two Types of Natural Beauty

In a consideration of the differences between Chinese and Western natural aesthetics, firstly a genesis-related question should be asked, namely:

How is natural beauty discovered? This question obviously involves the historical development of the relationship between man and his environment in a broad sense. It seems safe to say that a pure or uncontaminated nature does not really exist. Even in the case of “remote” locations such as the Antarctica, the ocean depths and the highest mountains are not immune to human interference. Most areas of wilderness are not primeval nature as such, but regions that reflect the earlier and continuing effects of human intervention in the form of land clearance, erosion, strip mining, reforestation, acid rain, and modifications in the surface of the land and in the extraction of water; alterations in cli-
mate induced by vast expanses of paved surfaces in urbanized areas, introduced Hybrid species of flora and fauna, and most recently in the desiccation of the ozone layer, in global warming and increased solar radiation full stop no area of the planet is impervious.3

According the American sociologist, Daniel Bell, an American sociologist, the principal contradiction of pre-industrial civilization is the “game against nature”; in industrial civilization, it is the “game against fabricated nature”; and in post-industrial civilization, the “game between person and person.”4 Indeed, pre-industrial civilization can be further divided into “pre-agricultural civilization” and “agricultural civilization.” In pre-agricultural civilization, especially in primitive society, man was still part of nature, and thus could not “contemplate” nature by stepping outside it. It is in the period of agricultural civilization that natural beauty was first discovered.

Two types of natural beauty can be distinguished that firstly the type that was found within agricultural civilization, where man faced real nature, and reacted in an organic and submissive way. Represented by Chinese traditional culture, we might call this “Chinese type.” Strictly speaking, in China natural beauty was first discovered in Wei, Jin, and Southern and Northern Dynasties. The reason is obvious: until the Qin dynasty nature had been a heavily didactic and moralizing concept, for it was regarded as a symbol of personal virtue; however, with the rise of metaphysics in Wei and Jin Dynasties, Chinese literary scholars found in nature a meaning of individual existence. From then on, it became a common aspiration of scholars to “ramble in mountains and waters.” Thus, the first type of natural beauty is discovered in agricultural society, as a cultural construct by agricultural civilization. The second type of natural beauty was discovered within industrial civilization. Represented by European classical culture, we might refer to this as “Western European Type.” In an industrial society, man was faced with the “second nature,” and his “doing” was inorganic and constructive in that he not merely had to engage in industrial production to help reorganize the society, but he also had to deal with contractual interpersonal relationship. Since the former aspect of his “doing” belonged to the economic base and was thus dominant, man in industrial society was in fact removed from nature. In this respect, natural beauty can be said to be “rediscovered.” It derives from the “aesthetic distance” between man and nature, in the same sense that people living in cities long for pastoral landscapes, and can better appreciate their beauty than those living in villages. That is to say, this type of natural beauty was also a cultural construct, a “rediscovery” made in industrial civilization on return to nature.

3.2 Misunderstanding of Chinese Traditional Natural Aesthetics

The emergence of natural aesthetics and environmental aesthetics is highly relevant to philosophical inquiries into the relationship between nature and culture. It is acknowledged that man “creates” art, but “discovers” nature. Even though natural aes-
thetics and environmental aesthetics are determined to correct the tendency of mainstream of aesthetics in an attempt to center on art, in establishing their objects of study they cannot neglect the interaction between art and nature, the appreciation of art and nature. On a more abstract level, these problems should be understood in light of the connection of nature and culture.

How is nature related to culture, then? In the case of Chinese traditional natural aesthetics, the “culturalization” of nature is important. Many Chinese scholars believe that “natural naturalness” sees nature as nature, meanwhile, considering furthermore that nature is dominant over man. But this is a misunderstanding.

Here, it is important to emphasize what Zhuang Zi said: Dong-guo Shun-zi is “a man in appearance, but void like Heaven (of any thought of himself)” (Zhuang Zi·Tian Zi-fang). Daoism teaches that all things in the universe are created by Dao, that man follows the movement of Dao, and is “spiritually clear” with virtue. Nevertheless, Daoism does not eliminate the distinction between man’s appearance and that of other things. This is why Zhuang Zi said, “The Dao gives him his personal appearance; Heaven gives him his bodily form; how can we not call him a man?” (Zhuang Zi·The Seal of Virtue Complete). This amounts to saying that a man is a man only if he has man’s appearance.

However, how is “void like Heaven” to be understood? In its normal usage, the term “void” means “empty.” In his Comment on Zhuang Zi, Yu Yue gives the following illuminating explanation: “‘void’ means the ‘orifice of human body’, which in turn can be explained as the ‘heart’...Therefore, the phrase, ‘a man in appearance, but void like Heaven OK?’, may simply mean ‘having the appearance of man and the heart of Heaven.’” 5 “Void like Heaven” seems to have a double meaning: on the one hand, both Heaven and man are generated by the transforming power of the Dao, though at the same time heaven shows a Daoist space to man – a space that is “empty within” and “void without”; on the other hand, a deeper meaning is also to be found in the connection between “void like Heaven” and “the heart of Heaven”, namely that the heart (mind) of Heaven enables man to have the pleasure of experiencing the unlimited while following the movement of all things. Thus the heart of man is “a natural human heart.”

The law, “Dao follows nature”, therefore constitutes the very essence of Daoist natural aesthetics to which both man and nature are subject. Here, we might note that “nature” does not refer to the vast physical nature, but rather, to “naturalness.” In other words, in the case of Daoism “nature” corresponds to the natural law. In fact, by advocating the return to a natural state and the necessity need to follow the law of nature, Daoism has humanized in the nature itself. In the case of Daoism, naturalization and humanization are simply two sides of coin.

The aesthetic character of Daoist wisdom has been keenly captured by various contemporary Western scholars. According to David L. Hall, there are two ways to understand wisdom: aesthetic and logical, the former being typical of Chinese Daoism, while
the latter typical is of Greek philosophy. He claims, “Daoism over certain mainstream Western approaches with respect to issues of ethics and ecology lay largely in the former’s understanding of the natural world as aesthetically ordered.”6 “The term ‘nameless Dao’ is best ‘understood’ here not as ontological ground but merely as the noncoherent total of all possible order. The ‘acosmotic’ cosmology of the Daoist entails a decentered world comprising a myriad of unique particulars—‘the ten thousand things’”. And “The order of the world is, then, neither rational nor logical, but aesthetic.”7

3.3 “Naturalization and Humanization in Chinese Traditional Natural Aesthetics

The ancient Chinese people culturalized nature in another way. Although the harmonious unity of man and nature is a basic component of Chinese culture, nature has remained both “a humanized nature”, and “a cultivated nature” in Chinese traditional natural aesthetics.8 A testimony to this is what Liu Xie, a celebrated Chinese ancient scholar, remarked on nature in his Dragon-Carving and the Literary Mind.

How are they coeval with heaven and earth? Now when the blue color parted from the yellow, and the round shape from the square, heaven and earth came into being. Like two interfolding jade mirrors, the sun and the moon reflect the images of heaven, while streams and mountains are interwoven into earthly patterns like gorgeous damask. These are manifestations of Dao. When earthly patterns and heavenly images take shape, inferior and superior places are established, and the two primal powers of heaven and earth are born. Yet, only when humans join in does the Great Triad form. Endowed with the divine spark of consciousness, humans are the essence of the five elements, the mind of heaven and earth. When mind is born, speech appears. When speech appears, writing comes forth. This is the way of Dao.”9

Here, in tracing the origin of literature, Liu Xie proceeds implicitly from the “patterns” of the universe to the “manifestations of Dao”, and then to “speech” and “writing.” This logical order shows clearly the steps leading to the transformation of nature into a culturized concept in Chinese traditional aesthetics.

The concept of “humanized and culturalized nature” is pertinent to the spirit of Chinese traditional natural aesthetics, for it both shows a respect for nature and “humanizes” it. This can be seen in the famous mountains and streams in China. For example, in Mount Tai, cultural relics are to be found everywhere, from the Dai Temple at the foot of the mountain to its summit Yuhuangding (Peak of the Heavenly Emperor). Mount Tai, therefore, can be considered to be a record of Chinese history and culture, or a unity of nature and culture. Also subject to humanization and culturization are the recently “developed” landscapes, as Chinese people are fond of creating names and myths for them. It does not come as a surprise that many Western tourists feel they
cannot experience “pure” nature in China.

Besides mountains and waters, Chinese gardens and art are also manifestations of Chinese “humanized and cultured” nature. They are called “artificial landscapes”, as opposed to the real ones. Over the last thousand years the most popular subject matter of Chinese landscape painting has been mountains and streams. For example, there are over 2000 Cliffside inscriptions on Mount Tai. And everywhere one can see inscribed on rocks poems and calligraphy works by celebrities throughout history. One cannot fail to notice the huge stone tablet entitled “Engraved Record of Mount Tai”, which is 14 meters high and 5.3 meters wide, bearing an inscription of 1008 Chinese characters. Such a legacy is to be found in most famous mountains in China. So tourists not only appreciate the beauty of these mountains, but are also they are also culturally involved.

Similarly, Chinese private gardens, normally known as “miniature landscapes”, are also man-made. The most typical of Chinese private gardens are those in Suzhou. A salient feature of these gardens is that, on the one hand, the method of “borrowed scenery” is employed to exploit advantage of the natural scenery outside, and on the other, artificial mountains, ponds, streams, and rocks are built at the center of the garden, embellished with trees and flowers, and surrounded by buildings. Given the good use of the surroundings in design and building, it becomes a typical Chinese landscape garden. For this kind of garden the aesthetic principle of “multum in parvo” is perceptible: that is, like a Chinese landscape painting they should present a suggestive poetic image. Furthermore, it must appear to be a work of nature rather than a work of man.

That landscape painting has remained an integral part of mainstream Chinese painting. It is probably due to the fact that literary scholars, due to their fondness of nature, wish to relive their feelings towards the mountains and streams through their paintings. Chinese landscape painting did not become an independent branch of Chinese painting until the Northern and Southern Dynasties, when natural beauty was first discovered. Afterwards, landscape painting prevailed over figure painting and was to become mainstream in Chinese painting. Take the famous painting “Spring Outing” by Zhan Ziqian in Sui Dynasty for example, small-scale figures serve to emphasise man’s involvement in nature, and his respective state of mind. Thus, the mountains and waters are “culturalized.”

From a historical perspective, whether a work of heaven or a work of man, nature only becomes an aesthetic object if it is related to man. But for environmentalists, this amounts to an anthropocentrism. However, one might claim that the environment is not meaningful unless it is related to man—whether in the sense as an individual person or as a species. Moreover, the environment must be subject to man. This is the starting point of Chinese traditional philosophy. The aim is not only to achieve a dynamic balance between man and nature but also to emphasize man’s cultural being.

For Chinese traditional aesthetics, natural beauty lies not merely in objective moun-
tains and waters, or in man’s subjective image, but it also lies in a man’s life. Natural beauty is a “manifestation” of the nature “entering” into human life. It grows and reveals itself in its connection with man. It is not a man-made product, but a process of becoming in the human world. This is because man comes from nature and returns to it, and man exists not only in society, but in nature as well. All above inevitably leads to the humanization and culturalization of nature.


There is a unique tradition of aestheticizing the habitat in Chinese aesthetics that corresponds to the concept of “humanized and culturalized nature”, and that belongs to traditional Chinese everyday aesthetics. The aestheticization of the habitat is also an important issue in environmental aesthetics. As Paul von Bonsdorff said: “In aesthetic reflections on the habitat, it is most fruitful to understand aesthetic value in a broad or deep sense. The aesthetic dimension then includes not only the sensuous pleasures of the environment: its vistas, light and color, its sound and smellscapes, and how these relate to the moving and sensing human body. It also includes what the particular environment suggests about human and natural life in general and in relation to the individual person each of us is… The aesthetics of the habitat understood as an investigation into its potential aesthetic value and resources, will treat it as both ‘art’-intentional and expressive, and as ‘environment’- natural and given.”

In his *Lin Quan Gao Zhi (High Taste for Forests and Springs)*, an important work of Chinese aesthetics, Guo Xi of Song Dynasty advanced a case of typical Chinese everyday aesthetics. He emphasizes in particular that one should possess both the “heart of forests and springs” and the “aspiration of forests and springs”, and that one must try to be “company of mists and clouds” rather than belittle streams and gullies with arrogant eyes. He said that is commonly believed that some mountains and waters are to pass through, some to look at from afar, some to ramble about in, and others some to live in. A painting is, then, a fine work, inasmuch as it represents such mountains and waters. Yet, to be able to pass through and look at the mountains and waters is not as good as to be able to ramble about and live in them. Why? Just for taking a look at the mountains and streams of today. Even if the mountains extend as hundreds of li, no more than three or four tenths are suitable for rambling and living in. So it is those in which one can ramble and live, that are inevitably sought after. That is why the aristocracy seek out the forests and springs. Therefore, painting must be guided by this thought (of creating mountains and waters suitable for rambling and living), and appreciation of painting must follow this thought (whether it creates mountains and waters suitable for rambling and living). It is only by doing this that it will not fall short of the spirit of painting.
Here, Guo Xi points out the fourfold function of mountains and waters: firstly, they are for passing through; secondly, they are for looking at from afar; thirdly, they are for rambling; and finally, they are for living in. Of these functions, the fourth is clearly the most important. For the Chinese, it is not good enough for real mountains and waters to be pass-able and look-able. More desirable are those that are appropriate for rambling and living in. Therefore, it is not difficult to see why Chinese man-made gardens are meant to provide a “livable” and “enjoyable” environment. The same is true in the case of Chinese traditional landscape painting.

Of the fourfold function, “passing” and “rambling” are clearly relevant. Yet while “passing” just means that the mountains and waters serve as the backdrop for a journey, “rambling” is suggestive of an aesthetic attitude. And, “looking” and “rambling” are interconnected. Yet while “looking” indicates that mountains and waters are merely the object of aesthetic contemplation, “rambling” highlights aesthetic engagement. Finally, “looking” and “living” differ in that the former refers to a superficial visual experience, while the latter, to a profound experience of living in nature. According to Guo Xi’s aesthetics, both art and everyday life should try to achieve the ideals of “living” and “rambling.” As “living” is given first priority, the highest possible level is in essence a return to the everyday world.

The ideal of living is in fact a deep interaction and communion between man and his environment. Just as Arnold Berleant said, “environmental perception engages the entire human sensorium through which we become part of environment in an inter-penetration of body and place. Thus we not only see our living world: we move with it and act upon and in response to it.” In a Chinese aesthetic situation, man is not only a spectator of the world, but also a participant in the world. As such, the physical nature should be regarded as the “home” of man. Plants, animals, water, rocks, soils, and so on, constitute the foundation of man’s home. And climate, weather, and seasons lead to changes of natural beauty — this is why Chinese natural aesthetics is particularly “time-conscious.” The concept of changing seasons, for example, is very much in the foreground in Chinese gardens and paintings. But of course, nature is still regarded as the “origin of culture.”

To conclude, thanks to the wisdom of life in Chinese traditional aesthetics, the ancient Chinese people used to enjoy an intimate communion with all things in nature, ranging from high mountains to a small flower. But in order to be described “beautiful”, a natural thing must enter the “living world” of the Chinese, since “living aesthetics” is the foundation of Chinese traditional natural aesthetics.

Liu Yuedi, Delegate-at-large at International Association for Aesthetics, General-secretary of Chinese Society for Aesthetics
Notes

2 For the skepticism about the selection of “the most beautiful places of China”, see Qianlong News Network: http://book.qq.com/a/20051101/000010.htm.
5 Quoted from Chen Guying, Modern Commentary on and Translation of Zhuang Zi, Zhonghua Book Company, 1983, p. 503.
11 Guo Xi, Lin Quan Gao Zhi (High Taste for Forests and Springs).
While in the early ‘20s Berlin was one of the greatest capitals in Europe, it was also a city forced to reckon with the incidents and politics of the previous decade: since the early years of the 20th century it was witness to a rapid process of urbanization related to the settlement of new factories, which required a continuous increase in the workforce; the growing urban population generated an immediate need for housing. New settlements of terraced single-family houses began appearing as early as 1910, their design commissioned to architects who, recovering the concept of the garden city, suggested a valid alternative to the city’s existing large and unhealthy blocks known as Mietkasernen (rental barracks). In this first quarter of the century, England was the European country able to provide the most appropriate urban models thanks to the principles underlying the Garden City of Parker and Unwin. This approach initially generated the Garten-Stadt, and later the complexity of the Siedlung: “What characterizes the English housing type is its presentation as a polar opposite to that of the work space; its conformation can only be that of a single-family dwelling where the categories of privacy and comfort acquire a fundamental importance” 1.

To meet the need for housing in the wake of the devastating consequences of the First World War it appeared immediately more advantageous to build new houses rather than proceed with a hastened reconstruction; this gave birth to the concept of the Siedlung - literally “settlement”, though in this case specific to the working class - destined to rise up in the urban periphery to circumvent the high cost of centrally located plots. The urban periphery, due to the planned improvement of road and infrastructure networks contained in the urban zoning project by the city planner Martin Mächler, was thus well connected and integrated with the rest of the city.

In 1920 Bruno Taut had delved into these issues in his book Die Auflösung der Städte (The Dissolution of the City), in which socio-political, cultural, architectural and spatial dimensions become a long-term project; the text is intended as an implicit criticism of the traditional city through drawings described by written comment. Taut proposed a reversal of the logic of settlement based on the bond between man and earth, to the rediscovered link between man and nature, to the equilibrium and close relationship between human settlement and the countryside. From the very first drawing Taut compares the ancient, dense, alienating walled city to the city of the future,

---

1. Paola Ardizzola d’Oltremare
which emerges harmonically like a flower in a large meadow. Districts are arranged like four-leaf clovers and connected by narrow branches of streets, with houses arranged in more or less concentric circles around a green space and a centrally positioned and complex community centre. In this way, by respecting the *genius loci*, Taut formulates an urban planning proposal that serves as the meeting point between utopia and reality; indeed, this scheme would serve as the premise for each of the Siedlungen he would later realise. Thus the present becomes the space of utopia and in his new commissions, which would result in the architect building more than 10,000 apartments in Berlin alone, Taut moved beyond the trends of functionalism, considering not only the daily actions that take place in the housing units, but also human an longer considered merely decorative in value, but now also functional. The mass residential building was associated with the needs of forms of mass recreation, so that all citizens could satisfy those needs cultivated for so long by the bourgeoisie in its gardens, clubs and resorts. The masses must be able to enjoy a new life in the open air, previously reserved only for the upper classes: “The masses must inhabit the park, that is to take possession of it not in the sense of a passive enjoyment of the landscape, but in the sense of an active participation to be effected in the open air: playing, practicing sports, relaxing on the grass, splashing in the water, horse riding, dancing; moreover the taste for music, for art, for flowers, for physical pleasure are welcomed”.

These assumptions determined the realization of many urban parks in Germany beginning in the early 1900s. The new cult of the sun and the open air transferred all those activities that could be performed beyond the walls of the home outside, rendering nature a means of physical and spiritual development, and of human aggregation: meadows, without fixed paths or functionally predetermined elements, become a valuable space to be freely appropriated by the masses. The functional flexibility of parks was made possible by the use of wild plants in lieu of formal gardens, by lawns instead of ornamental flower beds and by paths instead of alleys; they became organisms constantly changing according to the seasons, true living structures in their colours, form
and texture. The new park abolished the system of winding paths and the artificial manipulation of nature; the meadows became the central core open to the population, paved walks were minimized and replaced by trails, privacy and solitude overcome to make room for the social-democratic ideal of the Weimar Republic.

The success of the urban park was largely due to the concept of returning to the roots of German culture, as explained by Marco De Michelis: “The mediation to be approached is that proposed by the acute polarity determined between the unnaturalness of the urban event and the unavoidable necessity for people to rediscover their own roots, in active physical contact, with the inexhaustible vitality of nature, of the German landscape [...]. Therefore, returning to nature signifies the retrieval by modern man of the ability to live ‘as a whole’, the winning back of a graceful synthesis between the individual and the community that assumes the identity of Volk. Here life becomes a natural and collective action, freed from any intellectual inhuman angst”.

In the “am Schillerpark” Siedlung in Berlin Wedding (1924 - ’28), Taut’s first in this city, exterior space plays a primary role in the design. Inside the Siedlung the architect wished to offer inhabitants the opportunity to take advantage of the same features offered by the park outside the settlement: the Schillerpark. He was familiar with Leberecht Migge’s theories on nature, and the two would later collaborate “to build” the urban garden of the Siedlung in Berlin Britz: Migge saw the urban garden as a balance between city and countryside and as a contribution to the self-sufficiency of the metropolis; the culture of labour in the factories must move into the culture of the soil to allow people to rediscover and conserve their origins. In this perspective, Taut designed “outdoor living spaces” (Aussenwohnraumes), a term he coined to explain the concept underlying the natural spaces of the Schillerpark, intended as the landscape of the houses. This landscape is not limited to the space visible from the window, but expanded to include the entire system of open spaces: the very architecture of the Siedlung, with its loggias and its balconies, contains essential elements for the creation of outdoor living space; simple meadows occupy the centre of the courtyards; they are not flat, but form a hollow while double rows of trees project beyond the alignment of the buildings, orienting the narrow internal streets outward. Some residential blocks are so distant from one another that the placement of the trees, extending up to the space of the road, offers glimpses of the typology of semi-open constructions.
Taut was convinced that the quality of outdoor space should be designed to impress the eye, and thus facilitate the identification between the inhabitants of the Siedlung and the Siedlung itself. Outdoor space, like interior space, must offer a feeling of comfort and satisfaction. Its design was based on the movement of the sun, the wind and correct orientation, greatly influencing the sensations of wellbeing and calmness that, already existing in the housing unit, can thus also be found outside. On the one hand, the park full of trees, on the other the brick coursing of the internal façades, interrupted by stair towers, are the expression of a seductive balance between nature and the built environment; the courtyard garden and the entrances to the houses are accessible only laterally. The space inside the perimeter consists not only of spaces related to individual apartments but assumes the value of a great collective space, destined to the inhabitants of the Siedlung and separated from the street by a gate and a perimeter fence. Despite the typology of the plan that called for constructions at the limit of the plot (Randbebauung), Taut managed to design the landscaping as a continuous element throughout the Siedlung, so similar to a row house settlement.

It is my opinion that what emerges from this detailed control of the plan is Taut’s own personality: his preference for clear, well-proportioned and richly expressive spatial compositions, the use of different systems of architectural tools to finely differentiate the “outdoor living spaces”, the total integrated between landscaping and urban design testify to the architect’s understanding not only of the psychological value of outdoor living space, but also its compositional and functional value.

The opinion offered by Kurt Junghanns, curator of the
first monograph dedicated to Bruno Taut, substantiates this view: “Taut indicated in the ability of the inner courtyards one of the most important innovations of the Twenties. In the Schillerpark Siedlung he could not yet realise the intermediate landscaped areas between the houses; however, he foresaw beautiful inhabitable courtyards, delimiting in one of the streets, with a skilful distribution of vegetation, an intimate and comfortable space in front of the balconies, thus creating that game of voids in the semi-open style that allows the creation of a perspective through a series of courtyards and confers a unity on the entire settlement”\(^5\). What moves the architect to gather the houses around a shared space, to expand far beyond the space of the inner courtyards, is the desire to maintain the circle of the ideal of the Stadtkrone\(^6\)(City Crown), while from a functional point of view this is explained by the necessity to provide more air, more light and more sun, particularly to the loggias, considering the short shadow of their hollow space.

The “am Schillerpark” Siedlung presents some features that can be found in all the subsequent Siedlungen designed by Bruno Taut; for this reason it can be considered an experimental model of archetypal value, from which Taut drew typologies and architectural details effectively reutilised in other projects. Examining the plans of his Berlin Siedlungen, what is evident is the essential purpose of building around a landscaped space, attributed with the same importance as any construction. The orographic configuration of the terrain and the apparent natural barriers constitute the most valuable aid in establishing an outdoor living space: the existing streets of the Schillerpark suggested to Taut the idea of creating landscaped spaces using offsets that determine wonderful perspectives, while the outdoor living space establishes the layout of the blocks of flats. In the Hufeisen Siedlung in Berlin Britz (1925 - ‘30) the bowl-shaped conformation of the terrain with its oval pond becomes the centripetal fulcrum from which all the layout of the impressive “horseshoe”-shaped urban framework originates. In the Onkel Tom’s Hütte Siedlung in Berlin Zehlendorf (1928 - ‘30) the character of the new urban settlement was dictated by the existing forest, to which the new built environment had to harmoniously relate. Aside from the typological choice, what remains clear is the care exercised by Taut in the design of private and circumscribed external spaces, even in the case of his row houses, for example using the device of the offset or rotating the end block to obtain a space that promotes the formation of a community spirit, as in the Freie Scholle Siedlungen in Berlin Tegel (1924 - ‘32) and Carl Legien Siedlungen in Berlin Prenzlauer Berg (1928 - ‘30).

The landscaped spaces designed by Taut are generally located within the building complex and correspond to a share of the private space, well differentiated and characterized if compared to public parkland. In the Onkel Tom’s Hütte Siedlung the harmony between buildings and landscaped spaces is more evident: situated in a grove of tall trees, the houses are spread apart to provide a unique balance between the natural and the built environment. The “landscape” inclusion is optimal, and reiterates how
the habitability of social housing far exceeds the rigours of rationalist dogmas. Similar to the Schillerpark, the Onkel Tom’s Siedlung displays Taut’s extraordinary attention to both human needs and practical, functional and concrete issues. One need only observe the cutting and colours of the windows, the shape of their frames designed to facilitate ventilation, the range of colours used on the facades facing the street and gardens, the small front doors with their protective awnings, the synthetic coloured line of the external handrails, the curving and gentle line of the interior staircase railings: these elements offer an idea of the attention paid by the architect to each single detail. Elsewhere, the articulation of the balconies, loggias and winter gardens plays a key role in the equilibrium of the façades, mediating between indoor and outdoor living space, and differentiating between street and courtyard elevations.

Another fundamental feature is the flat roof, used for the first time by Taut in the Schillerpark Siedlung and consequently in Siedlungen with taller than two stories. Taut’s use of the flat roof is neither a simple pursuit of formal gratification, nor a strong “break with the past” reaction; it is possible to introduce the hypothesis that the roots of this choice should be searched for in the theory of “climatologic” architecture first launched by Taut in a 1925 article entitled “The Aesthetics of Berlin Buildings”:

“Referring to its global setting and in comparison to all other metropolitan cities, Berlin has the advantage to possess and enjoy a hinterland and a characteristic landscape: the Mark, having remnants of an old culture and traditions present to some certain extent. On the other hand, there still exists some virgin land with the quality of a rural setting that magnetically attracts intellectually equipped people or those with elevated entrepreneurial skills, from far and wide. Referring to this characteristic of Berlin, I would like to underline an architectural and aesthetic feature that seems to have been long neglected […]. In all the theories of Architectural Aesthetics – Taut continues – there is little concern for climate, but according to me, this factor plays an important role […]. The landscape related character of the lowlands is the horizontal that reigns everywhere. All the components of the landscape are adapted and in the Mark are accentuated with the horizontal line of the pine forests far beyond the water’s surface. The winds easily sweep the territory away, and the view is never obstructed till the horizon […]. All the constructions, which were built in this area till the 1870s,
demonstrate a similar feature: that is the extreme terseness of the contours and a great love for simplicity [...]. From Eastern Prussia to the Bergisches Land, the most stripped down solution of cube and roof is found [...] in the simplest houses. There is always a recognizable attempt to push this concision to the limit, up to the very elimination of the view of the roof”. The flat roof, which at the time aroused a great deal of sensation, and which, nevertheless, would come to be recognized as a stylistic gesture of the Neues Bauen, for Taut simply derived from the peculiar form of the Berlin landscape and the characteristics of the Prussian City. This climatologic theory is confirmed in the common ideas of Berliners, who affirm that during the summer it was possible, in Berlin, to breathe the salty air coming from the North Sea, reaching the city through the Brandenburger region, which is entirely flat and with no relief. It is significant that Taut adopted the flat roof in the residential blocks of many other Siedlungen realised in Berlin after having successfully experimented with and utilizing it in Schillerpark. Precisely the flat roof, adopted in consideration of its low cost and great practicality, was cause for discussion during the realisation of the of Onkel Tom’s Siedlung: the residents of Zehlendorf claimed that someone wished to build ugly enormous modern boxes with flat roofs in the forest; hence the authorities defined the project “Uncle Taut’s Cabins”. The architect, who collaborated with Hugo Häring, Otto Salvisberg and Martin Wagner on the design, managed to demonstrate that pitched roofs were not the only means of expressing one’s love for forest and nature: “the real beauty of this forest consists in the fact that among the pine trees of a very common species there were also some large and beautiful birch trees. We realized a project, on the condition that not even one birch tree would be pulled out [...]. We earned a high degree of trust when we demonstrated that the flat roofs would have allowed for a view of the stand of trees behind, while pitched roofs would have completely hidden the tree canopy”. Taut did not build to experiment with theory, but instead to create harmony: buildings, in their reciprocal disposition and in relation to the surrounding natural environment, should first and foremost be pleasant, comfortable and worthy of accommodating the individual in a space that is the exact opposite of the factory in which he toils. The Siedlungen permitted a critical examination of the principal themes of the overall order of the expanding city; by abandoning a closed typology of building, they allowed for a reduction in density, an attention to design that expands the dwelling into nature, and a radical criticism not only of the dense city but of the garden city as well. Although this last issue represents an important ideological reference, with a clear notion of the return to the village, what emerges from the Siedlungen is both a claim and aspiration to be part of the city. In the model of the garden city, the role of the built environment is almost on par with that of nature that, however, constitutes an antithetical landscape compared to its urban counterpart; while in the majority of the Siedlungen the integration between the natural and built environment played a leading role in defining space: it is the single Siedlung in its entirety that expresses the desire for form.
The elements of spatial definition that, case-by-case, characterize the Siedlungen of Bruno Taut, emerge from the ideal city described by the architect in his early books.

His entire work is one of research that pursues human delight and fulfilment: for Taut, each Siedlung was a work of art, an experience concluded in itself, the beginning and end of a process, an organization of space; it was never the application of a theoretical or an abstract principle, or of an optimal standard. This explains why his typologies never gained a following: within their rational simplicity, each one of them becomes an original and unrepeatable urban invention. Thus, the Siedlungen pass from "forms of content" to "forms of the expression", each individually recognizable and with its own autonomous existence. Taut never repeated himself, even while departing from the same basic concept of the residential unit.

In his Siedlungen, the architect, who believed in the creative capacity of intuition, employs worldly wisdoms and solutions to underline the meaning and importance of the relationship between man and the space he inhabits, constructing an "imaginative" space. Thus, each inhabitant possesses not only his own dwelling, but also his own piece of nature, street and sky, with which he can identify, and through which he can perceive the outside world. His habitat attains a broader spiritual significance thanks to the intervention of Taut, who sublimates the dwelling’s objective value, elevating it to the evidence of new social ethics and ideals.

Notes

1 M. CHIAPPONI, E. GREGORI, “Wohnkultur e condizionamenti economici: gli alloggi popolari nella Germania degli anni ’20”, in Casabella, 457/1981, p. 16. In 1922 Bruno Taut had already fully framed the problem of the city’s development and the urban/rural relationship, suggesting and motivating the choice of the Siedlung: “Perhaps the city itself does no longer exist. It is a built-up area that becomes larger in the country, without a limit so one can say: here the city ends and the countryside starts. It does not radiate organically from a vertex, but it accumulates and banks up, formless, meaningless. [...] The land of the city is opposed to the asphyxiation of all its pores, the earth breathes and lives with all its microbes and in the end does not tolerate the purpose of destroying it”. Taut continues in the same article, urging his colleagues: “Who recognizes this has to support and help this movement, must clearly identify all the assumptions that have a general value and then devise solutions for a collective layout of the new form of settlement, not only from a constructive point of view, but also taking care of gardens and crops. It will not be always an easy way - the man of the city of stone can not suddenly become a man of the city of earth - but, little by little, a tradition will be created according to which the new Siedlung will be built, whose shape is still fluctuating today, still to be defined. The so-called garden city will be the connecting point of the various Siedlungen. The experience of the garden city will merge with the new path undertaken and the new Siedlung will be the result”. B. TAUT, “La nuova Magdeburgo, un’analisi realistica della città” in Frühlicht iss. 3, Spring 1922, It. ed. Mazzotta, Milan 1974, pp. 146-147.

2 Regarding the realization of Taut’s utopia, the writings of F. BORSI and G. K. KOENIG in Architettura dell’Espressionismo, Genoa 1967, pp. 59-94, remain valid to this day.


Published in Jena in 1919, in *Die Stadtkrone* Taut proposes a new ideal of the city, however, rooted in the medieval model, characterized by its “coronation”: a centre that dominates the city both physically and spiritually. All the creations to satisfy and elevate the spiritual and material needs of men are gathered in it, from art to society, politics and ethics.


IV - Garden and Nature in the City
GARDEN AS SYMBOL: NATURE/CITY

Curtis L. Carter

My approach to environmental aesthetics here begins with reflections on previous encounters with the subject, focusing initially on aesthetics of the city. Then follows a brief look at current theories of environmental aesthetics as they relate to nature aesthetics. The final section will consider garden as a symbolic link of nature/city. Nelson Goodman’s theory of exemplification will serve as an account of garden as a symbol linking nature and city.

I. Beginnings

This first section will serve as an introduction to various issues relating to aesthetics of the city. The investigations noted here began in 1972 with a symposium at Marquette University with which included the invited speakers Philadelphia city planner Edmund Bacon, New York architect John M. Johansen, who designed Island House and River Cross for the Roosevelt Island community project in Manhattan, Swedish aesthetician Teddy Brunius, architectural historians, city officials, street artists, and representatives from community organizations who contribute to the aesthetic environment. The aim of this symposium was to gain a better understanding of aesthetics of the city and perhaps to inspire public officials to take a greater interest in aesthetics as they form new plans for reshaping the image of the city.

The insights provided by Bacon, author of Design of Cities, were drawn from his leadership as chief of city planning responsible for transforming the then dying city of Philadelphia. His recounting of experiences in this role showed the importance of vision, charismatic leadership, and links to the sources of political power as essential elements in any major attempt to reshape a city. ¹

John M. Johansen’s keen sense of the importance of aesthetics in urban planning, and his commitment to avant-garde solutions in architecture,² were instrumental in shaping architectural components in the revival of Roosevelt Island. Roosevelt Island is located in the midst of the East River between Manhattan and Queens, New York and was formerly known as Welfare Island, and before that Blackwell Island, when it served as a home for prisons, hospitals, and a notorious lunatic asylum. Owned by the
city of New York and leased by the state of New York’s Urban Development Corporation for 99 years beginning in 1969, this site was envisioned as a model of innovative city planning incorporating not only diversity of race and culture but economy of land use, efficient transportation, and other amenities necessary to an aesthetically pleasing urban life style.

Johansen’s architectural solutions for Roosevelt Island, together with those of other leading American architects including Philip Johnson, Louis Kahn, and Josep Liuis Sert, provided dwellings to accommodate a range of low, medium and high income urban residents. Their aim was to create a balanced environment endowed with amenities necessary for harmonious city living.

The main insight for the aesthetics of the city that emerged from this symposium was the need to incorporate aesthetic values into city planning. This is most achievable when attached to urban leadership willing to take responsibility for aesthetic decisions in the field of action. One pragmatic lesson disclosed in both the Philadelphia and the Roosevelt Island projects is that an understanding of aesthetic values is an essential component in the training of city planners and others responsible for decisions concerning the development of cities.

Following this symposium, I organized a research seminar on the subject, “Aesthetics of the City,” which sent students out into the Milwaukee community to investigate specific sites using interviews, the camera, and observation in conjunction with insights from the symposium and readings on aesthetics of the city. The aim of this process was to identify key elements in the environment that contribute to the aesthetics of the city. Interviews and seminars with key officials, artists, architects, planners and everyday citizens, together with visual and written documentation, provided important information that could be viewed alongside the theoretical works on urban aesthetics by such writers as Lewis Mumford, Kevin Lynch, Grady Clay, Bacon, Johannes, and other theorists active at the time of these projects. Through these endeavors, the students and I, working with members of the community, acquired a greater sense of the importance of incorporating multiple voices in any approach to the aesthetics of the city.

Further research on aesthetics of the city in 1975 took me to Greece where I studied the still standing remains of the ancient cities. Life in classical Greek times (circa 450 B.C. E) was mainly urban in character, as most of the people lived in city states ranging in population from 1000 to Athens with a population estimated at approximately 150,000 and an additional 50,000 slaves and workers. The arts— including architecture, theater, sculpture, poetry, music and dance— were an important part of Greek city life. Remaining architectural forms from these sites provide for us today the core remains of their aesthetic features. Most notable among these architectural remnants are the skeletal remains of ancient theaters in Epidaurus and Delphi and the temples on the Parthenon in Athens that continue to define Greek culture. Also of interest were the architectural remains found in other ancient cities including Olympia, Corinth and
the Islands of Crete and Corfu. The remains of ancient cities, including architecture and the arts of theater, poetry and sculpture, in Greece give testimony to the value placed on aesthetics by the citizens of these ancient cities.4

Subsequently, I journeyed to Japan to explore the evolving forms of modern urban cities in Japan as representative of an Eastern approach to the aesthetics of city. The visit to Japan involved first hand observations, consulting with architects, aestheticians, and planners along the way. Visits to Tokyo, Kyoto, Nagasaki, Hiroshima, Nikko, Kamakura, Nara and others cities in Japan including a remote village on the Japanese sea coast, afforded the opportunity to experience a broader range of the aesthetic elements found in living cities in Japan. Here too the architecture past and present gives testimony to the importance of architecture in forming the aesthetic face of a culture. Of particular interest in this research in both Greece and Japan was the constancy of decay and renewal through the changing environments of the cities.

The next phase of my study of aesthetics of environmental aesthetics took on a broader approach focus on human settlements from an interdisciplinary approach. This phase followed from an invitation to represent the American Association for the Advancement of Science at the United Nations Vancouver Conference on Human Settlements known as Habitat, from May 31-June 11, 1976. The Vancouver Habitat meetings brought together the views of anthropologist Margaret Mead, global visionary Buckminster Fuller, economist Barbara Ward, politician Pierre Trudeau and other global thinkers to reflect on the problems of human settlements worldwide. Held in the city of Vancouver located on the Pacific Northwest Coast, this gathering offered a range of perspectives featuring aesthetic, economic, political, scientific, and broadly diverse cultural views concerning quality of life issues from Native American Indian to African, Asian, and European perspectives, as well as the views of North and South Americans. The aim of the Vancouver Habitat Conference and subsequent UN Habitat forums was to aid policy makers and local communities in developing both an understanding and working solutions for contemporary urban environments.

Following the Vancouver UN Habitat meeting, under joint sponsorship of he American Association for the Advancement of Science and the National Endowment for the Humanities, a group of 13 interdisciplinary scholars representing architecture, philosophy, history, economics, chemistry, psychology, sociology, mathematics, urban planning, and environmental studies, converged in Washington, D. C. during the summer of 1976 for joint research on “American Values and Human Habitation.”

My role in this project was to represent aesthetics and philosophy and to serve as chair of the research team. The principal aim of this group was to attempt to design a research agenda of topics for future investigation of the problems of human environments. Among the insights that emerged in the deliberations, as initially pointed out by anthropologist Margaret Mead, a participant in the project, is that the popularity of research themes is cyclical. This did not mean that research into recurring environ-
mental problems is unfruitful, but rather that each cycle contributes to “a spiral of knowledge” in which each cycle offers some advance in our understanding. Among the interdisciplinary themes identified in the American Values and Human Habitation project are these: the image of the habitat, the impact of demographic trends on habitat, the relations between individuals and institutions and habitat, human rights and habitat, and the theoretical contributions of the various disciplines.\(^5\)

II. Current Literature on Garden, Nature Aesthetics

Among the leading philosophical writers on environmental aesthetics today, Allen Carlson has argued persuasively that aesthetics and science are compatible territories with respect to understanding the aesthetic aspects of environment. Carlson maintains that the aesthetic appreciation of nature is best understood when based on knowledge achieved through the natural and environmental sciences, which focus on qualities actually present in the environment.\(^6\)

Noel Carroll argues, contrary to Carlson, that appreciating nature “often involves being moved or emotionally aroused by nature ….by attending to its aspects.”\(^7\) According to Carroll, aesthetic experience of nature need not depend on the cognitive knowledge provided by scientific categories. Also against Carlson’s scientifically based environmental aesthetics, Budd points out that such values as order, regularity, and harmony recognized in scientific theories concerning nature do not as such translate into aesthetic appreciation of the environment.\(^8\)

Drawing upon the contributions of phenomenology and alternative non-Western sources, Arnold Berleant bases his approach to environmental aesthetics on the notion of aesthetic engagement. Berleant’s theory of aesthetic engagement posits the continuity of human beings in concert with an understanding of nature, but also includes the social and political and the experiences of everyday life, as well as the natural.\(^9\)

These and other current discussions of the aesthetics of nature are well argued and critiqued in the writings of Malcom Budd, Glenn Parsons, Emily Brady and others. Parsons and Brady respectively offer a critical overview of the subject of environmental aesthetics of nature, each lending additional insights into the various approaches to the topic.\(^10\)

Among the questions of interest to environmental aestheticians is the dispute over whether aesthetic valuing of nature is intrinsic (valued as an end in itself based on properties appreciated for their own sake), or instrumental (value based on function or use). Given our experiences with the projects noted earlier, and a review of the literature concerned with environmental aesthetics, it seems best to override any attempt to choose between intrinsic or instrumental value when interpreting the aesthetics of nature.\(^11\) Kevin Lynch, author of *A Theory of Good City Form*, put the matter succinctly:
“Practical and esthetic functions are inseparable. Esthetic experience is a more intense and meaningful form of that same perception and cognition which is used, and which developed, for extremely practical purposes.”

It seems clear that the environment found in both nature and city can be valued for intrinsic qualities offering life-enhancing experiences, as well as for contributions to the practical solutions required to address ecological issues. Thus the life-enhancing aesthetic experiences afforded by both nature and city extend across the boundaries of intrinsic and instrumental aesthetic values. They include satisfaction based on the appreciation of a beautiful landscape or an architectural masterpiece as well as the practical benefits afforded by ecologically sound uses of nature and well-formed city environments.

III. Concepts: Garden Nature, City

The remaining sections of the essay focus on showing how garden serves as a symbolic bridge between the environments of nature and city. Garden, nature, and city are key terms in the analysis that follows.

Garden. Virtually every city is endowed with a significant variety of garden as an essential part of the urban environment. Garden is in the sense used here is a public space established for “display, cultivation and enjoyment” of plants, flowers and other forms of nature. Garden is created from natural materials including soil, living vegetation, trees, grasses, flowers, rocks. (The discussion here will be limited to gardens featuring plants and other natural elements, although I am aware of the views of Stephanie Ross and others who employs a wider notion of the term garden). However, alongside these natural elements, garden often includes architectural constructions and may embrace a variety of functions both recreational and symbolic. Like city, garden is a constructed environment using principles of design to organize the natural elements in some order suitable for aesthetic appreciation. Garden is thus a microenvironment that offers creative opportunities and multisensory delight to both its creators and appreciators. As well, garden contributes to other life-enhancing practical functions of city. For example, garden serves as an important design element in the spatial organization of city and attractiveness of city environments for its residents and visitors. Garden differs from park which may include some of the elements found in garden, but is also used for various purposes such as hosting monuments, recreation, playgrounds, and swimming.

Nature: In examining the literature of nature aesthetics, one finds a wide range of understandings of nature. For some, nature consists of picturesque visual vistas, featuring mountains, forests or lakes. In this popular sense, nature is valued mainly for its visual features, and its aesthetic value is sometimes likened to appreciation of a
painting. This view of nature has been criticized for its failure to differentiate aesthetic appreciation of nature from appreciation of art, and for its failure to address ecological values that contribute to aesthetic appreciation as well as to other aspects of human well being. Recent interest in the aesthetics of nature, as noted above, has viewed the appreciation of nature in a more comprehensive manner so as to include information provided by the natural and environmental sciences. A contemporary understanding of nature is further complicated by its alterations resulting from “natural evolution” and from human interventions and exploitation of natural resources resulting in significant changes in the “natural landscape.”

City: City is a specialized space in nature. City offers a constructed environment representing human values and interests, shaped by the density of human settlements and specialized functions including its economic, political, and cultural processes. While city offers a plenitude of images for aesthetic appreciation based on its visual properties, aesthetic appreciation of cities follows from active participatory experiences in its spaces, including activities that extend beyond the visual. Engagement with architecture, commerce, government, manufacturing, transportation, and cultural life all offer possibilities for aesthetic participation. As Arnold Berleant has observed, the focus of interest and influence in cities has shifted throughout history and continues to evolve. The one constant in city environment is change.

IV. Garden in History

Hence, in the present context, I propose to examine garden as a cultural construction that provides a bridge between the aesthetic environments of nature and city. A brief look at the history of garden will show that garden is present in the histories of cities worldwide. Garden has existed for centuries, for example, in Egypt, Mesopotamia, Crete, Mexico, China, Japan, and Africa, as well as in Western Europe and the Americas. Moreover, garden is an integral component of modern cities. Historically, some of the principal types of garden include royal gardens attached to palaces, gardens next to shrines or monasteries, Zen gardens intended for philosophical contemplation, and public gardens such as Central Park in New York. Zen Gardens in Eastern cultures are intended for philosophical contemplation. Gardens in contemporary cities such as Cairo also provide services to promote social welfare of the needy as well as to advance social interaction and healthy life-styles. Botanical gardens offer rare species of both aesthetic and scientific interest. Currently there are over 1800 botanical gardens in 150 countries.

Garden Design East and West

For the purpose of gaining some perspective on the garden as a source of aesthetic appreciation, it is useful to compare Western European gardens of the 16th to 19th cen-
turies with Chinese gardens which represent different philosophical and cultural values as well as different approaches to styles of landscape design. Garden in both cases includes natural trees, flowers, grasslands, streams and ponds, and rocks. As well, they may include sculptures, architectural buildings, pavilions, and bridges and their supporting engineering systems. All of these elements are orchestrated according to a particular style of landscape design.

European gardens such as the gardens at Versailles Palace in France are arranged symmetrically along a central axis. Perhaps following the rationalist philosophy from Pythagoras to Descartes, natural and constructed elements of the European garden are carefully ordered according to a geometrically based formal order as in the Versailles gardens. This style of garden emphasizes the aesthetic values of harmony and balance. Even the organic manifestations of the natural plants are carefully manicured to accent the formal aspects of the overall garden design.

Major cities in China including Beijing and Shanghai, as well as XuZhou, Nanjing, and Yangzhou in the south of China all support important gardens as integral parts of their contemporary urban adornments. The styles of Chinese gardens have evolved for more than three thousand years. In contrast to the geometrically based garden design, traditional Chinese garden design favors irregular patterns. Accordingly the hand of the garden designer is concealed as much as possible. Although there are common natural and constructed elements in the different city gardens, each bears the style of the locale where it resides. Natural elements such as rocks, stones and water in the Chinese gardens are intended to bring the garden experience as close as possible to the experience of actual mountains and streams as they exist in nature. In some Chinese gardens, the plants are used as symbols. For example, bamboo suggests strength and resilience of character; pine connotes longevity and persistence, while the lotus symbolizes purity.

Perhaps reflecting the influence of Chinese scholars in governance, this emphasis on nature in the design of gardens is in keeping with philosophical Taoism and Chan Buddhism. Both Taoism and Buddhism identify the human relationship with nature as a source of refuge from the worldly complexities and as a form of spiritual nourishment.

In Japan, traditional gardens dating from the tenth to the twelfth centuries echo in part the influences of the Chinese gardens. Here sparse plantings, colorful flowers, deciduous plants and a mountain-shape mound located on an island in the center of a pond are signature elements. Two or more bridges connect the mountains to the shore. Also prominent, especially in Kyoto beginning in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries are Zen gardens intended to facilitate meditation. Zen gardens such as Saionji located in Kyoto favor sparse, abstract designs using stones to represent mountains.

The urban gardens cited thus far mainly serve as objects of aesthetic appreciation offered by physical and psychological engagement attained from being present in the environments. However, these gardens serve other important purposes by contributing
to the overall attractiveness of the city as a center of culture benefitting the quality of life and tourism, thus aiding economic wellbeing. On another level, the garden may serve as a means of educating the citizens by providing knowledge of flora and fauna and the other forms of nature that are represented.

Gardens in contemporary cities also function in other practical ways directed toward enhancing city life. For example, Al Azhan Garden Park, created by the Aga Kahn Trust, has participated in renovation of the historic Das Al-Ahmar area of Cairo. It also offers support for low income Egyptians including rehabilitation, support for healthcare, and education. Another garden park with expanded public services is the Koya Garden Project. The Koya garden project establishes garden in third world countries around the world to benefit the poor and homeless by developing community gardens. Both projects use the concept of garden to provide social interaction and healthy life-styles. These projects illustrate the notion that aesthetic enhancement though garden has a practical, extrinsic dimension as well as the intrinsic. In such instances the aesthetic is achieved through the successful fulfillment of the activities undertaken to advance human well being.

The aim of this brief look at garden in the environments of city in different cultures has been to show that garden is an essential contribution to the urban environment. It brings together elements of both the natural and the constructed fabric that comprise the well-being of life in the city irrespective of other cultural differences. Even its most elemental forms as an expression of personal interest and creativity, the private gardens that populate cities across the world inevitably draw the attention of passersby, who pause to enjoy the look and feel of garden as well as to admire the effort that its makers have extended to enhance city environment.

V. Garden as Symbol Linking Nature and City environments

In the remaining section of this paper I propose to frame the relation of garden to nature/city in a more philosophical setting. In order to undertake this task, I will refer to Nelson Goodman’s theory of aesthetic symbols. In his Languages of Art and elsewhere in his writings, Goodman introduces language to discuss the symbolic functions of works of art. I will draw upon only a small segment of his rich and complex account of artistic symbols to try to suggest how we might understand garden as a symbol that helps to explain the relation of garden to nature/city. The concept that best serves our purposes here is exemplification. Exemplification is one of three main forms of symbols used to explain how art works function as symbols. Exemplification, as distinct from representation or expression, refers to a relation between a symbol and its referent. In this case, the reference is to the relation between garden and city/nature. Symbols exemplify properties that they both possess and refer to.
symbols as such require literal possession of the properties they exemplify, and the principal route or direction of the reference is from what is being symbolized (in this case nature/city) to the symbol (garden). Exemplification is also one of symptoms or indicators of the aesthetic in Goodman’s account of artistic symbols and may perhaps lend support to my view that garden may function as a form of aesthetic symbol.

Exemplification literally takes place between garden and nature as both contain living trees, flowers, rocks and water. In Chinese gardens, for example, rocks with animated forms and surfaces exemplify the mountains and garden ponds reference smooth lakes of natural landscapes. Similarly, exemplification takes place between garden and city, for example, through the presence of architectural pavilions and other buildings in both garden and city. Garden also exemplifies features shared by nature and city (that is the very same features are found in all three). For example, bridges connect portions of land that are separated by streams of water. In nature and city the bridge establishes a connection between two naturally divided regions of the environment. In this instance, bridges in nature and in city both show the intervention of human design and construction. Garden too possesses these same features. On another level, garden literally exemplifies cycles of growth, maturity, and decay that also occur in both nature and city.

My proposal to think of garden as a symbol for understanding nature/city connections also involves the use of metaphor. According to Goodman, expression is metaphorical exemplification. Following Goodman, I will understand metaphor as a conceptual process where “a familiar scheme is implicitly applied to a new realm or to its old realm in a new way.” In keeping with the example cited above, the growth, maturity, and decay that are experienced in garden may also serve as a metaphor to express the occurrences of these processes as they might occur in nature and city.

Since garden is a work of art in at least some instances, metaphorical rather than literal reference seems an appropriate symbolic means suited to focus on the aesthetic aspects of garden. In such instances, the literal features of garden translate into metaphors endowed with aesthetic richness that succinctly captures aspects of the relation of nature and city that extend beyond the literal connections.

Metaphorical understanding of garden, allows for garden’s exemplifying traditional aesthetic values such as natural or formal beauty, and pleasure as well as other particular expressive properties such as harmony, balance, or elegance, that aestheticians might desire to associate with aesthetic features of nature and city environments. As well, metaphor seems to capture the essence of mood and feeling, even imaginative reflections that one experiences when enjoying the spaces afforded by garden. None of these qualify as literal or “objective” qualities of the respective environments.

Hence, garden as symbol may employ literal exemplification as when it focuses on certain features of the natural or city environment in order to make them salient, or to show how the two are linked. The features may then be straightforwardly recogniz-
able in nature or city or both, or available to be metaphorically applied to nature or city or both. For example, in the Jewish Museum in Berlin there is a garden that contains plants from all of the countries where Holocaust survivors settled (literal exemplification). The ground of the garden is uneven. There is no place where you can get a firm foothold. The garden is thus a metaphor for the refugee experience that is literally exemplified in the garden by virtue of the plants from the respective countries of Holocaust survivors.24

The ethno-botanical garden of Oaxaca, Mexico exemplifies both natural references to the landscape and cultural references to the history of the region. Located in the former 16th century monastery of Santo Domingo, the garden is organized by climactic zones and also shaped to convey a sense of past history of the region beginning with the use of seeds 10,000 years old. The ensemble of plants chosen by the anthropologist includes prickly pear and organ pipe cactuses and a rich sampling of additional plants from the region. Together these plants evoke a sense of the natural landscape known as a land of cactus and serpent “flower-bedecked and thorny, dry and hurricane-drenched….“ (Pablo Neruda) A red dye obtained from squeezing native white parasitic insects known as cochineal colors the water in a garden fountain, thus serving as a polemic reminder of the ancient blood letting rituals of Zapotec ancestors and also of the blood shed during Colonial conquests of the region.25

The use of garden to exemplify features of nature/city does not presuppose the existence of an established symbol system as might exist with a language or language like system. Rather the reference class for discussing garden and its use as a symbol for understanding nature/city matters is based on experience. Experience in this case will include knowledge of what constitutes garden, the variety of garden in history, and what properties garden has in common with nature/city.

Reference in the use of garden as a form of symbol here is perhaps in some respects perhaps closer to pictorial competence that enables us to comprehend pictures than to linguistic competence based on a system of semantic or syntactic rules. This is true to the extent that our experience of garden is significantly influenced by visual sensations and perception. However, appreciating the experience of garden, unlike that of painting or other visual arts, invokes all of the senses with the possible exception of taste. In the words of Catherine Elgin, “We hear the sounds of the birds and the insects (and in a city garden the muted sounds in the city in the distance). We smell the flowers and fallen leaves. We feel the ground under our feet (and perhaps feel other plants as we walk past them).” 26

The reading of garden for insight into nature or city environments draws on a broader range of experience and knowledge connecting these entities. The principal basis for understanding garden as a symbol of the connection between nature and city is the “natural” relation that exists between the symbol (garden) and its referents (nature/city), by means of shared features, e.g. living plants, rocks, water from nature,
and architecture, bridges, sculptures linked by design contributed by the human mind and actions. Interpretation of garden as a symbol of nature/city connections depends on a complex array of experience drawing upon observation, including visual, auditory, and other sensory experiences of every day encounters with nature and city, as well as the various systems of acquired knowledge gained from historical, scientific, philosophical and aesthetic sources.

The field of reference for identifying, comparing, and interpreting garden, as symbol is not an abstract system. Rather, it is the substantial body of gardens in cities throughout the world. Each instance of garden brings attention to the natural and cultural elements particular to the city environment in which it resides. The symbolic relationship in this instance is one of sampling the properties characteristic of nature and city in garden rather than describing or depicting.

The “rightness ” or effectiveness of a symbol as Goodman pointed out depends on what we want the symbols to accomplish. Standards vary with the type of symbols. Since our interest here is in understanding the aesthetic features of nature/city, it is useful to focus on aspects of symbols that best articulate the aesthetic features of our subject. In any event, the measure of a symbol’s worth rests on its ability to inform perception and enhance our understanding of the matter under consideration. Garden will best inform our understanding of city/nature when our experience takes into account a wide variety of gardens in reference to a range of nature/city configurations.

It is not sufficient, however, simply to introduce symbols for the sake of novelty alone. The concepts that we introduce should serve some useful interest. In this case the theme of the conference, “Nature/City” calls for rethinking how we might better understand how nature and city are connected. One of the issues in conceptualizing nature and city environments is identifying images of sufficient richness to contemplate the complexities of these entities. Garden offers a living symbol which directly embraces aspects of city/nature that are less accessible to human perception or understanding through either verbal or pictorial means of understanding the nature/city environments. Hence, the use of garden as a symbol in the present context seems altogether worthy of consideration.

Conclusion

To conclude this discussion of garden as a symbol linking nature/city, let me summarize briefly and draw some implications. I have argued that that garden functions as a cognitive symbol exemplifying both literally and metaphorically important features of nature and city environments. Like the concept of city, garden covers a range of artifacts from the Imperial Garden of the Chinese Qianlong Emperor (Qing Dynasty) in Beijing’s Forbidden City intended as a living space for the Emperor in his retirement,
to the formal gardens of Versailles and beyond, even possibly embracing a simple window box of verdant foliage and blossoms perched on the windowsill of a contemporary New York urban apartment. Hopefully, this application of garden to the relation of nature/city captures a fresh understanding of the affinities between the three entities, and invites rethinking of the role of garden in this context.

In the larger context of environmental aesthetics, the analysis offered here might have something to say about some of the central questions of this field. Among these, is the question whether aesthetic appreciation of garden can be considered a form of appreciating nature? Another matter is whether aesthetic interest in nature/city environments should concern itself mainly with intrinsic (valued for its own sake) or extrinsic (useful) aspects of environment. There is not sufficient time to address these larger questions in detail. However, it seems that the analysis offered here supports the view that appreciation of garden is indeed a form of appreciating nature. Similarly, it follows that appreciation of garden is a part of aesthetics of city. With respect to the second issue, the analysis here supports the view that environmental aesthetics must address both intrinsic and extrinsic aspects of garden as well as nature/city.

In short, our analysis here argues that that garden is an especially useful symbol for demonstrating the connections between aesthetics of nature and city. Garden symbolizes important aspects of nature/city as sources of aesthetic appreciation and also as useful contributions to human welfare.

Interest in the aesthetics of nature and city environments depends on the context of inquiry. The journey travelled in this essay has taken us from personal investigations of practical solutions to aesthetics of the city in three cultures to a review of current literature on environmental aesthetics focused mainly on nature, and finally to a philosophical analysis of garden using the concept of exemplification to explore the symbolic link between nature and city. A practical interest in environment, as reflected in the earlier part of the essay is directed toward investigations of environmental aesthetics which includes extrinsic ecological and social aspects of the environments. Philosophical inquiry directs attention toward concepts and arguments intended to frame the questions aimed at a broader theoretical understanding pertaining to aesthetics of nature/city environments. Our investigation here thus is intended as a further contribution to the spiral of understanding that relates aesthetics both to the practical solutions of environmental concerns pertaining to nature/city and to theoretical issues that arise in the course of pursuing environmental aesthetics.
Notes

5 American Values and Habitat: A Research Agenda (Washington, D. C.: American Association for the Advancement of Science: Division of Public Sector Programs, 1976), 4.
11 For a discussion of this problem see Emily Brady, Aesthetics of the Natural Environment (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2003), 23-26. Brody argues that aesthetic value of the environment is a response dependent non-instrumental, emergent value informed by the properties of the environment.
13 Although my use of garden here requires natural, living plants and other elements from nature, I recognize that plants in gardens are cultivated and hence may differ from species in raw nature.
16 provides a useful and informative account of garden in landscape design of cities across the world. (Who or what provides a usual and informative account?)
17 The research of Huang Zhongshan, “The Differences between the Garden Aesthetic Styles of Western Europe and China,” unpublished paper, 2012, has contributed to this section of my paper.
19 In some instances the distinction between the use of the labels ‘garden’ and ‘park’ become blurred as when ‘park’ includes elements of both. For example in Al Azan Garden Park and the Koya Garden Park, which function as garden while performing additional social functions. This is true of Central Park in New York as well.
20 I would like to thank Catherine Elgin for comments offered on an earlier draft of this section. The paper has greatly benefitted from her suggestions.


Thanks to Catherine Elgin who provided me with this example.


Catherine Elgin, Letter commenting on an earlier draft, June 14, 2012.
1. Urban diseases are widespread these days; thus, the city dwellers suffering from oppression crave the combination of urban living space and nature, and they wish a landscape which might bring exchange and relaxation into the public space. This is the same as the mental state of the East Asian traditional literati, who pursued “outer Confucianism, inner Taoism.” The European formal garden, in its typical symmetric arrangement, stands for aristocraticism or nationalism, that is, the history of social groups rather than personal life; on the other hand, the natural landscape garden, excluding artificial symmetry as shown in formal landscape garden, realizes the realm of the “correspondence of the heart and the substance” and “blending of feeling and setting” by arranging landform, water, buildings and trees as they are. We can refer to the East Asian model of natural landscape garden as a measure in order to help and resolve the problems of modern-day urban life.

The aim of this article is to consider the stylistic and ideological characteristics of the landscape garden which the previous East Asian literati established in order to express their own world of spirit, and in order to suggest the agenda and practical plan to apply to the establishment of landscape garden in the city to resolve the problems of modern-day city dwellers.

2. “Reclusion” and the East Asian landscape garden

In the pre-Tang dynasty, literati felt threatened by the rapid social change, thus they were greatly affected by the spirit of seclusion in terms of thought and behaviour. The tendency toward anchoritism, originally meaning isolating oneself from the world caused by such a political situation in the pre-Tang dynasty, passed into the type of spiritual anchoritism under the situation of political stability and the unity of Confucianism, Buddhism, and Taoism since the Tang and Song dynasties. From the term “seclusion” or the relationship between seclusion and literati, the situation of calling the established recluse to the world in the Han dynasty changed into the phase that the
trend of living as a recluse was in fashion owing to the chaotic situation of the world during the Wei and Jin dynasties. Meanwhile, in the Jin dynasty Wang Kang-ju classified reclusion as “great reclusion” and “petty reclusion”; and in the Tang dynasty Bai Ju-yi mentioned the term “semi reclusion” for the first time. From this time on, the three of petty reclusion, semi reclusion, and great reclusion became a standard expression of a recluse’s mental state. Petty reclusion indicates that a lofty gentleman who considers human affairs with a philosophical eye and intends to live as a recluse without being in conflict with or being contact with the world and finally goes back to nature. Semi reclusion means to live as a recluse in the troubled world. It is at this stage the recluse reaches a spiritual serenity, that is, not seeing the world as it is seen and as not listening to the world as it is in reality heard. And lastly, great reclusion means that since literati have their official positions in the Court, they maintain their integrity and spiritual comfort without becoming involved in the corruption and irrationalities of the world.

Petty reclusion, in fact, means cutting oneself off from society, so it is reclusion tinged with Taoism. Great reclusion was used to be respected as the traditional literati’s ideal behavior; however, later the recluse acting great reclusion was considered as a selfish hypocrite who preserved his own purity and integrity and paid no attention to others. Meanwhile, semi reclusion was also a type of reclusion which did not differ much from Taoistic behavior. It was, however, solidified into the Confucian literati’s behaviour because Confucianism, Buddhism, and Taoism had been united since the Tang and Song dynasties. Anchoritism, which literati considered ideal finally became the model of semi reclusion that Bai Ju-yi mentioned, which is expressed as the status of “not busy also not leisurely” or “likely to come out also likely to hide up”.

For literati, on the other hand, the semi recluse was also the most practical alternative. Literati could not be petty recluses as well as coping with everything with such a hypocritical cause as the great recluse, and thus, they chose the semi recluse as a practical alternative. From this time on, the semi recluse was conventionalized into visible forms, in other words, natural landscape was brought into the house as a form of landscape garden, which is the alternative of the real landscape, and which consists of a small mountain, a pond, plants, trees and etc. Thus, we can say that a landscape garden is the product made by such a psychological aim for living in seclusion as semi reclusion. This is the history of landscape garden.

3. East Asian aesthetics and literati landscape paintings

Literati liked to express their belief and ideals in the art of poems and paintings. Art was an important requirement to qualify as literati as well as a means of communication between them. Of literati art, landscape painting as a formative art is di-
rectly and significantly connected with landscape garden. When painting landscapes, literati did not describe the landscape itself but symbolically expressed their principles and ideals through landscape paintings. This is a very important characteristic which shows literati paintings are different from court paintings.

To the literati, just like the western contemporary painters, painting was another philosophical expression. Thus, what was important to them were not formal elements such as lines, colours, and composition, but the symbolic expression of values. This led the literati to produce and carry out a unique methodology, that is, the combination of icons and codes\(^1\), which is similar to the relationship between *signifiant* and *signifié* in semiology. Icons or forms are value-laden information symbolically.
containing codes or themes. Moreover, they are the texts transformed into images, which express visualized ideology. Through the combination of icons and codes or the method expressing visualized ideology, the literati produced unique aesthetical conceptions. Some East Asian aesthetical conceptions related to landscape gardens are as follows:

(1) Activity and tranquility: “The wise find pleasure in water; the virtuous find pleasure in hills. The wise are active; the virtuous are tranquil.” Since Confucius made this remark, “activity” and “tranquility” as East Asian aesthetical conceptions have been compared to the character of jun-zi, a man of honour and integrity in Confucian School. The properties of water which flows from a high place to a low place quickly is compared to jun-zi’s wisdom, and tall solemn mountains are compared to jun-zi’s benevolent character. Here one can find the combination of words meaning: “the benevolent-mountains-tranquility” and “the wise-water-activity”.

Fig. 3: Li Fang-ying, Qing

Fig. 4: Lee Yin-sang, Joseon
(2) Beauty of personality: Some plants and trees also have been compared to jun-zi’s particular behaviour due to their substantial properties: for example, the plum blossom’s Great Spirit to withstand frost and to fight off snow, orchids’ cleanliness and loftiness, bamboo’s high integrity, lotus’s not being polluted in spite of being rooted in the mud, evergreen pine tree’s enduring hard freezes. The natural beauty of those plants and trees which derived from their properties, through personification, became an expression of jun-zi’s personal beauty.

(3) Ugliness: East Asian artists sought to transcend a limited beauty, that is, a formal beauty, for their main aim was not the description of outward appearance but
the expression of human nature or natural substance. Thus, they invented the beauty of simplicity, which was completely opposite of beauty in form. The simplicity means the status which skims off the pleasure of the five sensory organs and leaves the essence of nature and human beings. Finally, the eventual peak of the beauty of simplicity was concluded in the beauty of ugliness. Thus, the aesthetics of “real beauty” was established: “the simpler, the more beautiful”, in other words, “the more ugly, the more beautiful”.

(4) Clumsiness: Similar to ugliness, this is one of the most important and highest aesthetical conceptions, which means natural plain beauty. The rough, withered, and crude shapes express the conception of clumsiness.

(5) Appropriate landscape: This is a technique using the distant natural landscape as a part of composition materials for landscape painting; it is also a method to create a cubic effect on the plain screen of paintings. Appropriate landscape has two meanings: One is to express the passage of time in space; the other is to express the aesthetical conception of “separateness”. The former means that an activity of the distant landscape comes to the expression of time to a viewer, and so the viewer experiences another time beyond the time of this world where the viewer is. The latter, separateness means the cubic space between the distant view and the close view. The separated space stands for the mental realm meaning dignity and broad-mindedness.
4. The application of literati aesthetic forms to landscape garden

The type of landscape garden is divided into two: formal style and natural style. The primary characteristic of the formal landscape garden is that buildings, squares, streets, water, flowers and trees are symmetrically arranged. The major European landscape gardens are generally formal in style, a typical example is Italian terrace garden during the Renaissance. On the other hand, the characteristic of natural landscape garden is that, excluding artificial symmetry as exemplified in formal landscape garden, landform, water, buildings and trees are naturally arranged as they are. The East Asian traditional landscape garden is composed in such a natural style. Here, the naturality of landscape garden is an expression of visualized ideology, in which the ideal values of literati brought.

East Asian natural garden as a practical expression of landscape painting realizes the realm of “correspondence of the heart and the substance” and “blending of feeling and setting” by establishing a microcosm of nature within the limited space. This could be said to be the combination of Confucian aesthetics and Dhyana aesthetics. To literati, the nature in landscape painting also means the utopia which is able to see, to go, to walk, and to live. If the practical activity is the realm of Confucianism, such internal utopia is the realm of Taoism. Then, natural landscape garden could be said to be the combination of Confucian aesthetics and Taoistic aesthetics. Natural landscape garden is ultimately the unity of Confucianism, Zen Buddhism, and Taoism.

These following aesthetical themes are expressed in landscape gardens in the same way as that of the literati paintings.

The most fundamental components of landscape garden are mountains and water, which have traditionally meant nature in East Asia. In the landscape garden, mountains and water are placed in the style of “fronting water with a hill at the back” with the geomancy consideration, making a pond with pouring water in a sunken place, and constructing a small mountain with the dug-out soil. Here the mountains and water are connected to “activity-tranquility” as aesthetical conceptions and “wisdom-benevolence” as philosophical conceptions.

Lots of plants and trees in the garden are the icons implying their own codes respectively as mentioned before.

Odd stones scattered around the garden are related to the aesthetical conception of ugliness, and express human nature or natural substance where artificial and decorative appearances are skimmed off.

The two major characteristics of natural landscape garden are as follows: One is that landscaping is derived from the natural geographical features as they are, in an attempt to develop the natural curve of rolling hills and water route; the other is that plants and trees are placed in a state of nature, which is to say that they are not placed in lines artificially and not trimmed up. Such characteristics are linked to the core con-
ception of East Asian aesthetics, clumsiness.

Aesthetical conceptions such as ugliness and clumsiness bring about a change in aesthetic recognition, and encourage self-reflection on the fixed idea and the dominating discourse and finally breaking from them, which are also the motto of Western surrealism. Thus, in such a space in the landscape garden, when a person, digesting the meaning, witnesses and feels the components of the garden, the person already becomes to get the time of philosophical thinking and self-examination.

The style of appropriative landscape set up in the garden also is of great significance. In spite of the fact that the viewer’s time and the distant landscape’s time are in the same time zone, it seems to the viewer that the time of the distant landscape relatively becomes the other’s time due to the unmoving diaphragm of close view. This experience provides another time for ruminating one’s time or being. Through such introspection, one can foster and expand his magnanimity through the cubic space between distant views and close views, that is, the space of “separateness”. The placement of flowers over the pond or the structure of seeing the moon over the windows is a good example of appropriative landscape.

Meanwhile, the entrance and exit of the landscape garden have to be placed in the same spot. This means that one is given the flow of human traffic to take a round in the garden. Taking a walk around in the garden means that one finally returns to the starting point, thus, it stands for the principle that the beginning and the end are the same, which is also related to the law of *yin* and *yang* or negative and positive.

Besides, a quadrangle shape must be thoroughly excluded in the natural landscape garden, for the quadrangle shape is an artificial product which does not exist in the natural world.

### 5. Conclusion

We can raise some questions which natural garden suggests, as follow: relaxation, building character with natural landscape, releasing stress by establishing another world as utopia, and liberation of personality beyond political order and social norms.

The most fundamental purpose and theme of the landscape garden can be summarized as follows: transcendence of reality, going back to nature, and oneness with nature.

(1) Why do city dwellers intend to transcend reality? Because they wish to escape from such reality (as a social group) in order to resolve the burden of mind and body derived from the relationship between them and social groups. The natural landscape garden can provide a sanctuary for them.

(2) Why do city dwellers look for nature? To them, reality means civilization, social groups, and relationships. Nature is the state of pre-reality, where city dwellers are out of reality regard as the ideal returning place.
Why do city dwellers seek to unite with nature? It is because they can get mental magnanimity from nature. Cultivating magnanimity means the expansion of sensitivity, which is the source of creativity. City dwellers can obtain the universal and harmonious lessons and wisdom from nature, and apply them to their present life and future outlook. Nature as pre-civilization reminds city dwellers of nostalgia, dreams, hope, purity and passions, who forgot or lost those. The natural landscape garden is not only a mere break or scenic area but also the philosophical area for meditation, self-examination, and spiritual enlightenment.

Notes

1 Icons generally refer to such individual items of composition in paintings as mountains, water, people, houses, pavilions, small bridges, boats, waterfalls, wind, moon, clouds, mist, snow, rain, rocks, trees, flowers, birds, animals, insects, musical instruments, etc. Codes are the meanings and messages that such icons imply. For a simple example in Confucian aesthetics, the code of a bamboo as an icon implies the spirit of a junzi, a man of honor and integrity.

2 If shapes are endowed with meanings and values, an ideology emerges from the shapes. In other words, cognitive ideology emerges from visual shapes. We can regard such ideology as visualized ideology.
In the city of Rio de Janeiro - an urban center of high density and great diversity – inhabitants of skyscrapers, a common typology of the local homes, show a strong desire to own a balcony in their living space. This balcony is expected to provide substantial improvements, turning it into one of the main attractions of real estate in this city.

Among the various expectations deriving from the carioca’s imaginary, the offer of contact with nature is what many people expect from their balconies. As an extension of the house, it favors the view of the landscape as well as the integration of inhabitants with their immediate surroundings.

However, this contact with nature is not always promoted by balconies in carioca homes, as the urban scenery of Rio de Janeiro does not often provide a view of a natural landscape. This is due either to buildings obstructing the view or disturbances from the public space, which curb the physical presence of the inhabitants in such a transitional environment between one’s home and the street.

The confidence of being in touch with nature due to the offer of a privileged view of natural landscape surroundings has won Rio the slogan of “wonderful city”. In many cases, however, it actually gives the impression of a simple sensation related to the inhabitants’ perception of finding themselves outside their homes, where the vision of certain fragments, such as part of the skyline or a tree in the street is enough to create a feeling of sufficient fresh air for one to feel outside the urban environment.

What is expected from the balcony in residential buildings in terms of contact with nature (which is certain to be achieved, as it depends only on the inhabitants themselves), is its environment as a garden. This is one of the moments when this “outside area” of residential units compensates for the lack of a yard thereby making one feel as though one were not living in an apartment (which is pointed out by many as one of the advantages of having a balcony).

The balcony’s environment as a garden may be observed simply by the presence of plant-pots, the most common adornment in such a living environment. However, this appropriation of the balcony as a place in which the inhabitant grows plants has taken on larger proportions, often demanding a landscape project.

It is certain that the size of some balconies contributes to this fact, but the issue is mainly the inhabitant’s strong desire to be in touch with nature, without having to leave
the “cozy shelter”, due to the constant sense of a lack of public security in public spaces.

According to Martins, an “increase in crime rate, robbery and general violence is driving citizens not only to lock themselves inside gated communities, but also to set up a series of pleasure activities aggregated to their residences” (2007, p.7, our translation). This is something that, in the author’s opinion, explains the “exacerbation of the idea of the house as a nest” (2007, p7, our translation) indicated by the “Pesquisa Casa Brasileira de 2015” (2015 Research of the Brazilian Household), coordinated by Angelo Deveza (2006).

In this paper the purpose is to indicate new behaviors of the population regarding their living habits. Based on the households in the cities of Sao Paulo, Curitiba and Rio de Janeiro, a trend for the year 2010 and 2015 points to an increase in the importance of the sense of security and protection that a house must have. This, according to the research coordinator himself, will partially be reflected in the treatment given to internal gardens and balconies that start to be considered as a space of the inhabitants who isolate themselves from the world.

The setting of the balcony as a garden thus reveals the desire to bring inside some of the “green” and peace which are usually not present in the neighborhood. Furthermore, the distance between the house and the street add is extended, and the apparently opposed reality of these two worlds is accentuated.

Besides the natural beauties and the various creations of men that make up the urban landscape of this so-called wonderful city, such as the architecture, monuments, parks and gardens, avenues, streets and squares that may be interpreted as beautiful landscape by some of the population, the carioca suffers - among other issues – from the agitation and noise coming from the street, full of vehicles and pedestrians. Moreover, the increase due to demographic density caused by constructions and the presence
of low-income communities, is often associated with violence and insecurity. Some people think that such situations may create a landscape a slightly hostile landscape to gaze at. (fig. 1).

The term hygiene used by Marins is an ironic reference to the “regeneration” in the central area of Rio de Janeiro under the Pereira Passos administration, called by many “o bota abaixo” with reference to the fact that the government destroyed buildings to open new urban centers at the beginning of the 20th century. As a consequence, the carioca elite was displaced to the south of the city while the low-income population gravitated to the north, and this accounts for the definite establishment of the favelas, since “those who were evicted by the carioca reforms who did not take the direction of the poorer areas of town established their forsworn presence in the favelas, which were rapidly spread throughout the hills of the city, as early as in the 1910s” (MARINS, 1998, p. 151, our translation).

The favelas that appeared in Rio de Janeiro almost at the same time as the Brazilian Republic were an exemplary start of the list of frustrations of the elites regarding the elimination of the acquaintanceship of diverse households and populations at the heart of the largest and most important Brazilian city of those days, providing a paradigm of what would be processed throughout the 20th century in almost all measures that aimed at the social exclusion by means of conviction and elimination of inconvenient households. [...] In a unique symbiosis with the city’s reforms, inhabitants who were expelled by the demolitions used the debris, extracting from those construction materials that would end up perpetuating the neighborhoods that the public works intended to eradicate. [...] with an outstanding speed, the shacks were raised all over the most urbanized areas of Rio de Janeiro, including those chosen by the elites to live in a “good neighborhood”, undermining the dreams of the Rodrigues Alves administration. (MARINS, 1998, p. 141-155, our translation)

Despite concern over the neighborhood, the proximity of the low-income population of the hills meant cheap labor force for household services in the well-to-do families. The occupation of the hills was justified by relation of the master’s house and the slaves’ house of the past and, thus, opened “new - and panoramic - perspectives of homes [...] at the reach of the sight of any one standing on [...] windows (1998, p. 154-155), resulting in a “forced acquaintanceship that spread [...] throughout the 20th century” (MARINS, 1998, p. 214, our translation) and that ended up marking the carioca landscape.

This is exemplified in the building in Av. Atlântica, 270, located in the Leme district, next to the favelas of Chapéu Mangueira and Morro da Babilônia, where part of the residential units enjoy the beach landscape, whereas, on the opposite façade, some balconies look onto the favela (fig. 2).
However, the bigger problem of this forced acquaintanceship is not as much the landscape (which does not even trouble some people), but the violence that was formed owing to social exclusion.

This violence and the consequent feeling of insecurity that affects the entire city of Rio de Janeiro is one of the factors that currently causes hostility in the street and presents the need for a gradual transition between this public and private space in the house, offered by the balcony. Evidence of this issue is the way inhabitants appropriate this environment.

A good example of appropriation is the setting of the balcony as a garden. Contact with nature or some sort of green, which also provides a view of landscape without having to leave the “cozy shelter.”

In a report entitled “Estilo de Vida (“Life Style”), broadcasted on January 27, 2009 by Rede Globo TV network, many balconies in Rio de Janeiro set as gardens were presented, aiming at approaching, precisely, the contemporary trend of this living environment with a view to suppressing the absence of a yard, putting the inhabitant “in touch with nature” without having to leave the security of their house (fig.3).

Terrace or maybe balcony? No, porch is better! What matters is: it became a decoration darling. Nowadays, mainly due to security, people have looked for apartments which have precisely a rather wide balcony. The goal is to have a space that has the security of an apartment, but with the sensation of a home backyard. Many people make use of balconies and turn them into a true garden with plants and even trees. (ESTILO DE VIDA, 2009, p.1, our translation)
Fig. 3: balconies in Rio de Janeiro set as gardens, broadcasted on January 27, 2009, at the TV show Mais Você from the Globo TV network.
As one can notice, this setting of the balcony is not limited to the presence of pot-plants, but also entails other types of adornments, furniture and coatings that refer to an external area. The inhabitant appropriates his own balcony as a garden regardless of whether it is open or closed, balanced or embedded in the facade itself. This appropriation invites the user’s permanence, creating a feeling of being around nature.

Daily life is becoming increasingly public. Radio, television, telephone, everything invades privacy. Thus, gardens must be walled and not be exposed to the sight of people [...] Before the machine age, also in urban areas, nature was people’s true companion [...] nowadays, the situation is inverted. Men do not find themselves with nature, even when they leave the city to be in touch with nature. Enclosed within their shining car, bringing in their souls the mark of a world that created the automobile, the man is a foreign body among the nature mean. A billboard is enough to suffocate nature’s voice. Nature becomes a fragment of nature, and men, a fragment of men. (BANFORD-SMITH apud FRAMPTON, 2006, p.510, our translation)

Feelings appear to intensify nowadays, when nature is the center of attention due to the environmental problems, giving rise to a greater desire of using the balcony as a garden setting.

However, if the inhabitant thus intensifies the meaning of the balcony in the integration space of the house with the surroundings, exploring the image they have of the home location where there is contact with nature, they also reinforce, through the setting with the garden, their meaning of filter.

This attribute of add the balcony which is expressed by the need to protect the house’s privacy is related to urban violence, and this appropriation is an expression of the *carioca* way of life in contemporary years.

Fig. 4: presence of plant vases as a shield of carioca balconies in the south zone district, Source: the author

---

**Figure 4:** Presence of plant vases as a shield of carioca balconies in the south zone district. Source: the author.
Plants used to set balconies become a shield for the invasion both of the looks of close neighbors, often, disturbing, and the street’s reality, distinct from the home’s atmosphere (fig. 4).

In a way, plant-pots provide a resource to avoid various unwelcome encounters promoted by the balcony. It seems to be the explanation for gardens in all the balconies of the building located in front of the Sagrada Família Square, at Lagoa District, in southern area of Rio de Janeiro, in very wooded surroundings, which seems to be a gesture of the determined building administration. (fig. 5).

In this case, it is evident that the balcony’s setting as a garden both promotes the inhabitant’s contact with nature and increases house privacy. The setting of the balcony that resides in its ambivalence of being a private space, and at the same time, also a public space, is better interpreted as a transition space. Above all, it reveals the living habits of the *carioca* in contemporary days.

**Conclusion**

The balcony’s appropriation as a garden in apartment buildings located in large cities such as Rio de Janeiro shows the need, nowadays, to be in touch with nature. Furthermore this is an expression of the demand for security reflected both by the desire to integrate with the environment inside the house, as well as the intention that these gardens might protect the home’s privacy and intimacy.

The balcony, in this case, assumes not only the role of the house’s yard, it but also acts as a filter of the home, introducing, in a diplomatic way, two distinct worlds: one of the house and the other of the street. This indicates that this particular setting of the balcony is not associated with the compensation of the absence of green areas in the urban environment, which, in the case of Rio de Janeiro is less critical, but the increasing desire on the part of the inhabitants to reside permanently in a “cozy shelter” and to preserve the home space.

Just like as in times, the public space or, by extension, the street, is once again seen by the citizen as a hostile environment, either due to noise, pollution, agitation, traffic chaos, and violence, and it is sometimes reduced to a sense of not knowing how to live.
together with diversity, not accepting the other. This has been an exposé of the cultural behavior of a society expressed by the living habits of the carioca in contemporary days.

Reference Works


A garden is a place of silence. Silence effaces the world erected by everyday prattle and creates an opening into which things can emerge. But a garden’s quiet is not devoid of power—its calm gathers and concentrates the energy by which things emerge into being and (what is the same on the side of the listener) the energy of attentiveness and expectation. The activity of speaking, like that of many musical phrases, ordinarily rushes us headlong into the future. The destitution that characterizes our age arises within our orientation toward the future: our being has become almost entirely being-toward-the-future. That orientation now all but defines what we have become. In the garden we learn about another kind of time: the silence we experience in the garden makes us aware of our duration, of the fact that our being is future-becoming-past. It makes us aware of our potential, calling us back from the forgetting caused by our involvement in actuality. The garden’s silence can also make us know that time can stop. 

The garden thus teaches us that the self and the world emerge together in an original experience in which we encounter the world that lies around us as “ever already there.” And even though in this silent realm I encounter the heavens, the sun, earth and water as though they were “ever already given,” that my being and that of the world are ontologically bound together makes me know the world is my world, for here the ontological interdependence of the self and the world intimates itself to me. In this complex of self and world, I become a human being. The garden’s silence affords the recognition that the call and its hearing-reception mutually belong together, that they are the selfsame. We learn, by participating in the energy of the garden’s silence, that whatever is present is given to humans, that it, in its essence (esse-ence), addresses itself to humans in their essence (esse-ence). We learn here that the world never lost its unity, that the marvellous never departed. We become acquainted with originating experience, for whenever we adequately quiet ourselves and open ourselves in the garden, we can experience the Holy, for the first time. To experience, for the first time, our familiar reality as the Holy is to accept—and to accept every time anew, as though for the first time—the holy self.

The silence of the garden calls us back to beginnings—to our own beginnings and to the beginning of the cosmos. For in the silence of the garden we can hear the reverberations that echo from the primordial Word. Attuning ourselves to these reverbera-
tions allows us to speak the word anew, for then our words are born of the Word. Silence creates a clearing that allows us to sense the potency of the word-made-new. With every uttering of the word-made-new, a wave of renewal passes across the surface of be-ing.

When perception is attentive, it responds not merely to the actual objects of experiences, but also to that which sustains their be-ing (i.e., that which makes them what they are). For this, perception must rise above what is given and experience the sacrifice of potentiality through which beings (objects) become actualized. But it does not learn to cherish this sacrifice by accepting the seamless appearance of things—things enframed in a seemingly continuous and unconflicted material reality. Rather, it learns this by opening itself to the ruptures and discontinuities from which experience arises (discontinuities that constitute the grain of a truer experience), and by attuning oneself to the convulsions and distortions from which beings arise. In doing so, silence revives the anxiety from which speaking delivers us time and again. It also discloses the meaning of that anxiety, for it harbours, as a potential gift, the threat of turning us back on ourselves, and so, of making us aware of nothingness.

A garden solicits us to become aware of the act of perceiving itself. A garden issues a call that, if attended to, can lift one out of the naive standpoint where consciousness is absorbed by its object. The opening towards disclosure that characterizes the “be-ing there” (the Dasein) of human be-ing, opens itself towards that emptiness, that nothingness, that is the scene of beings’ coming-to-be. For through this alignment of human be-ing—human be-ing as an opening—with nothingness, we sense the being-together of human be-ing and what there was even before all creation. That is to say, we discover the primordiality of human be-ing’s being-with Be-ing—the co-primordiality of human be-ing and Be-ing—that makes human be-ing the image of the Divine. This essential unity also allows us to sense—however vaguely—the being-together of human be-ing and what there was even before all creation. Before the “beginning was the word,” be-ing belonged to silence; consequently, beings are still poised at the edge of silence. The garden can help us understand that be-ing consorts with the generative power of silence. Now more than ever we urgently need this space and emptiness, to experience the mystery of Be-ing.

A garden is a site pregnant with the possibilities of transformation: its dynamic stillness encourages us to open ourselves to the revelation that the past lingers within the present and the present bears the germ of the future. Opening oneself towards that revelation requires patience, for only patience can disclose the Mystery by which Be-ing becomes time. Patience teaches us to linger in the gift of the abiding present and to allow things to emerge into the lighted clearing of radiant appearing. It teaches us to cease manipulating things and to turn from willing to waiting. In giving oneself over to the mild patience to which the garden summons us, one becomes attuned to the still, silent, other side of the world, which is a realm of clamour. But this mild patience must
be tempered by a resolute rigor, for it is certainly very hard to hear this still voice.

A renowned literary theorist known to all Canadians pointed out how common is the tale of the expulsion from the garden, which was continuous with our being—the tale of the fall into a sundered world, a world of fragments, a world where law was necessary for order, and of humans’ effort to recover a unified, integral cosmos. In expounding the epochal significance of that tale, he dwelt on the story of descent into a nether world, the katabasis that, in the end, grants vatic knowledge. Viewed in this context of that theory, the anguish that thoughtful people of our time feel is essentially an acute form of the feeling that Homer narrativized in The Odyssey—viz., nostalgia, which, according to the meaning of the original Greek, is the pain of returning home (nostos: return home; algos: pain). The anguish of our time is a call to go back, to return to some more primal, more immediate, and, perhaps less articulate, but certainly more genuine state—a vocation issued by the Ground of Be-ing summoning us to return to the destiny the Ground sets forth for us. But this call comes from afar, and calls us to an Afar, from the Beyond–be-ing which is also the Unmanifest. For this call is issued from anguish, and is conveyed through anguish to anguish—the Unmanifest discloses itself though anguish because it speaks from, and of, a form of absence replete with potential (all creation is ex nihilo). Absence, after all, is not sheer nothingness—it is a hidden plenitude that gathers that which was and that which will be, and so constitutes a “no-longer” that is also a “not-yet.” Thus, the garden makes us aware that time, absence, and human be-ing are essentially related, for all three have the same character.

The silence of the garden intimates to us that beyond the Light there is Darkness; beyond the Known, there is the Obscure; beyond the totality of everything that is, there is Nothing. And every coming-into-appearance is concealing of this Other—the mysterious, the awful Always-More and Always-Hidden, which appears only by dissimulation, that is, by hiding or concealing Itself in disclosing things. Still, whatever is, is a revelatory note from the Unknown gleaned from the appearance of what is known. The Bright of the seen and the heard manifests itself in unison with the Dark of the Unseen and the Unheard. The Gods surprise us in their proximity to what surrounds us. The Dark, in all its Vastness, is very near to what is right at hand. We learn how closely linked together are beings and Nothingness, freedom and Necessity, simulacra and the Real. Nor are the practical and the mysterious two separate things.

Silence harbours not only the binding powers of love, but also the power of a repellent terror—it is a mysterium tremendum as much as it is a mysterium fascinans. There is, then, an underworld to the garden’s silence, an underworld of terror and death. The word that comes from silence is menaced by the matrix from which it issues, for that matrix is invested with a destructive and demonic power as much as with a generosity that grants be-ing. This dark side of silence invests the word that is still in touch with silence with a formidable, ungainly strength—the dark side of silence nourishes
the word. The creating word delivers the life hidden in the Ground from non-Be-ing and converts it from potentiality into actuality; in doing so, it unifies the world of darkness (non–Be-ing) with that of light (be-ing and beings). But the abyssal demonic reacts against this unification, and wants to maintain the separation of truth and be-ing from actuality. When the demonic prevails, we founder.

But it is only in foundering that the call of the Absent One can be heard. Hence this anguish, too, can be understood as an opening, for it serves to make us ready to hear the call from the Ground and to prepare us for the only form of presencing the Unpresented can endure, that presencing that is registered in marks that the Unpresented leaves on beings as it withdraws so they can come forth into be-ing. Our anguished foundering can disclose what reason cannot—the Divine’s anguished love for beings. The idea that the Omnipotent should be required to undergo anguish is repugnant to reason, but it can be disclosed by our anguish because our anguish resembles its own.

The secret language of things is vouchsafed only to those who can abide in that form of contemplation that allows the be-ing (the first actuality) of beings to enter into human be-ing, who can endure the violence of that form of charity that Keats called “negative capability.” We who are slow and long deliberating are gradually learning to persevere in the face of the continuing failure of the gods to appear. We live in the hope of instilling into every glance that Light of Heaven through which things are disclosed and into every sound the echo of words that are joined to Word in their call to the Hidden. True thinking dwells within an originate unveiling that for the first time brings to light those beings that come to pass. Such thinking involves a sacrifice, for it rises above the things that are in order to allow what is Wholly Other than what is to be revealed. In thinking the Thought, the thinker sacrifices him/herself to and for originate and essential thinking itself: for we do not think this thought—It thinks in us. The sacrifice that the true thinker makes is also an implicit thanking, for it expresses the grace that accrues to human beings in being allowed to be, in their relations with things, the trustee of the power through which that which come to pass is made present. The original and essential thinking of human being is an echo within a human being of the Word of Be-ing, through which occurs any advential presencing.

But the sacrifice itself is wordless, as it is a form of devotion that unveils the illuminating Word that hides itself in the light shines within the be-ing of whatever is. In acknowledging this sacrifice, human being gives thanks that the presencing power of the Word is reflected into human words, that the Word finds a home in our common languages, the languages of men and women. Within the splendid and effulgent poverty of the sacrifice, the treasure of the incarnation of Be-ing appears, inasmuch as it is through the sacrifice of beings-that-are that the favour (grace) of Be-ing is bestowed on human beings. In essential thinking, we give thanks for the grace whereby the light of Word illuminates words and brings things out of obscurity
The garden issues a call that emanates from the Unthinkable. In art, the Unthinkable is evoked by that rupture whose sign is the cut, but it is never actually represented within the rupture. Yet despite being unrepresentable, the unthinkable lies within the domain of thinking, just as the unsayable lies within the domain of language. The reason for this correspondence is evident: it arises from the fact that no thinking is possible in the absence of the material signifier. So it is, too, with perception: the transcendent is paradoxically immanent within that which it transcends. Attentive perception opens itself to the inconspicuous ways that the absolute creates ripples (or leaves traces of itself) in experience, without allowing itself to be thematized. Of course, the manifestation of what transcends attentive perception never takes the form of beings; rather, these manifestations have the character of ruptures, gaps, and distortions that the absolute introduces into what the inattentive mind takes to be the unruffled web of experience.

Because it is always on the point of returning to nothingness, the abyss is a structuring factor for the cinematic image. A cinematic image, therefore, cannot be a form carved into matter. Rather, it is fundamentally a matrix of temporal relations (temporal relations, too, hover between be-ing and nothingness) and that are not visible in the photographed object itself. By blocking together past, present and future, the image makes these temporal relations felt. Time is intimate with the Open, out of which beings emerge. Thus, the image helps make the Open palpable, even though it does not present it. The cinematic image turns us towards the earth—the world is composed of definite things and resists change, while earth (the whole, duration) undergoes constant change. Its capacity to convey change and transformation gives the cinema a relation to the primordial—though many try to deny it—by imposing “good form” on cinema’s fluxing character to arrest change. Change—transformation—is the most fundamental effect of the cinema. This change should be liberated, by being released from the controls of narrative and good form, for doing so will enable the screened cinema to more closely approximate the cinema of things.

Cinematography likewise (and perhaps even more truely) extends the work of creation: the pictures that cinematography presents allow the pure language of things to re-address themselves to human be-ing. Cinematography is a pure extension of the creation—its reiteration, so to speak: cinematography is an act of cherishing, of recommending something to our attention, and so to our love. André Bazin noted that photography, and especially cinematography, offers “the natural image of the world” we can neither know or see. The pictures that cinematography presents allow the pure language of things to re-address themselves to human be-ing, and to their love. Bergson stated, “Wherever anything lives, there is, open somewhere, a register in which time is being inscribed.” This register is a cinema in nature, which the cinema we see on the screen duplicates. The discourse that things address to human be-ing resonates into the presence of disclosure.
when they are translated to the screen, and by that resonance, the cinema can provoke a sensation of the inner be-ing of things. It puts on display the life hidden in non–Be-ing becoming actual, and it does so by unifying the world of darkness with that of the light. Thereby is God’s creation completed.

Works cited


Notes

1 Robert Musil (Der Mann ohne Eigenschaften II Tl. 3 Kap. 48) noted that “unter der siegreich gebliebenen Wirklichkeit unzählige Möglichkeiten liegen, die auch hätten wirklich werden können” [innumerable possibilities lie beneath the reality that has remained victorious, possibilities which also could have been realized]. In the garden, we sense these unrealized possibilities.

Nature/city dualism is very ambiguous in contents. Really, for example, in case of fighting or riotous scenes in Hollywood movies, our impression depends on the background; a western film with a covered wagon and wild land sometimes affects us favorably because of the natural landscape and vital character of heroes, while a gang movie of car chases and shootings against skyscrapers and shopping centers in a big city will give us thrilling excitement in vain leaving a feeling of uneasiness. Even in terms of swiftness, the gallop of a horse looks much more refreshing than recklessly driving cars.

Since when did such dualism nature/city take the formulation? In fact, nature/art contrast has existed since ancient time as we find in the text of Aristotle, and nature/culture is another important comparison in modern times.

1. Nature/city concept of contrast; progress from nature to city

Nature and city are opposite to each other in principle, or between them there may be such relationship as progression from nature to city. Cities have been built and developed among natural land partly spontaneously like organism on one hand, and partly through autonomous and independent development by themselves.

Metaphorically and analogically, we can also compare nature/city to the contrast of life/theory, farmers on land/laborers in factory, natural law/civil law. Furthermore, another type of comparison may be possible as savage/civilized, rudeness/sophistication, wild/polite, unconscious/rational, myth/science, folklore researchers/humanist literati, etc. J.-J. Rousseau’s idea suggests the distinction natural innocence and crafty cultivation.

At any rate, from the standpoint that we live now in the time of postmodernity, only for facility for argument, we can understand cities as an extension or progressive development from nature. Civilization, urbanization, industrialization, and enlightenment may be plausible family terms here.
In order to get rid of savage life of inconvenience, any utility in city life pleases us. The city offers a place for company, and the art of sophistication and decoration will be requisite in society by necessity.

From a historical point of view, the progress also implied that from feudalism based on land to democracy in city. Let alone the reality of each nation, city life offers wealthier and happier enjoyment by way of convenient and effective infra- & supra-structures and equipments. This was the Enlightenment concept to explore the modernity.

The Enlightenment of 18th century tried to promote progress and improvement in industry and life standard, throwing away conventional regulations and aiming to innovation or revolution of the old regime. Most thinkers at the time of the Enlightenment were city dwellers with an exception such as Rousseau who preferred country life.

2. Ubiquitous corruption in modernity

Thanks to modernization in general, people have enjoyed wealthier and happier life as well as more freedom. However, as we duly know, corruptions and destructions ensued. Multiple population and immigrants in cities meant a price for convenience and prosperity. Worse security, crimes, slum quarters, traffic accidents, air pollution were and are among byproducts of urbanization. On top of it, human morals have degenerated.

Cities have been composed, built and developed on a respective principle. On whatever principles, cities have been a center of prosperity, and have caught people’s mind to be eager for money and fame, pleasure and luxury. Thus cities are always indicative of civilization both in the positive and negative ways. The question how far mankind have gained by civilization is very common shared with us.

J. S. Mill rightly enumerates advantages and disadvantages of civilization as follows.

Advantages are: (i) the multiplication of physical comforts; (ii) the advancement and diffusion of knowledge; (iii) the decay of superstition; (iv) the facilities of mutual intercourse; (v) the softening of manners; (vi) the decline of war and personal conflict; (vii) the progressive limitation of the tyranny of the strong over the weak; (viii) the great works accomplished throughout the globe by the co-operation of multitudes. [Mill, 105]

On the contrary, disadvantages are: (i) the relaxation of individual energy and courage; (ii) the loss of proud and self-relying independence; (iii) the slavery of so large a portion of mankind to artificial wants; (iv) their effeminate shrinking from even the shadow of pain; (v) the dull unexciting monotony of their lives, and the passionless insipidity, and absence of any marked individuality, in their characters; (vi) the contrast between the narrow mechanical understanding, produced by a life spent in executing
by fixed rules a fixed task, and the varied powers of the man of the woods, whose subsis-
tance and safety depend at each instant upon his capacity of extemporarily adapting
means to ends; (vii) the demoralizing effect of great inequalities in wealth and social
rank; (viii) and the sufferings of the great mass of the people of civilized countries,
whose wants are scarcely better provided for than those of the savage, while they are
bound by a thousand fetters in lieu of the freedom and excitement which are his com-
pensations. [Mill, 105-6]

Disadvantages in city life are evidently regarded as corruptions, i.e. corruptions
from something valuable. In addition to Mill’s enumerations, we thoroughly know the
environmental destruction of nature through industrialization and urbanization: air and
water pollution and contamination, deforestation, etc., those of which are byproducts
of modernization and serious problems in our postmodern age.

Jean-Jacques Rousseau’s Discours sur les Sciences et les Arts (1750) was published
when it was awarded the first prize at the competition: “Has the restoration of the Sci-
ences and Arts contributed to the purification of Morals, or to their corruption?”
[Rousseau, 5] As is known well, his answer was in the negative.

“Europe had relapsed into the Barbarism of the first ages. A few centuries ago the
Peoples of this Part of the World, which is today so enlightened, lived in a state worse
than ignorance. I know not what scientific jargon more contemptible still than igno-
rance had usurped the name of knowledge, and stood as an almost insurmountable ob-
stacle in the path of its return. A revolution was required to return men to common
sense <…>.” [Rousseau, 6]

According to Rousseau, contribution of sciences and arts were hypocritical and
only complement to political powers. “While the Government and the Laws see to the
safety and the well-being of men assembled, the Sciences, Letters, and Arts, less
despotic and perhaps more powerful, spread garlands of flowers over the iron chains
with which they are laden, throttle in them the sentiment of that original freedom for
which they seemed born, make them love their slavery, and fashion them into what is
called civilized People.” [Rousseau, 6]

Rousseau continues, relating city society: “Happy slaves, you owe them the delicate
and refined taste on which you pride yourselves; the sweet character and urbane morals
[urbanité de mœurs] [Pl, 7] which make for such engaging and easy relations among
you; in a word, the appearances of all the virtues without having a single one.”
[Rousseau, 7]

“No more sincere friendships; no more real esteem; no more well-founded trust.
Suspicions, offenses, fears, coolness, reserve, hatred, betrayal, will constantly hide be-
neath this even and deceitful veil of politeness, beneath this so much vaunted urbanity
[cette urbanité si vanteé] [Pl, 8]which we owe to the enlightenment of our century.”
[Rousseau, 8]

Such degradation is due to the development and temptation of luxury. “This is how
the dissolution of morals, the necessary consequence of luxury, in turn leads to the corruption of taste.” [Rousseau, 20] “While the conveniences of life increase, the arts improve, and luxury spreads; true courage is enervated, the military virtues vanish, and this too is the work of the sciences and of all the arts that are practiced in the closeness of the study.” [Rousseau, 20]

Detesting luxurious city life, Rousseau’s belief is in “ignorance, innocence, and poverty” [Rousseau, 26], and thus he claims: “if the progress of the sciences and the arts has added nothing to our genuine felicity; if it has corrupted our morals, and if the corruption of morals has injured purity of taste, what are we to think of that crowd of Popularizers who have removed the difficulties which guarded the access to the Temple of the Muses, and which nature had placed there as a trial of the strength of those who might be tempted to know?” [Rousseau, 26]

To Rousseau, corruptions vary from dishonest of characters and morals to tendency to luxury, in short, corruptions from the lofty nature of human dignity. “A taste for ostentation is scarcely ever combined in one soul with a taste for the honest.” P.19

In contrast, Bernard Mandeville, interestingly enough, proposes a paradoxical thesis: private vice is necessary to public good. In his The Fable of the Bees (1705, 1714), Mandeville defends human vices and desires, as “THUS every Part was full of Vice, Yet the whole Mass a Paradise” [Mandeville, I, 24], “THE Root of Evil, Avarice, That damn’d ill-nature’d baneful Vice, Was Slave to Prodigality, That noble Sin; whilst Luxury Employ’d a Million of the Poor” [Mandeville, I, 25] As a realist of human nature and like an ideologue for commercialism capitalist, Mandeville thinks of the whole system and mechanism of economical advance. According to him, we should tolerate some vices and evils as they will increase prosperity of a nation. That is why he advocates luxury, though that is admitted only for a few rich people. “Fraud, Luxury and Pride must live, While we the Benefits receive.” [Mandeville, I, 36] “So Vice is beneficial found, When it’s by Justice lopt and bound” [Mandeville, I, 37], and “Bare Virtue can’t make Nations live.” [Mandeville, I, 37]

Mandeville’s remarks are so directly simple and may precede contemporary Neocapitalist ideas.

In Adam Smith, we find another argument of the corruption, viz, that of moral sentiments.

He says: “This disposition to admire, and almost to worship, the rich and the powerful, and to despise, or, at least, to neglect persons of poor and mean condition, though necessary both to establish and to maintain the distinction of ranks and the order of society, is at the same time, the great and most universal cause of the corruption of our moral sentiments.” [Smith, I,3.3., p.61] “That wealth and greatness are often regarded with the respect and admiration which are due only to wisdom and virtue; and that the contempt, of which vice and folly are the only proper objects, is often most unjustly bestowed upon poverty and weakness, has been the complaint of moralists in all ages.”
Wisdom and virtue are not the only object worthy of respect, and vice and folly not the only object of contempt, and similarly the rich and the great should not always be respected. However, people came to admire the wealth and greatness due to modern values, then losing humanistic standard of respect to others. “We see frequently the vices and follies of the powerful much less despised than the poverty and weakness of the innocent.” [Smith, I, 3.2, p.62]

Eighteenth-century European thinkers focused on ‘progress & corruption’ with the Enlightenment mind treating material progress and wealth mixed with moral decline. Differently from those countries under monarchs and aristocrats, England and Holland, in particular, enjoyed prosperity and cultivated politeness in a commercial society, when moral philosophers then warned against diffusing corrupting power of luxury. [cf. Jack]

Thus there emerged the conflict between progress and corruption, wealth and virtue. Consumption contributes to a boost in economy, leading luxury in city life and corrupting morals in modernity.

3. Postmodernity and aesthetics

It depends on each thinker how to define and interpret the concept of ‘postmodernity’, though tentatively. Even some of corruptions detected in modernity would already meaningless today, though they are still harmful and poisonous.

Roughly speaking, our days are surrounded by following three factors in our life and cultural situation: (1) expansion and development of many kinds of media; (2) too much freedom of speech and expression not only through institutional law but also through a variety of media tools; (3) conspicuous and ostensive individualism expressed not only in consumption behavior but also in every vernacular performance from clothing to daily working. Those factors have produced the world of excessive self-expression and representations without any reserve or modesty.

The globalization has accelerated the tendency. Then focusing on the trends in aesthetics, we can point out features: (1) changes of terminology or terms that describe art and its world; (2) change of social meaning of art. Art itself transforms: expansion of materials, motifs, meanings of art work and artistic activity. Thus, aesthetics treats widely any topic relating to art and the aesthetic. From the viewpoint of media and IT, media studies for aesthetics is needful, and from the viewpoint of consumerism, something like trash aesthetics or aesthetics for recycle must be interesting. The problem in contemporary aesthetics must be that of <constructionism>, not that of <essentialism>. The constructionists try to forge any device whatever of theoretical frame of reference, producing seductive illusion by something like catch-copy. Discourses will justify any
work of art so long as there outstands some discourse, as Han Fei 韓非 says: “Sophists disturb legal order by words” 「儒は文を以て法を乱す」. Postmodernity implies fall of values and any accident and event is justified due to lack of standard of judgment. Such situation composes “anything goes” society. Only discourses and frivolous words hover. [Cf. Hamashita 2004; Hamashita 2007]

4. Summon for contemplation: a conclusion

While modernity can be called the days of the city with the idea of progress and how to live successfully, postmodernity could be characterized as the time of “anything goes.” Challenge of “return to nature” is reassessed according to expansion of ecology, methodological “deconstruction” is in fashion, overabundant design is flooded in city planning, advertising to trigger consumption competes. Still under capitalism, free market systems, the survival of the fittest principle is relevant. However, probably as the new stage of history, we may be experiencing things and events that have never emerged in many ways. From how to live well and how to live successfully, we are faced with the question for what we live for lack of values. There exit diseases that we cannot get over, transfiguring the name and character: melancholy in modernity to depression today, fatigue in body and mind to stress in general.

On analysis of respective features, modernity and postmodernity differ obviously from each other in kind, but there must be signs of transition. Here, I refer to two concepts: sympathy with joy in Smith and contemplation in Shaftesbury.

According to Adam Smith, “<…> our propensity to sympathize with sorrow must be very strong, and our inclination to sympathize with joy very weak.” [Smith, I iii, 1.4, p.44] Though, in fact, Oliver Goldsmith’s description: “the slightest distress, whether real or fictions, touched him to the quick, and his soul labored under a sickly sensibility of the miseries of others” [Goldsmith, 7] may be always actual, yet Adam Smith proceeds to the new dimension. “Notwithstanding this prejudice, however, I will venture to affirm, that, when there is no envy in the case, our propensity to sympathize with joy is much stronger than our propensity to sympathize with sorrow; and that our fellow-feeling for the agreeable emotion approaches much more nearly to the vivacity of what is naturally felt by the persons principally concerned, than that which we conceive for the painful one.” [Smith, I.iii.1.5, p.45]

By using the word ‘vivacity’, Adam Smith describes an observation of the order of feeling and sympathy of the new age. He emphasizes a nominal character of sympathy, mentioning at another text partiality of those feelings of ‘extreme sympathy’, ‘artificial commiseration’, and ‘affected and sentimental sadness.’ [Smith, III.3.9, p.40]
As for the idea of contemplation, I refer to Shaftesbury, contemporary with Mandeville, Rousseau and Smith. Shaftesbury was one of the modern thinkers who was interested in contemplation, the concept of which seems to be somewhat un-modern. The concept itself, originated in ancient Greek philosophy by the term of ‘theoria’, is connected with religious meditation and nature worship. [cf. Festugière; Cayré]

Contemplation differs from perception in that it is not an intellectual function to get sense data, but something of meditation and intuition through which human beings understand and appreciate the meaning of nature and the world, realizing the status of ourselves in nature and the universe. Cassirer contrasts contemplation not with perception but with operation, which presupposes the conquest of nature by way of observation and experiment while the former not. [cf. Cassirer]

Shaftesbury claims that man is created to be qualified for contemplation, saying: “Ye fields and woods, my refuge from the toilsome world of business, receive me in your quiet sanctuaries, and favour my retreat and thoughtful solitude. Ye verdant plains, how gladly I salute ye! Hail all ye blissful mansions! Known seats! Delightful prospects! Majestic beauties of this earth, and all ye rural powers and graces! Blessed be ye chaste abodes of happiest mortals, who here in peaceful innocence enjoy a life unenvied, though divine; whilst with its blessed tranquility it affords a happy leisure and retreat for man, who, made for contemplation, and to search his own and other [II,98] natures, may here best meditate the cause of things, and, placed amidst the various scenes of Nature, may nearer view her works.” [Shaftesbury, II, 97-98] “Yet since by thee, O sovereign mind, I have been formed such as I am, intelligent and rational, since the peculiar dignity of my nature is to know and contemplate thee, permit that with due freedom I exert those faculties with which thou hast adorned me. ”[Shaftesbury, II, 98]

Objects of contemplation in Shaftesbury are: “bodies, or the outward forms” [II, 144], “nature” [II, 98], “universe” [II, 91], “system” [II, 22], “all on earth” [II, 65], “surface of the earth” [II, 116], etc. These texts evidently represent the importance of nature inbuilt in contemplation as a mental attitude.

Between nature and city, our contemplation will be integrated with the former. “The wildness pleases. We seem to live alone with Nature. We view her in her inmost recesses, and contemplate her with more delight in these original野s than in the artificial labyrinths and feigned wildernesses of the palace.” [Shaftesbury, II, 122] Through contemplation, thought will revive. “Here thoughtless men, seized with the newness of such objects, become thoughtful, and willingly contemplate the incessant changes of this earth’s surface.” [Shaftesbury, II, 123]

Thus to Shaftesbury, the importance of contemplation is always concerned with nature, the world and the universe, i.e. creatures by God. Shaftesbury’s attitude may be rather pre-modern. However, what is remarkable is that contemplation is closely collaborated with the attitude of ‘disinterestedness’, which means that, without regard to
self-interest and self-love, we should admire and appreciate anything excellent. [Shaftesbury, II 55]

In postmodern city life, the contemplation with disinterestedness will be effective, in Smith’s thought, in so far as we are distanced from political faction and fanaticism that will bring about atrocities, and as a few “who preserve their judgment untainted by the general contagion” [Smith, III, 3, 43, p.155] we will become “the real, revered, and impartial spectator” [Smith, III, 3, 43, p.155] at the time of “anything goes” turmoil. This is the postmodern character of contemplation.

Through contemplation, hopefully, we will restore thoughtfulness, as Shaftesbury puts it, against talkative discourses without judgment.

References

Cayré: P. Fulbert Cayré, La contemplation augustinienne: Principes de spiritualité et de théologie, nouvelle éd., Desclée de Brouwer, 1954
Mandeville: The Fable of Bees or Private Vices, Publick Benefits. By Bernard Mandeville, Oxford U. P., 1924
Pl: J.-J. Rousseau, Oeuvres complètes, III, Bibliothèque de la Pléiade, Gallimard, 1964
V - City and Nature in Philosophical Discourse
The idea of human flourishing as functioning within a social context is central to views of the relation of human beings to the city, and more generally to the surroundings human beings construct for themselves through the historical period, and which take different forms. At stake is a crucial form of the nature-culture problem: In what kind of society do human beings flourish?

The problem of human flourishing in a social context is treated in different ways. One is the Christian approach according to which human flourishing requires turning away from the social context behind in returning to God. Augustine describes this specific approach, which for Christians of all stripes has always centered on a relation of the finite human being to an infinite God, as a turn away from Athens and toward Jerusalem. Another approach is the relation of human being within nature to culture and civilization as a human construction, in short through a relation of human beings to themselves.

This paper will identify and discuss variations on the theme of nature, culture and civilization and culture, including the canonical Platonic view and selected modern views as illustrations of the main alternatives formulated by Rousseau, Hegel and Marx. I will be suggesting that the Hegelian approach to flourishing within the modern world appears to be more plausible than its main alternatives.

On culture and civilization

Human beings emerge within nature in constructing culture as well as, if there is a difference, civilization. It has been widely believed since Greek antiquity that human beings, who are social animals, naturally live in groups of various kinds, including the Greek polis or city-state, and later cities and states. Hence, the city in all its forms has a special role in living, living better and living well. In different ways the relation of humanly constructed surroundings to human flourishing has been on the agenda over a very long period. Plato’s Republic is an important early effort to solve this problem through a theory of human flourishing in a rationally designed city-state at a point in time when the city and the state had not yet been separated.
In general terms, culture arises within in nature, which is understood only within culture. Both “nature” and “culture” are understood in different ways. I will understand culture as one facet of the humanly constructed social context, which contains culture in a narrow sense, including such phenomena as excellent taste, shared attitudes, values, goals and practices characteristic of institutions, or groups, and so on. In a wider sense culture might include the various sciences, economic matters, the great cities of mankind, their infrastructures, including policemen, sanitation, hospitals, schools, unions, and so on. It seems obvious that one might seek a full life in, say, playing the harp, or reading poetry, and so on, the kinds of things suggested in the *German Ideology*. Yet one might also need some of the many other things that civilization provides. Thus if we have the Platonic *Republic* in mind, the distinction between culture and civilization concerns the differences between representational or mimetic art of all kinds, including theater, poetry, painting and so on, which fall under the heading of culture, and a whole further panoply of problems of governance, including meeting reproductive needs, defense, questions concerning justice, and so on.

**Plato’s *Republic*, human being, and Rousseau’s problem**

The problem of the relation of nature and culture in the widened sense I have in mind, already attracted interest in early Greek philosophy. Socrates, who is challenged to answer in focusing on practice, responds in creating a city in theory, which comes into being based on needs (369B) since none of us is self-sufficient (369C). The Platonic conception of the city-state echoes through the later debate in which it is understood in ways running from what for Hegel is only an empty ideal but which for Heidegger functions as the very model for the Nazi state, or more generally for the totalitarian perspective Popper rejects.

The debate on Plato’s *Republic*, a text that has never been less than influential, long ago assumed enormous proportions. Plato’s *Republic* presupposes a conception of human being that is, or at least is intended to be, realized in the rational city-state. A rational city-state is one constructed according to rational principles, hence based on knowledge. In different ways, the theory of the rational state links politics, aesthetics and epistemology. According to Plato, artists, including all those who exercise cultural pursuits, should be banned from the polis since they do not and cannot know what they depict. This epistemological suggestion supposes a representational view of art, which was apparently the norm in ancient Greece. This suggestion points to a view that an artist must grasp or intuit reality lying beyond mere representation. Non-philosophical art must be excluded from the just polis constructed along the lines of the insights of the philosophers, who alone are capable of true art. The latter is the epistemological basis of the polis that provides the context of possible human
flourishing, hence is good.

Plato’s account of human flourishing further includes a conception of human being. The basic insight is the conception of function (ergon) that, if properly exercised, constitutes social wellbeing. The basic argument emerges in the course of reflection about living better in a just state late in book I. Socrates then asks, in calling attention to a conception of human being underlying the theme of living better in the just state: “do you think there is such a thing as the function of a horse?” This leads to an important argument, which can be reconstructed as follows based on the concepts of function, virtue, and the soul. The argument combines conceptions of function and virtue. A function is what someone or something alone can do, or what it does better than anything else, and a virtue is an excellence of function. A virtue, as distinguished from a vice, is the excellence of function. Socrates illustrates this doctrine in pointing out that a horse has a function, that is what one can do with it, and different human organs have functions. For instance, the function of the is to see and of the ear to hear. This leads to the inference that excellence of function is its virtue. Socrates goes on to suggest that if the soul is just, a person will live well.

Obviously the key move here is that as a social animal a human being has a social function best expressed in a particular kind of social context. Plato links together his conception of human function and the organization of the city-state. The Platonic Republic is conceived as a living work of art, in which through division of labor corresponding to intrinsic capacity each person is subordinated to the whole in exerting a function that person is most capable or only capable of doing.

The link to which Plato draws attention between human capacity and human function echoes through the later debate. His conviction that living well, what Aristotle later thinks of as human happiness, depends on excellent human function in a social context, in short in doing the job for which one is assigned by nature as it were, echoes through the later tradition. Many other readers of Plato have preferred to loosen the link between human capacities and a putative human social function in examining this key Platonic assumption.

**Rousseau’s problem**

Plato insists on the rational construction of the social context, in his case the ideal city-state. In modern times, this assumption is called into question. Rousseau simply drops Plato’s suggestion that human beings have a fixed social function in favor of examining the link between human being and the social surroundings that Plato merely assumes as a given.

In general, we can envisage three main solutions to the problem of human flourishing in respect to the social context in the modern tradition. These include returning
back behind the socially-constructed context to an earlier, more primitive phase of de-
velopment that is comparatively more advanced with respect to human wellbeing; an
effort to seek the human good not outside of but rather within the modern social context
in all its many forms as it develops through history; and, finally, a view that it is only
in transcending the social context, hence in leaving the modern world behind, that
human beings finally will become human. These three approaches can be illustrated
through remarks concerning Rousseau, Hegel, and Marx.

Everyone knows that according to Rousseau, human beings, who are naturally
good, are later corrupted by civilization. According to Rousseau: “Man is born free
and everywhere he is chains (“L’homme est né libre, et partout il est dans les fers”).
Rousseau, who is either uninterested in, or at least unable to understand the origin of
this state of affairs, seems to understand its political legitimacy as deriving from a so-
called common liberty that belongs to human nature. He takes as his political model
the family in which, since everyone is born free and equal, the people, or children only
alienate their freedom for their utility.

Rousseau bases his analysis of the fictitious idea of liberty in the equally fictitious
state of nature, which holds sway prior to government. This fiction was widely popular
at the time in such authors as Hobbes and Locke, who think it is rational to leave the
state of nature to overcome deficiencies for which government is the appropriate rem-
edy. The so-called state of nature, which goes back to Aquinas and perhaps even to
Aristotle, is characterized in different ways by modern social contract theorists, ac-
cording to Hobbes as a realm in which, as he says, “the notions of right and wrong,
justice and injustice … have no place,” but according to Locke as a so-called pre-po-
litical state in which “the state of nature has a law of nature to govern it, which obliges
everyone; and reason, which is that law, teaches all mankind who will but consult it
that, being all equal and independent, no one ought to harm another in his life, health,
liberty, or possessions.”

In simplifying, Rousseau reverses the shared view of Aristotle and Aquinas that
the political state is natural for human beings in suggesting it is unnatural. Human be-
ings, who are naturally good, are corrupted by society; and through the general will
that applies equally to all and comes from all, the whole citizenry achieves sovereignty
over itself in promoting virtues (e. g. liberty, equality and fraternity) latter enshrined
in the French Revolution. Writing at a time when capitalism was emerging, he can be
understood as rejecting the modern social context, hence civilization, which is unnat-
ural, in favor of returning to nature. Left unclear, of course, is how the general interests
of all human beings can be met within the modern world, which corrupts natural good-
ness, or on the contrary outside it through returning to a state of nature.

Though Rousseau says little about the general will, this conception is extremely
influential. It is arguably correctly restated in Article Six of the Declaration of the
Rights of Man and the Citizen (Déclaration des droits de l’Homme et du citoyen, 1789):
“The law is the expression of the general will. All citizens have the right to contribute personally, or through their representatives, to its formation. It must be the same for all, whether it protects or punishes. All citizens, being equal in its eyes, are equally admissible to all public dignities, positions, and employments, according to their capacities, and without any other distinction than that of their virtues and their talents”.3

The interpretation of the concept of the general will, which is difficult, is also controversial. It is sometimes objected that this concept suggests the dictatorship of the proletariat. If the general will, unlike the will of all, reflects the common interests of everyone, as Diderot thinks,4 then Rousseau can be read as suggesting that the modern social context falls below that standard, for instance because, as he indicates, in certain circumstances the general will is subordinated to the purposes of individuals who isolate their private interest from the common interest.5 It is hard to deny that this is a factor in the current worldwide great recession.

**Hegel and the rational form of the modern state**

Rousseau and Hegel divide about political Platonism. Rousseau proposes a kind of political anti-Platonism. The human good is not found in the social context as it exists or could possibly exist otherwise than if it necessarily instantiated the general will. One cannot and must not decide in the name of the people, who must rather determine for themselves their shared general interest. For Rousseau, the modern world is only a “false” construction, in which human beings do not and cannot recognize themselves. Hegel reacts in pointing to a contradiction between what is finally a romantic conception of freedom, which Rousseau seeks to realize in the social contract, where he misunderstands freedom as mere caprice instead of, as Kant later points, out the rational will that, as Hegel insists, is first realized in the state. According to Hegel, the universal will is not rational because it somehow includes all the individual wills, but rather because it is rational.

Hegel, who understands the impulse behind Plato’s *Republic* as an unsuccessful effort to counter the consequences of destructive forces present in contemporary Greek ethics in a mere idea, rejects this effort in preferring ideals to ideas. According to Hegel, philosophy, which cannot knowingly transcend its own historical moment, must comprehend the state as it is, not as it ought to be. He follows Fichte in understanding human being as essentially active in adding his own neo-Aristotelian view that all human activity of whatever kind is goal-directed, hence rational, thus, graspable through reason.

Hegel offers a complex argument for the conclusion that modern individuals flourish in the modern state, which he understands as “an inherently rational entity.”6 I take this claim not to mean that Hegel is endorsing all forms of the state, which would be
absurd, or even the state of his own time after the Prussian reformation, a criticism often raised by Marxist critics, but for which there is inadequate proof in the texts, but rather that, since human actions are inherently teleological, hence rational, the state to which they give rise is also rational. We can reconstruct Hegel’s argument in simple form as follows in terms of his views of human activity and recognition. The state is intrinsically rational, since it is constructed through human activity, which is rational.

Hegel’s conviction that human beings recognize themselves in the state is based on the famous analysis of mutual recognition in the master-slave section of the *Phenomenology*. Human beings, who can relate to each other in different ways that are antagonistic, violently antagonistic, or non-antagonistic, and that culminate in mutual recognition, whose basic form is love. Mutual recognition leads in different centripetal and centrifugal directions depending on the form it takes. One form is the deeply destabilizing force unleashed through self-awareness of one’s function within the modern capitalist framework, which Lukács famously identified as the problem of class-consciousness central to Marx’s understanding of modern industrial society. This centrifugal force, which does not stabilize but rather destabilizes the modern state, is at the root of many recent freedom movements, most recently in what has come to be known as the Arab spring. Another form is the possibility but not the necessity to recognize oneself in modern industrial society, a recognition that depends on the existence of various structures that make it possible for the individual to achieve recognition in finding oneself so to speak in the social surroundings. Recognition, which is accompanied by consciousness and at its highest level by self-consciousness, is not immediate, but rather mediated, in practice mediated through a long series of modern social institutions and practices that belong to the framework of the modern state.

Rousseau only regards as legitimate what Sartre later depicted as the rare socially fusional moments, perhaps mainly in revolutionary times, in which there is something approaching universal agreement. Surely this must be an unusual occurrence. Hegel, who sets the bar lower, differs radically from Rousseau in regard to the real conditions of human flourishing, which are found not outside of or prior to the social context however understood, but rather within the historical process culminating in the creation of the modern state in which recognition occurs in various ways (e.g. within through patterns of social interaction, objective social institutions and so on), mutual recognition is possible, and in which in appropriate circumstances individuals also recognize themselves. Human beings may, but need not necessarily, flourish within the modern social world to which they relate in different ways possibly but not necessarily leading to their full development. As the idea of mutual recognition suggests, human flourishing requires self-consciousness. Thus, depending on the individual, one may or may not recognize oneself in the various wars begun under George W. Bush, including the war in Iraq and the war in Afghanistan, which some observers regard as a deep expression of American generosity in spreading a recognizable or perhaps an unrecog-
nizable version of the American way of life, and others regard as possibly the deepest American foreign policy mistake and a moral tragedy or worse.

**Marx, human nature and communism**

Marx differs from Rousseau, who finds the possibility of human flourishing in returning behind the state as well as from Hegel in opting for a solution lying in an indeterminate future beyond the modern state. Unlike Rousseau, he is uninterested in an original but indeterminate state of nature, which he replaces by a determinate situation, which ends precisely when human beings begin to produce the conditions of human life. Marx, like Rousseau, believes human beings cannot flourish in the modern state, but differs from the latter through his belief that the modern state, or capitalism, leads to its replacement through a later social configuration he calls communism in which human beings will supposedly be capable of flourishing.

Marx’s theory of the real possibility of human flourishing is clearer than its practical possibility. This view is based on a conception of human being as intrinsically active influenced by Fichte, Hegel and others leading to an account of modern industrial society called capitalism as well as the transition to a future social form entitled communism and unrelated to any series of historical events. Marx follows Fichte and Hegel in formulating a theory of human being based on human activity. According to this theory, in their capacity within the process of production human beings produce commodities, social relations between people and things as well as between people, the productive process, and modern capitalism, as well as the transition between capitalism and communism.

We can further distinguish between reproductive needs, such as the proverbial food, clothing and shelter, and human needs, or the need to go beyond the often severely limited social roles human beings are forced to play in capitalism in meeting reproductive needs in further developing as individual human beings. According to this theory, in capitalism humans can meet their reproductive needs but cannot meet their human needs, which can only be met through the supposedly revolutionary transition to a new social phase lying beyond the modern world. The difference between the modern capitalist and the postmodern or communist phases is that the weight of the need to earn a profit prevents or at least impedes workers in developing their capacities beyond the point of meeting their minimal reproductive needs. In a future social framework that has been freed from economic constraints, or at least in which they have been significantly reduced, it will finally become possible for people to realize their individual capacities in developing in ways not required by or at least useful to the economic dimension of modern society.

If Marx is not a prophet, then he cannot predict future history. Christians point to
heaven. Marx perhaps unrealistically imagines a future social stage in which human beings will realize themselves in virtue of their freedom from economic constraints. Yet if the precondition of human self-realization is the abolition of private property that is the basis of the modern state, and of the state itself, then communism is a qualified return to beyond civilization to human nature within the state of nature.

The problem with the Marxian solution or any solution supposedly lying beyond the modern social context is that its attractiveness lies and can only lie in its capacity to overcome the difficulties of the modern world, in Marxian language through practice (or praxis) instead of mere theory, though in fact what Marx does is to substitute a theory of a possible, but probably imaginary practice for the reality of real practice. I see this as an insuperable obstacle to the very idea of adopting a view that seems at its heart not to be practical but rather impractical. It is then not by chance that at the present time the only great nation still embarked on the realization of some version of Marxism, even if very far removed from what Marx seems to have had in mind, was constrained at the end of the cultural revolution, which came into being precisely to continue the revolt against capitalism, for historical reasons to turn to capitalism that Mao believed must be left behind.

The nature-culture-civilization problem again and human flourishing

In the Republic Plato can be read as suggesting human nature is realized in the polis in the form of a kallipolis. When he was writing, it seemed plausible to dream of a polis constructed along rational lines that is in different ways true, good and beautiful. Yet this relation, that underlies the Platonic solution, no longer holds. For in the modern world, where culture the good is neither beautiful nor true, the true is not necessarily either beautiful or good, and the beautiful is often neither good nor true. Hence an aesthetic solution to what now appears as a problem of civilization no longer seems plausible.

The city-state and later the city are constructed within nature by human beings for human ends linked to the realization of human nature. The relevant question is whether this offers a sphere for human beings to be at home, hence to prosper in first alienating themselves in the construction of their surroundings and then in finding themselves within these structures.

It is time to conclude. In a short paper I cannot pretend to solve this difficulty, which echoes through the Western philosophical tradition. Rousseau, Hegel and Marx stand for the three main approaches to the problem of nature and culture as it plays out in the modern space after the emergence of the modern state and the distinction between culture and civilization. Suffice it say that each of the modern solutions to the venerable problem of the nature-culture problem has its weaknesses. None could
be accepted now without serious revision.

It is often suggested that the modern world is somehow inauthentic, ill-adapted to human flourishing, best to left behind either in a retreat into aestheticism (Nietzsche), longing for a revival of the Greek world (Winckelmann), a concern with Nazism as the true future of human beings (Heidegger), and so on. I believe, on the contrary, that no road leads back behind the modern world. In fact, even our understanding of what lies before modernity is filtered through our modern consciousness. There is no real alternative to the modern world as the theater to realize human beings. If this cannot come about outside the modern world, then it must come about, if that is indeed possible, within the modern world in adapting it not to aims foreign to human beings but rather to human beings who in this way find themselves within what they themselves have constructed.

Notes


3 ??


CONFUCIAN SCHOLARS’ AESTHETICAL EXPERIENCE IN HOMETOWN: NINE-TWIST VIEWS AND SONGS OF LANDSCAPE IN KOREAN ART

Seunghye Sun

The inspiration for this article was a Chinese Song, the poem of the Neo-Confucian philosopher Zhu Xi (1130-1200). In this well-known poem “The Boat Song of Wuyi” (Chinese: wuyizhaoge), he was striving to describe the scenery of a rural town near Mountain Wuyi in Fujian province, China. (PL1)

This is the area where the hometown of both the poet and his wife. It was here that he established a private academy of Neo-Confucianism around 1183 with the financial support of his father-in-law, Liu Zicui. Although it is not a major cultural city of China, this remote rural town is a symbol of Confucian academic site and it is introduced to Korea through Geography of Wuyi (Wuizhi) (PL2) including Zhu Xi’s poem and illustrations.

Here, I will not define Chinese concepts, but rather discuss how the usage of this aesthetical experience could be thought of in a single aesthetic structure in Korea. While Zhu Xi’s landscape viewing experience along the stream dwelled on the term “nine-twist” (Chinese: jiuqu) in his nine poems, Korean Confucian scholars conceptually considered that nine
phases were required to reach enlightenment. I will focus attention on aesthetical experiences, which encompass academy architecture, poetry, musical performance, paintings and calligraphy that gained more popularity in Korea rather than in China. The term “nine-twist” (Korean: gugok) was well established in the discourse of the Korean scholar Joseon. Among the abundance of writings on this theme, the best is undoubtedly by a Korean Confucian scholar Yi I (1536–1584) whose sijo poem, “The Song of Nine-twist Mt. Gosan” (Korean: gosangugokga) was influential. (PL3) Yi I attempted to describe the beautiful scenery around Sohyeon seowon, an academy for the education and ritual of Confucianism at Haeju in the Huangheado province currently in the North Korea. According to Yi I’s preface, the term “nine-twist” refers to those phases to be learnt from Zhu Xi’s Neo-Confucianism; he dedicates a large proportion of his time to a specific breed of Neo-Confucian culture in Korea. Inspired by Zhu Xi’s poem, Yi I composed it in sijo format composed of easy Korean alphabets for women and children, but not in Chinese for male literati. It was a rare challenge to recite the Confucianism concept in Korean alphabet because the Joseon elite mostly composed poetry and prose in classical Chinese because it was the official written language of state examination and court document. Yi I’s Korean sijo poem contributed to the composition of a much broader female and children audience of Confucian aesthetical experiences in a male-centered Joseon society.

Yi I’s followers, called Senior Party called noron, mixed both Confucian ideas and arts together chiefly known by art experiences such as singing a sijo poem, transcribing it both in the Korean alphabet and Chinese translation, and painting. (PL 4, 5) It is the best aesthetical experience as the ideal literati art called three perfections of poetry, painting, and calligraphy. The later Korean scholars of both the court official and the hometown-based recluse named a specific gugok around their residential area, which is a descriptive language that, by means of verbal implements, allows them to encounter their surroundings with Confucian value. (PL6) The aim of this article is to consider some of
the main aesthetical experiences in the specific gugok paintings, and to consider how a few of the residents in hometown might work in an aesthetic environment in relation to Confucianism, and with relation to a specific Confucian aesthetic, that is, Joseon Aesthetics of Korea. Furthermore, the gugok can be seen in a Confucian scholar and political leader Song Siyeol (1607-1689)’s hometown in unique location of his studying studio and beautiful landscape such as Huayang gugok in Chungcheon province in South Korea. Beyond the aesthetical viewing scenery experience, it is an extremely political site for worshipping the Chinese Ming emperor Shennzong who dispatched Chinese troops in order to back up Korea against Japanese shogun Toyomoti Hideyoshi (1536-1598) invasion in 1592. Song Siyeol theorized that by bringing different terms of loyalty, chung, under the doctrine of righteousness or moral duty, uiri, that stresses their interrelations between Chinese and Korea. He would be able to capture some of the unique characteristics of Korean aesthetics of uiri as a whole. The act of placing righteousness facing aesthetical experience but also pointing toward international and diplomatic loyalty, he speculated, might create a Confucian definition and a commitment of aesthetic value to the Korean elites. In a theoretical sense, we can see this tension also in righteousness uiri as the hiatus between two seemingly contradictory terms: moral and aesthetical values. This dialectic method continued to play a significant role in 17th century Korean aesthetics.

Mt. Gosan in Korea, Korea: Joseon period, 1803, National Treasure of Korea No. 237

Song Siyeol’s followers continued to make it his focus in the book, Song’s Great Book (Sonajadaejeon). His followers explored the tensional engagement of antinomies
in an aesthetic discourse in Song’s discussion of the moral term *uiri*. While the term usually refers to righteousness and loyalty, it is a compound that Confucian scholars unpacked to stress an inner aesthetical experience within the moral term itself.

For centralizing Confucian aesthetical experiences, Song Siyeol’s successor, Kwon Sangha (1641-1721), established the Confucian architecture shrine, *mandongmyo*, at Huayang gugok to visualize the righteousness *uiri* and considered its dualities, such as moral and aesthetical experiences and natural and artistic beauty. The Confucian architecture at hometown is a formation composed of a set of inner dual moral and aesthetical relations that illustrates a single structure. In *gugok* areas, the Confucian shrine serves to visualize what is seemingly morally right: the aesthetic experience at Confucian scholar’s hometown in Korea.

When the different notions were exposed this way, appreciating poetry, painting, calligraphy, and architecture of Confucian aesthetic sensibilities, we might have thought, a better grasp of the entire notion of a unique and cultural Korean Aesthetics would become more feasible. This article traces Confucianism with the aim of building a structure that might bring light to contemporary Korean aesthetics, and by doing so also to single out a correlation with tradition and contemporary aesthetics toward the possibility of an overarching notion of a Korean aesthetics.

Selected References:


The ubiquity of artefacts

At least four aspects stand out when considering criteria which characterise all cultural systems: they are collective, hereditary, involve learning or transmission, and produce artefacts. Even before the elaboration of bifacial axes and female fertility figurines, the evolution of culture depended on the production of artefacts whenever labour was imprinted upon durable materials, experience was accumulated and knowledge shared within a community. According to Pinker: “all foraging peoples manufacture cutters, pounders, containers, cordage, nets, baskets, and spears and other weapons. They use fire, shelters, and medicinal drugs. Their engineering is often ingenious exploiting poisons, smokeouts, glue traps, fill nets, baited lines, snares, corrals, weirs, camouflaged pits and clifftops, blowguns, bows and arrows, and kites trailing sticky fishing lines made out of spider silk.” It is also worthy of note that every culture has elaborated a variety of aesthetic items such as necklaces, bracelets or earrings, and the universality and antiquity of beads for adornment has been confirmed by findings in the five continents.

There is an ongoing debate among ethologists and evolutionary scientists as to whether it is possible to include within the concept of “culture “also animal behaviour since various species exhibit precisely those aspects mentioned above. Apis mellifera not only build artefacts like beehives but use and share a referential language. Birds and spiders employ weaving while different avian species learn local dialects. Crocodiles, caimans and alligators also build nests with leaves, sticks and branches piled in a clump over the water to breed their eggs, and even take advantage of these plants’ decomposition to increase nest temperature. Fish, termites and ants dig wells or tunnels in the sand to catch their prey and caddisfly larvae make silk cases in which they stick sand and plant debris.

If we define culture in terms of artefacts, perhaps no species has produced as many of them as the human species. Yet if an artefact is defined as the making of something that did not exist until produced by an organism, then the production of oxygen by bacteria or of cellulose by plants could be considered as artefacts that exceed all human cultural creation and consequently suggest the idea of proto-cultures in plants and animals. Although this may sound somewhat exaggerated it may at least show that a better defi-
nition of culture is required. If we consider culture to be related to artefacts, especially decorative artefacts, the prototypical case of non-human construction and ornamentation of artefacts are bowerbirds that build bower nests only for the sake of seduction and they collect shells, fruits, bones and coloured objects to decorate them. Some species even paint their bowers with berries and decorate them with fresh flowers, shells and blue iridescent beetles. The accumulation of items is common to many species especially among black wheatears that gather almost one and a ½ kilo of stones in their nests. However, the accumulation of rocks, as the Ur ziggurat from 6000 years ago, Stonehenge 5000-years ago or Giza pyramids 4500, exhibits an obsession with permanency that seems human all too human.

In addition to this quest for permanence, the opposite is also true, namely the search of greater flexibility. With the radical climate changes that occurred during the Pleistocene era two possibilities were at stake: 1) hominids with abundant fur would die during periods of extreme heat in the savannah and desert and face extinction or 2) the freezing temperatures during the ice ages would result in extinction of hominids lacking thick fur. We naked apes, as Desmond Morris named us, devised the perfect solution to these extreme climates: in order to survive the heat we blocked the development of fat and fur and to survive freezing temperatures we “borrowed” those furs from other animals. We thus evolved body adaptations and invented artefacts which reciprocally influenced each other and provided more options in dealing with the environment.

**Inheriting culture**

Culture is the rule of artefact, a legacy of something by someone who once conceived it, built it, used it, stored it and passed it on. We are completely surrounded and engulfed by artefacts. Such a variety of objects can only be a result of labour division that is directly proportional to the diversity and specialization of artefact production. Unlike the stems found around termite mounds that are used by chimpanzees for fishing these insects or the phenomenon of crows placing nuts in motorways for cars to crack the shells up, human artefacts are not invented anew in each generation but are inherited. As we artificialize acquired characteristics, we also pass on new developments from one generation to the next. Such objects can be expanded, changed, replicated, improved and adapted to different environments and purposes.

While the molecular structure of the DNA code is passed from one generation to another as a form imposed upon matter (amino acids) to build proteins, so culture can also be inherited as form replicated in different materials. Cultural heritage is passed not only directly through habit and imitation of certain activities, but indirectly by the permanency and replication of coded matter. Carved stones or cave paintings remain as indexical signs (in Peirce’s sense) of a life which expressed meaning and sensibility ontogeneti-
cally. Fossils also express meaning phylogenetically that can be read by reverse engineering as evolutionists do when from morphological and behaviour adaptations they infer the environments in which these organisms survived.

Not only humans are capable of inheriting. Beavers pass on their twig dams to their offspring and rats acquire their nests from their families. The bumblebee queen uses empty mice nests to build a vault and form a honeycomb where she deposits a cluster of buds for future bee workers. Salthe states that there are trails in the mountains that have been used by the deer for generations. He mentions that plants also inherit environments that have been favourably modified by their immediate parent, as when some trees and shrubs in very dry habitats produce highly flammable leaves to burn their competitors who are unable to survive the flames.4

**Cultural transmission**

Luca Cavalli-Sforza and Marcus Feldman designed mathematical models to observe and describe processes of cultural transmission over time in statistical quantitative terms.5 They set out to analyze these tendencies according to 3 criteria: vertical (parents to children), horizontal (peers and friends) and oblique (role models or other authority figures). By vertical transmission we learn from our parents what is correct or undesirable according to social norms. By oblique transmission we may learn from Socrates how to think by mayeutics (thanks to Plato), enjoy Euripides’ plays and admire the horses painted in the Chauvet cave 30,000 years ago. By horizontal transmission we can gain knowledge from our peers of the latest games, fads or hearsay on matters of common interest. Mass media technology has triggered horizontal transmission to exponential levels through spatial and cultural distances which were unimaginable a few decades ago.

The use of tools like the stirrup, harness, compass and gunpowder revolutionized agricultural technology, economy and military tactics when imported from China to Europe catalyzing the transition from a feudal to capitalist economy, as emphasised by Needham.5 A crucial feature in cultural transmission mechanisms is the possibility of inheriting deliberate individual findings and not only random variations (in evolutionary terms) and of accumulating inventions as well as disseminating at much higher speed than natural evolution since they no longer require the passage from one generation to another.

Just as the genetic code regulates nucleotide sequences in replication, so cultural forms regulate replication of social activities by codes involving traditions like wedding and passage rituals, protocols, etiquette, diplomacy, and agreements on exchange and trade regulations, ostentatious expenditure systems etc. Cultural transmission consists in mimicking attitudes, signs or gestures as accurately as each species’ nervous system allows. Imo, the female chimpanzee teacher at Koshima Island in Japan who invented po-
tato and wheat washing and transmitted her discovery to her group is a case in point. Ants (*Temnothorax albipennis*) may learn the safest way to food sources from an experienced worker by imitating the mechanism of tandem running. These cases include at least two of the requirements that define culture: imitation and learning.

The discovery of mirror neurons by Gallese and Rizzolati gave great hope for understanding precisely these mechanisms of transmission, imitation, communication, and empathy. They consist, as shown by fMRI studies, of an individual’s activation of neurons in the exact same area when performing an action as when merely observing that action. We identify with what we observe and perform mentally the action at the neuronal level. From this perspective, when we hear a symphony we not only enjoy the harmonious combination of sounds but vicariously experience the creativity and imagination of the composer as well the musicians’ playing dexterity. In other words, artistic experience may well consist of feeling Van Gogh’s skill and emotional intensity in the act of painting, Diego El Cigala’s warmth and ardour in singing, Nijinsky’s passionate and deftly dancing or Glenn Gould’s mastery and acute sensibility on the piano. We have the opportunity of in-corporating (literally integrating to our body) an artist’s sensitivity, elegance, fervour. The transmission of experience, knowledge and even feeling becomes possible by cultural transmission.

**The configuration of social territories**

Rudimentary culture allowed homo sapiens not only to survive the most extreme weather changes but ensured that their offspring would inherit acquired characteristics (as Lamarck believed to be the case in biology). In order to safeguard such heritage humans devised collective organizations that evolved in a variety of cultural institutions from the basic tribal consanguinity units. These institutions are to the social sphere what artefacts to the body and words to the mind: shared objectivations or extensions that constitute the building blocks of culture.

It is not enough to build and own artefacts, inherit and learn techniques for producing them and transmitting our acquisitions to following generations. We also need contexts that assign meaning to these artefacts, preserve them and secure a social position to their inventors, owners and heirs. Such contexts are delineated by means of institutions or cultural matrices.

Nature appears to be a garden of forking paths into lineages or clades of species derived from common ancestors. Culture is also a garden whose paths descend from a seminal proto-matrix rooted in biological ground through the first division of labour: sexual differentiation. The tendency of matter to be organized in harmonious, symmetrical forms such as in the case of the Bénard hive effect or Belousov-Zhabotinsky reaction is remarkable. The most basic forms of self-organization up to the more complex take on
reticular configurations in different patterns. As a collectivity, humans can be grouped into the couples, families, sects, clans or tribes, neighbourhoods, gangs, agrarian communities, towns, colonies, cities, states, countries, empires and civilisations. As an individual, a baby animal is a web of immune, neural, endocrine, digestive, and circulatory networks interconnected by chemical messengers such as hormones, enzymes and peptides flowing throughout the body regulating perception, emotion, memory, metabolism, balance and health. These networks are not just expressions of vertical hierarchical systems with a central control brain sending electrochemical signals to control the activity of each individual or social body, but heterarchical cross-linked and cross-fertilizing systems operating horizontally.

These paths lead to and configure cultural matrices and submatrices which branch off in rhizomatic, fractal, radial or arboreal patterns and webs. Certain matricial areas tend to stiffen when explicit and detailed rules are set up in their procedures constituting well defined territories in social institutions that reproduce by inertia and habit. The most conspicuous areas of the cultural fabric, equivalent to the five kingdoms in biology (monera, protista, fungi, plantae and animalia) are institutions like the family, school, church, state, commerce etc. By institution we may understand a social entity collectively established by explicit regulations with clear boundaries. Unlike a matrix which spontaneously grows from the bottom up, an institution is set from the top to bottom with well defined policies and hierarchical segmentation into commissions, boards, leaders and subordinates (as in clerical, governmental or educational organizations). A group of individuals consolidate these hard institutional tissues in culture legitimizing their procedures by consensus or by inertia of certain tasks considered more important than others, often quite arbitrarily. The prototypical case is a civil association whose statutes are agreed upon, notarized and certified from the start.

Mapping the mind, the city and growth

Cities are the collective fossils of culture, as the fossils of animals are the individual and species biological traces of nature. From fossils we learn about the growth and evolution of each animal species, and from cities we can infer and interpret the activities and conventions that had significance in the everyday life of their inhabitants. When we look at patterns of mental, urban and biological growth, remarkable echoes and structural coincidences among them become apparent. At least eight patterns resonate in morphological similarities among nature, mind, work and city, either pure or combined:

1. Arboreal: hierarchical bifurcations with a clear direction from a single source.
2. Concentric: rippling or expanding levels from the centre.
3. Axial: non hierarchical variations upon a same line or axis.
4. Rhizomatic: non hierarchical irregular and contiguous offshoots.
5. Modular: non hierarchical aggregation of repetitive elements at the same scale.
7. Radial: centrifugal growth out from a central point.

Arboreal patterns, sprouting hierarchically through forking paths from a common stem are typical of corporations, computer software, clades of species’ evolution, rivers and their offshoots, diagrams of companies work distribution, and mind maps.

Concentric patterns are found in tree trunks’ annual rings, ant nests, the ripples of water droplets and city plans of the antiquity like Al Rawda 2400 b.c.e. in Syria or the fortress-palace of Ardashir I at Firuzabad in 224 c.e. Contemporary urban sprawl designs in Arizona or Waterloo region in Ontario are designed concentrically. Eukaryotic cells, tissues in a vein, a retrovirus, the earth’s crust, mantle, outer and inner cores and topographical mountain maps, as well as football stadiums and bullrings are concentric.

Axial patterns are non hierarchical linear variations aggregated across the same plane or axis, as the disks and ribs of the human skeleton, cathedral façades such as Strasbourg, Orvieto, Milan, the design of the Pisa tower, traffic lights through an avenue or termite colonies’ nests. Axiality need not be along a straight line as in the DNA molecule aggregation along a helicoidal axis.

Rhizomes are found typically in bamboo growth, Brazilian fabelas and squatter settlements, the Tokyo metro, choral reefs, Adis Abeba city plan, Arab medinas like Tanger or Toledo in Spain.

These patterns sharply contrast with modular cities orthogonally planned in detail from above by the state. Babylon 3650 years ago was one such orthogonal planned city. Deir El Medina, near Luxor (Egypt) and Timrad (Argelia) have this same pattern. In the 19th century Baron Haussman planned Paris with its honeycomb of rigidly segmented perpendicular streets, and by the 20th century Bauhaus revolutionized design with the concept of modules. Modularity is present also in beehives, skyscrapers, forests, as well as minimalism and serialism in art and industrial production or Hipodamos’s plan for Miletus to the 1811 Comissioners’ plan for Manhattan, as well as Chandigarh in India, Los Angeles city plan and Barcelona’s Eixample district. Communist mass construction of social housing or gothic architecture’s repeated vaults are typically modular. Texture decorations and carpet weaving as well as lipid molecules in layers of cell membranes are modular too, as well as conventional ordering of time in calendars or hours.

Mandelbrot’s discovery of fractal geometry of self contained alliterated patterns across various scales revealed similar patterns in meteorological, vegetal, and anatomical designs. Fractals are characteristic of Sierpinski’s triangle and Julia or Cantor’s sets, in pulmonary vessels and the circulatory system. The logical construction of a text
where sentences must present similar structure to the paragraphs, sections and chapters of a book can be seen as fractal too. Fern leaves, broccoli, sea waves, clouds, thunderbolts and coasts are fractal.

Radial structures are present in flowers, mind maps, mandalas, the London Underground, the Notre Dame rosette, cities like 7th century b.c.e. Hamadan, as well as Medina and Mecca, jellyfish, the Place de l’Étoile in Paris, starfish, sea urchins or hedgehogs, tarantulas, crabs etc. Hydrogen wave functions can be radial, axial or concentric. In the loose sense of the term,

Network patterns are typical of computer connections and interlinked nodes, social groups such as facebook, academia or linkedin, fishing nets, cellular tissues like fascia or onion skin, fish scales, fabrics or silken threads in a cocoon, membranes, bird nests and neural networks.

These eight types of patterns rarely appear in pure form since they are usually found as hybrids. We can consider a modular and fractal hybrids whenever the same configurations repeat themselves in varying sizes at the same scale, as a sun flower’s centre, pine cones or pineapple peel. Spider webs are radial, netted and concentric, the Niches pyramid at Tajin combines modular and axial, the Knossos palace is modular and rhizomatic, thunderbolts and rivers are arboreal and fractal. Peacock tails are radial, modular, axial and concentric. Molecules in DNA are modular and either axial or radial. Urban plans of Eden Prairie, Florida and Deer Crest in California are concentric and radial, while Palmanova and Grammichele in Italy are concentric, radial and modular. Camberra is rhizomatic and modular. Cells in ant nests can be axial, networked or rhizomatic. The Aztec calendar is concentric, radial and modular. Snowflakes are radial and axial. The petals of flowers are typically modular and radial around the centre and the patterns in the heart are concentric, fractal-modular, and radial in spiral.

Examples of these configurations are almost infinite, yet the patterns seem to fall into a finite set of eight. What is remarkable is their fluidity along the most diverse natural and cultural phenomena, planned and spontaneous, in mental processes and organization of social tasks, across material, anatomical, urban, geological, architectural and animal manifestations. The explanation for these isomorphisms resides in their common grounding in nature as well as in human modes of organizing our perceptions, designs and work plans. Despite of presenting here only the tip of the tip of the iceberg, I still hope this exploration will substantiate the claim that cultural production is definitely not a means for dominating nature to serve mankind (as has been assumed since the industrial revolution) but a natural outcome of evolution and of communal life in various species. As evidence of the relative continuity between nature and culture increases, resonances of natural morphologies and growth patterns appear more salient across the most artificial and sophisticated cultural manifestations such as mental maps, work distribution, design, city planning, and institutional hierarchies. In the echoes among mind, cities and growth, nature is our culture and culture is our nature.
References


Notes

1 Pinker, p.189.
2 p. 201-2, 212.
3 p. 4.
4 p. 143.
5 p. 20.
6 *ibidem*
7 *ibidem*
8 The mirror neuron system can probably explain what Krebs and Dawkins defined as “mind reading” which implies endowing others with intentions by interpreting their gestures.
KANT’S CITY? SOME PRELIMINARY REFLECTIONS ON LANDSCAPE AND ITS AESTHETIC CONTEXT

*Mara Rubene*

City is a complex object of various descriptions, research, and reflection strategies. Philosophically acknowledged as early as in the famous Socratic say “the men who dwell in the city are my teachers, and not the trees or the country”, city is still in a need for far more comprehensive studies as it turned out to be a rather cryptic, enigmatic entity. If Walter Benjamin is famous by his close analysis and inspection of a city life, Immanuel Kant, quite a contrary, is noted for his eulogy of nature and its beauties. If Benjamin was known as a great traveler, Kant - in his turn, has been described as very economic in his habits. Nevertheless, both names are one way or other linked with the name of Riga\(^1\), a city on the banks of the River Daugava, — beauty of nature, emblematic symbol of dramatic changes in Latvia’s history. Koenigsberg — the birth place and life long home city for Kant, Berlin\(^2\) – the childhood city for Benjamin, as well as Riga (where Kant’s first two Critiques were published, where lived Asja Lacis) — all three of them were part of 20th century’s revolutionary and tectonic twists. Königsberg\(^3\) was named after Stalin’s henchman and turned into Kaliningrad, Berlin - before the split in West and East Berlin - excluded Benjamin and in a way put an end to his life, Riga turned into a capital of a Soviet Socialist Republic.\(^4\) Thus all three cities came to be involved in historic concussions more forceful than any natural disaster they ever suffered.

In his 3rd Critique Kant is trying to find the most acceptable formula for bridging the dualism, established by his first and second Critique, i.e., dualism between nature and human freedom. Almost in the very first pages of *Critique of Judgment* we find a colorful description: “If someone asks me whether I find the palace that I see before me beautiful, I may well say that I don’t like that sort of thing, which is made merely to be gaped at, or like Iroquois sachem, that nothing in Paris pleased him better than the cookshops, in true Rousseau-esque style I might even vilify the vanity of the great who waste the sweat of the people on such superfluous things, finally I could even easily convince myself that if I were to find myself on an uninhabited island, without any hope of ever coming upon human beings again, and could conjure up such a magnificent structure through my mere wish, I would not even take the trouble of doing so if I already had a hut that was comfortable enough for me.

All of this might be conceded to me and approved; but that is not what is at issue here.”\(^5\)
In my paper I intend to find out what exactly is at issue here and how Kant’s distinctions and critical power of his notions are and could be interpreted in the context of history of their recent reception and placed in the perspective of rather multifarious and multifaceted research on landscape. It seems to me that recent readings of Kant’s philosophical works and his lectures on anthropology and geography provide rich opportunities for aesthetic reflection on “nature” and “city”, on “natural environment” and “urban landscape”, etc. In my opinion, they are rooted in further elaboration of 1) sphere of sensuousness, notably, genetic aspects of “transcendental aesthetic”, sphere of passivity; of 2) re-elaboration of relations between sensuousness and rationality, together with exploration of hypotyposis (together with research on “image”), as well as poetic/rhetoric power of the name. Not all of these aspects are self-evident and in this paper, speaking on landscape and city, I will treat them by touching just some selected facets.

Overcoming metaphysics - visibility / invisibility of city landscape

Kant’s aesthetics is rather complicated itself, and one cannot hope to find here an easy way through to the subject of city landscape; on the one hand, its impressive influence on the understanding of aesthetic tradition will be of no help; on the other one, tectonic changes in interpretation of nature, land, image and aesthesis in the last decades of the 20th century should be taken into account. Nevertheless, in contemporary discussions on evaluation and theoretical elaboration of landscape problem, be it city landscape or cityscape or urban landscape, aesthetic criteria among others are acknowledged to be a prominent integral part even of contemporary multidisciplinary research. On the one hand, Kantian aesthetics has been blamed for its bonds with Western metaphysics. It was articulated most profoundly by Martin Heidegger, who qualified Kantian aesthetics as implicated in an old ways of metaphysical subjectivism, that partly meant to retain the prevalence of visual approach and feeling in evaluating the beauties of nature. That has led to the predominant positing of a landscape theme in an aesthetic perspective as an object of taste, or rather limited it to the rigid regime of representational approach.

On the other hand, Kantian aesthetics is involved in a recent re-reading of sublime, particularly well traced in French philosophy, thus reintroducing another perspective on aesthetic, affective, immersive, seductive and other aspects of landscape problematic. As an example of such re-orientation to more updated understanding of both aesthetics and landscape, I would like to point to some recent elaborations on the conception of presentation, as well as aesthetic act theory; rooted in advancement of more complex vocabulary of space and time, unity and heterogeneity, and making use of the distinction between “garden” and “landscape”. Thus Baldine Saint-Girons points that “L’acte esthétique se développe côté jardin et côté paysaga en révélant deux mo-
City fascinates us with its capability to satisfy two needs so important in human life — to come home and dwell there and to leave home as quickly as possible. Both of them are reflected in city landscape: one as a reference to cultivation of natural environment, the other as a reference to civilization, the first is historically recognized and developed as a “green city”, “fresh air city” (“garden city”), the other one as lines of power — transport lines, railway lines, main lines, skylines. The visible turns out to be just traces of power speed, of realized mental images. Just as in this reading emphasis is displaced from beautiful to sublime, from representation to presentation, so in landscape research accent migrates from sightseeing, visual, picturesque view toward broader immersive aesthetic experience of land, but in conceptualization of contemporary city emphasis is replaced to its aesthetic aspects of “sprawling”,13 loosing centre, ignoring its own citiness14.

The process of backing up perceptual ways of the universal subject inscribes us in the framework of Kantian amazement before the infinite richness of nature. Nevertheless, we can easily find out that the reference to Paris in his Analytic of the Beautiful is ironic and contains much more than an affirmation of disinterested pleasure rooted in his notion of nature. Contrary to what might be expected, Kant is not eager to support either taste of visual pleasures, or the rave of “superfluous things”, or a life “outside the society”. Paris remains Paris. On the one hand, in this reference to Paris Kant seems to allude to some kind of aesthetic minimalism, or the side of his understanding of human nature, designated by himself as “unsocial” (“Ungeselligkeit”); on the other hand, in this reference we can find affirmation of the necessity of being cultivated, we are invited to see in Paris more than just “cook-shops”, to be oriented to sociability (“Geselligkeit”) or, as Kant put it in the same Analytic of Beautiful: “It is readily seen that to say that it is beautiful and to prove that I have taste what matters is what I make of this representation in myself, not how I depend on the existence of the object.”15 Kantian “natural” human inclination to live in society, in his regard, offers to human being the most for the exercise of his or her faculties and the room for “a feeling of the promotion of life”.16 (Lebensgefühle)

This goes hand in hand with a renewed readings of Kantian critiques not limited to the dominating role of the theoretical project of the First Critique, but opening the way to more synthetic, more conceptual layers of feeling, desiring subject and subjectivity offered by the Third Critique. Thus it seems to me Kantian aesthetics in this afresh ap-
pliances recuperates unemployed resources of rhetoric and poetic tradition and gravi-
tates more to the ethical and political than to metaphysical.

Also, more traditional reading of Kant based on the frame of the perceptual is turn-
ingen into more synthetic, more holistic treatment of Kantian themes. Thus Paul Guyer
relies on the example from Kant’s Lectures on Metaphysics to make a stress on and
elaborate Kantian emphasis on image, imagination, concept and name. He quotes from
Kant’s “Lectures on Metaphysics”: “When I see a city, my mind then forms itself an
image of the object which it has before it, while it runs through the manifold,”17 and
concludes that “despite his legendary obscurity, Kant could not be clearer on the new
role for imagination in his epistemology”18. If Guyer is trying to find an answer to the
question: “how to create an order among the representational elements that represents
the simultaneous spatial positions of the landmarks” to assemble an image of “Man-
hattan skyline”, thus paying more attention to spatial positions in looking forward to
cityscape, so Nancy is stressing, alas, in more abstract way, temporal aspects of land-
scape. He alleges: “Uncanny estrangement occurs in the suspension of presence: the
imminence of a departure or an arrival, neither good nor evil, only a wide space
[largeur] and a generosity [largesse] that allow this suspension to be thought and to
pass. For this suspension is always a question of a passage or a passing on. A landscape
is always a landscape of time, and doubly so: it is a time of year (a season) and a time
of day (morning, noon, or evening), as well as a kind of weather [un temps], rain or
snow, sun or mist. In the presentation of this time, which unfolds with every image,
the present of representation can do nothing other than render infinitely sensible the
passing of time, the fleeting instability of what is shown. Every cloud has its own
peace, but this peace is so properly its own that it has such a peace—everything shows
this—only at the moment when this cloud has not yet become another, and with it the
entire landscape, which incessantly estranges and unsettles.”19 Rereading of Kantian
aesthetics is supported not only by the re-evaluation of previous theory of perceptual
subject (including genetic reading of Kant’s transcendental aesthetic, inaugurated by
the constitutive phenomenology of Edmund Husserl), not only by re-evaluation of his
theory of sublime, but as well by the “whole world” or “cosmopolitan” philosophy,
elaborated in his pragmatic anthropology, philosophy of history, and also lecture
courses on geography; reconciling earth history with the geography of landscapes.
Thus we can appreciate some reverberations of such a turn not only in more careful
reflection on landscape’s spatial and temporal appraisals, but also in stressing the active
role of imagination in the passivity of image formation, as well as some further em-
phasis on discursive and displaying functions in the process of mapping our place in
our world. In recent readings we can find orientational, not foundational traces of sub-
jectivity20. It could be supplemented and illustrated by a description of modern world
feeling given by Michel Houellebecq in his “The Map and the Territory”: “This map
was sublime. Overcome, he began to tremble in front of food display. Never had he
contemplated an object as magnificent, as rich in emotion and meaning, as 1/150,00-scale Michelin map of Creuse and the Haute-Vienne. The essence of modernity, of scientific and technical apprehension of the world, was here combined with the essence of animal life. The drawing was complex and beautiful, absolutely clear, using only small palette of colors. But in each of the hamlets and villages, represented according to their importance, you felt the thrill, the appeal, of human lives..." 21 Unfortunately, we have not enough place and time here to go into more elaborated articulation of more or less paradigmatic layers of aesthetic and rational search for an appropriate cosmology.

In a way, the name of city is a testimony to an inescapable human presence in the natural world. Also, it reveals equivocal, enigmatic realization of free humanity, or its cryptic absence. On the one hand, it appears as sensibly perceptible that is visible, as a way of seeing, or a way of walking, while on the other one, it could be read as an invisible, infinite, ruinous and lost site of some disastrous catastrophe.

The name of City invokes singularity of city landscape. Jean-Luc Nancy calls our attention to “image”, “idea”, “name” of the city when he asserts: “The city draws itself afar, contouring roofs, towers, spikes, domes, network of lights, haze in the sky: idea of a place, name, manner of dwelling and go past.” 22

In Kant’s works we find names of several cities — Paris, Athens and Rome, of course, Königsberg, as well as Lisbon, and may be some others. Containing poetic or rhetoric, conceptual or displayed power, the name of the city seems to be an important and organic part of Kantian approach to the problem of the appeal of city’s landscape, that thus could be inscribed in a broader reflection on the place of man in nature, as well as in his reflection on questions of human freedom as well as cosmopolitan hospitality of mankind. City as a place of cultivation of one’s own faculties, where educated, academic people set an example of reasonable life, is part and parcel of Kantian understanding of city’s good name. He announces: “A large city such as Königsberg on the river Pregel, which is the centre of a kingdom, in which the provincial councils seat of the government are located, which has a university (for cultivation of the sciences), and which has also the right location for maritime commerce — a city which, by way of rivers, has advantage of commerce both with the interior of the country, and with neighboring or distant lands of different languages and customs, can well be taken as an appropriate place for broadening one’s knowledge of human beings as well of the world, his knowledge can be acquired without even traveling.” 23

Landscape or urban landscape is rarely named, but it is placed, localized, linked to a particular territory, regionally defined, and thus, though temporarily various and displayed, it is complemented by the name of city, quarter, square, garden, suburb. Even more, landscape is borrowing words of description from so called urban literature, images of display from maps, paintings, photographies, cinema. Therefore it is impossible to localize aura or feeling of the landscape, but it nevertheless could be a source of ex-
ertion of fascination. Complexity of urban landscape comes from the complexity of layers of ascetic reason responsible for logical civility of contemporaneous city, as well as from its poetic complicity with pleasures of sensibility.

Deep are the roots of Kant’s reflection on human nature and human freedom: not only nature “in its chaos or in its wildest and most unruly disorder and devastation”, but also human being in his or her capacity to name and rename, to build and rebuild, should acknowledge his or her own engagement for being in a world.

**Landscape of disaster: aesthetics and politics**

Kant has written on Lisbon in his essays on earthquakes. He ranks among those having described the disaster in modern terms. Impact of Lisbon tragedy was immense. “The damage done to Lisbon on 1 November 1755 was extensive. Some of the finest civic buildings (including the great trading houses) were ruined; hundreds of smaller shops and homes were destroyed. One estimate suggests that only 3000 of Lisbon’s 20 000 houses remained habitable. At least half the city’s churches were damaged or reduced to rubble. The riverside, around the Royal Palace in the Terreiro do Paco, was particularly badly affected. The Ribeira Palace itself, crammed with rich artwork and library that may have numbered 70 000 books, was swept away.”

Lisbon turned out to be an image of human vulnerability in front of powerful nature.

The other landscapes of disaster, alas, were recorded less than two hundred years later, when countries and cities turned out to be victims of man-made disasters. Having lost their humility, human beings become capable of sudden irrational pervasive transformations of the environment. Twentieth-century technologies of vision and representation have been coupled with other technical achievements, transforming, but not extinguishing, the appeal of landscape and its power, that were leading to attenuate landscape as a crisis of “paradigm of modernity” and even to posing the question about the “death of landscape”.

Possibly, recognition of the violated land could be incorporated in the reflection on aesthetic dwelling on the earth. The still open discussion on open spaces in urban landscape, on aesthetic qualities of cityscapes, is a part of it. Recent history of disastrous destruction should be taken into account. Here I would like to highlight two points. One of them is linked to introduction of new names instead of old ones, the Thus Ladd Brian describes naming which characterizes not only East Berlin history exclusively: “The process of naming brings order and meaning, but it also brings power, as has been clear since Adam. So it is not surprising that names would also be the object of power struggles in Berlin. Street names are among the most obvious elements of a city’s historical identity. Compared with more tangible elements of the urban landscape, they can be changed easily and cheaply, which makes them tempting
KANT’S CITY? SOME PRELIMINARY REFLECTIONS ON LANDSCAPE AND ITS AESTHETIC CONTEXT

targets for politicians eager to make a symbolic gesture. But symbolic gestures divide Berliners more than they unite them, so decisions about street names arouse their deep suspicions about one another.” 26

In his turn Evalds Fogelis reports on the regular constructional praxis in Soviet period:

“In his turn Evalds Fogelis reports on the regular constructional praxis in Soviet period:

“Construction in its own way destroys individuality of old cities everywhere. It is the negation of everything present (old housing, previous landscape etc.). Thus, a new landscape emerges as a contingent aftereffect. There is another option - to understand and make use of the negation dialectically. In this case negation turns out to be a link between everything forthcoming and the old, a conjunction of all the obtained and positive to be carried on without any fluctuations.” 27, 28

Kant has been tireless in putting forward the necessity for a human being to orient him- or herself. Thus he invokes a lover of the beautiful in nature who has been tricked by artificial flowers or artfully crafted birds placed in the garden. As soon as it strikes him or her as deception, Kant says, the interest in this artificiality is lost.

“Uncanny estrangement occurs in the suspension of presence: the imminence of a departure or an arrival, neither good nor evil, only a wide space and generosity that allow this suspension to be thought and to pass.” 29

Notes

2 “Berlin is the city of the Berlin Wall, the Reichstag, Prussian palaces, Hitler’s chancellery, and some of the grand experiments of modern architecture. People’s responses to these buildings, ruins, and vacant sites reveal a great deal about Berlin as a collection of people and as a place.” P. 2 //
3 “The Nazis had broken radically with their predecessors in their treatment of the historical landscape and their sense of the relationship between past and present. They left their mark all over Berlin; their successors, determined to make their own break with the past, had to decide what to destroy, what to keep, and what to commemorate.” // Brian L. The Ghosts of Berlin : Confronting German History in the Urban Landscape, University of Chicago Press, 1998, P. 127
6 Just some examples: The Place of Landscape. Concepts, Contexts, Studies, ed.by Malpas J., The MIT
http://landscapeurbanism.com/

Thus Jeff Malpas formulates the task of the research: “The question concerning the place of landscape is thus not only a question of how landscape relates to forms of power or to modes of representation, but of how landscape functions in relation to place itself, in relation to human being in place, and of how place may be said to function in and through landscape.” // The Place of Landscape. Concepts, Contexts, Studies, ed.by Malpas J., The MIT Press, 2011, P. VII.


The picturesque developed not only as a response to changing attitudes to the landscape but also to what it perceived as the bankruptcy of a specific form of the analysis of the sublime — namely the attempt to map causes onto affects precisely, to claim for example that a large and massy object necessarily produces an affect of sublimity. The picturesque saw the world differently, its encounter with ‘landscape’ was inflected through nearly a century’s worth of contest and conflict over the right to use, see and picture the land. Within the mainstream of eighteenth-century discussion of the sublime landscape-aesthetics were fundamentally preoccupied with the pleasures of the eye. This aesthetic was indifferent to the needs of both the land and its users, to the productive capacity of the land to yield sustenance or organize social relations: it was content for the land to look like a picture, and when it did not conform to its idealised forms it usually re-arranged both land and dwellings in order to make it conform. //The Sublime: A Reader in British Eighteenth-Century Aesthetic Theory, Ed. By Andrew Ashfield, Peter De Bolla, Cambridge University Press, 1996, P. 15.


Jean-Luc Nancy announces: “La ville s’incivile et révèle l’incivilité de la civilisation: à savoir non exactement sa barbarie ni sa sauvagerie (encore qu’il y ait beaucoup à dire..) mais simplement ce fait que la civilisation — la ‘notre’, celle qu’on pêle-mêle “technicienne”, “capitaliste”, “humaniste”, “informaticienne”, “globalisante” — non seulement ne fait pas “culture”, n’arrive pas à l’immanence autoreflexive d’une culture, mais se propage et prolifère dans tous les sens à la fois comme une transcendance indéfinie qui n’aurait qu’à peine des points de fuite mais qui plutôt ne cessait de moduler toutes les variations du trans: transport, transformation, transit, transfixion, transimmanence éperdue...” // Nancy J.-L. La ville au loin, Paris: La Phocide, P. 10

Or another example, Clark D. Urban World/Global City, Routledge, 2003.


Kant I. Critique of Judgment, 5:245

Kant I. Lectures on Metaphysics, 28:235 Quate from: The Cambridge Companion to Kant and Modern Philosophy, Ed.by Paul Guyer, P. 180

o.c., P. 181.


“Levinas’s theory of non-cognitive ethics needs such an understanding of the orientational powers of subjectivity. Like the house that Kant describes in “What is Orientation in Thinking?” where all the furniture has been rear-ranged (WOT, 135/239), non-cognitive ethics presents us with a strange, in- verted, unfamiliar landscape. The third Critique helps to explain how it is possible for the subject to get its bearings within this strange environment, and navigate within it by means of feelings rather than concepts.” Dalton S. Subjectivity and orientation in Levinas and Kant // Continental Philosophy Review 32, 1999, P. 445.

Houellebecq M. The Map and the Territory,

Nancy J.-L. La ville au loin, Paris: La Phocide, P. 11. “La ville se dessine au loin, contour de toutis,
de tours, de flèches et de domes, réseau de lumières, vapeur dans la ciel: l’idée d’un lieu, d’un nom, d’une maniere d’habiter et de passer.”


27 Jebkura veida celtniecība savā ziņā iznīcina veco pilsētu individualitāti. Tas ir esošā noliegums (vecās apbūves, iepriekšējās ainavas u. c.). Aīnaviskais rezultāts pie visa tā rodas kā nejaufas sekas. Ir otra iespēja – izmantot un izprast noliegumu dialektiski. Tādā gadījumā noliegums klūst par sakaru starp jauno un veco; par vienojošo, kas nes sev līdzī visu iegūto un pozitīvo bez kādām svārstībām.


28 Fogelis E. On several questions of organization of city landscape and lining street with trees // 20th Century’s Essays and Manifets of Latvian architects... (in Latvian)

VI - Metaphysical Aspects of Urban Experience
TRAVELS IN TIME, SPACE AND INTENSITY

Annu Wilenius and Taina Rajanti

City as human nature – city as landscape and nature – relation of thought to environment and landscape – both philosophical exploration and artistic research

This paper will explore how thought dwells and travels within urban landscape. It is part of an artistic research looking at urban landscape from the perspective of the traveller and the stranger through performative, poetic and visual experiments. We are bringing together stories of our own experiences with cities that have made us think and changed our thinking as well as stories about cities and about thinking about cities. Ultimately our interest is to study the relation of thought and environment (place, space, landscape, surrounding physical and social world).

Travels in time

“Marco Polo imagined answering (or Kublai Khan imagined his answer) that the more one was lost in unfamiliar quarters of distant cities, the more one understood the other cities he had crossed to arrive there; and he retraced the stages of his journeys, and he came to know the port from which he had set sail, and the familiar places of his youth, and the surroundings of home, and a little square of Venice where he gambolled as a child.”

Italo Calvino. Invisible Cities: Thin Cities 1

To travel with Nietzsche – back in time, and up and down the European map. Nietzsche was shamelessly blunt about it: sitting down on your behind, eating tasteless food, drinking lousy beer and remaining settled affects your thinking and your writing. “Only ideas won by walking have any value”, he declares; the only way to set thinking in motion is to set your body in motion. For him the idea of thinking being materially related to the environment was also blatant: he “puts up with life” in Rome, unable to bring forward one step his Zarathustra, which had become into existence under the “unfavourable conditions” of the Ligurian coast and mountains, in a hotel so close to the sea that sleep was impossible, days spent in climbing and walking the mountainside.
during a “winter cold and exceedingly wet”, and which then was completed in “the hidden places and heights” of Nice. “The body is inspired: let us leave the ‘soul’ out of it … I could often have been seen dancing; at that time I could walk seven or eight hours in the mountains without a trace of tiredness.”

Thinking, thought, and theory are not mystic substances opposed to the real, the concrete, the practical. As Foucault and Deleuze define it, “theory does not express, translate, or serve to apply practice: it is practice. But it is local and regional, as you said, and not totalizing.” Thinking is something that needs doing, it is a material engagement of the sentient human being – who is always engaged also with and within his/ her “surroundings”. Nietzsche would have agreed: “Thinking has to be learned in the way dancing has to be learned, as a form of dancing…” Man’s mind is something that connects him to the world, not something that sets him apart from it, a systemic whole of man-and-environment instead of man confronting environment. Thus, thinking is a process of quite bodily connection, trial-and-error, within the system.

Travels in space

“All this so that Marco Polo could explain or imagine explaining or be imagined explaining or succeed finally in explaining to himself that what he sought was always something lying ahead, and even if it was a matter of the past it was a past that changed gradually as he advanced on his journey, because the traveller’s past changes according to the route he has followed: not the immediate past, that is, to which each day that goes by adds a day, but the more remote past. Arriving at each new city, the traveller finds again a past of his that he did not know he had: the foreignness of what you no longer are or no longer possess lies in wait for you in foreign, unpossessed places.”

Italo Calvino. Invisible Cities: Thin Cities 1

Annu Wilenius:

For seven years I have spent part of my time in Mongolia working on art exchange projects. This voluntary exile has had many different phases, but all through trying to understand and to document the city of Ulaanbaatar and myself in and outside of it has been a great part of the project. For Mongolia is changing. Of course Mongolia has been changing dramatically the past twenty years or so, but recently the change has taken yet another hectic spin described by the British newspaper the Guardian as “being on the verge of one of the most dramatic changes in human history”. What it is all about is mining; turning the once sacred surface of the Mongolian soil inside out and divulging coal, copper, gold… The thriving economy brings a lift to most people’s standard of living; still many are hesitant to be overtly positive or negative about the
whole process. It is not good or bad, it is. Change.

As we first came to Mongolia seven years ago as an artist group, we did so wishing to contest our perception of the world by trying out how we would experience a place as radically different from our own European backgrounds as Mongolia. As much as we wished to see an alien culture we also wanted to experience ourselves as aliens. And we did – though through the years in many different ways, as of course during the process it was not only Mongolia that changed, we also did. For the better or for the worse – who is to say one way or the other? Had we not lived the lives we have, we would not be who we are anyhow. Nietzsche writes quite evocatively of the process of becoming who one is in Ecce Homo, stating that “one becomes what one is presupposes that one does not have the remotest idea what one is”. To be able to avoid “blunders of life, side-paths and wrong turnings” would definitely ruin the process. Maybe the greatest wisdom lies exactly in the misfortunes that befall us – “they are an expression of great sagacity”. Knowing oneself is a practice of reflection better to be directed backwards than forward. We should be immersed in the experience and only afterwards take our time to reflect.

Here I will first present some of the artistic works I made during the years of travelling and exhibiting within these projects to reflect on in which ways my thinking has travelled through. Then I will give a more thorough presentation and reflection on these matters through an installation work combining video and objects called Minds-\textsc{scapes I-III}, that I have just finished in collaboration with Sedbazarin Ganzug at the Mänttä Art Festival in Finland.

\textbf{Works 2006-2011}

The first exhibition we held in 2005 in Ulaanbaatar simply presented works that we (the participating artists) were working on at the time – much of it landscape related. When we came back the following year I presented a work called Mongolia / Iceland, which was literally just that. It was a hand-bound book, where on the left side were images from Mongolia and on the right hand side from Iceland (where I have also spent a lot of time). The point of the work was that it was anything but obvious which were which just by looking. Iceland, being a small island in the Atlantic, and Mongolia, a huge landlocked plateau, have an amazing amount of similarities that do not end with mountains and horses. So my first (artistic) response to Mongolia was to experience it through something that I already knew quite well.

The next year, 2007, I thought I would set out to entirely undiscovered lands as I started a project of interviewing ger districts\textsuperscript{7} dwellers, or people who had spent their childhood in these ’slum’ quarters of Ulaanbaatar. The ’method’ was something I called a photowalk, which meant that the informant and I would walk around their residen-
tial/childhood districts and they would tell me about it while I took photos. What happened to me as I listened and watched was that I recognised my own childhood environment of 1970s Helsinki. The half planned, half wild places and the stories of freedom and happiness in them. The work that came out of this experience I called *Of the House I Grew Up in…* and it combined the ger district photos with a voiceover of a story of my childhood home.

For the exhibition, called *Mongolia: Perception and Utopia*, at Kerava Art Museum in Finland I also made artist interviews with the seven Mongolian artists participating. I felt an urgent need to inform people. Not only of the urban settlement situation, but also of the ideas the artists had of communist times, market economy and the ‘new freedom’ in its many different ways.

For the *Bare House* -exhibition, that took place in Pori 2010, I felt that I had been informative enough. I really wanted to go back to conveying my thoughts and experiences visually and unprocessed, so to say. (Not knowing what I was saying…) Thus I made the photographic series *Thoughts in / of Between*, which has absolutely no articulated thoughts behind them. Unarticulated and intense experiences, yes. For this exhibition Oula Salokannel and I also prepared an installation/video documentation work that was not about Mongolia, but carried the feeling or inspiration derived from the Mongolian attitude. We built a log raft and sailed down a river with it for four days. We knew nothing of building or rafting – but so what. Knowledge is not everything.

Then finally, of course, the project needed to be brought back to Mongolia for exhibition and for this puropos my partner and I travelled to Mongolia by the transsiberian train in 2011. All along the way from Helsinki to Moscow to Ulaanbaatar and then later to Beijing and Hohhot, we saw the birch tree being the ultimately most popular decoration piece in stores and cafes. From this sprung the revelation that what we had always thought as the ultimate symbol of Finnishness, was just as simply Russianness for the Russians and Mongolianness to the Mongolians. To ponder upon this we built a pavilion that brought together besides architectonic elements from all these counties and their usage of birch, also extracts of films with scenes of love and war in birch woodlands.

So in a way my (artistic) thinking went from exotism, to idenfication, to going native (in a positive sense on Finnish ground, I think, at least) and then finally to trying to parcel all these together. But where did my relation to the city go alongside? For much, of course, it was the source and the signpost of the works. At first everything was an adventure and even how difficult things would be you always have a buffer for an adventure, at least if it doesn’t last more than 2-3 months. I got used to a lot of things, for instance in the fields of privacy (lack of) and hygiene (lack of, also) and felt quite comfortable with being almost Mongolian (without Mongolian language, though). Then I came for the last, final, exhibition project and stayed six months and was organising, funding and curating two exhibitions in a museum that did not even
understand the concept that exhibitions are *built*. These issues combined with the immensely physical fact of change in the city of Ulaanbaatar – especially traffic and queueing had become totally impossible – I became acquainted with very many parts of my European-Weberian mind that would just not butch an inch for any kind of assimilation at all. I felt myself, ultimately and absolutely, exactly what I had been legally labelled: a registered alien.

Then, of course, I came back home and now some six months later I am rather missing Mongolia.

**Mindscapes I-III at Mänttä Art Festival, Finland, 2012**

As I was invited to participate at the festival I felt at odds to be presenting work about Mongolia all on my own and felt it better to parallel my own works with S.Ganzug’s works, inspired of experiencing the Netherlands with a herder’s mind. The work was built into three silo bases as the exhibition venue used to be a fodder factory.

The first of the silos presents S.Ganzug’s work *You Can’t Cheat Sin by Flour*, which consists of three video performances realised in Rotterdam, Ulaanbaatar and Hongkong between 2009 and 2011. Besides the videos there is an installation with sacks of flour hanging on horsehair ropes and a small mountain of flour on the floor. The title of the work is a Mongolian-Buddhist saying. In Mongolia wheat is very scarce as the nation is still partly nomadic and agriculture has not been part of the way of life. Wheat has thus been considered as something very special and holy. At Buddhist temples – and most likely in many homes – people have been smearing all sorts of (symbolic) objects with dough in order to make it absorb the evil spirits. Although this cleansing act has been well meant in its initial meaning of purification, the saying has also become to be used in the sense that hiding away mistakes will not make them go away. In Finland we say that there is no sense to wipe the trash under the carpet, with a slightly similar meaning.

Ganzug first started to work with flour during a residency period in Rotterdam, The Netherlands. One day we visited an old windmill in Overschie where a miller was still producing flour in the traditional stone-wheel-windmill-way. Ganzug, who had been making pancake sculptures for some days, was fascinated and bought a package of flour, and even had the miller sign it as the author of the flour. This made me laugh. The idea of signing flour would never have occurred to me. It also made me wonder what Ganzug saw as the meaning of flour and of dough. I reflected back, when still in Mongolia and Ganzug was asking me if there were fields in the Netherlands. It took me a while to understand what he meant. Crops, fields, agriculture...Right, but how could anyone be interested in that? Something so normal, so uninteresting... But of
course, he stated the obvious to me: For him, coming from the mountains and herding, the idea of agriculture is very exotic.

In the second silo is placed my video work *At the Building Site – Ulaanbaatar 2007-2011*. This is a work of video material filmed in Ulaanbaatar and other locations in Mongolia between 2007 and 2008 combined with sequences of still photographs of Ulaanbaatar and some countryside trips in 2011. The film starts with a long scene of an old lady sitting outside her ger in a wide open steppe landscape. Nothing really happens, besides the wind starting to blow a bit harder and the grasshoppers chirping a bit louder. This changes into a still photo series of the 2011 new Ulaanbaatar with its gleaming golden cars, swimming pools offering hot yoga and towerblocks one higher than the other being erected instead of the old Russian built 3-story housing and ger districts. The photographs are accompanied by hectic radio and traffic jumble from central UB.

Then a circular scene (the camera going round and round, again and again, filming the same scene, but the activities of people changing every turn). The location is a touristic camp just outside Ulaanbaatar, combining amazing mountainscapes and forests with very special Mongolian-Buddhist architecture. Then the film goes back to the Ulaanbaatar 2011 stills – to return to the circular filming at an Ulaanbaatar based monastery at Datchoilin. And so different scenes alternate between countryside stillness and city noise, until winter comes and all is silent.

During these past seven years that I have worked with/in Mongolia I have made enormous amounts of video interviews with architects, urban planners, historians, residents of different areas about how the city of Ulaanbaatar has changed and how does each and everyone feel about it. And although I have made some artistic works relating to urban planning in Mongolia I have never really used all this material for anything. My idea for this exhibition was to finally take up all this tape – go through it and finally make my Ulaanbaatar film. As I started watching I felt immensely tired. I watched and watched and listened – and the more I did the less I wanted to see and to hear; to have information or anybody’s opinion on anything. I just wanted to show what was important to me. What I love in Mongolia. What makes me walk the streets and steppes again and again in my mind, and makes me feel alive. (And what I hate in Ulaanbaatar and its change as well.) And this I did the best I could.

In the final third silo I built an installation bringing together objects and photographs, books and a video that have all been important to me in my relation to Mongolia. There is a Buddhist monk on a You Tube-video spiriting away bad dreams. There is a plastic dinosaur watering a plant stolen from Tsetserleg (Garden) City many years ago. There is a composition of technical gadgets from air humidifier to slide projector, lamp to solar panel prayerwheel. Somehow I felt that this collection of items visualised the intense hope of a difference that I, along with many other (urban) researchers, felt that the combination of Mongolian nomadic and Buddhist culture together with latest
technology could possibly be. And there are the two books that bring together the beginning and the end of my 'travel': Nietzsche’s *Ecce Homo* and Ursula K. LeGuin’s *City of Illusions*. City of Illusions is a story about how by accident and will power – and a lot of technology – one mind can hold inside itself two entirely differing personalities and cultures. It is also a story about how this kind of merging (though still keeping aware of parts?) is essential to manage superbly in the universe. Besides this it is ultimately a story of how both technologies and ideologies govern our being in the universe and different combinations give different results. And diversity is...the only option? Based on these two books I called the whole piece *City of Illusions or How One Becomes What One Is*.

**Taina Rajanti:**

For me, as human beings we dwell and stem from the city. The city is the human nature as built environment and meaningful culture simultaneously: sense. Here I will explore this conception of the city through the feeling of returning and coming home when one arrives the first time in a city that ought to be strange: “Here I am again. Or: It is here as it has been. A feeling of coming back, of returning, almost homecoming. It is here as it has been, and here am I again.” I am using my own experiences as literally material for thought, from notes gathered, essays and papers written, photos taken.

**Lodz 1987**

I cannot remember what was the first unexpected feeling of homecoming, when arriving for the first time in a strange city. I do remember the first recorded instance, at the beginning of my research career proper. I was attending a conference on “Between Institutions and Everyday Life” in Lodz, Poland in November 1987. It was still a socialist Poland, and everyone I talked to began their remarks with “we have a problem”. They were ashamed of their city, its crumbled and worn look and lack of many Western everyday comforts. And knowing my interest in the study of everyday life and city, they kept asking me what was my impression of theirs. So the question started bothering me, and in the end I wrote a short essay on it, trying to put into words precisely the relation of lived environment to one’s image and thinking of it.

Because, surprisingly for them I did not experience Lodz as a sorry socialist crumbling excuse of a city, but as something belonging to European civilization, rooted in Western heritage. The falling tiles and broken corners, grotesque monuments, lousy seventies architecture, battered cars and battered people are part of that old stone where the poet once rested his hands:
“die Hände auf alten Steinen” – hands resting on old stone; hands made of the old stone. “His hands meet the stone, and in the stone, the memories. He rests his hands on people who have been. He is joining hands with people, not historical persons, but the anonymous crowds, whose memory in the stones is more than the names given by history. Lodz is a name, but the place on earth is where hands join.”

Built environment is not first built of concrete physical elements and then inhabited by human beings. Were it so, thinking out the relation of thought to space would merely mean following reflections and their directions, while the human minds and bodies remained separate and separated from the environment. A built environment without human beings is not a perfect environment, but a ruin. Human beings inhabit and build the environment by their being there. Here Nancy’s concept makes perfect sense: we have a sense of the city; we do not reflect the city or inhabit an a priori material city, but we are the city, “just like that”. And I do not take Nancy to mean simply that existence is ungrounded, that we are “just” open to existence and the world as Ignaas Devisch says. Existence as sense, as meaningful and aesthetic simultaneously is what Agamben means when he says of being that it is whatever, “quodlibet”: whatever not in the sense of indifferent that it is, but that it always matters that it is. We are not “just”, indifferently, open to existence, but we are “just” open to existence without preceding Being and its subsequent reflections.

The poet rested his hands on old stone and in the stone, the people who are the city. The stranger may do the same – not because of familiar cultural connotations separated and separable from the old stones, but because of the inherent materiality of thinking the city, because of shared nature with the city.

New York 1993

My friend Babette had warned me about New York. “People come to New York to get killed”, she said, “and then they walk around a little and survive, and think, it’s not so dangerous after all; and then they get killed.” But getting killed didn’t bother me on
my first arrival to New York and the new world; what bothered me was that it didn’t look like a new world, it didn’t look like America – it looked sooty, shabby and sloppy, old and worn out – Munich – London – Warsaw? And New York didn’t look like anything it looks like in pictures. All words to describe it gather unnecessary glory – sooty, shabby, sloppy… It just is shabby, like London, or Warsaw, not in a big spectacular way.

Babette takes me to Chelsea to dine. We look at the skyscrapers, and the mist rising from the street – Underground ventilation. “Thar she blows”, I think, and then I think of Marilyn. Everything seems to be a quote, known already, from somewhere. The night has a scent. A familiar scent, one that I’ve known before. Food, dirt, exhaust-fumes, rubbish, people, the sea… Smells like a city. Is that you? But where did we meet last time?

New York isn’t a European city. My sense of the city does not stem from a shared cultural background – and I discover that too. In fact, it is the culture I’m a stranger to (long story, I’ll tell that another time). Yet the cityness of the city is familiar – and not just on the level of the imaginary: urban structure, elements of urban landscape, iconic places familiar from quotes. The cityness is familiar on the level of senses, all of them. The city is the material form for human existence, the urban form-of-life in Agamben’s sense: a life that can never be separated from its form, “a life – human life – in which the single ways, acts and processes of living are never simply facts, but always and above all possibilities of life (, and always and above all power)”13. The sense of the city is the scent of possibility, a sensation of the inseparability of life and its form.

Beijing 2007 - 2010

At Beijing I am an idiot, barely human. Every time I take the taxi I have to show a piece of paper, as if I was dumb. Beijing is enormous… the line of taxis at the airport is like an army marching in several columns, already even before entering the incredible flow of traffic. Crossing an avenue is like trying to cross the Red Sea without help of a divinity. I should be scared and confused and feel a total stranger – but no, I feel at home.

It is not even the scent – this is an inland city, with an unfamiliar bitter tang to its sensation. Even the dust, omnipresent, feels a stranger. I am not just an urban researcher, I am also streetwise, so I know one has to be ever alert in a big city (without seeming to appear so); yet the feeling of having come home is like laying back and leaning on soft cushions after a long day of work, relaxing without focusing on anything in particular. I’m leaning on the immense hustle and traffic and crowds of Beijing, as if floating against a deep blue sea.

But this is not a sensation I get at Shanghai, at all (or Istanbul, or Paris, or St. Petersburg – to name some other big global cities). At Shanghai I do feel the necessity to
stay alert, a hard insistency to be competitive and aggressive, to fight for one’s place and one’s right to be there. Thus, it is not merely an effect of being in a huge city – it is Beijing that takes me and swallows me like the sea would. The oceanic feeling, so despised by Freud as infantile, prior to the ego proper, prior to the understanding that others are not you, that you are separate from them. A “sensation of an indissoluble bond, as of being connected with the external world in its integral form, identified as belonging to religious experience”.14

Well, Nancy does say that sense is always community of existence: being in the world is the sense of our co-existence. Thinking sense is thinking community, as Devisch puts it. Freud is not very adept in thinking community, positing as he does a fundamental and necessary border between one individual/ ego and the next, instead of proceeding from a fundamental community of the human being. You don’t need to depart from religious experience, or regression to infancy, to think the inescapably common nature of human beings. As various classic and contemporary thinkers point out, man is a social animal, his intellect and his linguistic ability are shared characteristics, not possible to attain separately and individually.15 And urban form-of-life is the material sensation of this “indissoluble bond, as of being connected with the external world in its integral form” – as a possibility, not an established fact.

Possibility: because what one feels at home in is not any particular or unique place of one’s own. As Virno says, contemporary global metropolises are made of “common places” and inhabited by strangers. Virno rejects the idea of proper place and home almost completely, claiming that in the global society only public and common places remain.16 But still there is this obstinate feeling of coming home, of leaning back, and an indissoluble bond. To me this puzzling feeling of coming home to perfectly strange places is not coming home to some particular place of my own, with inherent affinity to a fixed “me”; but of coming home to my common place, a place where I am home precisely by being a stranger – the stranger that cities are made of.

Travels in intensity

“‘Journeys to relive your past?’ was the Khan’s question at this point, a question which could also have been formulated: ‘Journeys to recover your future?’

And Marco’s answer was: ‘Elsewhere is a negative mirror. The traveller recognizes the little that is his, discovering the much he has not had and will never have.’”

Italo Calvino. Invisible Cities: Thin Cities 1

What these stories are about here are the different experiences that travel whether in time or in space can reveal about both others (persons, cultures, cities) and about ourselves. The things and places that we belong to and don’t and in which ways this
appears in different phases... We mostly somehow imagine that we have solid, whole selves but, of course, we don’t. We are divided. We are processes. We change. Kristeva for one made a great point of the stranger inside ourselves, the unconscious, the part of ourselves that will never be known to us, that does not belong (to any house or culture).\textsuperscript{17} She writes of an emerging paradoxical community of foreigners that acknowledge their own inner strangeness alongside the strangeness of others –

and that through this combined knowledge of ‘radical strangeness’ we might shift somewhere else\textsuperscript{18}. Or along the thoughts of Nietzsche: it is oneself one needs to challenge, oneself that one needs to find a new continent (galaxy) in – to find new possibility of life in. We are just open to existence, and this our shared nature with the city, this is what traveling to strange cities teaches us.

To travel with Nietzsche – back in time, and up and down the European map. To continue with, what this paper is but a foot set out on a path, our aim is to organize a workshop/sets of workshops intent on materially retracing Nietzsche’s footsteps in Liguria or those of Kristeva in China – or those of “Frank” (Kaurismäki) in Helsinki... We dream of organizing a philosophical – artistic trekking and camping experience combined with discussions and works of art.\textsuperscript{19} We ask for your participation in the joint thinking journey, and hope you have enjoyed the familiar and the strange of what has been gone through so far in this elsewhere.

References

Bateson, Gregory (1973): Steps to an Ecology of the Mind, Granada GB.
Notes

1 Nietzsche 1979 Twilight, 26.
2 Nietzsche 1980 Ecce Homo, 104.
3 Foucault & Deleuze
4 Nietzsche 1979 Twilight, 65.
5 Bateson 1973, 454 – 463.
6 Nietzsche 1980 Ecce Homo, 64.
7 Ger is Mongolian for yurt. Ger districts are areas where people live in gers or self-built houses without sewage or running water. The heating is by coal stoves. Some 50 % of Ulaanbaatar residents live in these areas currently.
8 Rajanti 1991, 63.
10 Nancy 1997, 15.
11 Devisch 2006.
12 Agamben 2001, 3.
13 Agamben 2000
15 Starting e.g. from Aristotle’s Politics and ending with e.g. Virno who writes on information capitalism and knowledge production in his Grammar of the Multitude.
18 Ibidem, 195.
19 Here we are working in collaboration with the Migrating Art Academies MigAA, and their future project “Displace”.

ANNU WILENIUS - TANJA RAJANTI
**The City: A Place Of Places**

*Anthony Santora*

We say that our cities are alive. Words like living, breathing, dying, evolving all illustrate the notions of vitality and life that have become associated with both city composition and living. Often these words are directly associated and attributed to physical elements like economics and transportation, or to societal constructs such as governmental politics and culture. The infrastructure of the city is what is believed to be alive. But these elements are not alive. They do not breathe, feel, react or act anyway on their own. All of these elements are but extensions of a driving force that constructs the city, people; or more precisely the person. The city at its foundation is a human construct, a convergence of individuals that generate these surrounding environmental, sociological and cultural elements.

Why then do the city's architects often focus narrowly on these generated elements, while neglecting the central component of urban construction, the individual? Perhaps it is because the physical elements are ones that are easy to obtain, categorize and respond to. Likewise for the societal constructs. These are measureable elements, but not determinants. They should be studied and responded to but not drive design, as they often do. Designs in this way disconnect and fragment both the individual and community from the fabric by isolating them and destroying their places.

The focus of this work then is to re-examine the way in which architects can understand the city, not in broad physical and societal constructs but as a reflection and generation of the human element that animates and forms it. Through studying the way in which architecture both reflects and orients the place of individuals and how that place in turn is able interact with the external world, architects will be able to directly respond and design for a unified urban fabric that is not based on external elements, but rather utilizes them to enhance the individual experience and reconnect the person back into the city.

**Nature Of The City**

At first glance the city’s form looks to be composed of its external constructs. Road Notes: * This paper is still under construction as it is a preparatory piece for a project that is to be completed as a thesis.
and freeways denote the way in which a person moves within its landscape. Politics and
governments set up and regulate its makeup, determining what are to be residences,
shops, markets, and places of industry. Societies regulate acceptable norms within the
fabric of the city. However, these elements are not the generating factors, but rather mod-
ifiers that are utilized to establish a physical presence of the true nature of the city.

To understand the nature that constructs the city it is vital to look at what “moves it”.
Aristotle tells us that the true nature of any element is directly linked to the “thingness
“of that element; with “thingness being that which constructs it and gives to the element
its motion (drive). This motion then generates all of the external reactions that interact
with the environment that surround it. To understand the thingness of the city we must
ask a fundamental question of what; that is to say what is at the core of its inception,
what is the city. To answer the question of what, we must first look at the notion of how.
How the city is constructed provides a pivotal clue in unraveling the “thingness” that ex-
ists within it, since these physical elements are reflections of the natural driving force
behind their creation.

Examining the physical constructs of the city, a single emergent element begins to
dominate its composition, the human element. Without the need for human use, interac-
tion or creation the city would not be able to exist, as the city is itself a creation of human
intent and nature. In his writings: City, Soul and Myth James Hillman emphasis this fact
when he describes the “civilized city”. There becomes a distinction between what is
civil and what is civilized; for Hillman the civil refers to culture while civilized deals
with practicalities of the civil, so that civilized becomes another word for “bureaucracies
of maintenance”. The civilized city is composed of all the institutions of function and, in
the city can function efficiently utilizing only these functions. However, cities are not
machines of pure function, but in fact a composition of human elements which connects
and drives the city construction utilizing the civilized “bureaucracies”. Thus places such
as movie theatres, parks, public areas, etc are generated within the city as a result of the
human elements within it.

Nature Of The Individual

Looking past the external constructs of the city and into its core we come to realize
that the city is a reflection of the human nature that constructs it. Human nature drives
the construction and evolution of both city form and its function by externalizing itself
in the form of place.

Place is a central component of humanity. But what is place? How can we differen-
tiate the difference between space and place? Place can be described as a connection that
exists between a person and their environment dependent on the personalization of mean-
ing, a description of being within space. To put it more simply, place is the external form
of the being. Place carries our deepest meanings, feelings and thoughts and turns them into physical forms. This is reflected in Heidegger’s writing “Building Dwelling Thinking” where the construction of place within the context of the bridge illustrates the way in which place begins to become manifested through the soul. The bridge begins by the construction and placing of the elements that compose it by humanity. This placement begins to separate the space into meaning allocations of place inside that space, thus the embankment is now created as two points along the bank, the span bridging over the water at a specific length and area. This is all linked to meaning generated by the interaction of the individual and the world, and is an act of human dwelling, naturally building through our being. Thus by building we define place as our meaning within the world of space.

For the individual the architecture of their place begins with the internal orientation of themselves within the world. This internalization is key as it provides the beginning point that allows the process of externalized construction by linking meaning and being through signs and symbols with the physical elements that surround us. Signs and symbols become the physicality of being. We are able to translate these signs and symbols into architecture through the use of perception.

Perception is composed of internal constructs and utilizes the external abilities of the body. These abilities are translated into the notion of our haptic senses; those senses that deal with strict physicality’s of space. These senses allow a greater depth of connectivity and interaction between the individual and the surrounding environment. Predominately two main senses arise in the translation into place: Sight and Touch. Sight allows the individual to experience and interact with a wide range of elements, allowing for a greater context of orientation within spaces. Conversely touch reduces the breadth of the scope into a more personal relationship with individual elements. This personalization allows the individual to ground themselves inside the space by directly establishing a physical connection between themselves and the elements. These senses work always in conjunction with each other, meaning that it takes both to fully translate meaning into physical place. By orienting and identifying contextual elements the individual is able to position themselves into a closer relationship to the elements within the space and then root themselves into the space through direct connections. Physical elements like materiality and color begin to transform into symbolic constructs, ones that carry direct meaning, as the connection between the individual and the space becomes stronger. Each material and every color carries with it significance. The significance (meaning) of these elements is then made physically manifested in their placement within a space.

The act of physical placement denotes the shift from internalization to externalization. The individual is now actively constructing the world; having already oriented themselves in the space and connected to it. Methods and techniques of placement begin to form a hierarchical construct that unify the order of meaning within the space. This construct does not subvert any element but rather weaves them together. Every element has its sig-
nificance for itself and for the whole; every element becomes vital to the place that is being created. The integral act of physically placing significance in the world creates the place of the individual within the space of the world. Like the elements that compose the place, the place itself becomes densely interconnected to its surroundings.

As we build places within the world, we are inherently drawn together towards points; points where meaning is like our own, where being resonate to the world. Each place interacting and connecting to those that surround it. These points develop into communities and then evolve districts and finally into cities that denote a large notion of place amongst human civilizations. As art or architecture speaks to the nature of the person, the city speaks to the nature of the individual’s place within the world. Each singular place within a city is a woven together to form the fabric of interlaced meaning and experiences of individual being.

The Weaving Of Place

The weaving of places based on individual meaning can be seen through the patterns that are generated within the city itself. These patterns generate a unique quality that exists within the urban fabric, a duality of experience in which the individual both constructs place and is constructed by another’s place. This duality translates into a spiritual resonance between residences, where the act of living connects the being of every residence. In addition to the construction of place, two other aspects now arise from this duality. The first aspect is the way in which other places influence an individual, and the second aspect is how the architecture of the city reflects this spiritual dualism that encompasses the nature of the city.

An individual perceives the environment around them, this is already shown in the way they construct place in terms of the environmental factors around them. In the city however, those environmental factors are now all of human construction. The need to orient, define meaning and interact is still present only these now respond to the external inclusion of those that surround individuals that surround the place. This inclusion begins to take into account the meaning and significance appropriated upon a place by another individual, through the architecture of that place. The resultant construction of being within the world by the individual then encompasses both the meaning of the individual, and the meaning of those that surround them; for one is generated from their nature, and the other is responsive to the environment in which they live. This leads to the rise of spiritual resonance, as the nature of individual begins to connect and affect one another.

This resonance is apparent in both the way we build and what we build within the city. Thus it is always reflected in the architecture and construction that creates and defines the city. The way in which we build, construct the city, is able to display the significance established with each medium used. This pattern of hierarchical constructs, formed
by the methods of construction, solidify the fact that building is done by multiple hands in multiple steps. This building puts individuals in direct contact with one another, not just in terms of dwelling closely, but also in terms of active construction. This is also displayed in the things built that exist within the fabric of cities. Objects like monuments, parks, skyscrapers etc. display the amount of connectivity that exists between the individuals of the city; in each case the resultant, and driving force, of their inception is to put people within direct proximity of one another. These nodes create smaller places within the fabric shrink the city to a more human scale, one that is easier to interact, orient and connect with.11

Case Studies (Under construction)

Having laid out an overview of understanding city construction, along with individual place making, it is pertinent to apply this to very real material through the case studies of urban landscapes. The four selected cities (Cleveland, New York, Los Angeles and Tampa) represent four very distinct city-scapes ranging from full and vibrant to what is considered dying. Each provides very unique insights into the way in which the individual interacts, constructs and is constructed by the places around them.

Cleveland, Ohio: Suburban Connections
New York City, New York: Vertical Ascension
Los Angeles, California: Horizontal Growth
Tampa, Florida:

Conclusion

In conclusion it is a synthesis of the pattern of place, architecture and perceptions that will enable us, as architects, to properly respond, create and nurture not only the places of the city, but the places of its inhabitants as well. By utilizing materiality, form and perception it is possible to enhance the fabric that connect the inhabitants of the city together through two ways. The first is through the enhancement of individualized place, and the second is the reinforcement of the patterns of connectivity that exist within the city between its inhabitants. To further look at this I hope to utilize some case studies that will look to realize the ways that all elements come together. I will also examine three proposed sites, to obtain a more in depth analysis to examine the way to re-vitalize the degradated patterns and soul-lacking places within “dying” cities.
References


Notes

1 Aristotle: De Anima
2 James Hillman: City, Soul and Myth
3 Heidegger: Building Dwelling Thinking
4 Robert Venturi: Learning from Las Vegas
5 Aristotle: De Anima
6 Pallasmaa: Eyes of the Skin
7 Significance is often associated with physical value or worth, and tends to denote a intended hierarchical value among objects. However, significance here is used as a means of illustrating the importance and meaning that the element takes on from the individual.
8 Christopher Alexander: A Timeless way of Building underscores the relationship of patterns and their inherent construction within the city. Here Alexander describes the city as being a construction of its inhabitants through the patterns that are generated by their activities and nature and directly linked to their places. These patterns are a result of the individuals, which are in turn a creation of patterns in their being; so that from the molecular level to the consciousness of mind, the person is a construction of patterns constructing patterns in the world grounded within a certain place.
9 This can be linked to Peter Zumthor when discussing the notion of place in Atmospheres. Often the individual becomes aware and attuned to those that surround them, immersing and enriching the sense of place that is constructed.
10 Kevin Lynch: Images of the City
11 Kevin Lynch: The Image of the City
The Female Body of the City? Notes on Cities and Metaphors

Claudio Sgarbi

The city as an artificial garden, a holy mountain, a sculpture, an animal, a body, a machine, an organism, parasite, virus, as a prosthesis, as a ship, a harbor, a mine, a jewel-case, a prison, the city as written text, the city of bits, the city as hypertext, an augmented reality, as utopia, eterotopia, dystopia, eutopia, cacotopia; the city as an urban continuum, as an agglomeration, a dense or dispersed or diffused identification of boundaries defined by certain colors and shapes on the screens (or on outdated large sheets of paper) used by urban planners; the city as a functional system of relations and connections, as an electronic circuit, a neuronal synapsis, as cloud computing or finally, as the microbiological web created by an “intelligent” mould spreading over decomposing organic matter. Perhaps cities have a mind. Since they have become “smart” they must once have been stupid. They possess a soul and spirit, they have viscera, lungs and genitals too. They possess arms and feet, fingers and bones, veins, blood circulation and arteries and they can also be dead or decomposing.

Many metaphors help us to identify the heterogeneous space of the city. There are no cities without metaphors. Probably metaphors do much more than aid us in identifying the city’s space: they actually create the mental and physical space where the city exists – if an idea of city still exists. I suspect that some metaphors with which we are very familiar, like “city–organism”, “city–system” or “city–network”, do not deserve this ambitious name: they have a metaphorical origin which they tend to lose when they become mimetic definitions, in so far as they create a correspondence between two different realms. The gap between the domains evoked by the metaphor should always remain open. The metaphor is endlessly evocative. The female body defers the city toward a context (Lakoff would say “a frame”) which the city is not and will never be.

In many languages “city” is a feminine noun. But when we think of the city today, do we care about its gender? Clearly not. This appears to be an utterly futile debate, “like arguing about the sex of the angels”, and this is why I find the matter worth pursuing. The city of the angels and the sky above the city still hold significance for us. Even if it seems totally irrelevant to assign a gender to the city it is fundamental to comprehend the metaphor we employ to make the city tangible. And to think about the female body of the city is an effort in this direction. Tangibility is important, even
in a virtual domain of cloud computing, augmented reality, digital and vectorial or quantum computing representations. To make something tangible means to make it real, to make it exist—even in the most amorphous imaginable manifestations. Awareness should not be understood as an obligation, a boring duty or curse, but as a gift, an un-expensive and totally renewable manifestation of liberty. It is not a matter of having to become aware of what we are thinking and doing; we can decide to leave that metaphorical space “un-colonized” but we should nonetheless appreciate its existence and reality. Once we become aware of the metaphors we opt for, we should also are likely to understand their implications.

Perhaps, at the time when architecture (as a female body of knowledge) is substituted by the male body of the architect, the feminine connotations of the city begin to be submerged while the female metaphor dies. From that time on the city becomes an organism available for technological inspection, deciphering and cure. At the same time the body also is perceived as a “fabrica”, an efficient mechanism. We have just bare female city names now, nomina nuda tenemus. I am convinced that too many remedies are constantly advertized every day “to solve the city problem “. In my view this attitude is questionable. The city is not “a problem to be solved” even if ridding ourselves of some discomforts in our everyday existence might help.

The modern city has been infected by the “city disease” (“il male città”): the city as a sick and contagious body, the invention of the city’s disease and its hospitalization. The city, in the hands of the professional urban planners, has been subjected to the inoculation of an artificial disease: we perceive the city through the diagnosis made by those who claim to cure it and who already perceive the city as a compromised patient. One of the most dramatic epigones of our hyper-technological space is the invention of the iatrogenic city: the image of the city inflicted upon its residents by the artificial creation of the awareness of a disease—a disease which only a controlled number of specialists, with calibrated high technologies, can cure. Cures which are perceived not as “caring”, but as scarce utilities, in so far as they are available temporarily to assisted/controlled/dispossessed poverty and aristocracy. There are urban cancers, atrophies, infections, degenerations, gangrene, spills and terminal illnesses as well as the aggressive therapy or therapeutic obstinacy. The inspection of the veins, viscera and organs of the city often degenerates into the sense of impotence between residents. We are witnessing a monitored “medicide”. Relying on parameters, charts, statistics, numerical projections, intangible data, algorithms, and sets of analyses has proven to be essentially discouraging for those who endeavor to live in the city, since they must accept that someone else will be doing what they are not supposed to know how to accomplish. The voyeurism of the professional gaze has created a distrust of individual and collective imagination. Many independent groups, spontaneous associations, even the anarchic Occupy movements, or the heroic “unpluggers”, are a way of reacting against this expropriation—an expropriation which runs amuck in the very hands of
its own creators.

Many cities do not “need” consultations from any sort of specialized professional. Cities do not need to be cured. They must be able to react against any form of hospitalization, diagnostic restraint, or assisted prevention. Many slums, autonomous dwellings, and independent “unplugged” communities are more promising than any sort of intensive-care city spaces artificially created by competent professionals. The answer of many communities toward compulsive participatory agendas and threatening strategies is: “leave us alone!” Indeed, one of the most common words uses by architects and urban planners is “strategy”; I find the metaphorical context of this word rather awkward. The same is true for the words “agent” and “agency”. We should seek a different vocabulary or create a new one in order to avoid running the risk of falling unconsciously into the trap of compromised metaphorical contexts.

It is certainly not the role of the architect or the urban planner to announce “the female body of a city” or to assign a gendered space to human settlements. The exchange of roles between male and female or the promotion of forced equal opportunities between sexes (called quote rosa by the Italian government) will not solve the problem. It would be preferable to say that the city must remain a problem even from this point of view. It is the ungraspable domain of the feminine which should remain the open problem for the idea of the city. Promoting the city as an open problem (meaning also an “open work”) within its feminine nature could give new vitality to the metaphor. And this is a perspective that should be taken into consideration. But let us first start by considering some of its precedents and implications.

**Personification.** When we say “the city should become……” or “the city must be able to react……” or even simply “the city is……” we already imply a personification, which is a synecdoche. We use the container to indicate the contained. I say “city”, the container, to mean “citizens”, the contained. Society has often been represented as a male body and this gendered shift remains a fundamental idea in our culture. The use of this synecdoche is archaic and very effective in convincing the masses to go on respecting the oligarchs and their rules. When we say “smart city” we imply a personified image of a “locus” or a “topos” with a brain. We also use expressions like “the soul of a city” or “the spirit of a city” and, by extension “the genius loci”. Does the city have a soul? Or many souls? It seems ridiculous to rely on these animistic impulses and yet these are the expressions that belong to our language, communication and our inevitably contaminated imagination. They have a lot to say about our shared metaphorical space. To say “the female body of the city” is different from saying that “the city is female” in the same way as it is different to say that “the city is like a female body”. “Mother city”: does this expression still make sense in English today? The body has been reinvented by our cultural context. Are we happy with the image of the body we have created?
**City Machine.** The city was perceived as a machine when we began to view the human body as an organism with hierarchically organized components (*de humani corporis fabrica*). This image of the body is appropriate in the case of certain sciences but fails to satisfy the imagination. Rather, it confines the imagination of the body within this prejudice: the human being is a self-sustaining entity with specific needs which must be met if the body is to function properly. In line with this view the body should be self sufficient and contain the ratio which is capable of governing its functions. This prejudice is appropriate for a hospitalized body, or a body lying on the dissecting table, but is a somewhat marginal or even distorted perception for a living body, for being human in a social context.

The city’s most advanced technological achievements appear to respond to the criteria of interactive design and augmented reality. Some often misused terms are “sustainability” and “biomimicry”. But even the correct principle of “cradle to cradle” takes for granted a very complex mechanical idea of our “global system”. The contemporary epigones showing high tech devices performing “inceptions” of urban spaces are the result of an outdated interpretation of the city as a virtual mechanism. A long process generated the idea of machine as we understand it today. Even if nanotechnologies, MEMS, microbiologic genetic manipulation and other cyberspaces promote unprecedented perspectives, we have to come to terms with the reasons why we are acting in this way, that is, the imagination about our destiny. We do not need to consult sociologists, economists, philosophers or global planners for this. A great deal is already implicit in our technological assumptions. It is a matter of understanding and awareness.

We should try to avoid the negative consequences of “the smart city”. The artificial “total responsiveness” of our living spaces runs the risk of jeopardizing our human skills, obliging citizens to rely on totally unknown sources of functionality. *The Machine Stops* is one of the many apocalyptic stories written when our idea of modernity encountered its greatest success. Edward Morgan Forster published it in 1909. When the machine stops the young boy decides to escape from his golden subterranean prison where all the objects and subjects reach him without the need for him to move. Outside he meets or, at least, tries desperately to meet his mother again. She is a strange mother, unable to understand her son’s suffering. The space where the boy meets the mother is not an urban landscape but they try to share a civic domain which has disappeared. It is the allusion to the presence of this indifferent mother, fictitiously created by Forster, that I would like to highlight in this contribution.

**Where do you come from?** When you ask a European where she or he comes from, the answer might still be the nation and then the city or place of birth. We do not say that we come from our mother’s uterus but often we comment on the place where we were born. When you ask a New Yorker the answer is often “I just came from downtown”. The measure of the distance between origin and destination is mentally
shortened. If the mental belonging to a place becomes a mere recollection of a contingent place to which you are tied by short-term-memory we run the risk of answering: “I have just come from the bathroom”. Certainly the answer to the question should not be an account of the biological or anthropological origin of *homo sapiens sapiens*, but our belonging bears upon our dwelling and well being a great importance. Belonging is reduced to the shortest and most recent significant point of departure. The issue is that if you shorten and shrink the gap where you imagine your own history to be, you lose the quality of judgment and selection of your place in space and time. As Ivan Illich suggested, we should not ask “Where do you come from” but rather “Whence is your coming from” if we wish to obtain a meaningful answer.

*Mater semper certa / pater semper incertus est.* Mother was the only certainty. This is why we tend to attribute maternity to many places to which we feel tired. It is not a matter of nostalgia but rather the identification of a certainty which makes belonging a reality. The fact that paternity on the contrary is attributed to any artificial creation is another interesting discrepancy in our cultural context. Does this still make sense for us in the 21st century or does the adventure of bio-engineering, cloning, replication, neuronal implantation and experimental genetics make the mother and the idea of the mother obsolete?

**The female body of the city?** I could explore this concept by assuming that there is a unity between architecture and urbanism and that there is an architecture of the city capable of absorbing all the possible differences of the city and cities in all their possible manifestations. The female body of architecture is an issue which has received considerable scholarly attention. Yet I would like to explore this concept as if there were an identity and uniqueness in the city, creating a specific relationship with the female body. I believe there are two issues at stake here: the reflection on the city’s gender, and the reflection on nature’s gender. Is the city located inside, within nature, is it part of nature, a parallel manifestation or is it overtly in conflict with nature? Nature is one of the trickiest terms in use today. Nature is defined through our absence: the more we are able to limit the impact of our presence in this world, the more we claim to be able to perceive the integrity of nature. “Man and Nature” is a binomial used and abused in western thought. A city’s foundation is usually performed by males and most of the memories of our matriarchal societies have been removed from our man-made history. Not so long ago, as Mauss pointed out, “the nature of man” was meant to identify the genitals of a human being. Catholic priests used to say: “Do not touch the nature of the females”. Genitals have been given undue weight by psychoanalysts and the invention of “sex” is a deprivation of another space of freedom which some gendered vernacular communities keep alive. The genitals should simply make us laugh more (Baubo) and think less.
City divides. Ibn Khaldun considers the city to be a place where human beings “forget” social life, a place where they unlearn community and sharing. Inside the city we are confined into a common space and we forget the art of searching for a space to share. In the city we unlearn being together because being artificially confined creates a conflict. The nature of the city is the conflict; not the space of eros, but it is the space of polemos between individuals. It is often been repeated that the choice of a permanent place to dwell carries within itself the imprisonment of the wandering spirit of the human being. The city becomes a place for counting a new time, and also marks the beginning of the exploitation of that place. This is a passage which requires rituals of reconciliation. Our blind faith in the endless potential of technology, in the global exchange of goods and people – of people as goods – is just another ritual we use to make sense of our constant dislocations.

Entropy and the Matriarchal Alternative? The contemporary debates on entropy, de-growth and techno-nihilism are in line with the idea that our civilization contains some fundamental mistakes. Within the limits of this paper I would like to point out that some alternative societies, settlements and urban experiments rely on ideal matriarchal politics in order to inspire us to imagine a different future. Such is the case of Treasure Hill commanded by grandmother Missis Chen. Some of the experiments made during the 60’s and all the theories concerning the restoration of the “natural state” and the feminine matriarchal universe still require further investigation with alternative tools. Contemporary anthropology, sociology and geography are working in this direction and allowing us to understand much more about this little known cultural space.

Mother City. Mother-city is the authentic meaning of the term metro-polis. The Arabs still call Cairo Umm el Dounia, the mother of the world. It is my contention that the city was born as a female body because the city is a social body capable of generating life; it is a social body where human beings (citizens) are born and nourished, and these human beings are part of the city. This is another important starting point for the study of the female body of the city, the city as a mother. But nowadays the city is a very broad concept and includes settlements with 20,000 inhabitants (small town), vast metropolis with over 20,000,000 inhabitants, and diffused urbanized geographies corresponding to a nation’s limits. One of the possible readings of the contemporary idea of city might be accomplished through the concept of territory or landscape. Instead of presenting the city as a body, the territory or the landscape can be seen as a body where different kinds of settlements are man-made clusters with many extended and configured moieties. The term “territory” has fewer sentimental implications than the term “landscape”. Yet in both cases the metaphorical issue remains open. Only through a reading of a possible cosmology or cosmic-comic, can we
make sense out of the surface of the earth which has been greatly manipulated by our presence. A reading which is capable of creating tangibility is important for the well being of human imagination. To interpret the global landscape or planetary territory as a living organism or ecological biotope is still too reductive. We should attempt to be more precise and more incisive. Organic, ecological, geological or mathematical formulas can be very efficacious in explaining important phenomena but are not capable of satisfying the human necessity of “sense”, the human necessity to make sense out of what surrounds us. Attributing a gender to space might seem archaic and ridiculous. This is what religions have been trying to do for millennia. We do not agree with the religious dogmatism and we may prefer to cultivate uncertainties rather than faiths, but the gendered personification of cosmos, souls or infinities is a matter of being in sympathy with the surrounding world and this, in turn means establishing a relationship with someone and not with something. I am in favor of a sort of disenchanted naiveness – the same naiveness which informs the idea that the space is made up of many little houses, each house is like a small city, the territory is like a large city and the dimensions of domicilia are without scale in the realms of the our imagination. But this is acquired through a “propagation of the tangibility” of the self which occupies a certain space in time with a certain amount of commonality.

Adding man to Nature. The city is undoubtedly an artifact. Like sculpture, painting, architecture, agriculture, medicine and all the arts and sciences, it is an addition to nature. It is not strictly necessary. It can be always different from what it is, and its principle is not in the thing made but in the maker. The city is a guess, a spell cast into the future, a benediction or a malediction and it is impossible to forecast what it will become. There are no cities in our prehistory. The shift between settlement and city must have created a very confused domain and we are still unable to grasp it. A settlement is not “aware” of becoming a city. We are tempted to believe that in order to found a city a highly complex apparatus is required: urban planning, services, building materials, technological network, governance….. but we forget that there are many spontaneous congregations of people who do not require such complexity as a starting frame. Where does the awareness of the city stem from? There are cities where the rules are defined as the citizens go along.

Dinocrates and the Mountain.

Dinocrates’ design for the city in the shape of Alexander’s body of power is an ancient story, almost a myth. It exemplifies the issue of identity: the city is an identifiable place which represents its ruling, self regulating logic. Once the power has gone the city ends its cycle. The capital of the kingdom will be abandoned and destroyed when
the king loses power. There is a sense of imminent death in this kind of city where a ruling male, another subjected male, the attractive effeminate male body, the representation of the body of power, and other hedonistic and self emulating details come into play. There are many iconographic representations of the scene. This setting has much in common with our contemporary narcissistic representation of the city but I would like to concentrate on a “misunderstanding” which took place around the year 1500 (Vitruvio Ferrarese, Page 5). It is a drawing – hardly visible – which illustrates the story of Dinocrate and Alexander the Great as narrated by Vitruvius. It shows a very sketchy representation of Mount Athos as a seated woman holding a city in her right arm. It resembles the figure of the Virgin Mary holding the Christ child or more precisely, considering the turreted crown, a re-visitation of the image of the goddess Tyche.

Tyche

An archaic tradition reveals that a tutelary deity or a guardian spirit was in charge of animating the destiny of many cities. Her name was Tyche (Τύχη), that is, “luck” and was translated in Latin as Fortuna. The goddess went through various representations showing basically a sitting female with different attributes. On her head was an elaborate crown that sometimes looked like the walls of a city or a vegetal composition. She was also depicted with a globe or a sphere (representing the unsteadiness of fortune rolling in every direction), a cornucopia or a basket full of fruits, a ship’s rudder or a wheel; she is shown also with a serpent or the infant god Ploutos (wealth), or the horn of Amalthea (plentiful gifts of fortune), or the arx of Sicyon, or the winged Eros, or with the agathos daimon at her side. Nemesis (indignation/fair distribution/ransom) was considered the downside of Tyche since Nemesis was in charge of verifying the favors of fortune and the distribution of luck. The most famous statues are the Agathe Tyche by Praxiteles and the Tyche of Antioch by Euthychides. The latter became very famous and a reference for many other representations of the deity. Her epithets were Agathe (the Good), Megale (Great), Soteira (Savior), Fortuna (Fortune). She was equated with Fortuna, Isis, Demeter, Hermouthis, Hariti. She was considered the daughter of Zeus, one of the daughters of Oceanus or one of the Moirai (Fates). Often barely distinguishable from Demeter, Tyche seems one of the goddess’s attributes.

To Tyche, Fumigation from Frankincense. Approach, queen Tyche, with propitious mind and rich abundance, to my prayer inclined: placid and gentle, mighty named, imperial Artemis, born of Eubouleos famed, mankind’s unconquered endless praise is thine, sepulchral, widely wandering power divine! In thee our various mortal life is found, and come from thee in copious wealth abound; while others mourn thy hand averse to bless, in all the bitterness of
deep distress. Be present, Goddess, to thy votaries kind, and give abundance with benignant mind. Tyche, beginning and end for mankind, you sit in Sophia’s seat and give honour to mortal deeds; from you comes more good than evil, grace shines about your gold wing, and what the scale of your balance gives is the happiest; you see a way out of the impasse in troubles, and you bring bright light in darkness, you most excellent of gods. (Orphic Hymn 72)

The city is governed by a goddess presiding over inescapable destinies, chance and no fixed certainties. The unexpected always threatens the future of the city. But Tyche represents an optimistic point of departure in the Hellenistic tradition: she is a promising body of goodness and prosperity where nothing must be taken for granted; she is a landscape of hope. She is not a spell cast into the future such as is suggested in the entropic theory.

**AMOR/ROMA**

Rome was personified by a deity that appears at the base of the column of Antoninus Pius. Although in the Hellenistic religious tradition gods were served by priests and goddesses were served by priestesses, Roma’s priesthood was male and was the result of a selection between local elites. Greek coins depict Roma wearing a turreted crown or a Phrygian helmet but occasionally she is also shown bareheaded. Rome was associated with Zeus and Fides. In Republican Rome the cult declined. After the death of Julius Caesar, when the colonies of Asia and Bithynia asked permission to honor the emperor as a living *divus*, they were allowed to do so only in conjunction with *dea* Roma. She increasingly personified the Imperial or divine consort to the imperial *divus*, even if some Greek coins show the imperial *divus* standing as a supplicant or servant in front of her enthroned authority. The Imperial *divus* cult was an important element in the unification of the Empire and was perceived as a novelty by the Gauls, Germans and Celts who had had no precedent for a ruler cult. Temples dedicated to Roma and Augustus spread throughout the Empire: Lugdunum, Leptis Magna, Mactar and, in the Italian peninsula, Latium and Ostia. The impressive temple of Fortuna Prenestina also exemplifies the popularity of the cult of this deity. In the city of Rome the state cult to *dea* Roma was combined with the cult to Venus by Hadrian who built the largest temple in the city: the Temple of Venus and Roma. It was meant to inaugurate the reformed festival of Parilia, known as Romaea after the Eastern festival in honor of Roma. The temple contained the Hellenistic image of *dea Roma* holding the Palladium in her right hand. After the defeat of Clodius Albinus by Septimius Severus at Lugdunum, *dea* Roma was “co-opted into a new and repressive formulation of Imperial cult”. There was an attempt to recover this version of the goddess in Mussolini’s period of fascist propaganda.
Rome, *caput mundi*, was seen as a goddess, as a prostitute by the early Christians, and as a near-saint by the papal power, and as a symbol of Western civilization.

**Urbs**

There seems to be concordance between the etymologist in associating the Latin *urbe* with the verb *URV-are* which means “to plough” or to create a furrow with a plough, that is to mark and define a perimeter of a new settlement or a special place. In Roman ritual a furrow was made with a plough around the perimeter of a new city. It would also appear that in many languages (based on agricultural traditions) an analogy between ploughing the soil and copulation is evident.

**The city as a holy bride or prostitute**

The fact that two archetypical cities, Jerusalem and Babylon, were represented as holy bride and as a prostitute is a clue for our argument. Together with the artificial creation of a space for conviviality, as the city might appear to us, there is also the danger of its fall and damnation. The city is a curse in the Biblical context. In Cain’s lineage, males are supposed to suffer building cities and females are supposed to suffer delivering babies. According to *Genesis* (4,14) Cain became a city builder. To his first city he gave the name of his son (Enoc).

In the biblical culture the celestial city is a bride for God, offering her pure and perfect body to God. The corrupted city is a prostitute deserving blame and punishment. Jerusalem and Babylon are endowed with female bodies. Babel would appear to be genderless in the shape of “its” hubris. As a mountain, it probably bears the memory of its femininity which is sacrificed in the presumptuous construction of an outer spiral to the sky. The Greek imagination showing Tykhe and Nemesis together might provide one of the possible explanations for Babel’s failure.

**Città della Potta**

There is a medieval city known as “the city of the pussy”. It is common to find female genitals as apotropaic images carved in stone at the entrance of important spaces. It is relatively rare to find a collective memory created around the nature of female/male genitals alongside the image of the city. Modena is a case in point. Probably what we encounter in this place is an archaic myth (Baubo) connected with a city goddess (Tykhe), later combined with a different meaning because of the phonetic assonance (Mutinus-Mutina), then grafted on the Christian medieval imagination (the figurative program in the Duomo), then dispersed into the vernacular play, then rehabilitated in a
Christian civic program (the *Bonissima* by the local chronicler Tommasino Lancellotti), then progressively fragment into oblivion. We can take it for granted that it is fortuitous that Gabriele Falloppia, who was a canonic of the Duomo of Modena, became a fervent student of female genitals (the name “fallopian tubes” comes from his findings) to the point of pretending to have discovered the vagina; but what a civic sense!

**The Virgin Mary**

According to the Christian tradition the city is the Church and the church is the body of Christ which is materialized by the body of the Virgin Mary. It is important to note that this metaphor between the body of the church and the body of the pregnant Virgin Mary requires a careful philological reconstruction in order to become manifest, as if this important argument was meant to be understated or implied. The connection between the body of the holy pregnant woman (the Virgin Mary) and the most important monument in the city of Florence (the cupola of Santa Maria del Fiore) must not be made clear. It is a necessary subconscious presence which is veiled from the imagination: the imagination knows about it but there can be no explicit reference to it if the metaphorical shift is to be kept alive. The metaphorical connection is as precious as it is fragile.

The ideal city in Raphael’s *Marriage of the Virgin* relies on the centrality of a building representing the ideal body of the Virgin. The cities’ patron saints are usually shown offering a model of the city to the Virgin who in turn offers the body of the Christ child to the community of believers. Federico Zapperi has analyzed the phenomenon of male pregnancy alongside the biblical account of the birth of Eve from Adam’s body.

**Organism**

The most famous unfinished Renaissance drawing that explicitly illustrating the city/body relationship is contained in the first page of Francesco di Giorgio Martini’s codex on fortresses, urban planning, architecture, military art and mechanics. This city is primarily an ideal fortress. But the text and the caption (“figure of the body circumscribing the city with its inner distribution”) generalize the relationship between this male figure and all cities. On one of the following pages of the treatise (f.6v) where the author begins the description of the city, he states even more clearly that the cities have the ratio, measurement and shape (*ragion, misura e forma*) of the human body. The drawing of a man in the square and circle, with the center at the navel, is added so as to show the proportions between the human body and the city. Francesco di Giorgio explains that, if the citadel is not included in the plan of the city, the church and the ducal palace will occupy the position of the head, the main square will correspond to
the belly, other palaces and squares will be located where the feet and hands are, and all the other components of the city (Francesco does not specify) will refer to the eyes, ears, nose, mouth, veins, viscera and all the internal and external limbs of the human body, and will be “organized” (organizzati is added by Francesco’s hand) accordingly. The idealized city plans shown hereafter are mostly centralized and schematically symmetrical layouts, some of them showing the main church occupying the position of the head. Francesco di Giorgio knows that the relation between the city and the human body is evocative and not literal. Yet he seems to indulge in thinking literally about a body which is organized as a city and vice versa. As we know, the reversibility of the terms is a property of the similitude, not of the metaphor.

Daedalus and Pahiaphae

The myth of Deadalus, the necessity of the labyrinth (here intended as an infinitely complex branching maze) as an irrational conflicting space inside the city could provide an interesting comment on femininity and the city when one considers the original sin of Pasifae. The labyrinth is built to imprison the monster which is the result of an unnatural copulation between the queen and the sacred bull which takes place thanks to the artificial creation of a mechanical trick by the architect Daedalus. He also constructs the labyrinth in order to house the Minotaurus. The monster is the result of a sequence of events and the origin of another series of dramas. The female desire is the arkhè of the sequence where each individual act keeps leading to another drama and the city’s labyrinth is the most conspicuous manifestation of this uterine desire. It is only another woman who will be able to teach to a male how to exit from the labyrinth. The fact that the city is usually considered the common place where the innocent male meets the prostitute could also be tied with this myth.

Metropolis

It would be superfluous to expound the content of this fundamental reference in Modern architecture. I will just point out that the destiny of Metropolis is in the hands of two opposite female personifications of the soul of city: the good Mary and the bad Mary - the latter being a mechanical replica of the good one. The males are confined to the inability to discern the good from the bad. They simply rely on one Mary for their future, unable to detect the true from the false. Certainly this is not a feminine impulse of the creator, director and writer of the story; it is rather a slippage into a realm of awareness where the tangible destiny must be sought after something other than the masculine ratio.
The City of Women

Le Livre de la Cité des Dames, written by Christine de Pizan around 1405 is a reply to the misogynist Le Romance de la Rose by Jean de Meun. Christine builds her city using famous women as building blocks. The city made of female bodies is meant to work as a metaphor for her book as well as a new landscape for the male imagination in opposition to its prejudices. The City of Women by Federico Fellini is another expression of sexualized surrealistic marginalization of the male as explored in one of his better-known movies 8 and ½. Fellini decides to play surrealistically with this impairment. The city of females is created by completely virtual and potentially fictitious recollections of female memories: the memory of the female body as “known” by the male body. The city presented here is the city of sexualized separation which is also the city of segregation fed by feminist literature and the urban female guerrilla.

Invisible Cities

The ghosts of idealised female bodies are relevant in Italo Calvino’s Invisible Cities. Even if the author himself maintained that the feminine names of the cities are of no particular significance, the urban spaces of the potentially infinite male imagination maintains a feminine vagueness which is even more powerful and evocative than any other explicit reference. The sequence of names has the power of an archaic list. It is not my intention to psychoanalyze Fellini, Calvino and all the other authors who have tried to reveal the gap between the female body and the city. I merely wish to show the importance and give a sense to this necessity – the necessity of the female body of the city. Calvino himself repeats this sense obsessively in the sub-titles: the city and the name, the city and the memory, the city and the desire, the city and the eyes, the city and the dead, the city of exchanges, the subtle cities; all the titles are combined in different ways from beginning to end of this vast fictitious territory populated by the list of female names. This is mostly what the female names communicate: like in the infinite story they are always grasping something more remote: unreachable vanishing points in the male’s narrative.

Einstein’s mollusk

In The Evolution of Physic Einstein uses an urban analogy to explain the difference between restricted and general relativity. The city’s mollusk body of general relativity has neither a temporary nor a permanent “system of reference”. Nor does it have a parameter, or an underlying structure on which we can rely. The city/mollusk does not
simply change constantly, but even the space and temporal horizons where the city happens to be (but we cannot be sure even about this) is constantly reconfigured by the smallest modification and disturbance. The city/mollusk paradigm is the European cities, while the paradigm of the partial relativity is the American city where the grid provide a permanent reference point. Obviously this description is relevant to Einstein’s scientific reasoning. They are of less relevance to the context of urban theory. Yet considering the ideal scientific conquest of the total relativity, Einstein seems to be in favor of the mollusk-European city’s spime (space+time). Is this just a matter of nostalgia? Is this poetic license? We know that the politics of North American cities tend more toward the sort of absolute relativity discovered by Einstein, while the traditionalist European urban patterns and their “permanence” seem more resistant in the long term. Here Einstein is simply borrowing an image: the informal European city looks like a mollusk, while the formal North American city “looks like” a Cartesian grid. In the mollusk you touch an apparently insignificant spot and the whole body reacts (total sensitivity body), in the Cartesian grid not every occurrence, whether big or small, changes the coordinates. In a well known article Massimo Cacciari wrote an emulation of Einstein’s mollusk city where infinite “possibilities” can take place. “The sympathy toward the mollusk, beside indicating a culinary preference, might also be a subconscious reference to an archaic feminine” (Riva), a reference that is much less formal than the Hellenistic Tykhe statues seem to suggest and more prone toward the Irish Shelah-na-gigs or Baubo mythology.

**Marginalia.** We do not have to get trapped into the reading of the personification of nature with a female body as one of those fundamentals which structuralism, psychology, neurosciences and apriorisms want to assign to the structure of the mind of all human beings. In Egyptian mythology the earth is personified by a male body under a female starry night sky. And in many other cultures male and female souls intertwine in space and time. It’s not a matter of assigning a sex to a different space, but rather an issue of recognition, identity; an issue of making sense out of a space offered to the imagination (through the reverberation, dissonance, the tuning of the self and the commons), an issue of not refusing a gift, a boon, of not responding with an offense to an offering. The munus of community is a gift which requires reciprocity. In *La Forma della Città* Pier Paolo Pasolini seems to refer precisely to this issue: if the contemporary city cannot establish a dialogue with the form of the city, why should it irreparably violate that “form”? There is no nostalgia in this simple observation but just awareness of different identities. Maybe the city of the past was highly metaphorical, whereas the city of the future is not metaphorical at all. So far it looks like the contemporary city has only been trying to avoid the issue and to erase this awareness.

Personification is counterfactual. It is an elementary disposition of the imagination which has great importance insofar as it is indefinite. There is no better way of de-
stroying a metaphor than by forcing it. Western thought has disburdened upon these elementary metaphors a huge amount of rational thinking, whereas the metaphors of personification are very brittle: they can support only a very light rational burden. They could easily support the un-definition of the vernacular oral tradition; they are actually nourished by it. But the overwhelming logic of the alphabetized thought in the west wounds them.

There are mental conditions (which we can find in primitive or archaic human beings but also in children or artists – ontogenesis and philogenesis still provide a meaningful parallelism) where to live inside the world means to interpret it always and only with live metaphors. These live metaphors are like the myth. From inside the mythology - being part of its magic evocative power - we cannot say that Ghe is a metaphor for the fertile soil. “Ghe and nothing but Ghe is the fertile soil” (C. Lévi Strauss). Ghe does not represent the fertile soil, it is not “like” the fertile soil, does not have a similitude, “it is not a name for…”. And according to the myth, Ghe is just a layer, the cladding of a rather different and obscure space populated by Cthonic deities “whose relations with the different surfaces can only be endlessly narrated”. This is how mythical/metaphorical thinking captures our imagination into an endlessly evocative realm, where the only possibility is to unfold the future into its manifestation.

Many urban agglomerations or “suburbities” where we live nowadays have no manifest connotations (there may be no connotation at all) or they might have occult connotations. They are realities at very low definition, rarefied, vague, distracted representations. Sometimes the “definition” is so rarefied as to make us believe it is impossible to grasp any kind of metaphorical representation. Many cities have a metaphorical consistence which is neither manifest, nor obvious, nor evident but latent, unconscious and subconscious. Many cities have lost whatever kind of metaphorical substance they once possessed. The city pretends to be just itself, alone, unbound, éten-due, potentially infinite, endless solitude; lonely, self referential pervasiveness, tautological rhetoric, pure adventure into the capitalistic faith, total implication into the system and its derivatives.

Is the female body of the city a negative or a positive metaphor? It largely depends on how we use it. If some religious extremists continue to use it as it was used in the Bible to identify female holiness or the depravation of capitalism then we must regret its existence. If we think about it as an evocative space of unpredictable imagination then it can still make sense for us: certainly if we decide to let it die definitively we should understand what “to live into other metaphors’ frames” means, or if it is possible to create a new mental space where metaphors are avoided tout court?. Some contemporary currents of artistic and philosophical nihilism, materialism, minimalism and postmodernism seem to be keen toward this avoidance. The question is not whether this is a good metaphor, or not; but rather: are we going to be able to create a metaphor, so evocative, so powerful, so open as the one which our fathers have so badly cor-
rupted, fragmented, ridiculed and finally compromised? Or, are we going to be able to rid ourselves entirely of any other metaphorical approach and think of the city as if for the first time without any sort of compromise (metaphorical commitment)?

Of the female nature of the city very little is left in our Western civilized world: a forgotten myth and an archaic metaphor totally obscured by the ratios of organisms and systems, and “smart” masculine brains. Maybe by recovering this very ancient and prehistoric idea we will find the traces of a path we have moved away from, as Michael Graves suggested in his literature on the White Goddess. Perhaps we can find a language which has not been fully spoken yet and tools that have been discarded in some unknown place and are no longer in use. Maybe we will find the horrifying or beautifying impulse of a possible feminine, of a body “in wait” for the unknown, still waiting for an undesirable or desirable encounter, but capable of giving life and entirely rethinking its configuration. Our body should be reinvented. Fortunately it still contains a discrete degree of un-definition. Fortunately it still reaches the unknown and its off-shoots are still unreachable.

Despite centuries of misconceived rationality and positivism we now understand that something cannot find its logic within itself. Even observing something or thinking about observing something means disturbing its stillness or its state, and compromising its integrity. The knowledge of reality is always a shift into its difference. Even the most simple gestures or tools disturb the inner equilibrium of an object and its context: so there is no pure observation or objective manipulation of something. And there is no self-sustaining, self-referential or “tautological logic” capable of exhausting what we make fully into what we make, even if we can make it magisterially well.
VII - Art related to Nature and the City
REFLECTIONS ON VIOLENCE IN NATURE AND STILLNESS IN ART.
AN ESSAY IN SEVERAL PARTS

Mary Wiseman

The paintings of Vermeer and 19th century painters of the American West reveal a deep similarity between the interiority of the human mind and the sublimity of nature that suggest that the distinction between nature and culture—mind’s contribution to the ongoing of the world—is artificial. This is the subject of Part One. Further, consideration of the myriad relations between nature and human beings, in particular, consideration of the violence each does to the other, shows the permeability of the borders between (the concepts of) nature and culture. This is the work of Part Two.

Part One

Ideas in ancient China about what nature paintings express and ideas in 20th century France about what underlies pure architecture provide examples from disparate cultures of a serious connection between nature and art that raise a question about the familiar and deeply entrenched distinction between the two. From this brief beginning we turn to paintings that further bring the distinction into question, namely, city paintings in 17th Netherlands and nature paintings in 19th century America that reveal distinctions like inside/outside, private/public, near/far, explored/unexplored within each of nature and culture. This structural similarity casts doubt on an alleged opposition between the two.

China and France

In the history of landscape painting in both the west and China several things are worthy of note. One is that except for the prominence of landscape painting in the Netherlands in the 17th century, landscapes were deemed inferior to history paintings until the 19th century, whereas in China, mountain-water ink painting (shan shui) was traditionally the most prestigious form of visual art. Landscape became a central theme in the Sui dynasty (581-618) and gained prominence early in the Song (960-1270). It has been characterized as painting that “is not an open window for the viewer’s eye, it is an object for the viewer’s mind. Shan shui painting is more like a vehicle of philosophy.” The painters do not try to capture an image of what they have seen but rather
quiet their minds and let what pulses through the earth’s rivers and mountains resonate in them as they move their brush over paper. The philosophy reflected in the resulting work is the Neo-Confucian one whose interest is in the patterns and principles that underlie all phenomena, natural and social.

In the same vein, Le Corbusier’s *Vers une Architecture* (Paris, 1923) claims that architecture is “a thing of art, a phenomenon of the emotions” whose purpose is to move us, which it does when “the work rings within us in tune with the universe whose laws we obey, recognize and respect.”1 (Emphasis added.) Corbusier sees the universe as built out of cubes, cones, spheres, cylinders, or pyramids, primary forms whose image is “distinct and tangible within us and without ambiguity,” as do the rivers and mountains of the Chinese shan shui paintings capture the same vital energy (qi) that runs through all there is. Corbusier continues that because the image of these forms is within us, they are the most beautiful. “Everyone is agreed as to that, the child, the savage, the metaphysician.”2 He says that his time has escaped the tyranny of styles and lets “the engineers of today make use of the primary elements and, by coordinating them in accordance with the rules, provoke in us architectural emotions and thus make the work of man ring in unison with the universal order.”3 (Emphasis added.) The same patterns and principles and geometric forms lie behind both what nature has produced and what we have built. Corbusier’s primary forms are the static counterparts of the Chinese vital energy.

Mountains and rivers were the most worthy subjects for Chinese painters since the 6th century and prisms, cubes and cylinders, pyramids or spheres the most worthy of an architecture that is pure. The same forms underlie natural phenomena and buildings made along nature’s lines. Good paintings and good buildings—culture’s gifts—result when artist and architect are in harmony with nature, as Vermeer (1632-75) is in his *View of Delft* (1660-61) (fig. 1).

The Netherlands

Cityscapes became an independent genre in the Netherlands in the 17th century, and Vermeer’s *View of Delft* is one of the earliest, of which the British art historian Andrew Graham-Dixon said: “He took a turbulent reality, and made it look like Heaven on earth.” This and *The Little Street* (1657-58) (fig. 2) are the only ones of the 34 paintings attributed to him that have buildings rather than people as their subject. *View of Delft* portrays far more sea and sky than it does the city of Delft. The sky occupies half the picture plane with dark clouds occupying the top third and a beach where a small boat is moored and six people stand occupies the bottom sixth. Three boats are docked on the city side of the River Schie, and an allee of trees along a canal perpendicular to the river moves into the picture plane toward a row of more brightly lit build-
ings. Red roofs cap the near grayish brown buildings, three towers reach toward the sky, and reflections of boats and buildings appear in the river.

Shadows in the water and towers in the sky capture a moment of beautiful harmony among river, buildings, and sky. Empty land on the river’s other side and the people on it are the only reminders that Delft is not of one piece with the water around and the sky above it. The dark clouds above might disturb the peace, but not yet. Stillness and silence pervade this work as they often pervade landscapes, and the city in View of Delft seems to meld into the river and the sky as the buildings in Monet’s Houses of Parliament, Sunset (1902) do, even though nature in the Monet is not so still: the river reflects the dazzle of the sky and all seems to be awhirl. This is one of a series of ten paintings of the buildings painted from the same place on the Thames on the same size (32 X 36 7/8 in.) canvas. Each was done at a different time of day and in different weather conditions. The series studies the effect of time and weather on the buildings that serve here as a prop. Houses of Parliament, Sunset is more nature-scape than building-scape.

So too is El Greco’s View of Toledo (1596-1600). It is even referred to as a landscape, one of two surviving by El Greco and the first in the history of Spanish art. With its Mannerist flourishes and distortions it is markedly different from View of Delft and is different too from both the Vermeer and the Monet in having grass and trees where they have sea. But the turbulent sky is what dominates. Occupying more than one third of the picture plane, its light clouds are lighter than the grey buildings and the city wall that snakes up the hill and the dark clouds darker than the trees that dot the hill and stand between sky and town. No harmony here, but the stolid buildings, small against the lowering sky, hold their own. Nonetheless, here heaven dominates earth and the works of man.

These three paintings’ disturbance of the boundary between cityscape and landscape is consistent with there being few pure cityscapes in art. Architecture, not painting, is the art of the city, where cities are groups of buildings whose sites depend on the availability of water, the condition of the ground on which they will stand, and the weather conditions of the place, in short, on elements of nature. A different blurring of boundaries appears between the subjects of some landscapes and some paintings of people. For example, what is expressed in the mountains in paintings like Alfred Bierstadt’s 1868 Among the Sierra Nevada Mountains, California (fig. 3) is hauntingly like Vermeer’s paintings of women express. More of this later.

Vermeer’s other cityscape, The Little Street (1656-57) is closer to the paintings he set in interiors than it is to View of Delft, which, in turn, is closer to nature paintings than it is to The Little Street. In that painting, the two houses shown on the street stand behind a narrow strip of white cobbled street. About one-quarter of the taller house is cropped at the right and its very top is cut off. We are in close. Cropped also is more than half of a smaller house to the left of two alleys behind which a few buildings re-
cede into the mid-distance. The left side of the larger building bisects the picture plane, and sky occupies the upper left quadrant. In the lower right are three women. One is standing in an alley with her side to us doing a wash, and two are in front of the large house, one sitting in the doorway sewing and the other kneeling with her back to us feeding a dog.

All are working. All are preoccupied in this scene that is as compressed as the View of Delft is expansive, spilling over as it does into the sea and sky. This difference outweighs their both being cityscapes. Yet the three women in the courtyard in The Little Street do not make us want to know what they are thinking or feeling as Vermeer’s other women do because we cannot see their faces. However, we do want to go into the house in whose doorway a woman sews or into the alley where another is washing. Although it is a city scene, it teases us with the promise of people and of home, as the paintings of inwardness create the desire for an intimacy that the self-contained presence of their subjects denies. This is how The Little Street is closer to Vermeer’s paintings of people than it is to View of Delft. Stillness and silence pervade Vermeer’s paintings of people occupied in some task or other as they also prevade his cityscapes. He is the master of interiority, and the people in his paintings are preoccupied, as closeted in their thoughts as they are in their houses. In those moments, the city outside is as distant from them as the mountains in Bierstadt’s Among the Sierra Nevada Mountains, California (1868) are.

The grandeur of the scene in the Bierstadt puts it in a world of its own, one different from the human world. So does the inwardness of Vermeer’s women put them in a private world of their own where they are utterly separate from and independent of anyone’s thoughts and feelings about them. Nature in her magnificence is an object of wonder. So too is the fact that there are other minds than ours, minds that are like, but are not, ours. We cannot imagine them because we would be imagining them through our own minds, and what we would get is our own minds, not theirs. We cannot put our minds aside. They are all we have. We can imagine what it would be like to be someone in a position other than ours, but we cannot imagine what is going on in the mind of a particular person at a particular moment. So the minds of others are, like much of nature, there only to be acknowledged. They cannot be appropriated. We stand in awe of the human mind with its secrets and depths full as much as we do of nature, many of which still escape science’s grasp.

Such is the genius of Vermeer that the stillness in all of his paintings sacralizes their subjects, no matter what they are. The paintings stop time by capturing a moment in which their subjects are fully present. Present before us but not to us. And so we might say of the subjects of two painters of the American west who accompanied geologists and land-surveyors in the Westward Expansion, Alfred Bierstadt (1830-1902) and Thomas Moran (1837-1927).
The American West

To say that the landscapes of the unexplored American west are not present to us is to say that we cannot imagine ourselves in them: we sense that a human presence would change the scene utterly. They portray a nature different from the one we have made ours by first exploring and then using it, often by building on it. This does not lead us back to the nature/culture distinction, however, for there are the same distinctions within the realm of the human—between people who are present to us and those who are not, between people whose positions we can imagine ourselves in and those we cannot. That this is the case makes nature and the human more alike than different.

In our discussion of Vermeer we followed a path from View of Delft to The Little Street to Mistress and Maid or The Astronomer in which it is clear that the mistress and the astronomer are thinking, and it is equally clear that we have no access to what they are thinking. This suggests the distinction between the accessible and the inaccessible, a pair of terms cousin to others like private/public, near/far. We have indirect access to others’ thoughts and feelings when they tell us what they are or express them in some other way, but we never have direct access to their timbre, the feel. So too can nature be inaccessible to us and in various ways. One is when we cannot climb its mountains, travel its waters, or inhabit it. Another is when and where science cannot fathom it. Yet another, this way closest to the inaccessibility of other minds, is when we stand in awe of it and see it as sublime, as exceeding the reach of our minds and our imaginations, as do the subjects of paintings like Albert Bierstadt’s Among the Sierra Nevada Mountains, California (1868), Sunset in the Yosemite Valley (1868) and Thomas Moran’s The Grand Canyon of the Yellowstone (1872), The Chasm of the Colorado (1873-74), and An Arizona Sunset near the Grand Canyon (1898).

Here is an art of silence. Together with the Vermeers, these paintings show there to be no conceptual chasm, no split between the furthest reaches of the human mind and the natural world. Nature and the mind—the source of cultures and their cities—are alike in having secret springs and in being able to perform in ways that resist our efforts to know them. Here is further reason to put the distinction between nature and culture aside.

Part Two

Violence in and to Nature

Nature generates and sustains the existence of everything that lives, and it causes their degeneration and death, with deaths sometimes the result of plagues and natural disasters. The terrible paroxysms that cause disasters are sublime in their sheer demonstration of nature’s power. Disasters that defy our predicative powers, as virtually all do, are the greatest violence nature visits upon humankind.
Cities are made where nature is quiet enough and its soils and seas fecund enough to support communal life. When human beings hunted and gathered, they interfered little in nature’s course. But as they cultivated the land, built cities and engaged in manufacture and commerce, they intruded more. Nations arose and, for more land or power, waged wars that became more and more efficient and lethal culminating in the creation of nuclear weapons. Their power derives from reactions that release vast quantities of energy from relatively small amounts of matter. This reprises the creation of the universe from the big bang, a ball of hot dense mass a few nanometers across expanding with astonishing speed to the universe’s now astronomical size. With the creation of these weapons, human beings have the power to destroy all life. While this remains a remote possibility, actual violence to nature is being done by the uncontrolled use of carbon rich fossil fuels. Their burning releases large amounts of carbon dioxide only half of which can be absorbed in natural processes. Carbon dioxide is one of the greenhouse gases responsible for global warming, which could result in the destruction of life as we know it.

The violences nature and humankind visit on each other are about evenly matched. Not only are nature and humankind perpetrators of violence against each other, they are also inextricably entwined. Everyone would agree that in every human enterprise, even to the living out of a simple life, people are in thrall to nature and are, finally, at her mercy. It is not clear, however, that everyone would agree that there is no such thing as nature raw, one that does not bear the press of the human hand. Even though it existed without us for billions of years, nature has a history, and so soon as we entered its history, we left our mark, as has everything that has come onto its scene. Our interference and influence has, however, been greater than that of any other living creatures.

**Nature Raw, Nature Apart**

There are two reasons for denying the existence of a nature raw, a nature apart, one conceptual, one empirical. The first is that we cannot think of nature except through an idea of it, one that we construct from our sensory perceptions, past experiences, and what we know. The idea may be more or less faithful to its object, that, in turn, may itself be more or less undetermined. However, it is our idea; it is what we have been able to make of nature. Everything we think about is mediated by our ideas and so then is all that we know and experience of nature. These ideas govern our interactions with it, which in turn refine the ideas. There is between the two a reflective equilibrium.

The second reason for denying nature’s independence is that we put our mark on it. We do this so soon as we kill animals and pick fruits to nourish ourselves and, in general, make nature ours by mixing our labor with it. We make it ours also by plumbing its depths to discover what Hume called its secret springs. We scrutinize and the-
orize, make some hypotheses that become law and some that do not and make some predictions that are confirmed, some that are not. Science has given us great understanding of nature, but always there is what eludes us—operations more fine-grained than our accounts can handle. Nature has yielded some of herself up to our minds and our hands. But in what appears to us as its randomness, it has imperiled us with its earthquakes and storms. This randomness is a rough counterpart to the free will thought to distinguish us from the rest of nature.

The freedom human beings have to direct the course of their lives is constrained by the workings of the unconscious mind and the brain as these were uncovered by Freud at the turn of the 20th century and neuroscience and evolutionary biology at the turn of the 21st. In a different register, the decisions of governing bodies and regulatory agencies are influenced by the economic, political, and social demands upon them and by the fact that their decisions have repercussions throughout much of the world. One need only look at the current battle between the interests of big business and environmentalists in the United States or remember the agonizing decision made by the United States to drop the atom bombs in World War II to appreciate the constraints. Nonetheless, though restrained, our individual and collective decisions are not determined. But it cannot be predicted when and, in a given case, whether an individual or group will find its freedoms curtailed. It is, we might say, a matter of chance.

Quantum mechanics shows chance to be an essential part of the universe’s unfolding, and we know from meteorology that we cannot currently predict the occurrence of disruptions such as earthquakes. Whether or not we will eventually be able to predict disasters, we cannot now, and they occur as though by chance. Moreover, the scientific community is not in agreement as to how much of evolution can be predicted, but one view is that it depends on too many chance events to be repeatable. In short, while human beings are less free and more determined than they might like to think, nature, because we cannot always predict its course, appears to be less determined than we would like it to be. Through science we reap benefits from nature and through our energy needs put demands on it with the result that little there is in nature that does not wear the press of our hand. Yet no matter how advanced our civilization and our culture, we are so dependent on and indebted to nature that little there is that can resist it—time if nothing else will take its toll on our greatest productions. How then can we keep the nature/culture distinction in tact, especially since they share what is a source of wonder, namely, that there is in both nature and the human mind—the minds of others and, often, of ourselves—what we can never reach and before which we stand in silence.
Notes


2 *Towards a New Architecture*, p. 31.

3 *Towards a New Architecture*, p. 33.


5 Of the Vermeer’s 32 paintings of people only two, *The Geometer* and *The Astronomer*, portray a man alone, whereas many of the remaining 30 portray a woman alone.

6 This paper was presented to the *Conference on Nature and Cities*, University of Bologna, June 2012, where images of these works were shown. They can be accessed on the internet.
The landscapes of Hokusai (1760-1849) can give us a good understanding of the relationship between nature and the city in Japan. Among the famous “Thirty-six Views of Mount Fuji” we find eighteen scenes in which the mountain is viewed from Edo (the old name for Tokyo) which lies eighty miles away. As we know, it is difficult to see Mount Fuji from Tokyo today, not only because of the distance, but also because of all the modern buildings blocking the view. In the landscapes which show the city of Edo, Hokusai shows that he clearly understood the character of the city of Edo and its citizens. In Japan, mountains became traditional objects of worship through the ideas of Shinto. This religion has neither scripture nor doctrine, only the mythologies to be found in the books of Kojiki (712) and Nihon Shoki (723), which expressed the ancestor worship practised by the Tenno (Emperor). But there was also the worship of Nature and of Spirits, and for Shinto, Mount Fuji has been the ultimate symbol of Nature.

In the famous print, *Edo Nihonbashi* (The Nihonbashi Bridge in Edo), which is one of the 36 landscapes of Mount Fuji by Hokusai, we can see in the foreground only the heads, caps and goods of the people walking on the bridge. In the middle ground we see several loaded boats on the river, and beyond them the castle of Edo, where the General Tokugawa was living. But far beyond the citizens, the boats and the castle, there is Mt. Fuji, which is watching over them.

In *Fukagawa Mannenbashi shita* (Under the Mannen Bridge at Fukagawa), we notice the small Fuji, which is seen as a mere appendage. But for the citizens of Edo, this mountain was an essential part of the landscape. In the Gohyaku-Rakan-ji (The Temple of the Five Hundred Arhats), the people on the balcony are looking at Mount Fuji, which is a long way from this northern part of the city, but probably the balcony was constructed just for this purpose. The boy with the bald head at the left is pointing at the mountain. The worship of the mountain is based on an admiration nature as something to be marveled at.
In *Koto Suruga-Machi*, amid the typical architecture of Edo, we can see Mount Fuji, echoing the form of the triangular roofs, where workers are mending the tiles. These houses are stores belonging to tailors, which show the signboards of each shop. At *Asakusa Hongan-ji*, the triangle of the big gable in the foreground also repeats the form of the distant mountain’s shape. The roof workers are depicted as if they were on top of a mountain. Kites and ladders at the fire tower extending above the clouds are juxtaposed with the two triangular forms both near and far.

*Honjo Tatekawa* was one of ten prints, added after the initial success of *Thirty-six Views*. Mount Fuji is depicted amid the timber near the right-hand margin of this print. The mountain is positioned among the artificial and geometrical forms of the lumberyard. Under the system of *sankin-kotai* (alternate attendance) enforced by the Tokugawa, the feudal lords (*daimyo*) had to spend every other year in Edo and leave their families there when they returned home. In *Ju Senju Hanamachi*, some of the samurai in the procession of a *daimyo* are looking at the far mountain beyond the field nearby, the houses and the distant forest. Mount Fuji impressed them owing to the importance of the capital since it was protected by a sacred mountain.

In Japan, it is interesting to note that they preferred to construct the cities not by the sea, but in a basin among the mountains. This means that the people like to live with mountains. Nara, the capital of Japan from 710 to 784, and Kyoto, capital from 794 to 1869, were in this kind of geographical position. Kamakura, where the Shogun had his headquarters during the Kamakura Period (1192-1333) was also surrounded by mountains. Although this is also at the seaside, the seashore is shallow and consequently the military ships could not approach the city itself. But Edo’s situation was exceptional — there are no mountains nearby and the city was at the head of the Bay of Edo, which opens out into the Pacific Ocean.
After the Battle of Sekigahara (1600), the Tokugawa clan dominated Japan, and in 1603 the Emperor appointed its leader Ieyasu as Shogun (General of Japan). He established a government in Edo. He had already begun to construct a castle there and to improve the city itself.

Why did Ieyasu Tokugawa choose Edo as the seat of his Shogunate?

Ohta Dokan (1432-86) constructed the first castle in Edo. He sent a poem to the Emperor boasting that from his castle he could look down on the high mountain of Fuji ("Kanto Heiranki"). A landscape which included a distant view of Mount Fuji had for a long time been appreciated as a symbol of Japan. They took seriously the fact that "Seeing Mount Fuji, (Fujimi in Japanese) has a homonym which means: “immortal” or “invulnerable” which could be the watchword of the samurai during the Period of War (1467-1568). Fuji also means “happiness” and “charity.” This would seem to be mere wordplay, but for them it was more than that. Mount Fuji was always a symbol of the divinity which protected them. (It is also curious that shiomi means “seeing the sea” and “encountering death”. They were afraid of tsunami so they tried to avoid using this word, in spite of living in a city by the sea.

It is quite possible that Tokugawa chose this area for the visibility of the sacred mountain. He could have chosen Kamakura, the old seat of government during the Kamakura Period (1192-1333) as his new seat of government. But Kamakura did not have the same scope for expansion as the Edo area, and from there it was not possible to see Mount Fuji because of the surrounding mountains. He probably always adored Mount Fuji. He was born in Mikawa where he could see it. And his whole life long he lived in places within sight of Mount Fuji. After his retirement in 1605, he elected to live at Sunpu where he could see it everyday, and finally chose Kunozan close to Mount Fuji the place where he was to be buried.

To govern Japan well, he attempted to curtail the power of each daimyo, so he made them send people to Edo as hostages to ensure their obedience. In 1635 (Kanei 20) he required the daimyo to reside in Edo every other year (sankin-kotai) and to have their families live there permanently. This drew people from all over Japan to the city. In the 18th century, Edo’s population reached one million, making it the most populous city in the world at that time (London: 460,000; Paris: 550,000; Osaka: 380,000; and Kyoto: 350,000.)

Edo, like all other Japanese cities, was not surrounded by walls because there was no danger of attack. In fact, during the Tokugawa Period (1615-1867), there was no war at all, probably because of the system that the Tokugawa shogunate adopted. So the landscapes showing the cities are very peaceful and are characterized by green woods, although in the city centre there was development of houses and roads.
The commercial areas occupied 20% of Edo and almost 60% consisted of the residences of the government employees and of the families of the *daimyo*, which each had gardens. Twenty percent of the most important locations were occupied by Buddhist temples and Shinto shrines, which also possessed woods and gardens. Consequently there are no typical city landscapes such as those in China and in Europe, which were full of architecture and crowded with people.

How did the people see the landscape of Edo? A book, *Edo Kibun*, published at the end of the Edo Period, tells us what the citizens could see from Edo Castle. They could see the fields of Musashino being developed in the west, and in the far distance in that direction they could see Mount Fuji. (To the east, the rivers flow along to the shore, passing villages and emerging at the sea.) For the citizens, this mountain was always an important element of the landscape to be seen from Edo (Kenryo Ashikaga, *The History of Reading the Landscape*, NHK, Tokyo, 1998)

In Edo there was no Imperial Palace such as there was in Kyoto. That means the culture of Edo was quite different from that of the traditional court. Hokusai and Hiroshige did not include features appropriate to an imperial court in the Edo landscape. In the screen painting of the landscape of Kyoto (*Rakushu-Rakugai-zu*), we generally find the Imperial Palace (*Dairi*) in the center. For Edo, instead of this symbol, it seems that Mount Fuji adopts a similar role. After the Meiji Period, the Imperial Palace moved to Tokyo, and the role of Mount Fuji has thus been weakened for its citizens.

In Europe, each city had its own patron saint, like St. John the Baptist in Florence, St. Petronio in Bologna, and Notre Dame for Paris. In Japan, there is no tradition of a saint for a city. In Europe in the center of a city, a big cathedral was dedicated to each saint of the city. In the case of Edo, it is Mount Fuji that is watching over and protecting the people because the Buddhist temples were not for the community as a whole but for the individual spirit.

In fact, in the *Manyoshu*, the collection of circa 4500 poems (*waka*) complied in the 8th century, it had already been said that Mount Fuji was a god who protected Yamato-no Kuni, the whole of Japan. A poet, Mushimaro Takahashi, in his “A Poem of Mount Fuji” (*Manyoshu*, 319), wrote that this high mountain exists in the middle of Japan, where God lives beyond our human perceptions. This *Manyoshu* poem has been continuously read since then, and so this concept is rooted in the spirit of the Japanese. But not only was this traditional idea promulgated by the poems, but also by many paintings from all periods but I do not have the space in this paper to tell the full story of all the images of Mount Fuji.

*Fuji-kou*, one of the religious movements in the Edo Period was so concerned about the worship of Mount Fuji that groups were organized to climb it. Hokusai, in *Shojin Tozan* (A group of Mountain Climbers), depicted the scene of the climbers clad in white with walking sticks. At the top of the mountain, they rest in a cave. Traditionally in Japan, climbing mountains has been a religious act, Shugen-do. To purify the body
and spirit, they walked up the steep ascent. It is a Shinto activity, based on the worship of Nature.

Hasegawa Kakugyo (1541-1646) was a founder of the worship of Mount Fuji, and his teachings were based on Buddhism. He associated the mountain of Sengen Bosatsu, a bodhisattva. He prayed not only for the benefit of everyone, but also specifically for the peace of the country itself. His worship was linked to Shinto, which admired Nature. And Jikigyo Miroku (1671-1733), a merchant, having met a bodhisattva on Mount Fuji, gave his fortune to others, and dedicated himself to the mountain. He died there. Many people followed him, having been influenced by his life, consecrated to this Nature.

But for the people who were unable to go to Mount Fuji, many Fuji-zuka (artificial mounds of Fuji shape) were built in Edo at Shinto shrines (There are still about sixty of them today.) Komagome-Fuji was the most popular among them, and was valued as a landmark that people liked to visit. And in the city of Edo, there were many so-called Fujimi-zaka, slopes from where Mount Fuji can be seen, and Fujimi-dai, hills from which to see it. People enjoyed seeing Mount Fuji from many viewpoints, just like the landscapes Hokusai painted.

If we think of the city of Edo as one garden, Mount Fuji was “borrowed” as its background, (Shakkei, “borrowed scenery”, plays an important role in looking at Japanese gardens.

Finally I should like to point out a European imitation: the Eiffel Tower in Paris, which was constructed in 1889. The motif of the construction was a symbol not only for the 1889 Exposition Universelle, but also for the city itself. Everyone can see it everyday. It is probable that Gustave Eiffel (1832-1923) tried to make an artificial Mount Fuji in Paris. In that period, Japonism was very popular, and the French artists admired ukiyo-e prints. The Thirty-Six Landscapes of Hokusai were well-known and much studied by them. It is not by accident that the form of the Eiffel Tower resembles a little that of Mount Fuji. His plan was at least very similar, unlike the other proposals in the competition for the tower.

Anyway, in 1902 a Parisian lithographer, Henri Rivière (1864-1951) produced prints of 36 scenes of the Eiffel Tower, exactly the same number as those of Hokusai. Only four of them were woodblock prints, but the others are lithographs with just with five colors. It is very clear that this artist imitated Hokusai - not only the composition, but also of the concept of a symbol for the city.
The difference between Mount Fuji and the Eiffel Tower suggests that in Japan nature is much more important than human constructions. In fact, temples had not been important for Shinto prior to the introduction of Buddhism. Shinto shrines were first built at the end of the 6th century. The mountains themselves had been the objects of worship. In Edo also there were no very big Shinto shrines (Meiji Jingu and Yasukuni Jinja were founded after the Edo Period). But there were big Buddhist temples, such as Zojo-ji or Kanei-ji, which the Tokugawa patronized. Senso-ji of Asakusa, which had been founded in the 7th century, became the Tokugawa’s choice for a temple in which to pray. We can say that Mount Fuji was the symbol of Shinto for the people of Edo.
PUBLIC ART AND THE MEANING OF LANDSCAPES

Andrea Baldini

1. How should we appreciate and interpret a landscape? This is one of the main philosophical questions concerning our relationship with environments. By criticizing formalist approaches to nature appreciation, cognitivism in environmental aesthetics, which is the critical focus of this paper, proposes provocative answers to that question. For formalists, the appreciation and interpretation of landscapes are similar to those of artworks. They depend mainly on attending specific sensuous properties—often defined as formal aesthetic properties—such as “being red,” “being rectangular,” “possessing unity,” etc. On the contrary, cognitivists deny such similarity. Formal aesthetic properties are, or should not be, the focus when appreciating and interpreting landscapes. In their view, properties that are not formal—such as historical and ethical properties—may very well be more relevant than formal ones. In this paper, I argue that, though pointing towards an interesting direction, cognitivism in environmental aesthetics misunderstands the relationship between artworks and landscapes. There is no principled disjunction between the appreciation and interpretation of artworks and those of landscapes. Noticeably, my thesis does not rest on formalist grounds. The appreciation and interpretation of landscapes are not similar to those of artworks because they both depend on attending formal aesthetic properties. The contrary claim is true. They are similar because formal aesthetic properties often should not be the focus of the appreciation and interpretation of artworks. Often, appreciating and interpreting artworks—like landscapes—requires focusing on many different kinds of properties other than formal aesthetic properties. Only by considering those properties, we can fully appreciate their cultural significance.

2. Reconsidering Nature’s Appreciation

Within contemporary debate on the philosophy of art, themes related to our appreciation and interpretation of nature have received much consideration. This area of
study—commonly labeled as *environmental aesthetics*—emerges both as a theoretical reaction to twentieth-century philosophical aesthetics’ exclusive focus on art, and as a practical aspiration to help preserving nature’s aesthetic dimension in a period of ecological crisis.\(^1\) Cognitivism is a major strand in environmental aesthetics. *Contra* formalism, it holds that sensuous properties are not the focus of nature appreciation. In cognitivists’ view, appreciating nature depends on attending properties far removed from the sensuous domain.\(^2\) Historically, cognitivism draws on eighteenth-century landscape aesthetics, though with important qualifications. As initial qualification, eighteenth-century landscape aestheticians confine the appreciation of nature to that of *pristine nature*, that is, nature in its state prior to human intervention. On their part, cognitivists characterize more generously those objects of appreciation. They argue that we do not merely appreciate naturally pristine sceneries, but also the world at large, including its more mundane vicinities such as: the majesty of a city skyline, the liveliness of a park on a warm afternoon, and the organized chaos in a busy marketplace. Correctly, cognitivists argue that we appreciate not only the natural world, but also environments, territories, and man-made settings such as gardens and cities.\(^3\) Call those objects of appreciation *landscapes*.

As a further qualification, eighteenth-century landscape aesthetic understands appreciation and interpretation of nature in terms of the concepts of the picturesque and the sublime. Thus, from that point of view, appreciation and interpretation of nature are analogous to canonical models for aesthetic appreciation and interpretation of art. Cognitivism in environmental aesthetics strongly disagrees with that view. For cognitivists, the appreciation and interpretation of landscapes differ profoundly from those of artworks. Primarily, such contrast rests on ontological and phenomenological differences. In their view, artworks and landscapes are ontologically distinct for two main reasons: first, paradigmatic artworks are more or less discrete, stable, and self-contained physical objects or events. We can discern and list their properties almost exhaustively. For instance, Botticelli’s *Birth of Venus* consists of an oil-painted canvas, occupying a determinate spatiotemporal position. It measures 172.5 cm x 278.5 cm. At its center, it presents a young naked woman, traditionally identified with Venus. The list of properties could go on describing the painting in its minutest details. On the contrary, landscapes change through time and, by expanding indefinitely in each direction, have no exact boundaries. Consider, for instance, New York City’s skyline: where does it begin or end? How could I possibly describe its outline, once I acknowledge how quickly it changes? As a consequence of their not being discrete and stable objects, landscapes’ properties are in flux, thus—at least in principle—being inclined to change, even dramatically. Of course, their list must be provisional.

Second (perhaps the deepest difference between artworks and landscapes), artworks are products of artists. Artists intentionally design and (often) realize their
works. Artworks relate to artists’ intentions not only causally, but also conceptually. By working within specific traditions, artists inform their artistic products with, among others, historical, generic, and stylistic properties. Consider, for instance, Picasso’s *Les Demoiselles d’Avignon*. Of course, we recognize the lines, the colors, the arrangements of figures on the canvas as all intentional choices by its author. The physical realization of the work is surely an outcome of Picasso’s (extraordinary) painting skills. Also, Picasso’s artistic choices impart to his work stylistic properties linking the painting both to Western modernism and traditional African art. On the contrary, landscapes are not the product of intentional designers. They emerge “spontaneously,” as outcomes of natural processes or of human actions lacking an overall explicit design. Think about the Apuan Alps, where the Carrara marble quarries are found. The outline of the mountains— which is a complex output of natural orogenic and erosive processes interacting with extractive human activities— cannot be considered as the product of the design of any of the forces (both natural and artificial) concurring to its formation.

From a phenomenological point of view, cognitivists in environmental aesthetics argue that artworks and landscapes differ for two reasons. First, artworks are objects or events that we can engage properly just from specific distances and points of view. For instance, we should look at Leonardo’s *Mona Lisa* from an appropriate distance, which allow us to notice at the same time both its overall *Gestalt* and its main details. In addition to that, the direction of our view should be perpendicular to the flat surface of the canvas. When considering music, we know that optimal musical listening requires being at a suitable distance from the sounding sources (for instance, few millimeters for headphones, few dozen of meters for rock-concert loud speakers). Moreover, we know that we should occupy a particular portion of the inside angle of the sound projection cone. If we move too far from the inside angle, the music will become inaudible or partially conveyed. For instance, in order to listen optimally to Rodrigo’s *Concierto de Aranjuez* performed by the Philadelphia Orchestra at the Kimmel Centre, I should be sitting on one of the middle rows of the main floor, while occupying the inside angle of the sound projection cone, where instruments’ volume are best balanced— plausibly, close to the centre of the main floor. Otherwise, the quality of my hearing might be seriously compromised. However, for cognitivists in environmental aesthetics, there are no such limitations when perceptually engaging landscapes. There is no optimal distance or position for experiencing landscapes. Moreover, we perceptually engage landscapes “from within,” while being immersed in them. Consider the *Boboli Gardens* in Florence. It seems that whenever we perceptually engage those gardens, we occupy a proper position, which is also a part of that landscape (or of a larger one including those gardens). Of course, we can engage them from different distances and spatial locations: perhaps, from their main entrance, or from the *Isolotto*. However, no point of view is more legitimate than oth-
Second, artworks come in different media, whose perception requires the use of specific senses. For instance, we perceive paintings (and other works of visual arts) by means of sight, while musical works are mainly perceived through hearing. For instance, it seems that I engage perceptually Caravaggio’s *Lute Player* when I see it. Similarly, a perceptual experience of Beethoven’s *Ninth Symphony* is primarily an experience of properties of sound. However, for environmental aesthetics, landscapes’ complex structure elicits multi-sensory responses. Landscapes are not merely seen or heard: we engage them with the full spectrum of the five senses. We see, for instance, the contour and the colors of the *Langhe Hills*: we are immersed in their sounds (a river roaring, birds singing, agricultural machines operating); we touch their surfaces (the rough ground, the irregular cortex of trees, the hard and slippery ice on a cold night); we sense their smells (the grass after the rain, the blooming flowers in spring, the must boiling in the fall); we can taste, for instance, its grapes and truffles. A satisfactory perceptual grasp of the *Langhe Hills* should include at least some of those experiences (if not all). As a consequence, cognitivists in environmental aesthetics describe the experience of a landscape as somewhat totalizing—even “engulfing.”

By considering landscapes’ ontological and phenomenological peculiarities, cognitivism in environmental aesthetics characterizes the appreciation and interpretation of landscapes as follows. In terms of appreciation—which is the ability of successfully engaging an external object or event, while grasping its good qualities—landscapes do not merely present themselves in a specific perceptual field, but they spatially absorb appreciators, eliciting all their senses. Noticeably, by lacking both an intentional design and a recognizable style, genre, and historical trend, the appreciation of landscapes is not influenced by traditional conditioners in art, such as knowledge of art history or artistic categories. By the same token, when we consider interpretation—which is the final outcome of a reflective understanding of the meaning(s) of an object or event—interpretations of landscapes cannot be construed, constrained, and warranted in terms of art historical, stylistic, generic, and intentional criticism.

Cognitivists in environmental aesthetics argue that the appreciation and interpretation of landscapes should be respectively guided and warranted by a different conditioner, namely the nature itself of the object attended. In this sense, a knowledge of landscapes’ history, type, and properties is essential for guiding their appreciation and warrant their interpretation. For instance, when considering the marble quarries of the Apuan Alps, the knowledge of the history of the extractive activity, of its relevance for the local community, and of its methods of production are helpful as frames for guiding our appreciation and for warranting our interpretation. As Allen Carlson writes: “Such knowledge encourages us to enlarge and adjust our frames,
our senses, and even our attitudes, so as to more appreciatively accommodate the expansive uniform landscapes that are the inevitable result of such [extractive] practices.\textsuperscript{8}

3. Castagna’s \textit{Chiesa all’aperto}: landscape or artwork?

Cognitivism in environmental aesthetics is surely one the most interesting trajectories in contemporary aesthetics. It correctly emphasizes that landscapes are possible sources of value, thus being worth of serious consideration. I also agree with the cognitivist idea that the appreciation and interpretation of landscapes require more than attending formal aesthetic properties. However, cognitivists seem to seriously misunderstand the relationship between artworks and landscapes not only in terms of appreciation and interpretation, but also at an ontological and phenomenological level. I argue that landscapes and artworks are not as different as suggested by cognitivists. Consider, for instance, \textit{Chiesa all’aperto (Outdoor Church)}, a public artwork realized by Italian contemporary sculptor Pino Castagna between 1988 and 1994, installed in Zermeghedo, a small town near Vicenza.

\textit{Chiesa all’aperto} occupies a portion of the hill where Zermeghedo’s original church—a traditional concrete structure—is built. The local clerical administration asked Castagna to redevelop the area outside the church, which consisted of an unappealing and useless muddy open space. Noticeably, patrons asked Castagna to install something that not only was in continuity with the holiness of the location, but also was appealing to people of diverse religions. In effect, many leather factories operate in the vicinities of Zermeghedo, and many workers are immigrants from India, Eastern Europe, Africa, and South-East Asia.\textsuperscript{9} Patrons saw the redevelopment of that area as an opportunity for promoting integration between locals and immigrants. Castagna intended to realize a place of spiritual and physical encounter, pervaded by a silent sense of devotion. He opted, then, for an outdoor church with peculiar characteristics mitigating the distinctively Christian atmosphere created by a church.

A concrete steel wall decorated by a monumental cross in stainless and Corten steel constitutes the altar piece, which is the main sculptural element of the work. The altar piece orients the overall space, at the same time both delimiting a mystical niche and suggesting to the eye the openness of the space. The silhouette of the cross emerges as the negative space left between four kites of Corten steel, mounted on a surface of stainless steel. At night, light bulbs placed behind the kites illuminate the cross from within, producing a visual image of an ethereal and transcendent quality. The cross is oddly shaped: the transverse bar is longer than the post. Thus, the cross does not resemble any traditional Christian cross—for instance, neither Latin nor Greek. Such peculiarity is intended: it abstracts—at least in part—the cross from its immediate Christian reference. More importantly, the four kites bend outward towards the centre.
of the alter piece, in a movement that mimics and represents a projecting “hug.” The cross opens up to the world, welcoming and holding each pilgrim, in spite of her faith.

In front of the altar piece, we find an altar in natural stone. The flat top is in local red raw marble from Chiampo (a variation of red Asiago marble), which also paves the raised platform where the alter stays and part of the whole location. The flat top in marble lays over an erratic rock in dark granite, which Castagna found in a nearby creek. By surrounding the erratic rock, a series of light colored and small river rocks complete the altar. Right next to the altar, we find the baptismal font, carved in the same red raw marble from Chiampo.

On one side, the altar opens towards the valley, while on the other it touches the mountain, which is contained by a dry wall built with local black granite, in the shape of small cubical rocks. Between the altar and the dry wall, a small staircase in Asiago red marble leads to the priest’s apartments. While facing the altarpiece, we can see a construction—originally a school. On the opposite side, the work expands towards the church entrance. The two—the church and Castagna’s work—conflate where another Asiago red marble staircase designed by Casagna leads the way inside the church. Between the dry wall and the church, another staircase opens: it takes to the church’s tower, which is also the top of the hill. The first 15 steps are in Asiago red marble. Castagna intended the rest (circa 35 steps) to be coated with a different marble. However, he was unable to complete his work, which would have interested also the priest’s apartments. The steps have a peculiar design, suggested to the author by functional considerations. A small drain directing the rain flow separates each step. At the top of the staircase, a small paved surface allow for viewing the hills in the surrounding. A smaller sculpture by another artist completes the scene we can observe.

Perhaps, attentive readers already realized that Castagna’s Chiesa all’aperto—like many other public artworks, though perhaps more explicitly than others—challenges prima facie the distinction between landscapes and artworks as characterized by environmental aesthetics. To begin with, Chiesa all’aperto seems to share with landscapes two relevant ontological features. First, Castagna’s work is not a stable, discrete, or self-contained object as artworks supposedly are: its boundaries are undetermined and open. It expands in all directions and it is not clear where it begins or ends. It blurs into the church and the surroundings, thus creating a “tissuey” entity. Second, we cannot reduce Chiesa all’aperto’s identity to Castagna’s intentional design: that reduction would overlook the genesis of the work, which: (i) emerges from a natural and human-made spatial arrangement preexisting Castagna’s design; (ii) is still “unfinished” and may expand following different trajectories, many of those being unforeseen by Castagna (think about the work by the other artist); and, (iii) changes accordingly with the natural succession of seasons: colors of the local flora—in capsulated within the work—and the natural light differ radically throughout the year.

We can notice distinctive similarities between Chiesa all’aperto and landscapes at
a phenomenological level, too. There is no proper distance or point of view from which we should engage the work. Like a landscape, appreciators engage Chiesa all’aperto “from within”: once you can experience the work, you already occupy a portion of its space. Moreover, Chiesa all’aperto elicits pertinently all of our senses—or at least most of them—, engendering that “engulfing” experience typical of landscapes. Of course, we engage visually the work. However, we can also touch it, as the rough borders of the kites invite us to do. We surely sent the smells of Zermeghedo: its trees, its grass, perhaps the foul of the leather factories. We perceive the mystical silence inhabiting the location. Noticeably, Castagna designed Chiesa all’aperto as a venue for music performances, thus explicitly emphasizing its sounding dimension.10

The similarities between Chiesa all’aperto—as well as many other artworks—and landscapes suggest something relevant. Rather than being essentially different, landscapes and artworks are entities of similar kind. We can imagine landscapes and artworks placed on a ideal continuum between two extremes. On one extreme, we find landscape of pristine natures: unstable, with uncertain borders, in a state of permanent change, devoid of an intentional design. On the other, we find artworks such as easel paintings or indoor small sized sculptures: discrete and self-contained objects, products of an explicit intentional design. Thus, the distinctions between artworks and landscapes drawn by environmental aestheticians capture the differences between specimen at the two extremes of the continuum. However, those same differences do not distinguish intermediate cases. There are surely artworks that are not stable and discrete objects, whereas we can think of landscapes—for instance, a Japanese indoor garden—that actually are, at least to some degree. In this sense, we may draw a radical conclusion: there may very well be cases where an entity is as promiscuous in its nature as to be possibly considered either a landscape or an artwork. Castagna’s Chiesa all’aperto is surely an example of those.11

Ontological and phenomenological similarities result also in comparable appreciation and interpretation when considering Chiesa all’aperto and landscapes. In terms of appreciation, Castagna’s work does not merely present itself in a specific perceptual field. Engaging the work is totalizing, and successful appreciation depends—at least in part—on attending multi-sensory features. Moreover, appreciators experience Castagna’s work “from within.” By considering what should guide our appreciation, and consequently warrant our interpretation, we realize that Chiesa all’aperto’s peculiar nature plays a relevant role. In effect, Chiesa all’aperto is one of those artworks that do not merely occupy a space, but “transforms” it. By drawing on Susan Feagin’s “Paintings and Their Place,” I argue that Chiesa all’aperto functions as “subjunctive space,” that is, a real space provoking individuals to act in various ways.12 In effect, Castagna’s work creates a place for religious devotion and worship, for encounter and dialogue, for performing and listening. Its role as an elicitor of religious, social, and cultural experience is not a mere accident to its nature. On the contrary, it is intrinsic
to it. I will miss much by merely attending *Chiesa all’aperto*’s formal aesthetic properties while ignoring its peculiar genesis, social function, and relationship with its surroundings, including the local communities.

By appreciating the preceding, two important points must be emphasized. First, when appropriate, considerations other than formal ones are fundamental for fully appreciating and correctly interpreting artworks, even artworks that may not be public as *Chiesa all’aperto*. As Joseph Margolis argues, artworks’ interpretation draws on many historical, conceptual, and practical resources transcending the formal aesthetic domain. Artworks are cultural entities whose understanding can take place only within an appropriate form of life (*Lebensform*).\(^{13}\) In this sense, artworks function sometimes as landscapes.

Second, when considering at least some landscapes, more traditional frames canonically used for guiding and justifying respectively artworks’ appreciation and interpretation may very well be useful. As in *Chiesa all’aperto*’s case, considerations of artistic intention, stylistic and generic membership, art-historical placement, and so on may very well be important to our understanding of a landscape. Consider again the *Boboli Gardens* in Florence. How could we fully appreciate and understand its complexities without referring to the design intended by its creators? How to exclude their being gardens of a particular style? As a consequence, landscapes function sometimes as artworks.

4. Conclusion

By considering Castagna’s *Chiesa all’aperto*, I have argued that landscapes and artworks are more similar than what assumed by environmental aesthetics. Their similarities do not depend on their formal aesthetic quality, but on their capacity of carrying “meanings” in ways traditionally attributed only to artworks. In this sense, landscapes and artworks are often appreciated and interpreted in light of their social and cultural role. Many consequences follow from my account of landscapes. However, let me highlight one, which I take as particularly pertinent to the topic of this conference. When considering landscapes, and in particular urban cities, from neighborhoods to cities at large, we could approach them as if they were artworks—a thesis defended also by Italian architect Marco Romano.\(^{14}\) By approaching them as artworks, we may be able to preserve and foster the social and cultural significance that cities possess. In fact, arguing for the thesis that urban landscapes as cities are like artworks is not encouraging a reductive “aesthetization” of the city, as if the city were an object of pure contemplation. On the contrary, it is intended to illuminate the possibility for the city (and its parts) to function as a “subjunctive space” for action, where certain public rituals, ceremonies, and rituals can take place. In this sense, we should approach the
city by avoiding the Scylla of the “aesthetization” and the Charybdis of mere functionalism, which understands cities and their places as fulfilling basic tasks, such as offering shelter and permitting mobility. Cities can do much more than that.

Note


3 For a sympathetic view, see also Raffaele Milani, The Art of The Landscape (Montreal: McGill-Queen’s University Press, 2009).

4 For a discussion of the philosophical relevance of this aspect of Picasso’s painting, see Joseph Margolis, What, After All, Is a Work of Art? (University Park, PA: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1999), 94.

5 For a sustained discussion of appreciation, see Susan Feagin, Reading with Feeling: The Aesthetic of Appreciation (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1996)


7 See Feagin, Reading with Feeling, in particular, 34-37.

8 Carlson, “Aesthetics of the environment.”

9 In 2010, 18.2% residents in Zermeghedo were foreigners. For further details, see http://www.comuni-italiani.it/024/120/statistiche/stranieri.html

10 It is unclear whether music has been actually performed there.


14 See Marco Romano, La città come opera d’arte (Milano: Giulio Einaudi Editore, 2008).
ENVIRONMENTAL ART AND APPRECIATION OF THE ENVIRONMENT

Tanja Plešivčnik

In the second half of the last century we witnessed the migration of artwork from galleries and museums to open space, be it urban, rural, remote uninhabited parts of the deserts, the North Pole, the sea bed, air, etc.

Placing artwork in open space is not a novelty; for centuries it has been common to see public sculptures as monuments and memorials outside of galleries.

Environmental art engages a large field of various practices like landart, earhart, ecoventions, eco-art, etc. Regardless of the type, environmental artwork rarely represents monuments or memorials in a traditional way; rather, they are devoted to research or to representing environmental issues, human-nature and culture-nature relationships, bonds between art, science and nature, etc. Generally, they are strongly attached to the specific site, as observes Carlson, “site is part of the work itself” (Carlson, 1986), and take the environment and natural objects as a means for art creation.

Environmental artwork can modify the local environment, its ecology and aesthetics, permanently or temporarily, and at the same moment present the aesthetic object by itself as a work of art.

Notwithstanding the message of artwork, its physical presence reflects the relationship and engagement of the artist with the selected local area. By imposing human creation upon nature, creating artwork can cause harm to the natural environment.

Through study I will examine whether some artwork can express a respectful aesthetic and ethical attitude towards the environment and might also offer the opportunity to connect us with the environment. This will help me to define if some artwork can promote an appreciation of the environment or not.

The study also tries to build a new model for the possible categorization of environmental art which is based on recognizing its focus and taking into account the concepts of attachment to nature (stated by Brady) and of green aesthetics (stated by Saito). This model can serve to define which artwork pays more respect to the qualities of art and which are more devoted to the qualities of the environment and nature.
2. Aesthetic Appreciation Of Nature And The Environment Through Art

The following chapter presents two different points of view and approaches to exploring the field of environmental art within the context of aesthetic appreciation of nature and the environment. The first view is offered by Emily Brady, theorist of contemporary environmental aesthetics who adopted a non-cognitive line of understanding an aesthetic experience. Brady emphasises the importance of engaging the natural environment and argues that with perceptual effort and imagination (her basic resource of aesthetic experience) it is possible to build aesthetic appreciation of the environment. Brady rejects cognitive views and marks scientific knowledge as too constraining to present a guide for aesthetic appreciation of natural environments (Brady, Spring 1998). Yuriko Saito emphasises a key role of knowledge, especially ecology, to build proper aesthetic appreciation of nature and the environment. She does not, however, deny the relevance and importance of other conceptual considerations, such as the historical, social, and cultural in some contexts (Saito, 2007).

2.1. Concept Of Attachment To Nature

Brady in her essay “Rooted Art?: Environmental Art and our Attachment to Nature” argues that: “Aesthetic experience can engender an intimate relationship with the natural environment by engaging us with our surroundings in a particular way. The senses, thought, imagination and emotion are the aesthetic resources which facilitate aesthetic appreciation and the vehicles for developing that potential relationship.” (Brady, 1998, p. 20)

Within her essay she explores the extent to which environmental art encourages or promotes attachments to nature and defines whether environmental art can engage us with nature and enable us to either connect with nature and guide us to appreciate it more on its own terms or distance us from it.

As she claims, her primary concern is not one of ethics but to research what type of attachments environmental art can foster: Does it encourage attachments that support an intimate relationship with nature or does it impose humanity on nature, manipulate nature or undermine harmonious attachments to nature?

Attachment to nature can overlap with a sense of place, but in a broader sense it may be connected to those objects in nature not associated with a particular place. Attachments related to place are often connected to familiarity and associations, while some attachments to nature can also be based on preferences for strange or unfamiliar things, otherness of nature.

She emphasises the importance of respect for nature, also to the otherness of nature, and suggests that the “ideal type of attachment to nature involves the play between in-
timacy and respect” (Brady, 1998, p. 22).

Brady pursues the role of the concept of attachment through cases of environmental art by considering four categories (stated by Stephanie Ross): masculine gestures, ephemeral gestures, performance works, and landscapes and proto-gardens (Brady, 1998).

2.2. Concept Of Green Aesthetics

Yuriko Saito offers another point of view on how to appreciate the environment and nature within environmental aesthetics in her book “Everyday Aesthetics”.

Describing her everyday aesthetics she is more concerned about how we aesthetically appreciate nature, the environment and artefacts, rather than art itself.

She explains how our everyday aesthetic has had negative impact on the environmental agenda and suggests how we should use the power of aesthetics to cultivate everyday aesthetic appreciation to not disturb and cause negative environmental consequences. That type of aesthetic perspective, guided by environmental values, is called green aesthetics.

As she also argues, the concept of green aesthetics is not limited to nature, but is also applicable to artefacts.

Saito emphasises the importance of knowledge, especially ecology, in developing green aesthetics but at the same time argues that imposing ecological literacy upon humans is not enough to change our attitude towards the environment or how merely gaining knowledge about ecology does not change our aesthetic appreciation of how we aesthetically value objects.

She refers to Aldo Leopold, one of the foremost environmentalists, who emphasised the role of aesthetics to promote land ethics: “he thought it necessary to transport the bookish knowledge gained by such studies to our actual perception and experience of nature.” Aldo Leopold also claimed that “we can be ethical only in relation to something we can see, feel, understand, love, and that it is ‘inconceivable...that an ethical relation to land can exist without love, respect, and admiration for land, and a high regard for its value’.” (Saito, 2007, p.70)

Concentrating on the key role of our aesthetic reactions in our attitude towards the environment, she argues that green aesthetics could be achieved with adequate social propaganda or improved by proper guidance of our aesthetic taste to serve the specific agenda. Another author that supports the possibility of promoting a green agenda through aesthetic engineering is Marcia Eaton, who argues that: “creating sustainable environments necessitates asking not just what people do find beautiful but what they should find beautiful.” (Saito, 2007, p.77)

The concept of green aesthetics can be also applied to environmental art. Creating an aesthetically attractive work of art but which disturbs the environment cannot pro-
mote green aesthetics. A work of art that was built with respect to the aesthetic values of an environment and might also be aesthetically attractive by itself and may guide us to build aesthetic appreciation, based on an environmental ethic.

Saito presents further principles or concepts, which might be helpful in researching the power of environmental artwork to promote aesthetic values of the environment.

1. “Truth to material” is a type of aesthetic-moral principle that emerged in Britain (initiated by John Ruskin) and had a major influence on subsequent art and craft movements. It was primarily applied to organic materials and refers to respecting and working with the quality, the very essence of things, to expose the unique nature of the material. It claims that the character of each material needs to be respected. Romney Green: “We like to sense the living bond between the furniture we make and the forest trees that gave it birth; to manifest the ‘woodiness’ of our woodwork.” (Saito, 2007, p.117) Some contemporary environmental artists like David Nash, Andy Goldsworthy, Alfio Bonanno and Michael Singer have embraced this notion.

2. Another concept is the aesthetic of ambience within which Saito emphasises the multisensory experience of a whole complex: “sound, physical environment, time of the day, and the season, give rise to a unified expression,” (Saito, p.119) and its contextual appropriateness/inappropriateness. Marcia Eaton gives an example of a log cabin or abandoned shack as being generally valued as aesthetically positive in pristine nature but not in an urban environment. An inverse example could be a fast food restaurant.

This uncovers a deeper problem in environmental aesthetics: the frameless character of the object of our everyday aesthetic appreciation, “hence, it may appear to lack a unifying theme that organizes various ingredients provided by different senses and associated ingredients” (Saito, 2007, p.122-123).

We appreciate the way in which various elements come together to give expression to a unified quality, atmosphere or ambience.

3. Saito thinks that the insights of the above aestheticians suggest that each kind of object has its own characteristics and unique aesthetic value. Appreciating this, she forms a concept of appreciating something (and also understanding it) on its own terms by submitting ourselves to the objects’ implicit guidance. This understanding and appreciation calls for the rejection of the ego and anthropocentric views and presents a perspective fundamental to Zen Buddhism.

At the same time she observes that: “training for overcoming one’s self and the artists’ and designers’ listening to and submitting their creative process to the objects and materials are still ultimately guided by our desire to achieve enlightenment or to design good objects.” (Saito, 2007, p.138)
3. Focuses Of Environmental Art

In the previous chapter I presented two views on appreciation of the environment through art, first more focused on the possibility of art to connect us with nature and second on the aesthetic-moral principle, the ability of art to present and promote green aesthetics. Those concepts can be used as factors to define whether art can promote an appreciation of the environment.

Researching the diverse field of environmental art, I decided to build a presentation model, which can also serve as a way to categorize environmental artwork in the context of research. The model is based on two central focuses of appreciation within environmental art, appreciation of an art object on one side and appreciation of the environment on the other.

![Central focuses of appreciation of environmental art](image)

Throughout the study I have focused on works of art that intervene in specific environments (spatial interventions), but environment art is far larger and includes artwork that is not meant to be implemented or related to a specific space.

When an artist pays respect to qualities of the environment, he tries to not disturb or cause negative impacts on it. That could mean he has to step from being “art-centred” (centred on artistic qualities) to an “environment-centred” position (centred on qualities of the environment, nature).

Some artists remain “art-centred”, not going deeper into issues suggested by environmental aesthetics or ecology. Consequently, their works might not only alter aesthetic qualities of the environment but also be harmful to nature.
Others artists adopt a sphere of intersection and an intimate relationship between art and the environment. They create aesthetic objects, works of art, which are able to represent aesthetic qualities of the environment and respect toward an environmental ethic.

A third category, “environment-centred”, is devoted to artists that are rather focused on aesthetic qualities of nature and appreciating the environment on its own terms instead of creating an aesthetic object, i.e. artwork in more traditional sense. This category can uncover a complex relationship between art and nature, culture and nature, the human and nature and raise questions like: Does this art also present an aesthetic affront to nature? or Where is the sense in creating such art if we can appreciate nature on its own terms?

With regard to Carlson in principle every environmental work of art could be an aesthetic affront to nature, as it turns nature into art and changes its aesthetic qualities. While he confess that some art, like Sonfist’s Time Landscape (1965/1978-present) are more likely not to be an aesthetic affront to nature (Carlson, 1986).

In light of previously presented concepts which I will use as factors to challenge the ability of artwork to promote appreciation (concept of attachment, concept of green aesthetics and the concepts: truth to material, aesthetics of ambience and appreciating objects on their own terms) I will, through the examination of various created works of art, research the main features of the stated categories and define which works of art are more capable of promoting an appreciation of the environment.

Toward the end I will also address why it is important to promote appreciation of the environment within the urban and natural sphere.

3.1. Art-Centred Environmental Art

The focus of those works is on the artistic qualities. Observing them displaces our focus from the aesthetics of the environment and generally distances us from the environment itself.

Some artists creating art-centred environmental art might have adopted some knowledge from natural science; however, their works intentionally alter the environment’s aesthetic qualities and can be disruptive and harmful to the local environment.

With the creation of an artistic object lacking a respect to nature, to the aesthetic qualities of environment and also environmental ethics, it fails to present or promote green aesthetics and goes on to betray other aesthetic-moral concepts such as truth to material, the aesthetic of ambience and appreciation of objects on their own terms.

Generally, those works of art are created in natural/rural environments, some of them also in devastated areas, but very rarely in the urban field (Michael Heizer, Levitated Mass, 2012). Another feature of this category is the diversity of material used: it can be industrial, natural, inorganic or organic, and could be part of the side or
brought from outside and from laboratories.

Michael Heizer offers some prime examples of such artwork. He uses technology and heavy machinery to create his works that might be formed from natural material on site (Double Negative, 1969-1970) or by combining diverse natural and industrial material (City, 1972-; Displaced/Replaced Mass, 1969). His works are mainly created in deserts and mountains, unspoilt areas far from human settlements. Therefore he might not disturb humans but surely damages those sites within the natural environment. Also, some other environmental artists like Robert Smithson (Spiral Jetty, 1970) or James Turrell (Roden Crater, 1977-) have created massive landart works and earthworks.

Alternatively, some artists choose not to create their works by transforming the natural material of the site; they incorporate materials brought from outside into the natural environment.

They may introduce new industrial materials into a local place, e.g. Nancy Holt (Sun Tunnels 1973-1976: four 22-tonne concrete pipes with various holes drilled in their walls and placed in the desert) and Walter de Maria (Lightning Field, 1977: 400 vertical stainless steel rods placed in remote desert). Others chose to adopt more ephemeral gestures like Cristo and Jean Claude (Wrapped Coast 1968-1969; Surrounded Islands 1980-1983, Wrapped Trees 1997-1998).

While the artists above incorporated industrial materials to natural sites, some choose to introduce foreign organic materials to cultivated unspoilt areas, for example underwater projects from Peter Hutchinson (Flower Triangle Undersea, 1969 and Threaded Calabash, 1969). Those projects can also be disruptive to the environment and can cause negative impacts on local environments, destroying their balance.

### 3.2. Environmental Art Of Intersection

The next category includes works by environmental artists who are deeply engaged in the natural environment and show more respect and sensitivity toward both the environment and material used. Chiefly, the works are set in natural environments and are site specific, created with natural material gathered from their location. Those works can present a symbiosis between art, nature and ecology.

Consequently, those works of art are able to present some aesthetic qualities of the environment through creatively modifying natural materials from the site (like much artwork from Andy Goldsworthy; Richard Long, Line in Himalayas, 1975; Alfio Bonnanno, Giant Nest and Insect Forest, 2004). The intimate attachments that they foster can guide us to aesthetically appreciate those environments, their ambience and objects, and through them connect us with nature.

Those works of art are also able to promote green aesthetics, regardless of whether
they show respect to environmental ethics. They can also promote the concept of truth to material and the aesthetic of ambience, but whether they can directly promote the concept of appreciating nature on its own terms is doubtful. Even if they do not disturb nature, they still impose aesthetic qualities of art upon aesthetic qualities of the environment.

Some such artwork also manipulates nature, like the projects of growing, cutting and shaping living tress into domes and ladders performed by David Nash (Ash Dome, 1977).

3.3. Environment-Centred (Environmental) Art

While environmental artwork in categories above are mainly created in natural/rural environments, environment-centred artwork often takes place in the urban, built environment and devastated areas. This field of art has expanded greatly in the last decades and contains numerous different practices, distant from traditional artistic practices.

Some early examples of environment-centred art were performed by Joseph Beuys (project of planting 7,000 trees in Kassel, 1972-), Alan Sonfist (Time Landscape, recreated a pre-colonial forest in the urban environment of New York City, 1978), Agnes Denes (Wheatfield – a confrontation, planted an 8,000m² area with weed in Manhattan, 1982), etc. (Spaid, 2002)

The primary focus of the artist in this category is promoting qualities of the environment and also a global environmental ethic. As Brady argues, these artists, “are truly interacting with nature” (Brady, 1998, p.6); some of them can even actively engage us with environment (in contrast with the artwork cited in category of Intersection above). Agnes Denes’ project of planting autochthon pine trees on the site of an old gravel quarry (Tree Mountain, A Living Time Capsule, 1996) and other projects she has implemented worldwide involve a large number of locals and volunteers (Spaid, 2002).

Several artists are collaborating with various scientists, like botanists, zoologists and ecologists, engineers, architects, designers, local communities, etc. in their projects (several projects from both Newton and Helen Harrison). Many those examples are further presented in the book Ecovention by Sue Spaid.

Related to Saito’s emphasis on the importance of knowledge for aesthetic appreciation of the environment, the knowledge of many of the artists within this category grew out of ecology and other natural sciences and they thus pay respect to the environment and are able to promote green aesthetics. If they can guide our appreciation of objects: nature on its own terms, an ideal of aesthetic-ethic appreciation will be addressed further in the last section of this chapter.
3. Does this art also present an aesthetic affront to nature? or Where is the sense in creating such art if we can appreciate nature on its own terms?

I refer to the natural environment through its observation and study, but addressing the natural environment can be problematic, as we can hardly assert that there exists unspoilt nature out of human touch and influence. There persist some areas of tropical forests that we can declare wild nature, but due to deforestation, they are endangered.

On the other hand, we, humans, are also part of nature; if we do not care for nature, we do not care for our future well being.

Environment-centred art would not be reasonable in a context of unspoilt nature. It would in some way present an aesthetic affront to nature by imposing human creation upon it.

Due to serious environmental problems on the global scale, art projects that revive an aesthetic appreciation of the environment and environmental ethics, restore nature and improve the quality of local spaces generally do not present an aesthetic affront to nature. Some of them can, in fact, guide us to appreciate nature more on its own terms (like permaculture projects or re-establishing natural river basins).

In many ways environment-centred art within urban space has evoked the realisation that the city also is part of the environment, part of this same world ecosystem and spreads awareness of presence and the importance of natural elements throughout the urban sphere, not only from the trees, parks, birds, rivers and lakes but also the soil under the city, the flora and fauna hidden from our eyes, etc. Those natural elements grant well being to its citizens.

We have witnessed various successful artistic projects: creating urban gardens, forests (Alan Sonfist, Agnes Denes), waste and wastewater treatment (Buster Simpson, Viet Ngo, Betsy Damon) etc., directed toward creating green cities and raising the quality of urban space (Spaid, 2002).

The urban sphere also presents a concentration of people, knowledge and power, and therefore, promoting an appreciation of environment and nature within it can have great reach.

4. Conclusion

The aim of the study was to discuss whether environmental art can promote an appreciation of the environment, taking into account the concepts of attachment, of green aesthetics and others (truth to material, aesthetics of ambience and appreciation of objects on their own terms).

The listed concepts were used as factors to challenge the ability of art to promote an appreciation of the environment.
With respect to the diverse field of environmental artwork created, a model representing different focuses of environmental art was built which helped to classify artwork, whether the artwork is more focused on artistic qualities of or on qualities of the environment and nature.

The concepts of green aesthetics, truth to material, aesthetics of ambience and appreciating objects on their own terms are aesthetic and also moral factors. On the other hand, environmental art that is more focused on aesthetics qualities of the environment also tend to be more respectful towards the environment.

The classification revealed that art-centred artwork fails to guide us to appreciation of an environment. Artwork at the intersection of the natural environment and anthropocentrism can promote aesthetic appreciation of the environment and also show respect toward nature. On the other hand, it can still be manipulative with regard to nature and impose artistic qualities upon the aesthetic qualities of the environment.

Approaching environment-centred art showed growth in the importance of appreciating the aesthetics of the environment as well as environmental ethics. Some environment-centred artistic projects can even offer direct, active engagement with the environment.

Environment-centred artistic projects have been successful in enriching the quality of urban space and restoring nature in rural and devastated areas. Due to environmental issues, those projects can play important roles in guiding us toward aesthetically appreciating the environment and adopting a more respectful attitude towards it. And some of them may even posses the power to guide us to respect nature on its own terms.

References


THE PARADISE IN HEART

Yanqin Meng

Maybe from the age of Adam, Humankind desires to live in the garden of Eden where humans live in harmony with nature. Humankind is an integral part of nature. They have not only the material needs, but also the spiritual needs. One of the important ways that can satisfy the spiritual needs is the aesthetic experience which are non-utilitarian in the natural environment. But it is hard for people to obtain the real natural aesthetic experience in the modernized cities. The population explosion, dense buildings, traffic jam, etc. have made the city dwellers isolated from nature.

In fact, harmony between the human life and nature is one of the most ideal state of human existence. Although this ideal state can hardly be obtained in reality, it has been obtained in hearts. In the inner world, it can be obtained by people’s imagination and fantasies. Artists are the group of people who not only have excellent imagination, but also show the imagination and fantasy in their works. The aesthetic experience of art is non-utilitarian. When artists produce art, they become engaged in an non-utilitarian aesthetic encounter, or they hardly produce real art which may evoke one’s an extraordinary range of stimulation and an aesthetic response. The landscape painters are the group of people who are engaged in the non-utilitarian aesthetic experience of art. Their works show their imagination as well as the fantasies of the harmonious state. Especially the artists of traditional Chinese landscape painting, they demonstrate their vivid imagination in their arts by means of romanticism and expressionism.

Typically, western landscape painters has imitated the natural world in their aesthetic experience of art, while the artists of traditional Chinese landscape usually expressed the inner world. This inner world is an imaginary paradise in which human is an integral part of nature. The traditional Chinese landscape painting, with a history of nearly 1700 years, is the traditional national art in China. With the development of the times, the traditional Chinese landscape painting has seen more and more development and innovations. A lot of artists are now engaged in composing it, and it is very prosperous in the contemporary. Many artists of traditional Chinese landscape express their ideal paradise in works that cannot be encountered in the real word. It is a perfect world of freedom, peace, satisfaction, and pleasure.

Lu YuShun is one of the traditional Chinese landscape artists. He is also one of the most famous contemporary Chinese traditional landscape painter. In his works, he shows
the paradise in his heart. He never designs sketches before painting a work, instead, he
paints by instinct. This is the reason why his works have spontaneity, naivete, and a di-
rect appeal to our feelings and emotions. The Chinese Poeticized Series are Mr. Lu’s
masterpieces, these works express the artist’s spiritual home, perfect paradise in his
heart. There are mountains, springs, trees, wildflowers and anchorites, which compose
the ideal paradise and the best pattern of the harmony between humans’ lives and nature.
It is the non-utilitarian of artistic creation and the artist’s instinctive cognition that makes
people come to understand their genuine wistfulness on the living environment through
the paradise of the artistic works. This article describes pieces of work of Lu YuShun.
The paradise in the fantasy of the artist may bring a little inspiration for the improvement
of our living environment.

Next, I will make some analysis to the three paintings by Lu Yushun.

The first painting:

In this painting, there are several images: mountain, cascade, trees, aquatic plants,
rocks, cottage and anchorites. These are in fact the essential components of an ideal liv-
ing environment. Living in the mountains brings about peace and tranquility. The trees
and plants are vibrant and quiet and the running stream and cascade give a musical
pleasure. In addition, the rocks with grass growing on it create a feeling of comfort and
the no windows thatched cottage makes people feel the closeness and harmony between
men and nature.

Another point worth mentioning about this painting is that in the upper left corner
there are several boats. The boats make it possible for the anchorites to go elsewhere if
they want to. This means that this ideal living place is not totally isolated from the out-
side and the anchorites choose to live there.

The second painting:

Animals are part of nature and humans have the need to get close to the animals. In
this painting, there are several elegant cranes in the reed bed. In the corner of this paint-
ing is located the no windows thatched cottage and some hidden boats. Similar to the
first painting, there are also mountain, cascade and rocks.

The third painting:

This painting is full of flowers. The artist paints the mountain flowers in full bloom.
The kinds of the flowers are not clear — maybe they are gardenia, or osmanthus. The
scene of the flowers in full bloom provides a feeling of overflowing fragrance. This re-
veals the artist’s instinctive desire for the ideal living environment that is filled with
fragrance of the flowers. Again, similar to the previous two paintings, the artist paints
the hidden boats, the no windows thatched cottage, the mountain, the cascade and the
rocks.

In the Chinese Poeticized Series works, we can see the paradise in human’s heart
and the genuine wistfulness on the living environment. What have been known about
the genuine wistfulness on the living environment of human may bring a little inspiration
to the improvement of the human living environment.

Maybe you think that the scene in Lu YuShun’s Chinese Poeticized Series works only represent his own ideals, but western architectural design master Frank Lloyd Wright had made a similar attempt in real world in 1936. He designed the building “Fallingwater” that is the masterpiece of world architectural history. there are water fall, mountain, trees, rocks with grass growing on it, and the no windows terrace, etc. The western artists’s inner ideal world is surprisingly similar to that of the Eastern artists. This shows that human’s intuitive ideal is similar.

The true meaning of humans’ lives in harmony with nature and the return to the nature is that humans can get the lost peace of heart back in the hustle and bustle of utilitarian city life. Peace, comfort, and freedom are the keys to the improvement of the humans’ living environment.
VIII - CITY AS AESTHETIC OBJECT - CITY AS NATURE
In addition to earning the eagerly sought designation as a World Heritage Site, both Dresden Germany and Liverpool England share other commonalities: they are on rivers, have a variety of architectural styles, suffered substantial destruction during World War Two, and have engaged in continuing reconstruction and restoration activities. Dresden and Liverpool’s cityscape has been recognized by UNESCO as possessing outstanding universal value. Today, I’ll discuss the World Heritage Sites criteria in context of the urban panorama an aesthetic object. My comments will concern Liverpool because its cityscape has retained it listing while Dresden’s cultural landscape was delisted when a bridge was built across the Elbe River. It was decided that the bridge effectively destroyed the landscape’s cultural integrity. Liverpool has retained its World Heritage Site listing even though its cityscape has a variety of contemporary structures mixed in with its historical ones. Liverpool’s listing applies only to its urban architectural ensemble; this is not defined as a cultural landscape, even so, its stakeholders recognize and seek to preserve the views of the cityscape in its natural setting.

There are a variety of interesting philosophical paths one might take, but my comments will focus on the idea of the cityscape as aesthetic object, and so the other topics will have to wait. First, I’ll explain the criteria that define World Heritage Sites, hereafter ‘W-H-S’ and the meaning of ‘outstanding universal value’, hereafter ‘O-U-V’. Then I’ll show how those criteria, when applied to the Liverpool panorama, describe its cityscape in a language usually reserved for masterpieces of art or natural landscapes recognized for their sublime beauty. I will show how Liverpool’s architecture symbolizes its historical, cultural, economic, and political development becoming the second city of the British Empire. Following this, I’ll analyze all this in relation to diverse philosophies of art demonstrating how a selective combination of aesthetic principles when applied to Liverpool’s urban panorama does qualify it as an aesthetic object.

Signatory nations of the UNESCO Convention are obliged to submit a list of sites in their territory that represent their cultural and natural heritage. Which sites qualify as the best representations is what the national bodies say. For example, here in Bologna, the Porticoes were listed in 2006, but as yet have not been recognized as a WHS. The site has to be outstanding, but not unique; there can be multiple sites sharing similar criteria both within a nation and internationally. These national candidate lists
are one of the first steps in their possible recognition as World Heritage Sites. To be listed as a WHS the appropriate national institutions have to prove OUV which requires meeting some combination of ten selection criteria. To what quality does ‘outstanding’ refer in OUV? ‘Outstanding’ is a property that belongs to what the UNESCO-related national organizations explain in their documentation of what they consider to be their best examples, according to the WHS ten selection criteria, of their cultural heritage. As representative of the best, the outstanding qualities of the site are shown to be exceptional examples of that particular nation’s cultural heritage. ‘Outstanding’ is an international value, that is, universal, because the criteria are recognized and affirmed worldwide. The burden of proof is on the national body to prove OUV and to do so they narrate how one or more of the selection criteria are represented in the candidate site. Acceptance of the proofs by UNESCO affirms its OUV, in other words, the candidate site is recognized as possessing OUV because the international organization’s members agree that the documentation satisfies the criteria.

The Liverpool Maritime Mercantile City World Heritage Site Supplementary Planning Document of 2009, written five years after the city’s being awarded its UNESCO WHS listing describes the port as, “the supreme example of a commercial port at the time of Britain’s greatest global influence.” The World Heritage Site Committee considers Liverpool a heritage site with outstanding universal value because of the global significance regarding two of its demographic activities: as the leading port of the slave trade and mass immigration to the New World. Innovations and efficiencies in dock construction and port management, as a result of its global trade, gives these structures outstanding universal value. As a result of its topography and geography, the mercantile-related structures built along the waterfront of the Mersey River and the construction of significant monumental architecture in the city as a result of its power and wealth are an exceptional testimony to the global influence of mercantile culture in the 18th and 19th centuries. The economic and cultural traditions that thrived in the city, especially those that arose in conjunction with the waterfront, show how integrally related the city is to its physical setting and how this combination had global geo-political ramifications. The growth of the British Empire’s trade in persons and goods and the projection of power to protect trade are a result of the natural conditions of the site, and which one can read in its architecture. The WHS listing recognizes that specific historical structures and the panorama of distinct ensembles of these buildings has an aesthetic dimension. The geo-political significance of the historic urban structural ensemble tells the story of how the river and its relation to the sea facilitated the types of architecture composing the urban environment. In order to retain the integrity of the WHS, Liverpool’s cityscape and waterfront require its careful management, and because it possesses an “exceptional testimony”, this testimony must be presented.

Let’s take a closer look at the WHS selection criteria. The first criterion, referring to masterpieces of art that represent human creative genius, is applicable to architec-
ture. It is uncontroversial that individual buildings possessing OUV, but what about an ensemble of buildings? Susanne Langer in *Feeling and Form* discusses place in a non-geographical sense as a created domain, but this is meant analogously, in that, the domain is not a thing, rather, it is a created “sphere of influence”. The ensemble of structures, she says, “(l)ike any other plastic symbol, it is primarily an illusion of self-contained, self-sufficient, perceptual space... The created ‘place’ is essentially a semblance, and whatever effect that semblance is architecturally relevant”. Liverpool’s cityscape panorama is analogous to a theater set, it is a virtually-enframed-scene. In another sense, it is a place, a whole composed of parts, that is, individual buildings which are recognized as possessing OUV. So, it is an aesthetic object both because of its parts and because of the place of them as a designated assemblage framed by the bank of the River Mersey. “The character of this landscape changes dramatically throughout the WHS... This variety is an important aspect of the overall character and ‘sense of place’ of the city”.

In addition to criterion one, three of the ten WHS criteria apply to cityscapes. The second criterion specifically mentions architecture, here the valued aesthetic object exhibits, “an important interchange of human values, over a span of time or within a cultural area of the world, on developments in architecture or technology, monumental arts, town-planning or landscape design.” Criterion two shows that a key heritage asset is the development of the city’s architecture in relation to its landscape, and also to its seascape where piers, docks, and warehouses, for example, developed over several centuries making Liverpool, Great Britain’s second city and integral in its evolution into a global power. The city’s wealth and importance is reflected in the urban design that facilitated such monumental architecture as the Town Hall, Royal Liver Building, Walker Art Gallery, and St. George’s Hall.

In the fourth criteria, the value is an outstanding example of a type of building, architectural or technological ensemble or landscape which illustrates (a) significant stage(s) in human history.” Criterion four is applied to the natural setting of the waterfront which is shown to have a remarkable history. The riverine environment is defended as possessing outstanding universal value for several reasons: it is rare, large, and complete as a natural resource. Add to this the impact of Great Britain’s economic and political activities that issued from this natural setting upon the international community. The river is both the fundamental reason why the city evolved in the way that it did, and it is also the physical edge of the site, and so it is analogous to a picture frame enclosing the city within its border. In criteria five what is important is the relationship of human settlement to nature, and so the application states, “The topography of the city has played an important role in forming its character and historic development. The highly distinctive topographic bowl surrounds the city centre to the east and south and is fundamental to its character and structure.”
Let us now investigate in a little more detail Liverpool’s WHS application attending to the, “relationship between the WHS and the River Mersey (that) is fundamental to the Site’s history and outstanding universal value.”\textsuperscript{10} The fifth criterion, recognizes an “outstanding example of a traditional human settlement, land-use, or sea-use which is representative of a culture (or cultures), or human interaction with the environment especially when it has become vulnerable under the impact of irreversible change.” The River Mersey was integral to the historical and cultural development of Liverpool, and was obviously the primary factor the types of architecture built along the riverfront. Over a dozen docks were constructed throughout the 19\textsuperscript{th} century with contiguous piers and warehouses, some of which are the largest in the world. Liverpool’s topography and geography were the conditions that propelled the development of its waterfront, and through the wealth and power generated there, the architecture of the city. And it is from the perspective of the river that the city, that is, the urban panorama is presented to the spectator. So, it is not only the buildings that are valued, but the, “views to, from and within the WHS are an important aspect of its visual character and directly contribute to its outstanding universal value. (These views) also form a part of the character and setting of the conservation areas that encompass the WHS and some of the views form part of the setting of key listed buildings within the WHS and Buffer Zone. These views are structured by topography of the wider city, its relationship with the river, the locations of landmark buildings and the urban form and skyline of the WHS and its Buffer Zone”.\textsuperscript{11} Liverpool’s Planning Document combines individual buildings and structures in the site with the natural setting of the cityscape in its relation to river and the overall appearance of the urban tableau. “These views are important as they aid the legibility and understanding of the City and are also significant to the outstanding universal value of the WHS, the character of conservation areas and the wider city centre”.\textsuperscript{12} UNESCO’s choice of words clearly demonstrate their philosophical assumption that the panorama as a whole as well as its individual structures together express meaning enabling understanding. UNESCO has declared that it is important to recognize the value of the architecture in its setting, and to preserve the architecture’s legibility, that is, to protect its readability in order to facilitate an understanding and appreciation of its outstanding universal value.\textsuperscript{13} Liverpool’s inscription onto UNESCO’s World Heritage List in 2004 introduced a fundamental expectation that the cultural heritage of the site, recognized as possessing outstanding universal value (criterion four), including the built environment and the views of it, will be protected and conserved and why.\textsuperscript{14}

It is my hope that this brief introduction has adequately explained first, how the World Heritage Site criteria defining outstanding universal value is applied to an ensemble of buildings; secondly, how the official descriptions identify the vista and argue for its value; and finally, how the description of Liverpool’s architecture and the panoramic view of it possess aesthetic value. Now that the identity and value of the
site has been introduced, I will show next that it is through a selection of principles from a variety of theories that UNESCO can establish that the vista of the cityscape in its topographical and geographical setting is an aesthetic object.

UNESCO is an international body recognized as authoritative by all of the signatory national bodies. This authoritative institution has accepted the proofs offered by the appropriate agencies of the government of the United Kingdom that the site is a representative example possessing outstanding universal value. All of the various stakeholders are enjoined to “Ensure that new developments enhance and protect the outstanding universal value of the WHS. (and to) (e)nsure that the setting of the WHS is adequately protected and that new development respects its visual and historic context”. In my opinion, these statements directly apply to the institutional theory of George Dickie which requires a public proposal of a candidate artwork for consideration. In our Liverpool example, the art world, represented by UNESCO, first, is asked to accept the city’s architecture as art works. Secondly, asked to accept the view of the urban tableau as an art work. Fulfillment of the UNESCO criteria is offered as proof regarding the value of the Liverpool WHS as possessing OUV, in that, and so if the architectural ensemble is an art work, then so also would the view of the panorama possesses aesthetic value, and cultural and historical significance.

The proposal to the art world includes as supporting evidence the recognition by UNESCO is a value transferred to the appreciating public through the listing of the site and the follow-on historical and cultural education. From the description in WHS documents, the vista is a species of artwork. Establishing a point of view from which to experience the cityscape permits participation of the art-going public. The cityscape expresses a public meaning, neither private or psychological, where the buildings are representative of, and so can be appreciated as possessing cultural quality with historical significance. The cityscape from a certain point of view is a perceived aesthetic object with values and meanings. It is not simply a passive looking at a cityscape, but rather, the vista becomes a particular species of aesthetic contemplation because of the appearance and arrangement of the aesthetic objects constituting the view can be read. Liverpool’s architecture and the view of its cityscape can be identified as sharing properties with other representative examples of works of art. Thus when the WHS criteria are applied to the vista and accepted as valid by the recognized authority, this results in establishing the view as, at most, a species of artwork, or at least, an aesthetic object.

Next, let us ask, ‘How it is that a particular vista of a cityscape can be an aesthetic object? One of the essential aspects of an aesthetic object is that of intentionality. Let’s take a brief look at Monroe Beardsley definition of art as the “intentional arrangement of conditions for affording experiences with marked aesthetic character”. The aesthetic object itself of the urban panorama was never an intentional artistic act of a creative subject. Rather it is belatedly made an aesthetic object by those who circumscribe it in documentation in order to protect its expression of meaning. The panorama is not
the creation of an artist, but many of the monumental buildings are. The view as aesthetic object is accidental in the sense that the construction of each building was not, at the time, considered as part of a vista. I don’t know if there was some intentionality by architects or city planners regarding the cityscape vista as seen from the river. I am only aware of the city plan laying out monumental buildings along streets. The intentional waterfront scheme was practical and efficient, but this does not preclude that they might possess an aesthetic quality. And even if the intentional layout was a result of economic concerns according to the topographical and geographical limitations determined by the banks of the River Mersey, this also does not preclude its aesthetic value. The structures along the riverfront expresses a mercantile intentionality. While the city plan was intentional both as an expression of the practical requirements of city planning but also intentional in its expression of Liverpool’s geo-political power and cultural importance. These forms of intentionality challenge the opinion that the buildings compose an unintentional tableau and this disqualifies the view from consideration as an intentional aesthetic object. Liverpool’s city planners are the intentional arrangers of the structures, the architects design and build these structures in conjunction with the natural conditions of the Mersey Riverbank and consistent with their intended function.

The WHS documentation has established the viewpoint and affords it protection as an aesthetic object representing outstanding universal value. So, the determination of the viewpoint of the cityscape that affords this experience is also intentional and the result is that an educated spectator will appreciate the meaning and significance of the vista. So, there are several principles that support the premise that Liverpool’s urban vista is an aesthetic object. Now, the panorama is protected as an aesthetic object; its value its current configuration. The tableau is only now given a formal integrity that is to be preserved. What the cityscape as aesthetic object entails now is space where the building is one formal element among many. Distance is the newly added element constituting the vista as aesthetic object, and so it is that this new consideration is a variation on a theme where the approach to a building is part of the aesthetic experience intended by the architect. Distance allows the entire tableau to be read as an expression of the intentionality of the architects and city planners.

To understand more fully this aspect of intentionality, let’s go back and investigate one of the assumptions of the WHS criteria regarding buildings being legible and readable in order to facilitate understanding. Here, I turn briefly to Nelson Goodman’s, *How Building’s Mean*. WHS documents that prove OUV employ a Goodmanesque vocabulary that describes architecture as capable of bearing witness, as being legible, readable, that its form is illustrative and representative, that its structures express an exceptional testimony with historical meanings some of which possess outstanding universal value. Clearly, Goodman’s explanation regarding how buildings mean translates well to the urban panorama constituted by its buildings. On Goodman’s view, how does a panorama mean? Goodman’s first states what buildings are not; they are
seldom descriptive or representational, and other than a few exceptions they do not
denote, that is, “they do not describe, recount, depict, or portray. They mean, if at all,
in other ways”.\textsuperscript{17} It is these other ways of meaning that interests me. The buildings that
compose Liverpool’s panorama are, on Goodman’s view, symbols that facilitate in the
advancement of the understanding. This understanding agrees with the WHS criteria
that Liverpool’s magnificent monumental architecture allude to, express and represent
the city’s cultural and historical predominance. Similarly, the vista, as a kind of repre-
sentation is expressive allowing for interpretation and facilitating understanding. On
this view, the urban panorama offers the spectator a particular frame of reference that
is analogous to reading a picture. Here the spectator learns to appreciate a particular
kind of presentation of a symbol system. It symbolizes, through its waterfront structures
of pier, wharf and warehouse, Great Britain’s geo-political position of wealth and
power. Goodman’s criteria regarding how buildings mean can be seen in how their
significant size, architectural novelty, age and historic role express Great Britain’s mer-
cantile empire. Together, the waterfront’s functional structures and the city’s monu-
mental architecture express and symbolize meanings thus they qualify as aesthetic
objects. Much more could be said about Goodman’s philosophy of architecture, but
let us take this one point of how the visible structures, both individually and together,
constituting Liverpool’s cityscape express meaning and move on to investigate several
other thinkers.

Gerard Genette in \textit{The Work of Art: Immanence and Transcendence} suggests some
corrections to what he sees as limitations in Goodman’s philosophy of art that will
strengthen our thesis regarding the cityscape as aesthetic object. Selecting one line of
thought from Genette’s lengthy discussion of Goodman pertains to the ontology of
aesthetic objects. Among Genette’s several interrelated definitions of the art work is
one of particular applicability: an artwork is an intentional human artifact with an aes-
thetic function, that is, it is intended to produce an aesthetic effect. Genette explains
this as a “progressively inclusive relation, three levels of aesthetic objects: aesthetic
objects in general, artifacts that happen to produce an aesthetic effect, and artifacts
which have an intentionally aesthetic effect, that is, an aesthetic function. These last
would be works of art properly so called”.\textsuperscript{18} Later, Genette offers another definition:
an artwork is, “any human activity the perception of which can by itself produce and
structure an immediate aesthetic effect”.\textsuperscript{19} Adding Genette’s definitions to Dickie’s in-
stitutional theory and Beardsley’s intentional aesthetic object leads to the possible con-
clusion that the cityscape is an aesthetic object, when viewing the vista produces an
aesthetic experience. Goodman would object on several grounds one is that he would
restrict aesthetic experiences to those events which can be described as performances
and a panorama is not a performance – there are no performers, creators, directors, or
“others involved in realizing the work”.\textsuperscript{20} I’d like to investigate further this idea of
how object and experience together compose the work of art. Genette overcomes
Goodman’s restrictions by describing the experience of the urban panorama in such a way that it could be considered as a kind of performance, that is, the vista is intentional, it is organized, and then delivered to an audience. For Genette, the cityscape is an aesthetic object and the concomitant aesthetic experience initiated by it together constitute a kind of event.

In applying Genette’s idea of presentation to the urban panorama regarding it as a kind of performance and on this view it can be added to the discussion above: the OUV criteria, Dickie’s institutional theory, and Beardsley’s aesthetic object. In regards to this principle of presentation, Genette states the, “artistic value which may be attributed to the act of proposing depends largely on the nature of the object proposed…That the work consists in the act does not entirely neutralize the specificity of the object…the artistic is not always bound up with, and therefore is not necessarily bound up with, the aesthetic. If we say that the work here consists, not in this particular object, but in the act of proposing it, we leave open the possibility that there is an aesthetic quality, not to the object, certainly, but to the act.”21 The urban panorama is an aesthetic object in the act of presenting it to spectators.22 Ignoring their substantial differences in other areas, for Dickie and Genette, the cityscape is proposed as an aesthetic object because of its aesthetic presentation. In contrast, for Genette the art work includes its perceptible properties, the proposition/gesture-of-exhibition – as a kind of performance, and the idea of it. Summarizing our conclusions so far, Liverpool’s WHS urban vista is an aesthetic object because it is publicly accepted as such by various authoritative publics, because it is an intentionally created ensemble of structures, that are a self-contained, self-sufficient, and perceptual space presenting an event that symbolizes and expresses meanings of historical and cultural significance the appearance and arrangement of which constitute a view of aesthetic objects that can be read, and so, the vista becomes a particular species of aesthetic contemplation.

Finally, I propose that all of this can be tied together in the philosophy of Mikel Dufrenne who seeks greater precision in methodology, “by subordinating the experience to the object instead of the object to the experience, and by defining the object itself through the work of art.”23 The Phenomenology of Aesthetic Experience describes aesthetic objects in a number of ways that apply to the statements in the Liverpool application for WHS listing that are used to identify, describe and defend a variety of architectural structures. These WHS defined viewpoints are said to express an historic and cultural system of symbolic meanings, qualities, and properties. After architecture, the closest art form might be sculpture; specifically the arrangement of statues in a museum gallery through which a spectator walks, or a place from which a spectator observes the arrangement. Goodman notes that the scale of architecture is bigger spatially and temporally requiring us to move about in it. It “is firmly set in a physical and cultural environment that alters slowly”. 24Expanding this idea to an entire cityscape, the buildings become formal elements in a large scale museum. There are
other intentional view points from which architects would have a spectator appreciate the perspective within a building. The cityscape panorama is analogous to a single building in its setting enabling one to view it in its environment, to experience it in the place where it stands, and also to enter into its space like one would enter a theater. But even as the view is analogous to the set and scene on the stage of a theatrical production there is with the cityscape no theatrical world in this aesthetic experience requiring the subject suspend the real for the imaginary world on stage. While the panorama does not speak, it can be read, though it does not mime or dance, its meaning is legible as a collection of individual architectural structures. “The aesthetic object aestheticizes its surroundings and integrates them into its own world. It makes them into provinces of its kingdom, servants under its authority”.

Nevertheless, Dufrenne distinguishes the aesthetic experience of a natural spectacle from the human creation of an art work, in our case, a spectator observing an urban panorama. But the distinction is only to distinguish their respective sources not the quality of the aesthetic experience. What exactly is this experiential difference and how is it that the object facilitates a different quality of aesthetic experience in the subject? “The object and subject, existing only within the confines of the mediation joining them, are thereby the conditions for the emergence of meaning, the instruments of a Logos”. It is a form of human intention, “a construction of space and matter”. The cityscape silhouette as it is seen from the river is a contemporary form of aesthetic object that reflects contemporary aesthetic values. The cityscape is a new kind of art work – a cumulative, cooperative and coherent style whose formal elements are an intentional human composition that expresses meaning and facilitates aesthetic experience.

Dufrenne asserts that the art work consists of an arrangement of formal elements that are each and all part of a complex system of complex relationships. But it is the spectator as witness who confirms and completes the art work. Dufrenne’s view is consistent with the WHS criteria of OUV in its elevation of the spectator’s aesthetic experience. Both theories abandon an aesthetic of the creative genius and personality of the artist, in this case, the architect. Even if some of Liverpool’s architects are known this knowledge is not essential for the vista includes anonymous structures: piers, docks, canals, and warehouses, that are expressive and which have meaning. They constitute the tableau and are the ingredients that facilitate the spectator’s aesthetic experience, but it is the meaning of these practical structures that is what all our theorists wants the spectator to appreciate. That some buildings are art works is not controversial, even if there is disagreement regarding what exactly is a work of art and which buildings qualify for such appellation. Less controversial and more inclusive might be a statement affirming that a building is an aesthetic object. Docks are not art works, narrowly defined, and neither were they created with some intentional aesthetic purpose, nevertheless, all the structures composing the cityscape have been elevated by UNESCO to aesthetic object that all together signifies, symbolizes, and expresses meaning.
What then is the ontological status of the aesthetic object when it is a cityscape, a view of buildings between river and sky? It is the case that the cityscape is an aesthetic object. The meanings it conveys and the symbolism it expresses are derived from the spectator’s appreciation, that is, her aesthetic experience of the buildings as presented in the vista. On this view, the panorama is a presentation of an aesthetic object offered for appreciation of the symbol system which is conveyed by its unique tableau. “In binding itself to the world instead of separating itself from it, the architectural work annexes the world and aestheticizes it. Through the magic of the palace at Versailles, the park, sky, and the city take on a new quality. I am no longer able to perceive them as ordinary objects. Even history, of which the monument perhaps speaks to me, is promoted to aesthetic dignity”.29 It is a specific phenomenon that is not natural but is an appearance as a sign with meanings, representations. Liverpool’s cityscape expresses a geo-political, cultural, and historical meaning; and its form as silhouette and tableau is a unique human creation of outstanding universal value. “The aesthetic object is the work of art as perceived. And this provides the key for defining its ontological status. Aesthetic perception founds the aesthetic object”.30 For Dufrenne, there is an essential relationship between the aesthetic object and the aesthetic experience. “Aesthetic perception, in contrast, has appearance blossom so that appearing is identical with being. Owing to the spectator, the being of the aesthetic object is its appearing”.31 Also, there is a profound bond between object and subjectivity for if the “object is capable of expression and contains within itself a world of its own that is completely different from the objective world in which it is situated, then one must say that it manifests the aspect of a for-itself, and thus it is a quasi-subject”.32 So, on this view, Dufrenne would accept the WHS cityscape as an aesthetic object, a quasi-subject, designated as an aesthetic object by the structures within the panorama. The wrinkle is that the vista is both an objective world in which aesthetic objects appear as a for-itself, and an aesthetic object in-itself. That there is an aesthetic experience may be one of the criteria that leads to defining an art work, but it cannot be the only one. The spectator is a participant and under some circumstances, as one who has an aesthetic experience, is also a co-creator of the art work.

In conclusion, while Dickie might insist upon the value of an informed appreciation of the aesthetic object by the art public, and that the city’s history should be known to the spectator, for Dufrenne it is not a necessary condition in order to facilitate an aesthetic experience. Some familiarity with historical background is sufficient to create that certain kind of aesthetic perception, one that is different from ordinary perception, which is constituted in the spectator by object of appreciation. Ordinary perception can become aesthetic perception when it, “seeks (the) truth of the object, such as it is immediately given in the sensuous”.33 On the other hand, the WHS and Dickie want to define and preserve the panorama in order to enable the spectator to read the cityscape and understand its OUV. But for Dufrenne and Beardsley education is not
necessary to the aesthetic experience which arises from the aesthetic object. Dufrenne’s aesthetic experience suspends practical or intellectual interests; the subject’s world is neither “around the object or behind appearance” but “of the aesthetic object, which is immanent in its appearance to the extent that this appearance is expressive”.

34 Dufrenne’s vocabulary enables us to apply the principles of Goodman’s architectural aesthetic to the urban panorama. The vista is not an aesthetic creation in the sense of it being the result of one artist’s intention. “The aesthetic object is the work of art as perceived. And this provides the key for defining its ontological status. Aesthetic perception founds the aesthetic object.”

35 So, it is in the presentation and perception of the architectural tableau as a symbol system possessing outstanding universal value that makes it an aesthetic object for appreciation. Analogous to other forms of performative and conceptual art works, the concept of the cityscape as an event facilitates an aesthetic experience. The concept of the panorama as an aesthetic object is presented to the spectator’s gaze who can come to appreciate the outstanding universal value of the urban vista as a cultural act.

36 For Dufrenne, the spectator “has the responsibility of granting recognition to the work, and through it, of rescuing its creator’s truth…”

37 The creative truth here refers to the architect as artist’s aesthetic experience, but just as important, as co-creator, the spectator’s aesthetic experience is in the fulfillment of the WHS criteria that creates an aesthetic object in the view of the cityscape, and so making possible an aesthetic experience in the subject.
Appendix A

United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO)

Ten selection criteria:

1. to represent a masterpiece of human creative genius;
2. to exhibit an important interchange of human values, over a span of time or within a cultural area of the world, on developments in architecture or technology, monumental arts, town-planning or landscape design;
3. to bear a unique or at least exceptional testimony to a cultural tradition or to a civilization which is living or which has disappeared;
4. to be an outstanding example of a type of building, architectural or technological ensemble or landscape which illustrates (a) significant stage(s) in human history;
5. to be an outstanding example of a traditional human settlement, land-use, or sea-use which is representative of a culture (or cultures), or human interaction with the environment especially when it has become vulnerable under the impact of irreversible change;
6. to be directly or tangibly associated with events or living traditions, with ideas, or with beliefs, with artistic and literary works of outstanding universal significance. (The Committee considers that this criterion should preferably be used in conjunction with other criteria);
7. to contain superlative natural phenomena or areas of exceptional natural beauty and aesthetic importance;
8. to be outstanding examples representing major stages of earth’s history, including the record of life, significant on-going geological processes in the development of landforms, or significant geomorphic or physiographic features;
9. to be outstanding examples representing significant on-going ecological and biological processes in the evolution and development of terrestrial, fresh water, coastal and marine ecosystems and communities of plants and animals;
10. to contain the most important and significant natural habitats for in-situ conservation of biological diversity, including those containing threatened species of outstanding universal value from the point of view of science or conservation.
Bibliography


Cameron, Christina, Evolution of the application of ‘outstanding universal value’ for cultural and natural heritage, 2005.

Langer, Susanne K., Feeling and Form, Charles Scribner’s Sons Publishers, New York, NY, USA, 1953.


Notes

1 Topics, such as, the relation of the cityscape to: controlling the gaze in Foucault, symbolism of the view in Panofsky, visual experience in Nietzsche, aesthetic perception in Merleau-Ponty, spatiality and ready-to-handness in Heidegger, narrative historicism in Ricoeur, ready-mades in Danto, museum-experience of Malraux, visual depth in Perez-Gomez and Pelletier, place in Edward Casey, and virtual space of architecture by Langer.


3 Liverpool Maritime Mercantile City World Heritage Site Supplementary Planning Document,

4 Liverpool Maritime Mercantile City World Heritage Site Supplementary Planning Document, 9.

5 Liverpool Maritime Mercantile City World Heritage Site Supplementary Planning Document, 2.

6 Langer, Feeling and Form, 95.

7 Liverpool Maritime Mercantile City World Heritage Site Supplementary Planning Document, 39.

8 Liverpool Maritime Mercantile City World Heritage Site Supplementary Planning Document, 1.

9 Liverpool Maritime Mercantile City World Heritage Site Supplementary Planning Document, 28.

10 Liverpool Maritime Mercantile City World Heritage Site Supplementary Planning Document, 50.

11 Liverpool Maritime Mercantile City World Heritage Site Supplementary Planning Document, 48.

12 Liverpool Maritime Mercantile City World Heritage Site Supplementary Planning Document, 53.
It is interesting that most of its waterfront structures no longer function for the purposes for which they were built. That the view of the cityscape also possesses an aesthetic value may have arisen out of the Renaissance’s urban planning; or as the subject matter of art works, such as, Vermeer’s ‘View of Delft’.

Liverpool Maritime Mercantile City World Heritage Site Supplementary Planning Document, 39.


Genette, *The Work of Art*, 143 and Footnote 16: “‘To know the art is to know the idea; and to know an idea is not necessarily to experience a particular sensation, or even to have some particular experience.’” Timothy Binkley, “‘Piece’: Contra Aesthetics’” *Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism* 35 (1977) page 266. Goodman and Dufrenne, among others like Merleau-Ponty, are not so quick in separating knowledge and experience. Genette, *The Work of Art*, 137ff. And: Arthur Danto can accept that the cityscape is aesthetic object, though it is, “neither the proposed object as such, nor the act of proposing it as such, but the idea behind the act.”


Dufrenne, *The Phenomenology of Aesthetic Experience*, 152.

Dufrenne, *In the Presence of the Sensuous*, 3.

Focilion, *The Life of Froms in Art*, 33.

Dufrenne, *In the Presence of the Sensuous*, 5.


IS IT POSSIBLE FOR ENVIRONMENTAL AESTHETICS TO TAKE A “TRANSHUMAN STANCE”? 

Peng Feng

Nature and art are different but not opposites. What is the main similarity beyond the differences? According to Theodor W. Adorno, the similarity is that both art and nature exemplify non-identity;¹ and the common opposite of both nature and art is artifact, cultural industry, and so on, which, in turn exemplifies identity. Art, as Adorno mentioned, is avant-garde art in the twentieth century. It advocates a turn to the inhuman, or an attempt to escape anthropocentrism from a transhumant standpoint. The affinity between nature and art is based primarily on the fact that they share a transhuman standpoint. Adorno used the residue of non-identity in nature to understand the art², whereas Alan Carlson clarifies the aesthetic appreciation of nature in terms of art. My question is: do both Adorno and Carlson take a real transhuman stance? Or, as Wolfgang Welsch asks, how can we move beyond anthropocentrism? In this paper, I shall examine the transhuman stance in art and environmental aesthetics, and then propose an alternative from the perspective of traditional Chinese philosophy.

I

Avant-garde art in the twentieth century differs greatly from the art of modernity. The former pursues the inhuman, while the latter is anthropocentric. The modern anthropocentric stance places man at the centre of everything. As Diderot wrote, “man is the unique concept from which we must start and to which we must refer everything back.” “It is only man’s existence which makes the existence of things interesting.”³ The most striking example of this anthropocentric stance is central perspective art since Renaissance. As Welsch remarks:

The whole appearance is determined by the beholder’s viewpoint and eye. The human touchstone is at the heart of all appearance. In this respect, perspectival representation is deeply anthropocentric. Everything appears not by itself, but as perceived from our side. Every detail in the picture is related to us and determined by our viewpoint and view. Objects are correlates of our gaze at the world.⁴

As the author observes, the escape from modern anthropocentrism or the appeal to the inhuman is evident not only in 20th century avant-garde art but also in 19th century
romantic art. It would appear to be obvious that the Romantics tried to overcome the anthropocentric stance which was prevalent in modernity. As noted above, the Modernists preferred the human stance to nature, whereas the Romantics preferred nature to human. As Novalis wrote, “rocks and matter are supreme, but man is the proper chaos.” It becomes clear that Romanticism and modernity are opposites, especially when we compare what Novalis said with Diderot’s statement that “without man the pathetic and sublime spectacle of nature is nothing but a sad and mute scene; everything turns into a vast solitude.”

However, even if Romanticism stands in stark contrast to modernity, Welsch does not think the Romantics have successfully overcome the anthropocentrism.

Rather, Romanticism represents a culmination of the modern principle of subjectivity and thus remains bound to the anthropocentric feature. Higher being at least was for the Romantics not something real, but something that first arises through human attention – not, however, primarily via thinking, but via feeling and sensation, the senses and contemplation. The true world is the product of humans’ poeticizing the real world. Romanticism represents a type not of primary, but of ultimate anthropocentrism.

The avant-garde art in the twentieth century is very different from Romantic art. In order to move beyond anthropocentrism, art in the twentieth century directly appeals to the inhuman. Apollinaire, for instance, declared in 1913: “Above all, artists are people who want to become inhuman. They assiduously seek traces of inhumanity.” In 1925 Ortega y Gasset diagnosed a “dehumanization of art” as being typical of modern art. In 1948 Merleau-Ponty praised Cézanne’s painting for revealing “the ground of inhuman nature on which the human settles”. And finally Adorno, in his posthumous Aesthetic Theory of 1970, declared that “art is loyal to humanity only through inhumanity toward it.” Can the appeal to the inhuman lead beyond anthropocentrism? According to Welsch this is not the case:

The inhuman one brings to bear is just the negative of the human. It is, from the start, conceived as the counterpole and alternative to the human, and is thus still defined by the human. The contours of the inhuman are determined by those of the human. Hence the turn to the inhuman is an inappropriate strategy for overcoming the anthropocentric principle. Rather it remains caught in its fetters.

II

We can see this tendency of escaping anthropocentrism not only in art but also in the appreciation of nature in the twentieth century. Because of modern anthropocen-
trism, natural beauty and the aesthetic value of nature have been neglected. As Adorno said:

Natural beauty vanished from aesthetics thanks to the expanding supremacy of the human freedom and dignity inaugurated by Kant but fully realized in Schiller and Hegel, who transplanted these ethical concepts into aesthetics, with the result that in art, like everywhere else, nothing deserved respect unless it owed its existence to the autonomous subject.¹⁰

Since natural beauty and the aesthetic value of nature are simply repressed by the autonomous subject which is the core of modern anthropocentrism, the revival of interests in natural beauty or the aesthetic appreciation of nature over the last third of the twentieth century can be seen as a part of mainstream anti-anthropocentrism.

Let us now consider a parallel question: can the interest in natural beauty and the aesthetic appreciation of nature lead us to beyond anthropocentrism? The situation here is similar to that of the arts. Just as both Romantic art and avant-garde art intend to escape but finally reinforce anthropocentrism, so most of the models for aesthetic appreciation of nature also fail to escape anthropocentrism. As Allen Carson observes:

Many of other models for aesthetic appreciation of nature are frequently condemned as totally anthropocentric, as not only anti-natural but also arrogantly disdainful of environments that do not conform to artistic and cultural ideals and preconceptions. The root source of these environmental and ethical concerns is that such models...do not always encourage appreciation of nature for what it is and for the qualities it has.¹¹

The models which are frequently condemned as totally anthropocentric are the object and landscape models. “The former pushes nature in the direction of sculpture and the latter treats it as similar to landscape painting.”¹² Neither model treats nature as nature but as something else. In this sense, they are very close to central perspective art which has prevailed since the Renaissance. Carlson writes:

Thus, the object model focuses aesthetic appreciation primarily on natural objects and dictates appreciation of such objects rather as we might appreciate pieces of abstract sculpture, mentally or physically extracting them from their contexts and dwelling on their formal properties. On the other hand, the landscape model, following in the tradition of the picturesque...mandates appreciation of nature as we might appreciate a landscape painting. This requires seeing it to some extent as a two-dimensional scene and again dwelling largely on formal properties. Neither of these models fully realize serious, appropriate appreciation of nature for each distorts the true character of nature. The former rips natural objects from their larger...
environments while the latter frames and flattens them into scenery. Moreover, in focusing mainly on formal properties, both models neglect much of our normal experience and understanding of nature.\(^\text{13}\)

There are some models that may be free from the charge of anthropocentrism, such as the natural environmental model, the engagement model, and so on. “Since the natural environmental model bases aesthetic appreciation on a scientific view of nature, it thereby endows aesthetic appreciation of nature with a degree of objectivity that helps to dispel environmental and moral criticisms, such as the charge of anthropocentrism.”\(^\text{14}\) In support of the view that the natural environmental model is not anthropocentric, Carlson resorts to similarities and relationships between nature and avant-garde art.

There are many models for aesthetic appreciation of nature, but not all of these are appropriate. In order to find an appropriate model for an aesthetic appreciation of nature, Carlson has carefully examined the concept of appreciation and finds that there are two suitable models for appreciation: design appreciation and order appreciation. The former is essential to paradigmatic art appreciation; while order appreciation is appropriate to the appreciation of avant-garde art and nature. The art works which Carlson employs to justify order appreciation are almost same as the art works which Welsch take to show the appeal to the inhuman, i.e. the 20th century avant-garde art, including Jackson Pollock’s action painting, Dadaist anti-art, surrealist experiment, Duchamp’s ready-made, and so on. Carlson highlights some similarities and relationships between such works of art (and even anti-art) and the objects of nature. Carlson admits “revealing of the relevance of order appreciation to the appreciation of nature are the claims of the artists who initiated these works of art and anti-art.”\(^\text{15}\) Avant-garde artists are fond of claiming that their works are somehow the results of nature. For example, Arp states that: “These paintings, sculpture, objects should remain anonymous and form a part of nature’s great workshop as leaves do, and clouds, animals, and men. Yes, man must once again become a part of nature.”\(^\text{16}\) Carlson’s observation of the avant-garde art in the twentieth century clearly supports Welsch’s view that there is an inhuman trace in them. The aim of avant-garde art is to go beyond anthropocentrism when it (in Arp’s words) “urges man to identify himself with nature”.\(^\text{17}\) But Welsch does not think this kind of avant-garde art succeeds in escaping anthropocentrism; and Carlson usually insists on following the situation in art so as limit himself to considerations of nature within the boundary of aesthetics; likewise, it seems reasonable for us to doubt whether order appreciation of nature can be successful in moving beyond anthropocentrism.

Carlson’s natural environmental mode takes for granted the fact that it is positive aesthetics which maintains “the view that all the natural world is beautiful”.

According to this view, the natural environment, insofar as it is untouched by man, has mainly positive aesthetic qualities; it is, for example, graceful, delicate, intense,
unified, and orderly, rather than bland, dull, insipid, incoherent, and chaotic. All virgin nature, in short, is essentially aesthetically good. The appropriate or correct aesthetic appreciation of the natural world is basically positive and negative aesthetic judgments have little or no place.\textsuperscript{18}

Here the concept of “virgin nature” is ambiguous and doubtful. Literally, virgin nature means a pure, unsullied state of natural things devoid of human intervention. This kind of virgin nature would appear to be very rare in the world. Ordinary men and women appear to have little opportunity to appreciate these beautiful natural things. Metaphorically, virgin nature perhaps means nature herself. To appreciate the virgin nature means to appreciate “nature for what it is and for the qualities it has”.\textsuperscript{19} We are unable to enjoy natural beauty not only because virgin nature is very rare in the world but also because we lack the ability to appreciate nature for what it is and for its inherent qualities. According to Carlson, it is natural scientists who can teach us to appreciate virgin nature. In this sense, our scientists play the same role as that played by the avant-garde artists. Both teach ordinary people a new world view to foster an appreciation of the world, or they persuade ordinary people to look at the world through their own eyes. Both artists and scientists appear to be somewhat more than human because they are also specialists or exceptionally talented individuals. In this respect, exceptionally talented individuals are misinterpreted as the inhuman. Perhaps this is the main reason why both avant-garde art and order appreciation of nature finally fail to move beyond anthropocentrism.

The other famous model for appreciation of nature, namely the engagement model supported by Arnold Berleant and others, is also unable to overcome anthropocentrism. Although the engagement model is very different from avant-garde art, it seems to be close to Romanticism. Given limits of time and space I shall not discuss the engagement model but, rather, give precedence to a detailed consideration of an alternative way to overcome anthropocentrism.

III

Let me return to Welsch. After exposing the failure of Romantic art and avant-garde art to overcome the anthropocentric stance, Welch takes a different approach, that of defining the human as \textit{homo mundanus} (man as a world-connected being), not as \textit{homo humanus} (man centered on himself). In his quest to move beyond the anthropocentrism, the author writes:

The basic requirement is a conception of the human that neither defines the human in opposition to something different (to the world or nature) nor distinguishes the human by exclusive properties (like mind, rationality, language or the like). Instead,
the human is to be perceived in a fundamental community with the world and other beings, and the specificity of the human is to be explained through and within this communality.20

Welsch delineates two approaches to achieve such a conception. One is to reinterpret the human condition in the light of evolutionary insights, which has recently occupied the author’s attention; the other is “that of Eastern thinking. It too develops a participatory – not oppositional – understanding of humans’ relationship to the world; here too homo mundanus expresses the true demands of human existence.”21

Here, I would like to elucidate Eastern thinking in greater depth according to the precepts of Chinese philosophy.

1. Modern scholars, especially Sinologists, bring together many different strands of thought from the Chinese tradition under the concept of “correlative cosmology”. “Like all concepts, ‘correlative cosmology’ is conditioned by historical, ideological, psychological, and perhaps even biological realities.”22 Although this concept is questionable, it can convey the idiosyncrasies of the thought of ancient Chinese people.

   Based on this “correlative cosmology”, man has never been centered on himself. Man is a kind of thing connected with other things. Ancient Chinese people referred to qi (气ether), yin and yang (阴阳 feminine and masculine), wuxing (五行 five elements) to explain everything in the world, including man and natural things. As Zhuangzi said, “Man’s life is the gathering of qi: gathering is life, while dispersing is death.”23 Everything, including man, is a form of qi, so basically, everything is equal and correlated.

2. Not only is man a thing, but he is an inferior thing. As Michael Sullivan points out, according to the Chinese viewpoint,

   [M]an is not the culminating achievement of creation, but a relatively insignificant part in the scheme of things…. By comparison with the beauty and splendor of the world itself, the mountains and valleys, the clouds and waterfalls, the trees and flowers, which are the visible manifestations of the workings of the dao, he counts for very little. In no other civilization did the forms and patterns of nature, and man’s humble response to it, play so big a part.24

   Here Sullivan is inspired by a popular Chinese legend. The legend of Pangu, which concerns the origins of the world:

   In far-off time, it runs, the universe was an egg. One day the egg split open; its upper half became the sky, its lower half the earth, and from it emerged Pangu, primordial man. Every day he grew ten feet taller, the sky ten feet higher, the earth ten feet thicker. After eighteen thousand years Pangu died. His eyes became the sun and moon, while his blood filled the rivers and seas. His hair became the forests and meadows, his perspiration the rain, his breath the wind, his voice the thunder, and his fleas our ancestors. 25

344
In the legend of *Pangu* we learn that man was a natural thing, i.e. flea. On the contrary, nature was a primordial man. The fact that man was a flea does not mean he is still a flea. In this world, man is man, and flea is flea. I am interested in the dialectic movement, the dynamic progress or circle: namely, the universal *dao* transformed man into nature and nature into man. Everything in the world is in flux. In order that man should respect nature he must respect himself.

3. Since man and nature are in a process of transformation, the relationship between the two is extremely close thereby leading to a reciprocal relationship in which man and nature stimulate and respond to each other. As *Lüshi Chunqiu* (*吕氏春秋*) notes: “Things of the same correlative category (*lei* 类) naturally attract one another; things of the same *qi*-ether (*气*) naturally come together; tones that are similar answer (*ying* 应) each other.”26 It is through sheer *ganying* (感应 stimulus-and-response), rather than abstract knowledge, that man understands nature.

4. According to the theory of *ganying*, man and nature enjoy a symbiotic relationship. So man should act according to the rhythm of nature. As *Liji* recorded: “In commencing great undertakings, there should be no opposition to the great periods (for them) as defined (by the motion of the sun). They must be conformed to the times (as thereby marked out), and particular attention paid to the nature of each.”27 With this in mind, *Liji* made the governor a list of what color clothes to wear, what rituals to perform, what to eat, and so on, during the different months of the year. Unless these instructions were carried out, nature or Heaven will spontaneously send down omens and urge man to act in harmony with nature, even send catastrophes to punish man. For example, as *Liji* (礼记) recorded:

If in the first month of spring the governmental proceedings proper to summer were carried out, the rain would fall unseasonably, plants and trees would decay prematurely, and the states would be kept in continual fear. If the proceedings proper to autumn were carried out, there would be great pestilence among the people; boisterous winds would work their violence; rain would descend in torrents; orach, fescue, darnel, and southernwood would grow up together. If the proceedings proper to winter were carried out, pools of water would produce their destructive effects, snow and frost would prove very injurious, and the first sown seeds would not enter the ground.28

So, the concept of man in ancient Chinese philosophy is a typical *homo mundanus*. Can we set up an environmental aesthetics on this concept of man or based on the concept of “correlative cosmology”? I think this is possible even if it may take a lot of work.
Notes


5 Quoted by Welsch, *ibid.*, p. 476.

6 Quoted by Welsch, *ibid.*, p. 476.


8 All quotations quoted by Welsch, *ibid.*, p. 472.


16 Quoted by Carlson, *ibid*.

17 Quoted by Carlson, *ibid*.


23 *Zhuangzi – Zhibeiyou*.


25 *Ibid*.

26 *Liushi Chuanqiu – Yingtong*, Martin S. Ekström’s translation.

27 *Yueling, Book IV of Liji*, James Legge’s translation.

Despite there are many studies on urban space and urban landscape, a study on the changing relationship between nature and the city with reference to cultural landscape theory is seen valuable to draw new perspectives for urban studies. The cultural landscape theory that emerged as a subfield of cultural geography by Carl Sauer and Berkeley School in 1920s emphasized the role of culture in shaping up the physical space. A cultural landscape is fashioned from a natural landscape by a culture group. Culture is the agent; the natural area is the medium. The cultural landscape is the result...The natural landscape is of course of fundamental importance, for it supplies the materials out of which the cultural landscape is formed. The shaping force, however, lies in the culture itself. (Sauer; 1963, 343) Culture in cultural geography is understood in different meanings and representations which Thrift and Whatmore summarized the common three expressions in cultural geography as “first culture as the ‘whole way of life’ of people; secondly culture as forming the identity of a group or other social formation; lastly culture that can be tagged to social processes.” (Thrift & Whatmore; 2004, 7-8) Cultural landscape is generated by the social practices of a cultural group on a physical space and landscape. In this context, the paper aims to decipher the cultural landscape of the Anatolian side of Istanbul in late Ottoman period by focusing on the physical landscape with reference to political, economical dynamics and social practices in addition to the representations of landscapes as written and painted.

2. “Sayfiye”

Nineteenth century signals the transformation of urban space by the dissolution of the traditional binary oppositions as center/periphery or urban/rural. One of the most significant consequences of this dissolution was the development of suburban settlements outside the city which generated a new relationship between nature and the city. The paper aims to discuss the changing relationship between nature and the city focusing on “sayfiye” concept emerged at the late nineteenth century on the Anatolian side of Istanbul.

Ebru Salah

“Sayfiye”: Reconceptualizing the Transformation of Nature into the City on the Anatolian Side of Istanbul
side of Istanbul. The paper puts forward that “sayfiye” was the preliminary spatial archetype of the infusion of nature into the city developed as a consequence of the modernization project of the Ottomans.

The Turkish word “sayfiye”, derived from “sayf” which means summer in Arabic, defines a settlement or area that is used for seasonal recreational and leisure purposes particularly in summers. Until nineteenth century, the suburbs of Istanbul were composed of small villages in addition to suburban gardens owned by the royal family and the Ottoman ruling elite lined on the shores of the Bosphorus, most of them concentrated on the Anatolian side. It was the sultans and the Ottoman ruling elite that who developed the better defended Bosphorus to an unprecedented degree with waterfront villas known as yâls that gave rise to the distinctive villegiatura tradition of rural excursions that mature in the sixteenth-century. (Necipoğlu, 1997: 34) Until the mid-nineteenth century, the settlement on the Anatolian side of Istanbul was concentrated mainly in Üsküdar as the largest settlement on the eastern bank of the Bosphorus. Kadıköy to the south Üsküdar was another relatively large village with a Muslim and Greek population. The area starting from Kadıköy until Bostancı was composed of small villages surrounded with the agricultural land opening up to the countryside. In the mid-nineteenth century, Moda district in Kadıköy formed a settlement area with the construction of residences used in summers for recreational purposes, mostly owned by foreigners and Levantine families. The spatial pattern of the Anatolian side started to transform with the development of suburbs as “sayfiye” starting from Kadıköy until Bostancı.

3. Background Dynamics of “Sayfiye” Development

The background dynamics of the development of “sayfiye” depends mainly on Tanzimat reforms of the Ottoman Empire in the nineteenth century which aimed to modernize the Ottoman system for political and economical improvement. Tanzimat reforms symbolized the decline of the traditional institutions and regulations and the foundation of a new administrative system. The dynamics of urban transformation in the nineteenth century in Istanbul can be summarized as the introduction of new urban administration system, the transformation of land regime and last but not least the new urban transportation systems. The preliminary development of “sayfiye” settlements forming an organized pattern depends on different dynamics but particularly on the introduction of the new modes of transportation, particularly the Anatolian Railways.

In nineteenth century, railways were the most significant transportation system for transformation of urban space. They had two major impacts on the urban space; while they served as a centralizing device by causing concentration of population and activities at the center, they also enlarged the limits of the city by causing decentralization.
Decentralization, both in Europe and America, was shaped by the extension of settlements through the transportation lines and spread indiscriminately over the surrounding countryside. *With the train began the steady liquefaction of the classical city.* (Nijenhuis, 2011: 67) The city started to expand beyond its frontier and boundary by the development of new settlements along the route of the railways. So as much as the railways contributed to centralization, they also acted as instruments for the invasion of the countryside by the city through the new settlements. In physical terms, railways influence and transform the land while passing through the earth, and vice versa the topographical and geographical features of the land affect the railway route. Thus, railways give shape to their environments by transforming land and refining the relationship between urban and rural.

Since the Ottomans lacked the technology and finance for railway construction, the desire to construct railways between Istanbul and Belgrade was firstly declared by the Ottoman State by searching foreign enterprises through the notice on the European newspapers in 1855. An early concession was given to a Belgium banker Baron Hirsh in 1869 for an 80 km line as Rumeli Railways passing through the route of Istanbul-Edirne-Filibe-Dedeağac-Burgaz-Salonica-Sava. In 1870, the trains started to operate between Yedikule and Küçükçekmece. Rumeli Railways facilitated not only for international transportation, but also connected the distant settlements along the shoreline with the city center by the operation of intercity trains. After the opening of Rumeli Railways starting from Yedikule, passenger complaints about the distance of the station to the city center caused a search for the location for the main terminal. Sirkeci was seen as a convenient location for the main terminal, but railways had to pass through Topkapı Palace’s territory causing to demolish historical buildings inside the palace and penetrate to the garden of the palace. Despite the oppositions to the passing of railways through the garden of the palace, as a result of the decision of Sultan Abdülaziz; the route between Yedikule and Sirkeci was opened in 1872. On the European side of Istanbul, Rumeli Railways passed through the residential quarters along the Sea of Marmara with six stations: the terminal in Sirkeci, Kumkapı, Yedikule, Makriköy, Yeşilköy and Küçük Çekmece.

On the Anatolian side, the aim of the State to connect the capital with the eastern provincial cities resulted in the construction of Anatolian Railways by the Ottoman State. Although the Anatolian Railways between Haydarpaşa and İzmit started to be constructed in 1871; due to financial reasons, the construction of the line was completed in 1873. The first trains started to operate between Haydarpaşa and Feneryolu in 1871. The preliminary stations in the territory of Istanbul were composed of Haydarpaşa, Kızıltoprak, Feneryolu, Göztepe and Bostancı. In the following years of its construction, there have been additional stations as Fenerbahçe and Erenköy in addition to the shift in the route of the railways. (fig.1)

Railways not only affected the immediate surroundings of its trajectory but also
functioned as the major force on the urban growth of the city. Although the main reason for constructing railways were to connect the capital to Europe and eastern cities, the operation of intercity trains enabled the people to move outside the city walls and develop new settlements outside the city. This development process led to the dissolution of the traditional binary oppositions as city and countryside and influenced the urban growth of Istanbul along the railways’ route parallel to Sea of Marmara. On the European side of Istanbul, the railways effected the existing settlements causing demolition of buildings and transformations in urban morphology. The construction of Rumeli Railways fostered the new settlements in Makriköy and Yeşilköy districts which were the major development outside the city walls in the late Ottoman period.

On the Anatolian side, contrary to Rumeli Railways, the railways passed through the agricultural land and the countryside. Starting from the late nineteenth century, the area between Kadıköy and Bostancı gradually transformed into a continuous settlement following the route of railways. The urban growth of Istanbul was depended on the city’s significant geographical character—a city divided by the sea. In Istanbul, railways complemented with ferry services brought the city center and the Anatolian side closer which also caused the distinction between the city and countryside disappear. By this way, the Anatolian side was not only connected to the center but also opened for new settlements. (fig.2)

In the following years of the development of the Anatolian Railways, the area between Kadıköy and Bostancı started to transform with the construction of summer residences at the area. In addition to the easement of access to the area through railways, another important factor effecting the urban development of the Anatolian side was
the land reform. The land around the capital was owned by sultan as imperial land used for agriculture and pleasure purposes. The regulation of 1858 on land divisions, “Arazi Kanunnamesi”, had a direct effect that shown itself in facilitating the transformation of miri (imperial) land into mülki land in addition to the systematizing the property documents with the concept of certification of the property. The transfer of the miri land into mülki land facilitated the sale of these lands with the market price and generating private property. During the construction of the Anatolian Railway, 100 donum of land that was the property of the Foundation of Sultan Selim was sold to four Levantine families during the construction the railways. (Akbulut, 1992: 84) In Europe, the value of property on the periphery was increased as a result of the railways. The real estate promoters and railway and streetcar companies purchased distant tracts, laid out rectangular streets, and sold house lots in what they described as ideal suburban communities. (Schuyler, 1988:153) In the case of Istanbul, the land around railways was developed mainly by the private landowners.

In addition to land reforms, the regulations governing urban planning and construction activity had major impacts on the settlement pattern of the Anatolian side. Between 1848 and 1882, six major regulations passed composed of the building regulations, street regulations, construction methods regulations, municipal law and building law. The ultimate goal envisioned by post-Tanzimat regulations was a city with straight and uniformly wide streets defining rectangular or square blocks composed of stone or brick buildings. (Çelik, 1986: 52) The settlement pattern on the Anatolian side was mainly shaped by the new regulations with rectangular blocks around straight streets.

In the late Ottoman period, the urban transformations in Istanbul were not only affected by the new modes of transportation and new building methods, but the change in the social structure also played a crucial role. The transformation of Ottoman social structure from community based model to citizenship fostered the rise of a new class as the Ottoman bourgeois. In the traditional city model, the wealthy and upper class usually lived in the center of city; but the wealthy started to move to the periphery of
the city with the development of the railways. The people moving to the Anatolian side were mainly composed of the new wealthy that had capital, the high level state officials, the foreigners and the non-Muslims. On the Anatolian side the Muslim upper class moved their mansions to the shores of the Bosphorus, around Üsküdar and Çamlıca, and the districts of Haydarpaşa, Kadıköy, Suadiye, Caddebostan, Kızıltoprak, Göztepe, Erenköy, and Bostancı along the railways. (Tekeli, 1999, 30) On the contrary to the garden house settlements which were a result of the demand of the European bourgeois to structure itself as a separate social group, the settlement on the Anatolian side was guided on the new land and building reforms declared after Tanzimat. But it is important to note that the upper class life style and culture of the Ottoman bourgeois were also reflected on the urban space on the Anatolian side.

3. The Urban Morphology of “Sayfiye”

From the beginning of the twentieth century, Göztepe district on the Anatolian became a popular settlement area as a result of the connection of the area to Istanbul by ferry services in 1857 and the railways in 1872. Dethier, the director of the first museum in Istanbul during the late 19th century, states that Kadıköy was re-constructed like a European city after a large fire destroying the area. Kadıköy is developing as the most popular district of the Istanbul housing people from all societies. (Dethier, 1993: 93)

The first railway station in Göztepe which forms the center of the district was constructed on the north of the rail line as a wooden building in 1872. Göztepe district was subject of a huge land speculation at the end of nineteenth century. The area composed of 1000 donum on the south of Göztepe Station until Bağdat Street was purchased by a tobacco trader, Tütüncü Mehmet Efendi. Tütüncü Mehmet Efendi sold his property by parceling out 15-20 donum of land which gave way to the expansion of the area as a settlement. The formation of a district named as Mehmedefendi in Göztepe is stated in a document in 1902 in the Ottoman Archives.¹ (fig.3)

At the late Ottoman period, Göztepe started to transform from a rural area into a settlement with the construction of buildings inside large orchards and gardens. Most of the buildings in this region were composed of wooden mansions owned by state officials and foreigners which were used as summer residences at the preliminary period of their construction. Most of the “sayfiye” compounds were composed of multiple buildings as haremlık (the part for women), selamlık (the part for men) and its auxiliary buildings. (fig. 4)

The regulation “Ebniye Kanunu” in 1882 brought changes in the arrangement of the new settlements. The Article 16 states that:

The people that will sell their uncultivated lands, orchards or gardens by the division
of land for the constitution of a new district, are obliged to leave a place for the school and police station; to construct drainage system until the border of the district; and also pay a fee to the government for the expense of the sidewalks. (Selman, 1982: A65-A107)

Tütüncü Mehmet Efendi founded a mosque at the south of the station in 1899 with the endowment of 15 shops and a bakery which constitutes the center of the district. There was a police station at the rear of the mosque. The commercial area extended to the north by 9 shops built by Nadir Ağa in addition to the construction of more shops by high-level state officials. (Şehsuvaroğlu, 1969: 33) Thus, the surrounding of the train station became a commercial area with various shops, bakery, post office and bank.

From the map of Kadıköy (Arseven, 1913: 102), the area at the south of the railways has a plan system composed of street network as grids with 30-40 donum of islands. As a consequence of the new regulations as “Turuk ve Ebniye” (Regulation Codes for Buildings and Roads) between 1848 and 1891, the new settlements were developed reflecting the ideas of Western planning which was based on a gridal plan scheme. The grid blocks or islands are gradually subdivided into smaller land plots in the latter years. The “Ebniye” regulation of 1882 summarizes the urban planning decisions for the proveniences in addition to Istanbul. Article 1 of “Ebniye Kanunu 1882” divides the streets into five categories according to their widths as 20, 15, 12, 10, 8 “arsın”
(13.72, 10.29, 8.23, 6.86, 5.49 meters); and the cul-de-sac streets into two as 8 and 6 “arsın” (5.49, 4.11 meters). Tütüncü Mehmet Efendi Street, the main street connecting the station to Bağdat Street, is minimum 9 meters wide in the plan dating from 1925. (fig.5)

Celal Esad Arseven, the municipal of Kadıköy between 1913 and 1914, described Kadıköy as a “trail” of Istanbul which is a “city village”. Kadıköy is “sayfiye” of Istanbul as a residential settlement. (Arseven, 1913: 69)

4. Nature in “Sayfiye”

The enjoyment of nature by the Ottomans was through the excursion grounds outside the city which were generally defined as recreational grounds as “mesire”. In the late nineteenth century, the tranquilizing and sanative influences of nature were introduced to the domestic life of the Ottomans through the development of new settlements dispersing over the countryside. The preliminary urban development of the Anatolian side of Istanbul is a significant example of the infusion of nature into the city through “sayfiye” settlements. These settlements also reflect the evolution of modern recreation and domestication of nature in urban space. “Sayfiye” settlements brought the advantages of nature to the urban life through easy railway access. By the construction of railways, the countryside’s pleasure was opened to the public. These new settlements—“sayfiye”—enabled the Ottoman society to enjoy the pleasures of the country life and at the same time attend business in town. By this way, the traditional enjoyment of nature limited to the royal family and the ruling elite in suburban gardens was spread to the Ottoman society. Apart from the influence of “sayfiye” to make countryside accessible to all, their development reinforced the development of public domain. In this context, their development symbolized the deprivatization of nature through the privatization of the land.

“Sayfiye” resembled a European style settlement with mansions opening up to the immense rural area and landscape away from the city life. The agents of the develop-
ment of “sayfiye” were mainly the Ottoman bourgeois, who were composed of the new wealthy, high-level state officials, foreigners and non-Muslims that emulated a European life style which was also reflected in the typology of the “sayfiye” houses. This new building typology of in “sayfiye” was a combination of traditional wooden mansions with an extroverted approach reflecting the European influence. They were residential complexes composed of multiple buildings as selamlık, haremlik and auxiliary buildings rather than modestly scaled wooden mansions. Contrary to the former suburban houses as yaşısı and kiosks located at the shores of the Bosphorus, these “sayfiye” compounds were located near the railway route whose layouts were shaped by the building regulations with a European influence.

For the Ottoman bourgeois, the ideal house was transformed from a city-house into a “sayfiye” house surrounded by garden composed of vineyards, vegetable gardens, woods and formal flower beds. Some of the gardens, mostly owned by high-level state officials, mimicked the European gardens with their axially planned and geometric garden schemes. Fuad Pasha, a high-level state official, started to construct a compound near the railway in Feneryolu with multiple buildings in a “pleasure garden” with a large pool at the center where the family can ride in boat. The garden had a symmetrical composition with formal flower beds with circular compartments and large trees. The compound was composed of a main building as the center, a wooden mansion of his daughter and auxiliary buildings as barns, personnel houses and a projection tower for
lighting. (Ekdal, 2005: 396-401) The Garden of Fuad Pasha had a display-oriented design rather than the traditional introverted Ottoman life style. (fig.6)

Most of the high-level state officials built “sayfiye” houses on the Anatolian side near the railways. Şehsuvaroğlu (1969) states that the area was also a popular settlement for the high-level state officials by their demand to be far from the state control and denouncement. Rıdvan Pasha, şehremini (the municipal) of Istanbul between 1890 and 1906, built a compound in Göztepe to the north of the train station. The compound was composed of a three-story building and a wooden pavilion accompanied with auxiliary structures. While the main building is built with an extroverted design with the large balconies and colonnades with a European style, the modestly scaled pavilion is a wooden structure with extensive ornaments. (fig.7) The pavilion is built for the daughter of Rıdvan Pasha which is more integrated with the garden of the compound. (fig.8-9)

Another şehremini of Istanbul, Cemil Pasha, built a “sayfiye” compound on 30 dunams of land in Çiftehavuzlar district in Kadıköy. The main building with three-story was designed with art nouveau style distinguished by its tower on the corner and extensive ornaments. (fig.10) In addition to the “sayfiye” compounds of high-level state officials in Kadıköy, there were also “sayfiye” houses built as wooden mansions with a traditional manner. Abdulkadir Efendi, the son of Sultan Hamid, bought a wooden mansion in 1910 on the north of the railways in Feneryolu. He built a small

---

Fig. 7 The main building of Rıdvan Pasha compound in Erenköy (Source: Ekdal, 2005: 289)

Fig. 8 View and facades of wooden pavilion of Rıdvan Pasha (Source: Uluengin&Uluengin, 1976: 77)
pavilion at the garden for his music studies. (Ekdal, 2005: 170-175) It is understood from the architecture of the buildings in “sayfiye” compounds, while the European style buildings are mostly designed by European educated architects, the wooden mansions are designed by building foremen with the traditional architectural style. Gazi Muhtar Pasha, one of the three significant pashas of Sultan Hamid, built a “sayfiye” compound on 63 dunams of land on the north of the railway in Feneryolu. The compound was composed of an inner garden including the three-story main building, a bath, kitchen, green house, library structures; in addition to an outer garden including selamlık building and auxiliary structures with limonluk (large green house), orchards. The garden of Gazi Ahmet Muhtar Pasha was famous for its vineyard. He built a gazebo in the garden, which is the replica of a model that he had seen in Vienna.

Hence, the “sayfiye” buildings on the Anatolian side were composed of a mixture of different architectural styles, but all of them defining a new relationship between nature and the city. Most of the “sayfiye” compounds had large gardens composed of extensive landscape with flower beds, vineyards, orchards and woods.

Fig. 9 Layout of Rıdvan Pasha Compound (Source: Uluengin & Uluengin, 1976: 76)

Fig. 10 The mansion of Cemil Pasha in Çıftavuzlar (Source: http://www.mimarlikmuzesi.org)
6. Conclusion

Even though the urban growth of Anatolian side was not depended on the new concepts of city planning developed in America by the ideas of Olmsted and Vaux that promoted the separation of compact business districts and residential area with “rural spaciousness”, the result in Ottoman Istanbul was the development of new settlements composed of mansions inside large land plots where the beauties of the natural landscape and rural spaciousness can be experienced. “Sayfiye” marks the preliminary form of the infusion of nature into the city by transforming nature into urban landscape. Thus, the cultural landscape of the Anatolian side of Istanbul was formed by the Ottoman bourgeois sculpting their social formation on land which was reflected on the physical landscape as the development of “sayfiye” settlements. In addition to the physical landscape, the cultural landscape of the Anatolian side is also reflected on the representations of landscape. “Sayfiye” settlements on the Anatolian side were also a popular subject for the novels and paintings of the period reflecting the cultural sphere. According to the authors and painters, Kadıköy was portrayed as a European style settlement with mansions opening up to the immense rural area and landscape. The authors describe the area with its extensive landscape, natural beauty, scenery, its social atmosphere and being away from the city life. The area became a popular subject for landscape paintings by the painters of the period. (fig. 11-12)

To conclude, the modernization project of the Ottoman State in the nineteenth century not only influenced the urban space but also had major impacts on the relationship between nature and the city. In the late Ottoman period, the urban space on the Anatolian side was based neither on the city alone, nor on the nature alone, but rather on the dialectical relationship between them which is concluded as the infusion of nature into the city and the city to nature.
"Sayfiye": Reconceptualizing the Transformation of Nature into the City on the Anatolian Side of Istanbul

References

Arseven (1913) Kadıköy Hakkında Tedkikat-ı Belediye.
Şehsuvaroğlu, Bedi (1969) Göztepe. İstanbul: Türkiye Turing ve Otomobil Kurumu

Notes

1 BOA. Date: 20/Ra/1320, Dosya No: 530, Gömlek No: 35, Fon Kodu: DH.MKT.
2 For more information about the mansions refer to Şehsuvaroğlu (1969) and Ekdal (2004)
3 The original text is as follows: “Bugün bu şehre adeta İstanbul’un mühimce bir kuyruğu yani şehir köyü nazaryyla bakılabilir. Sırf ikamete mahsustur. Aynı zamanda İstanbul’un bir sayfiyesidir.”
4 The architect of the building is stated as Levantine architect Vallaury although the building is also listed in the projects of Turkish architect Vedat Tek.
A number of authors have claimed continuity between nature and the city. The sociological tradition of “urban ecology”, founded by the Chicago School, considered city as nature. Human-made urban space, too, had its “natural history” (Park, 1925): it was a legitimate field for studying action, perception, and interaction as elementary biological functions. These daily organic functions had causal relations to their social and spatial environment. In other words, there was no reason why the study of nature should not include human societies and cities, from human-made materials and objects, up to the entire context of urban life. In The Architecture of the City (1966), Aldo Rossi highlighted the importance of the city as a historic and collective creation, reminding architects and urbanists of their responsibility towards this environment; he also argued that the existing context of “urban facts” was conditioned by specific “dynamics”, that is, by “permanent and universal forces” describable by “urban science”. Extending the conventional image of a “both natural and artificial homeland” – which referred to canonical authors such as Vidal de la Blache, or Carlo Cattaneo, to architecture and cities, Rossi clearly intertwined the concepts of natural sciences with those of urbanism and architecture.

But how many different ideas of “nature” and “environment” are thus alluded to? How does such a hybrid naturalization relate to our lives in cities, and how could it influence our uses of moral concepts such as individual or collective freedom and responsibility?

In this paper, I wish to consider the tentative program of a “natural history” of cities, by focusing upon the concept of perception. I will survey the framing or shaping effects that urban environment may have on sensory perception. For cities could shape, beyond the content of our perceptions, our ways of perceiving.

1. Using some insights from George Herbert Mead, and claims by Chicago sociologists, the first section elaborates the idea of ecological framing of perception: the material properties we are acting upon daily, in the urban environment. If no essential or ontological separation between city and nature (meaning, the world described in ways compatible with the laws of physics) holds, the resulting continuity should appear in full light, at this elementary level.
2. Acknowledging cultural framing of perception does not necessarily involve the return of conceptual dualism. Even as we share habits and norms about perceived urban space, and as we use signs to identify and recognize places, we do not “leave” direct perception. Cultural and symbolic mediations typical of urban life do not break down the naturalist framework of perceptual experience, but rather enrich it. This is why naturalism has to be “historicized” – a perspective I will specify by elaborating views expressed by Joseph Margolis (1993, 2009, 2010).

3. Finally, the shaping of perception in the urban context involves normative views in a stronger sense, framing our beliefs about what cities should be. Still operating within sensory perception, normative framing is involved in constant selecting and evaluating of objects perceived within urban situations.

1. **Shaping: habits of perception in the urban environment**

Perception framing firstly has a practical meaning: biologically reacting to events around us, we develop unconscious habits of perception. I propose to call this, the ground-level ecological framing.

As living beings, we grow up among places and people that we have to learn from, and adapt to. Cities, our “artificial homelands”, obviously have “natural” physical properties. A limited range of materials make up this sort of place: stones, bricks, concrete, metal and glass; greenery; some wood and plastic materials (as in street furniture). Factors such as colours, slope, water, the width of street space and pavement, climate and temperature, also constitute this perceived environment. We perceive those on a “seen but unnoticed” mode, just as common forms of talk in natural languages. The perceived materials of urban space, so to speak, are the perceptual grammar of a native tongue: we get used to these properties, to the point of being able to interact with objects without conscious reference or reflection.

This relates to the broader structure of experience – of which sensory perception is a part – in ways that classical pragmatism, from James to Mead, has investigated. Mead, especially, described perception as a “phase” of the act. Indeed, spatial forms and materials of the city affect us, primarily, in practice. Acquiring a practical training that enables direct recognition and selection of stimuli, as well as bodily response to the environment, there is no reason for us to discriminate, while acting, between the natural and the artificial. As we become centres of perception and action, we are confronted to enironing elements, which we have to deal with. This is what ecology, the science of the environment, studies. In that regard, there should be no difference between studying human development in cities and in “wild” nature – cities being just as much parts of a “natural” environment.

The consequences of this continuity were considered by direct contemporaries of...
the pragmatist philosophers: the Chicago sociologists who founded urban ecology (Thomas, Park, Burgess, McKenzie). Their use of the concept of “natural history” aimed at defining and establishing sociology as a science, while rejecting a mere functional or institutional (economic or political) description of cities. It enabled an empirical study of city dwellers’ behaviour. The project involved a rather unique sort of naturalism, compared to what we generally mean today by this term. Park, in “The City considered as a natural phenomenon” (1952), explicitly rejected any idea of the city “as an artefact”; for him, the city was “something more”, involving “human nature”:

The city is, rather, a state of mind, a body of customs and traditions, and of the organized attitudes and sentiments that inhere in these customs and are transmitted with this tradition. The city is not, in other words, merely a physical mechanism and an artificial construction. It is involved in the vital processes of the people who compose it: it is a product of nature, and particularly of human nature. [...] The city is, finally, the natural habitat of the civilized man.

This famous “definition” of the city refers to “nature” in a quite original way. Nature seems tightly related to life (“vital”), but surprisingly distanced from material elements (“physical” and “artificial” together). Park was not interested in thinking of the city as natural or artificial space, because he thought that what makes the city a natural phenomenon was people interacting – rather than just bodies, streets and signs. Park does not state, of course, that the material environment plays no part in defining the city, but he thinks it plays a secondary part, even for a naturalist understanding of urban behaviour.

Among the consequences of this view for my problem of perception, it is worth noticing that we perceive, as “civilized” living beings, things that other living beings do not, or certainly not the same way. If we say that our perceptions are shaped by the environment, we have to understand the reciprocity of the process: our perceptions within cities, and most likely, of cities as well, are collectively shared and transmitted through habits of perception that are not secondary, but “vital” to our experience.

How is that possible? Should we not be determined by our physical environment? Or are we, precisely, living beings with an environment that can never be considered as “merely” physical?

“Naturalism” does not have to mean physicalism, that is, the limitation of theoretical work to the use of notions coined by physical sciences – as the next section will clarify. One should consider the nature of cities, as Park suggests, as “more” than just physical space somehow “containing” causally determined physical organisms. However, I do think physical space has to be included in the study of people’s behaviour and interactions. Sociology has to learn from urban ecology. For our relationship with
the urban environment is socially shared; it stems from our social interactions, and it affects, in turn, social life.

2. Framing: social and cultural factors in the perception of urban space

Mead argued that the skill of perceiving was acquired by both practical training (“adjustments”) and socialization (“organized attitudes”). I will now briefly recall how this works, preparing my following claim that cultural factors also frame or filter our first-level perception of urban space. I will attempt to define this claim by building on some of Margolis’ views.

• Mead on “the social factor in perception” (*Philosophy of the Act*)

For Mead, perception depends on organisms capable:
- (a) of identifying an “organized environment”, or “perceptual field” in order to act;
- and (b) of dissociating the perceived objects from this “unquestioned world of perception” (1938, p 12).

This field (a) is a “precondition” of experience, as much as our bodies; it is directly connected to our capacity to act, for perceiving is a part of acting8. As such, it is more than a physical world9. It originates in our habits and in past attitudes10, and it opens perspectives for future actions. Finally, because it conditions all the “things” we perceive, the “perceptual world” itself has social conditions:

The characters of a perceptual world are dependent upon the susceptibilities and attitudes of the individuals who make up human society. The physical thing marks the experience as an organization of perspectives. So far as the thing is in experience it lies in the perspective of an individual, but if it is a thing it may lie in the perspectives of other individuals as well. The perspectives, however, are not separate from or independent of one another. [...] The individual perceives the thing which the others perceive. Both the thing and the perception have this generalized character. It is within this organization of perspectives that criticism, doubt, and adjustment take place.

“Generalized character” and “organization of perspectives” are the words in which Mead proposes an account of the objectivity of our perceptual experience (he also uses “universalized social responses”). Not only is perception shared with others, but it is immediately and essentially a social experience, for the experiences of individuals themselves are socially organized through acquired “attitudes”11. Human perception is a shared process; and this is how it enables us to distinguish “objects” (b) that we
perceive, so to speak, with others.

This sort of “not-only-physical” naturalism is not social determinism, since it places both individuals and society in a shared reciprocal relationship to their environment:

The individual and the society are selectively and causally determinative of the environment, and this determines the individual or the society – neither can be explained in terms of the other except as the other is determined by it.\(^{12}\)

In fact, Mead’s account of perception, stressing our irreducible social nature, conveniently makes room for a two-ended perceptual relation with our environment. So, when we perceive urban space, though partly determined by its material elements and qualities, we do causally transform it by performing acts that we choose to do; this includes for instance selection, measure, symbolization, or manipulation of things and spatial properties. These shared operations on our perceived environment, overwhelmingly important in the case of cities and urbanized space, make up for what I would call the \textit{cultural} framing of perception.

- Cultural framing in perception of urban space

Taking place in a perceptual field which we got used to, perception of things is inevitably mediated by our social background. These mediations is to a large extent institutionalized in the in the case of the city. As human beings, we learn the meaning of objects, signs and symbols, by interacting with family members, friends and educators; but as city dwellers, we also learn from a wide range of anonymous people who belong to various social institutions – merchants and vendors, barmen, delivery men, professional educators, civil representatives, etc – and from the constant presence of strangers. It is likely that someone I do not know will share similar perceptions of the actual environment to my own, because we both have to interact with this same environment, in a limited and populated space.

We perceive within predefined situations, which we have seen others experience themselves: for instance, stopping at a red traffic light or crossing the street as it turns green, waiting in line, or finding one’s way from signs. These situations, and the states of things they involve, are perceived in a sense that is hard to reduce entirely to material or causal relations. Though it is worth starting from a naturalistic description of such facts, since they imply symbolic exchanges, meaning, and language, I will call them “cultural”.

Thus, consciously or not, several types of \textit{cultural framing} enable us to recognize and identify objects in urban space, by sharing certain beliefs about what this broader perceptual field \textit{is}. I use “cultural” in a broad sense, to refer to a collective, symbolic
and historical context. This does not add up a second ontological level or “layer” to the natural, physical one, but specifies, rather, how we deal with its properties. The perceptual grammar of everyday objects among which we act, is acquired and transmitted within a broader form of life. Growing up among parking lots, highways and shopping malls, just as interacting within tree-lined avenues, narrow streets, or enclosed public squares, not only do we experience different spatial forms; we learn to recognize signs and symbols, we share various social views and habits, and get used to seeing different objects and behaviours as typical, familiar, exceptional, strange or even deviant. Someone who waves her hand at you in the street might want to say hello, or ask you something; or maybe she’s just calling a cab. But by reviewing (consciously or not) these options, you immediately exclude a certain number of them – you assume that she is not dancing, stretching, insulting you, or, say, invoking a spirit. This filtering effect within perception is a kind of historical a priori: it is what I propose to call the cultural framing of perception.

Urban environment as a perceptual field, thus, is organized by social values and preferences, conveyed by the city dwellers’ habits, and appreciations of what they perceive. Cultural framing includes architectural design and urban planning – or, the lack of it. Rossi (1966) famously recalled that urban configurations and design display the marks of collective memory and shared beliefs. This is obvious in the case of Italian cities, but it is also true for colonial settlements of the new world, since people who design, build and inhabit cities refer to a cultural background, to shared preferences and values. There is no such thing as a neutral, perfect or universal urban form, as the traditional Western examples of “ideal cities” make retrospectively visible. History and collective memory play a necessary role in framing our direct perception of urban places; just as particular geographic and climatic variations are reflected in building materials.

But does this perceptible diversity not contradict the project of naturalism, by taking us out of the scientific purpose of universalization?

- Towards a “historicized naturalism”

Acknowledging cultural framing of perception does not mean the return of dualism. For, as we share habits and norms about perceived urban space, and use signs to identify and recognize places, we do not “leave” direct perception. Cultural and symbolic mediations typical of urban life are accountable for this framing without abandoning naturalism about perceptual experience.

Therefore, I argue for a “historicized” approach of perception – or its naturalized history –, extending Park’s idea of a “natural history”13. In order to specify this understanding of perception, and to use it to consider urban space, I will now briefly elaborate views expressed by Margolis (1993, 2009, 2010), who proposed helpful attempts
in that direction. He often uses a definition of naturalism which really is that of “physicalism”:

the discursive policy that results from restricting the primary use of the term to no more than the physical, extensional, nonintentional characterizations of things, explained (under adequate conditions) entirely in causal terms modeled on what is normally offered in the physical sciences.16

Commenting on visual arts, the author argues for the irreducible presence of perceivable intentional elements in the actual paintings; directly perceivable, at least, for “second-natured” or “encultured” human perception. There must be more than just a subjective understanding of these properties (as classic dualism would have it) but also, more than a mere causal relation (as physicalist versions of naturalism would claim). Margolis shows the necessity of bringing back “intentionality”, that is, historical and cultural specificity, within the scope of naturalism17.

For my purpose, giving an account of the cultural pervasion through natural perception is crucial. The fact that perception is not a purely physiological process, that the “phenomenology of perceiving” cannot be reduced to “sensory perception”18, depends on cultural factors present in first-level immediate seeing – within publicly perceptible objects. It requires a “historicized” naturalism19, capable of focusing on material properties and forms that convey socially shared meaning. Interacting with perceived objects in urban environment, city dwellers can detect and understand meaning as soon as they perceive these objects.

Thus, Margolis’ arguments finally bring us back to the socially and historically transmitted framing of perception: a realistic account of perceiving urban space cannot escape, in my view, those questions, for, not unlike artworks, cities have “expressive and representational properties”20. This reminds us of the constraints bearing on perceiving meaningful gestures and speeches, and on social interactions. If “the same preparation is needed for the perception of artworks and the perception of human behavior”21, such preparation is likely to extend to the perception of urban space. I think that urban places and objects, in their nature, are to some degree eloquent about history, possibilities of action, and cultural preferences.

In a short final consideration, I wish to show how framing of direct perception, in the specific case of urban space, includes normative factors, which effectively influence our perception of physical things and events. I will then sum up my observations.

3. Normative framing: perceiving the appropriate

The shaping effects of urban space on perception include normative views in a stronger sense: they influence our beliefs about what cities should be. These beliefs
reciprocally influence our perceptions. Within immediate sensory perception, *normative framing* is involved in the constant selection and evaluation of objects perceived in urban spaces. Most likely, we also need those normative beliefs when we perceive, if only to make our actions more efficient – easier, safer and faster.

But why speak of norms or rules at the level of direct perception?

The theory of direct perception maintains that perceptual states, for the agent involved in any practical process (such as crossing a street), provide access to the environment as it *is* for the agent at the time of her actions; it insists that there is no deliberation or interpretation involved in the usual process of perception\(^22\). By deliberation or interpretation, I mean conscious inferential activity of the type “premises > conclusion”, which would necessitate awareness of both the ‘sense data’, and the means to ‘interpret’ this data. Defenders of direct perception do not think this is usually the case, where we directly perceive things available for use, just as we directly perceive objects, including images and significations – words, gestures, signs. This involves a set of related uses which is not entirely reducible to physical causal relations, but connected to grammatical rules of natural languages.

In the case of perception, I use the word ‘norm’ in the minimal sense of a rule implying a normative state, that is, a state of things that is more appropriate than another, considering a given plan of action – be it conscious or not, for such a plan of action can be obtained by external description, and need not be ‘mapped’ in the agent’s mind. In particular, a normative state might be directly perceived, if the visible environment incorporates contents such as signs, which are intelligible by virtue of rules (signification). After having learned how to access and use meanings and language, most of the time, we *perceive* signs and images, though we do not consciously read them. And such a *direct* perception (though not immediate, since this involves the mediation of the sign or the image), happens in the case of perceiving normative states, that is, states of things requiring appropriate practical responses. This is most visible with the appropriate actions that we accomplish without thinking after perceiving non-linguistic signs, such as visual symbols, arrows, or traffic lights (stop, turn left or right, turn back, etc); it is also the case when we obey an order, follow a piece of advice, or simply listen to what someone says before answering.

Within this context, there are perceptions upon which practical responses are generated by way of institutionalized habits. These are the perceived normative states: states of things we act upon because we perceive their requiring appropriate actions, without having to consciously infer anything. So, if someone raises her hand, the taxi driver perceives the meaningful gesture as addressed to her; if we see a ‘stop’ sign, we perceive the necessity to brake and immobilize the vehicle. Signs refer to actions that we are not physically forced to carry out, but that we are used to carrying out by virtue of institutionalized common practice, of social life and habits. This is why we perceive them, mostly, in the *seen but unnoticed* mode. And this is why, in thinking
about urban space and architecture, it is crucial not to focus only upon form and composition, but also on symbolism, iconography, and imagery. There is a specific symbolic complexity to urban space, which is not the same as in other natural environments or “habitats” of human beings (such as in the country, mountains, or forests); “urban facts” are already history and objects of collective memory, they are intentional products of figurative actions. The very design and building of cities rely on shared norms, and transmits them by exerting normative effects on perception of its inhabitants.

Thus, historical continuity displays the unity of normative beliefs and natural qualities, in the sense of biological properties of our perception. As pragmatist philosophers state, and as Margolis, in particular, makes clear, such unity can be explained through “the primacy of the practical”\textsuperscript{23}. The point here is, again, to underline the living unity of social, cultural and historical elements, in that case the appropriate state of things we expect to perceive with immediate perception: since we mostly perceive in order to act, that is, within a definite sequence of action.

**Conclusion**

Urbanized spaces have statistically become the primary habitat of most human beings\textsuperscript{24}. But what does that mean, and how does it affect our experience? The concept of perception framing holds these three types of framing or shaping effects – ecological, cultural, and normative – closely related, within the first-level perceptual experience of urban space. City environment is understood as a perceptual field which determines the shape of our perceptual experience, but is also determined by our attitudes, habits, and beliefs. Thus, a non-dualistic and pragmatist anthropological philosophy, inspired by authors like Margolis, but also, Ingold and Descola\textsuperscript{25}, may hope to renew and enrich urban ecology\textsuperscript{26} by showing how exactly perception of cities depends on intermediate structures such as habits, shared memory and cultural imagery, which are framing or filtering urban experience at its most empirical level.
Bibliography

Gibson, James
Giddens, Anthony
Garfinkel, H.
Lussault, Michel
Margolis, Joseph
Mead, George Herbert
(1934) *Mind, Self and Society*, University of Chicago Press
(1938) *The Philosophy of the Act*, University of Chicago Press
Merleau-Ponty, Maurice
(1945) *Phénoménologie de la perception*, Gallimard
Park, Robert Ezra
Rossi, Aldo
Thomas, William Isaac
(1923) *The Unadjusted Girl*, University of Chicago Press

Notes

1 I will consider ‘urban space’ and ‘cities’ as equivalent regarding my problem, though it would need further explanations to justify this conceptual continuity.

2 Rossi (1966), “Introduction”. The author does not really elaborate further on his use of this term of “force”, though he uses it several times later in the text.

3 Author of *La città considerata come principio ideale delle istorie italiane* (1858).

4 In my research (PhD), I argue that urban space, as a primary environment, both exceeds and pervades our immediate perceptions (of people, objects, or actions), for two main reasons:
   (a) it cannot be actually perceived in its totality, though it can be figured in many different ways – symbolized, mapped, represented, imagined;
   (b) like any natural environment, it frames or shapes simple perceptions, in a complex way that connects perceptual states with shared norms: social norms, relating to the necessities of coexistence, to the transformations of the environment itself, and to its figuration.

7 Park (1925), ch. 1.
8 See, for instance, 1938, p. 149.
“The experience within which the intelligence of human society expresses itself is a world of physical things. It is also a perceptual world. The thing and the percept bring out two characters of this experience. The percept marks the experience as a perspective.” (1938, p. 140)

“The past is also in the act, for facility and familiarity are products of past reactions.” (1938, p. 25).

Ibid., p. 149-153. Mead even states that our organisms were “social organisms” (1934, p. 230, 235).


This tentative formula is, of course, the subject of further analysis and cannot be dealt with here. Obviously referring to possible (mis)uses of Kantian idealism, it alludes, in particular, to issues raised by Foucault, but also by Walter Benjamin in several places in his work.

Such as, for instance: metal and glass or brownstone in New York City, bricks in Bologna, quarrel stone and concrete in Paris.

Perhaps it has more to do with pragmatist anthropology, or anthropological history, than naturalized history. But the point of referring to naturalizing, is somewhat similar to the rejection of political science by Park, and to Rossi’s affirmation of the existence of “urban facts”. The interest of urban ecology, as I understand it, is to consider urban space as a context in which physical environment (including architecture) and people’s behaviour and beliefs connect. It would appear that such a unified approach can be reached through an analysis of perception and action, as inspired by pragmatism’.


The use of this concept does not specifically refer to phenomenology, though its contemporary meaning is indebted to Husserl. “Intentionality is the power of minds to be about, to represent, or to stand for, things, properties and states of affairs. […] The word itself, which is of medieval Scholastic origin, was rehabilitated by the philosopher Franz Brentano towards the end of the nineteenth century.” (P. Jacob, “Intentionality”, Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy, http://plato.stanford.edu).

Ibid., p. 59.

“Historicized” is extensively used in Chapter 2 of Margolis (2010), entitled “Reclaiming Naturalism”. However, I am not sure how the author himself would consider such proposal.

Ibid., p. 106.


See Gibson (1986) and Giddens (1984). This point is also indebted to social phenomenology (Merleau-Ponty, Schutz), and to Mead’s “social behaviorism”. See for instance Merleau-Ponty (1945), Introduction, § 3; Part I, 3; and Part III, 1.

“This helps to define the sense in which the normative in philosophy, science, and morality is always practical or praxical, the sense in which the practical is always concretely grounded in the actual flux of life and thought, the sense in which what is normative in practice is not quite the same as what is normative (and still “practical”) in a utopian spirit a little distance beyond the primacy of the practical.” (Margolis, 2010, p. 143).


Tim Ingold, The appropriation of nature: essays on human ecology and social relations (Manchester University Press, 1986), and The perception of the environment: essays on livelihood, dwelling and skill (Routledge, 2000); Philippe Descola, Par-delà nature et culture (Gallimard, 2006).

For a recent attempt to renew and extend the Chicago School’s meaning of “urban ecology”, see Vasisht and Sloane, Returning to Ecology: An Ecosystem Approach to understanding the city (2000).
Leading questions starting from two cases/ examples

I shall begin by considering some images of skyscrapers concerning blocks of flats and housing estates from two different contexts (Ferrara and Sheffield). In addition to some common formal, structural and architectonic aspects, I shall go on to analyse what these buildings have in common, namely the fact that they are associated with situations of disease.

Particularly interesting, from this viewpoint, is the first case, namely the “Skyscraper” in Ferrara (see fig. 1), which during the last decade in particular, has become a byword for an area of social and urban decay. A mere reading of some articles from the local press (La nuova Ferrara, Il Resto del Carlino) from the last three years – as well as a series of interviews with tenants and local residents who usually frequent this area (carried out by a group of students from the Faculty of Architecture at the university of Ferrara between November and December 2011) - has allowed us to gather information about what, in the perception of the inhabitants, constitutes a source of problems and disease in this area. Without entering into details, we can summarize the problematic aspects connected with the “Skyscraper” of Ferrara by dividing them into the following four main groups: social and cultural aspects, security issues, economical problems and structural and aesthetic elements. The first category consists of suicide cases (most recently on the 5/2/2012 when an Italian man of Florentine origins jumped from the 18th floor); it concerns the coexistence of people...
coming from different cultures with different habits and lifestyles, the impression of some of the people interviewed of living in a ghetto and the presence of young prostitutes. The risks for the supply of services (heating and water) due to the default of payments of about half the tenants - which also affect the maintenance of the elements of the building fabric (especially but not exclusively of the lifts and gardens), comprise the second group of problems. Whereas the large number of flats, insufficient lighting, neglected green spaces as well as the lack of colours belong to the fourth category. Lastly, the sense of instability caused by the rapid turnover of tenants, fights among immigrants, the widespread sense of insecurity, drug addicts as well as concerns about the presence of illegal immigrants are included in the perceived security issues.

From the perspective of town planning, the two skyscrapers, identified as tower A (composed of 22 storeys) and tower B (slightly lower) connected by little tower C, stand side by side at the edge of the town and are known as the “Grattacielo” (Skyscraper). These are perceived by the inhabitants of Ferrara as a separate entity because firstly they are the only examples of skyscraper in the immediate proximity of this historical town, and secondly because the complex of these two buildings represents the first skyscraper of Ferrara (Scardino 1995). They were built at the end of the ‘50s. But, despite its closeness to the boundary walls of the town, this is not included symbolically or from an urban point of view, in the heart of Ferrara whose form still constitutes a clear recognizable unit which divides the town into two (see fig. 2). On the one hand, we find the “Addizione Erculea” (name of the insertion of aristocratic quarters planned by architects such as Biagio Rossetti by the request of the Duke Ercole I of Este in 1492), dating back to the Renaissance period. This area is characterized by a rational organization of wide streets and by imposing buildings distributed along them according to a grid scheme, whereas, on the other hand, the medieval part of the town with its narrow, intricate web of streets can be seen. On the contrary, the two skyscrapers are located about 500 meters away from the entrance to the town centre; they are adjacent to the railway station and stand in front of a roundabout, from which they are separated by about 200 meters of green space. From a physical and geographical point of view it is evident that this position marks the exclusion of the “Skyscraper”
from the unitary body of the town that is circumscribed precisely by the boundary walls. In the architects’ mind and according to the municipality which commissioned its realization, on the one hand, the “Skyscraper” was meant to supply the middle class with affordable low-cost dwellings, and on the other hand, it was intended to evoke the idea of the tower structure of the houses in the Middle Ages. But despite the intentions of architects and of the municipality, how do the forms, the kind of lines and the typical way of shaping and structuring the space of a skyscraper affect the people who live in it? What sort of reactions and feelings does an urban area which is mainly occupied by skyscrapers and blocks of flats, provoke on its inhabitants and the people in contact with these spaces? What impressions do individuals coming from different parts of the world have as they stroll through these buildings which represent one of the most recognizable symbols of a modern city landscape? Can we speak of the existence of a basic, common and universal set of reactions to the mentioned architectonical elements, independently from the cultural variables of human behaviours related to the space? And, on the contrary, how do the different spatial and sensory worlds of the tenants from different cultures who live in skyscrapers, influence their way of experiencing this type of architectonical space?

**Grey “box houses” and the fulfilling of the minimum dwelling**

Before addressing these questions, let us consider some further aspects regarding the analysis of the formal, structural and aesthetic characteristics that we can deduce from the illustrations of the blocks of flats located in England (probably in the suburbs of Sheffield). The observer is initially struck by the dark grey colour of the external walls and then by the flat roof which forms a right angle with the façade. In particular, the absence of a sloping roof which – as the American essayist Tom Wolfe has noticed (Wolfe 2009: 22) – is surprising if we consider the amount of rainfall and snow at that
latitude. Then, we find the façade, which is simple and does not present any kind of ornament or further architectural elements. In other frames of the video (taken from the TV series “This is England 1986”, 2010) the narrow spaces of the flats, passageways and stairwells are also visible as well as the low ceilings of the rooms. Lastly, apart from the dark grey, the other colours we can see are white or pale grey. The most common aesthetic reaction to the mentioned formal aspects, at least for individuals coming from a western cultural heritage, is very likely to be one of judging the ugliness. Furthermore, these blocks of flats appear to evoke a sense of uneasiness. It is therefore interesting to explore the theoretical conception and the idea underpinning these architectural and urban choices. In this connection, I shall focus my attention on some of the main ideas of the International Style, in particular two of its leading figures, namely Gropius and Le Corbusier. Rather than analysing the elements of their architectural style or of their “poetics” per se – given that the characteristics are widely studied and known – I will attempt to shed light on the underlying concept of human beings upon which they built their theories. Furthermore, I will consider some of the main cultural and theoretical points of references they referred to, in order to sustain their positions in the fields of architecture and of urban planning.

Arguments for a functionalist and rational architecture and town planning

The first problems the Functionalists wanted to address, included, on the one hand, the issue of the deficiencies and difficulties resulting from the effects in cities caused by the progression of industrialization during the two world wars, and, on the other hand, the challenge of creating a new answer to the problem of the minimum dwelling/housing for the industrial working class (Gropius 2007: 123-132). The first set of difficulties can be summarized as follows: they wished to tackle the sizeable increase in the urban population, due to the demand for labour connected with the increase of the industrial production. Overcrowding was exacerbated in particular by the
shortage of housing. From this point of view, the construction of multi-floor blocks of flats seemed to represent the ideal solution. In fact, in their opinion, the advantage of these kinds of buildings included avoiding the increase of the distances between the place of work and housing. These types of buildings faced the problem of overcrowding by distributing and "ordering" in "healthy" vertical spaces the mass of workers, who were unable to find a decent housing in the already overexploited horizontal spaces of the industrial cities. Population had to be compressed, whereas streets had to be relieved from traffic congestion (Le Corbusier 2011: 189). Secondly, the transformation of urban communities into "factory cities" worsened the quality of life and health in them; cities became "insalubrious and unsanitary because of the miasmas which invade them and because of the population density". All of these elements made cities "an oppressive and psychologically alienating environment" (Argan 1988 : 248 ff.). According to Le Corbusier, already in 1925 the haste of people in cities as well as the speed and the number of cars had greatly increased. Therefore town planners had to face these new needs together with traffic congestion (Le Corbusier 2011: 132). Furthermore, the labour force had to become more efficient in order to facilitate the transformation of cities into production organisms because in Le Corbusier’s opinion, the time for working takes priority over “the time for leisure” (ibid.: 248). To make that possible, it was necessary to eliminate all obstacles that hindered the smooth functioning of the industrial towns (Argan 1988: 248), such as economic disorder caused by real-estate speculation. Lastly, the building techniques seemed inadequate to resolve the housing problem, which now had to be managed on a citywide planning scale. It was also necessary to substitute traditional building techniques and materials with those of faster standardised mass production, which industrial techniques of production enabled (ibid.). In this connection, Le Corbusier explicitly refers to the principles of Taylorism (Le Corbusier 2011: 177-178). Moreover, according to what Gropius wrote in 1924, this would have made it possible to unify dwelling buildings and to reduce the costs so that the multi-storey blocks of flats would have been affordable for the workers. Thus, the program of intervention of the architects and town planners who adhered to Functionalism sought to accomplish a rational reorganization of the city which was conceived by Le Corbusier as an organism, as testified by the recurrent metaphors he uses in his books. For instance, he speaks about the flats that represent the “cells” of the city, and refers to Paris as a “body” which is “seriously affected”. The demolition and construction of buildings in the centre of Paris without considering new solutions for traffic circulation represents a “cancer”, whereas the rational urban planning is the “surgery” which can cure the diseased town (Le Corbusier 2011: 246, 260-264). Broadly speaking, the aim of the functionalists was to make cities safer, more efficient and fit for use from the point of view of a society which was focused on the new industrial system of production and on the primacy of a business world (ibid.: 105). As Leonardo Lippolis illustrates, the international architectural avant-
The theoretical and cultural references of these conceptions deserve further though. On the one hand, especially in Le Corbusier’s case and at a lesser extent in Gropius’ theories, they seem to be represented by data and observations gleaned from all disciplines such as biology, statistics and a certain type of sociology which corresponded to a positivist idea of science. Results of researches in these fields constituted the basis upon which Le Corbusier and his followers tried to argue their urban planning and architectural projects and choices/solutions. In Le Corbusier’s writings we can detect some inflections that call to mind the futurists’ exaltation of speed and of the machine and technology era (Le Corbusier 2011: 92, 150) as something ineluctable which has to be further developed by overcoming the unproductive nostalgia of the past. Some of his expressions resemble a sort of Darwinist interpretation of the problems and of the potentialities of the great city (ibid.: 95), and the majority of his considerations expressly evoke the positivist faith in the power of science and of the technological progress as something ineluctable by solving urban and social problems (ibid.: 148).

Structural and aesthetic criteria: prescriptions, dogmas and “nuances” of the modern Style

The architectural and urban planning solutions to the afore-mentioned problems and concerns seem to be indisputably embodied in the following formal and structural elements. Firstly, geometry, the straight line and right angle became in themselves a
guarantee for the restoration and creation of order, whereas the curved line was considered a byword for disorder and chaos. Even from an aesthetic point of view, there appear to be few advantages as some urban planners such as Camillo Sitte argued (Le Corbusier 2011: 11). As Wolfe remembers (Wolfe 2008: 18-20), also the initial interest of Gropius in the curved line and in the expressionistic architecture was stigmatised by Theo Van Doesburg as bourgeois idea and consequently abandoned. In particular, Le Corbusier associates the curved street with recreation, whereas a straight road is connected with work and easiness in orientation (Le Corbusier 2011: 208). He also tries to justify this “spontaneous” preference through a physiological argument. If regular lines, shapes and volumes affect our sensory by provoking a sense of calm and by elevating our spirit, broken lines and indented outlines, such as those of North Europe cathedrals, give rise in his opinion to anxiety. They produce physical pain and evoke the idea of conflict (ibid.: 70-72). Thus a deterministic vision about how forms affects our feelings, physiological reactions and general wellbeing emerges in Le Corbusier’s conception to such an extent that, in his opinion, these considerations must constitute the basis upon which town councils should decide the exclusion of certain forms because of their negative effects. Secondly, the façades had to be devoid of all decorative elements: on the one hand because decorative elements can hinder the industrial standardisation of building production, while, on the other hand, they are superfluous. In this regard, it is interesting to consider the position of Hannes Mayer, the second director of Bauhaus, who claimed the refusal of artistic character in architecture by arguing that both architects and designers had to meet people’s needs instead of luxury requirements. The building industry had to aim for a social practical humanism. Thus architects and designers need only follow the general formula “function by economy” (Meyer 1928: 12) which underlay the form of each product in a kind of natural automatism (Möller-Thöner 2005: 31-32). Urged by other types of considerations (from a political point of view), Le Corbusier also claims an egalitarian town, which should be an expression of rational criteria, and which is embodied in a linear row of buildings, made of reinforced concrete and characterized by a uniform style, or by the aesthetics of skyscrapers with their regular and geometrical forms and volumes (Le Corbusier 2011: 178). Both of these examples correspond to the style of the modern times. Le Corbusier refuses therefore an aesthetics based upon individual differences, which legitimises the use of prestigious materials such as marble or of forms that are not strictly determined by their function alone. In fact, as we have seen, he assumes the existence of a universal human being, which means that individuals are all the same and that by fulfilling their universal, common, basic needs it is possible to realise everyone’s happiness. Therefore rationality and function must be the main criteria for the modern aesthetics of architecture and town planning. It has to be an aesthetics of order (Le Corbusier 2011: 98), based upon quantities, statistical data, mechanization, standardisation and measures which reflect the laws of nature and the forms which allowed the
perfect functioning of biological organisms (ibid.: 295 ff.). As a matter of fact, this conception constituted the background of the idea of the “modulor”, the scale of man’s proportions and measures according to which Le Corbusier and his collaborators planned the human spaces for the “unité d’habitation” he realized in Marseilles (1946-1952). The list of aesthetic criteria – which frequently became dogma of the modern style – could be continued by adding the stylistic characteristics and elements we illustrated by analysing the images of the blocks of flats in England.

Before considering some of the objections that have been raised with respect to this conception of architecture and of urban planning, let us now summarise some of the principle elements of it. Le Corbusier’s central idea of the necessity to use rational forms expressed in pure geometric shapes was based on his conception – inspired by Cartesian rationalism and the Enlightenment theories of Rousseau – that geometric forms correspond to the rational nature of man. This rational element was also essential for the early Bauhaus movement, led by Walter Gropius, although his point of departure was different: according to Gropius, the nature of human life is irrational. Moreover, in his opinion, what must instead be rational is the way that thought solves the concrete problems of life, and not the shapes these solutions take, because in his opinion the forms and shapes of objects and buildings are the way in which art – as a way of thinking – understands and experiences the world through the senses (Argan 1988: 255). Starting from a vision of human nature and of society as an organism comprised of a sum of functions (which calls to mind the conception of the evolutionist positivism), Le Corbusier believed he had found the solution to the problem of human happiness in the simple satisfaction of his basic functions. He did not address the issue of psychological and social unease which could result from the conditioning induced by the chosen urban and architectural configurations. On the other hand, it should be emphasized that Gropius’ attitude towards the previous solutions tends to become much more complex and nuanced in his late writings, especially as regards the power of rationality as the only indisputable leading criterion for town planning (Gropius 2007: 177-179).

The cultural dimension of space and the Skyscraper

But what is the outcome if we do take into account the cultural dimension of human use of space? And what are the consequences if we discover that the physiological aspects of human beings do not exhaust their needs and cannot fulfil their way of living and experiencing space? What are the implications if we solely consider that the universal human being and nature as Le Corbusier conceived them do not exist? In order to answer these questions we have to make reference to the following authors. Firstly, the anthropologist Edward T. Hall and, secondly, Franco La Cecla who is also an anthropologist. Hall was the founder of proxemics, the term he coined in the sixties to indicate “the in-
terrelated observations and theories of man’s use of space as a specialized elaboration of culture.” (Hall 1990: 1). His research demonstrated, for instance, “that Americans and Arabs live in different sensory worlds much of the time and do not use the same senses even to establish most of the distances maintained during conversations” (Hall 1990: 3). In particular, he states that he was “unable to discover anything even remotely resembling our own legal concept of trespass.” (Hall 1990: 163), as the Arabs, at least at the time he conducted his studies, did not seem to have the notion of privacy or to possess the idea of “life space” in public and in private places. This observation, in our opinion, takes on greater relevance if we compare it with Gropius’ assumption that the extreme reduction of spaces in the minimum dwelling (the “house-flat box”) would have respected the psychological and physiological needs of man merely by the construction of walls for guaranteeing his “Lebensraum” (living space). But, according to Hall’s research, it is the partition walls as well as low ceilings are elements which clash with the Arabs’ feeling and conception of space and which could seriously compromise their social and psychological wellbeing. Furthermore, as La Cecla has shown in his studies with the notion of “spatial mind”, the relationship between space, man and cultural habits is also a question of the way our identity is built because these relationships become part of us.

To conclude, I would like to draw reader’s attention to the following three excerpts from Hall’s most famous work. They refer to some considerations about architecture, different sensory worlds, and concerns about skyscrapers:

“I have always believed in the importance of aesthetics in architecture, but not at the expense of the people housed in the buildings. Unfortunately, today most buildings communicate in no uncertain terms that designing for people is low on our scale of priorities. All too often architects and planners are hamstrung by decisions made by financial experts concerned with “the bottom line.” Financial calculations are seldom based on any understanding of human needs or the ultimate costs of ignoring them.” (Hall 1990: XI).

“Since the French savor and participate in the city itself - its varied sights, sounds, and smells; its wide sidewalks and avenues and parks - the need for insulating space in the automobile may be somewhat less than it is in the United States where humans are dwarfed by skyscrapers and the products of Detroit, visually assaulted by filth and rubbish, and poisoned by smog and carbon dioxide» (Hall: 146).

“The Negroes have been particularly outspoken in their condemnation of high-rise housing. All they see in it is white domination, a monument to a failure in ethnic relations. They joke about how the white man is now piling Negro on top of Negro, stacking them up in high rises. The high rise fails to solve many basic human problems.” (Hall 1990 [1966]: 169)
A provisional conclusion

Coming back to Le Corbusier, from a sociological point of view, what he stressed is a specific ideal of everyday life, which corresponds to the satisfaction of the four basic “anthropological-urban categories”, to which the complexity, the potentiality, and the needs and desires of human existence is reduced. These categories are as follows: to work, to inhabit, to move about, and to spend leisure time.” (Lippolis: 187). Through the lens of Hall’s proxemics, both Gropius’ “Box-Houses” - corresponding to the ideal of minimum dwelling - and Le Corbusier’s unité d’habitation can be seen as a kind of architecture and town planning which implicitly reflects a specific model of “integration” of different spaces and sensory worlds, namely that of assimilation. In this regard, by making reference to Edward Hall’s works and Franco La Cecla’s notion of “spatial mind” (La Cecla 2011b: 34), I suggest, that skyscrapers can be seen as a symbol of a way of shaping space which reduces the plurality of space-sensory worlds and cultural ways of living and of using spaces to an abstract model which claims to be universal. In fact, as Lippolis observes, from Le Corbusier’s program a very specific conception of society emerges: a deterministic-utilitarian perspective which is conceived as a progressive proposal for an improvement of the functioning of urban activities and of the quality of everyday life (Lippolis 2007: 97). This conception not only assumes to have detected, upon the scientific basis, the universal elementary needs of human beings, but it also implies the firm belief in the existence of a universal kind of subject, whose needs do not depend on cultural dimension and heritage. On the contrary, according to the anthropologist Edward Hall, who founded proxemics at the beginning of the 1960s, beyond some parallels between human beings and animals concerning how different spaces and distances affect our behaviours, there is a microcultural dimension which shows how the way we perceive spaces and the way we use them reflects – not in a deterministic sense – the different sensory worlds developed by the different cultures. Some of the diseases we mentioned at the beginning of this paper concerning the case of the skyscraper in Ferrara could therefore be understood – at least partially – by taking into account the different habits and uses of public, common and private spaces of the tenants who come from different cultural and sensory worlds. And

Fig. 2 – Map of Ferrara (sketch by C. Portioli)
both local people and immigrants live in a sort of mutual lack of knowledge of the “silent language” (Hall 1959) of the other, as Hall called in his first formulation the cultural dimension of space. The “world in a skyscraper” is precisely the multitude of people coming from different cultures and experiences of space, who have to adapt to living in a pre-determined built space chosen by a single expression of one culture which presumed to be universal.

Bibliography

Argan G.C. (1988), L’arte moderna, Firenze, Sansoni
Bonaiuto M.- Elena B.-Fornara F. (2004), Che cos’è la psicologia architettonica, Roma, Carocci
Botta M.-Crepet P. (2007), Dove abitano le emozioni, Torino, Einaudi
Callari Galli M. (ed.) (2007), Mappe urbane. Per un’etnografia della città, Rimini, Guaraldi
Choay F. (1979), L’Urbanisme, utopies et réalités. Une anthologie, Paris, Points
Hall E.T. (1959), The Silent Language, Garden City, N.Y., Doubleday & Company
Hall E.T. (1996), La dimensione nascosta [1966], It. tr. Milano, Bompiani
Interviews (12/2011) to people in the area of “Skyscraper” in Ferrara realized by a group of students of the Faculty of Architecture
La Cecla F. (2008), Contro l’architettura, Torino, Bollati Boringhieri
La Cecla F. (2011b [1993]), Mente locale, Milano, Elèuthera
Le Corbusier (2011), Urbanistica [Urbanisme, 1925], It. tr. of A.B. Raini, Milano, Il Saggiatore
Imola, La Mandragora
Lippolis L. (2007), La nuova Babilonia, Milano, Costa & Nolan
Romano M. (2010), Ascesa e declino della città europea, Milano, Raffaello Cortina Editore
“Si suicida lanciandosi dal 18° piano” (6/2/2012), in www.lanuovaferrara.gelocal.it/cronaca/2012/02/06/news/si-suicida-lanciandosi-dal-18-piano-13153643
Simmel G., Sociologia [1908], It. tr., Torino, Edizioni di Comunità
Wolfe T. (2009), Maledetti architetti. Dal Bauhaus a casa nostra [1981], It. tr. of P.F. Paolini, Milano, Bompiani
PARIS, CAPITAL OF THE 19TH CENTURY:
PASSAGES BETWEEN NATURE AND HISTORY IN WALTER BENJAMIN

Aléxia Cruz Bretas

“The expression ‘the book of nature’ indicates that one can read the real like a text. And that is how the reality of the nineteenth century will be treated here. We open the book of what happened”.

Walter Benjamin, The Arcades Project.

From 1927 to 1940 – that is, during some of the most turbulent periods of the recent European history – Walter Benjamin was persistently faithful to a major long-term project: the Passagenarbeit (or Arcades Project). Complex, fragmentary, forever in ruins. In a nutshell it may be described as an unfinished work by an unclassified thinker. Sketchily composed of several layers or dimensions, this inconclusive chef-d’oeuvre constitutes an interesting yet provisory montage consisting of initial drafts, scattered quotations and eclectic annotations on the Urgeschichte or pre-history of the nineteenth century. Inspired by the Surrealist flânerie through the labyrinths of Paris, Benjamin offers an idiosyncratic approach to the arcades, panoramas, world exhibitions, interiors and barricades as “residues of a dream world”. Art Nouveau, painting, photography, architecture, fashion and advertising are just some of the different phenomena which constitute this compelling ongoing mobile of modernity.

Unfortunately the author did not live to achieve his goals. However he has left some clues. In this context The Arcades Project may be read as a kind of map or plan of construction of such an unfulfilled enterprise. In the archive “N”, dedicated to the discussion of the theory of knowledge in a meaningful parallel with the critique on the idea of progress, one reads: “The pathos of this work: there are no periods of decline. Attempt to see the nineteenth century just as positively as I tried to see the seventeenth, in the work on Trauerspiel.” Emphasizing the relation of continuity between the early and late studies, Benjamin draws the following comparison: “The book on the Baroque exposed the seventeenth century to the light of the present day. Here, something analogous must be done for the nineteenth century, but with greater distinctness”. Thus, in order to reach this major objective, the author rehabilitates allegory as a fundamental key reading of both constellations – the Baroque German theatre and the Paris of the Second Empire. Naturally, according to Benjamin’s own allegorical method of examining the past in the light of the present, such aesthetical – as well as political – configurations are necessarily
referred to within a contemporary framework. It means that important resonances can be felt between the book on the tragic drama, Expressionism and the catastrophes of the World War I, likewise the research on Baudelaire is somehow connected to the Surrealist experience and the horrors of the Nazi dictatorship followed by the Second War. In any case, an incipient theory of modernity may be deduced from Benjamin’s seminal studies on the figures of a secular “nature-history” performed in the Trauerspiel (17th century) and materialized in the passages of Paris (19th century).

The Baroque nature-history

Written from between 1916 and 1925, the controversial Origin of the German Tragic Drama has the merit of compiling some of the most influential themes that Walter Benjamin wrote in his youth. In more general terms, the so-called book on the Baroque is divided into three major theoretical axes based on three insoluble dialectical tensions: 1) the antithesis between the particular and universal – or in other words, between the Sachgehalt (material content) and the Wahrheitsgehalt (truth content of things); 2) the contrast between German tragic drama and Greek tragedy, that is, between the exhibition of the temporary character of history and the atemporal recurrence of myth; 3) the opposition between the figures of symbol and allegory, namely, between the organic totality of nature and the precarious traits of the human condition.

In fact, all these motifs orbit around a single centre: the presentation of history as the core of Trauerspiel. Against classic, romantic and contemporary interpretations of tragedy – such as the young Nietzsche’s for example –, Benjamin claims that the main content of German tragic drama is historical life itself, it is precisely at this point that it diverges from the Greek plays whose primary focus was not history, but myth. So what makes Baroque theatre distinctive is the firm initiative to promote the idea of destiny as an elementary force of nature – that is, as a natural-historical category that held particular significance in the Zeitgeist of the Thirty Years War (1618-1648). As Benjamin points out, if destiny leads inexorably to death, it is not shown as a medium or path to the apotheosis of the immortality of the hero, but rather as a somewhat crude expression of the guilty creature subjected to the laws of natural life. It is not by chance that such ubiquitous allegory is exemplarily represented by the paintings of Vanitas – commonly associated with the Still life genre in northern Europe, especially in Flanders and Netherlands. Extracted from the book of Ecclesiastes, the Latin motto “Vanitas vanitatum et omnia vanitas” (Vanity of vanities, all is vanity) is overwhelmingly depicted as one of the preferred themes of the seventeenth century. In brief it consists of several allegorical objects carefully arranged and portrayed in order to remind viewers of the transient character of earthly life. Then, chronometers, clocks and clepsydras mark the length and passage of time; empty glasses allude to nothingness; bubbles and extinguished candles indicate
evanescence; smoke suggests phantasmagoria; globes recall mundanity; faded flowers hint decay; rotten fruits mean degeneration; musical instruments refer to Arts and the pleasure of the senses; books represent science and human knowledge; swords signify military conquests; shells evoke birth and fertility; other objects, such as crowns, jewellery, coins, fabric, garments and noble ornaments all denote wealth, power, luxury and beauty. Ultimately all these aforementioned images emphasize the futile nature of all worldly things and proclaim the persuasive teachings of *Memento mori*: “Remember you will die”.

In reality, despite the great variety of items and articles painted after the *Vanitas* style, there is one object bearing an inscription in capital letters of the doctrinal message of Ecclesiastes, which demands the viewer’s attention: the skull. In the third chapter of the book on the Baroque, Benjamin maintains that, in contrast to symbolic representation, allegory shows us the *faccies hippocratica* of nature as “petrified primal landscape”.

> “Everything about history that, from the very beginning, has been untimely, sorrowful, unsuccessful, is expressed in a face – or rather in a death’s head. And although such a thing lacks all ‘symbolic’ freedom of expression, all classical proportion, all humanity – nevertheless, this is the form in which man’s subjection to nature is most obvious and it significantly gives rise not only to the enigmatic question of nature of human existence as such, but also of the biographical historicity of the individual”.

Essentially hybrid, the allegorical expression stems from a singular combination of nature and history submitted to the destructive flow of time. According to such a configuration, the skull turns out to be the quintessential emblem of the facticity of natural death as well as the worthless character of human life. Under the sign of the “earthly all too earthly” motto, the skull represents the ultimate crystallization of the rigid physiognomy of nature as the horrible mask of the same universal catastrophe – whose meaning was, according to Benjamin, fully evident in the Baroque cult of ruins. He compares: “Allegories are, in the realm of thoughts, what ruins are in the realm of things”.

**Baudelaire, alchemist of modernity**

In this sense Benjamin attributes to the figure of the alegorist the crucial task of saving dead things to eternity. That is why he compares his mission to Alchemy, whose main purpose is to transform metals into gold; or metaphorically, to transmutate a common material, usually of little value, into a noble substance. Ultimately, it is precisely what Benjamin intended to do with the rehabilitation of allegory in *Origin of German Tragic Drama* and also what he attempts to repeat in *The Arcades Project*. Not coinci-
dentally Baudelaire is taken as the hero designated to accomplish such an enterprise. Transposing the *Memento mori*’s doctrine from the Baroque culture to the Paris of the Second Empire, the author of the *Flowers of Evil* writes the poem “A carion” (*La charogne*) as if he had painted his own version of modern *Vanitas* as a profane allegory of the ephemeral existence of mortal creatures exposed to the devouring stream of time.

“Remember the object we saw, dear one,
On that fine summer morning so mild:
At the turn of a path a loathsome carion
On a bed sown with pebbles,

Its legs in the air, like a lubricious woman,
 Burning and sweating venom,
 Opened in a nonchalant cynical way
 Her body full of stench.

The sun shone on that rottenness,
 As if to roast it thoroughly,
 And return a hundredfold to great Nature
 All that it joined together.

(...) 

Yes! You will be like that, O queen of graces,
After the last sacraments,
When you go, under the grass and rich blossomings,
To rot among the bones.

Then, O my beauty, tell the vermin
Which will eat you with kisses,
That I have kept the form and the divine essence
Of my decomposed loves!”

Therefore the disgusting piece of meat found by chance in Parisian the streets of Paris represents nothing less than the same function of the skull, dead birds or faded flowers in the paintings of the seventeenth century: to remind the spectator of his own mortality. In strange syncronicity with the peculiar taste in German tragic drama for the amorphous, precarious and heterogeneous aspects of reality, Baudelaire aims to submit such natural disorder to the redemptive “intoxicating monotony” of artistic transfiguration. In doing so he believes he is interrupting the cyclic and essentially de-
structive dynamics of nature in the behalf of an ultimate goal: to extract the eternal from the transitory – or figuratively to obtain Gold from Sulfur. The poem “Parisian Dream” (*Rêve Parisien*) clarifies this purpose quite well.

“Of that terrible landscape,
Such as no mortal ever saw,
This morning the image,
Vague and distant, still excites me.

Sleep is full of miracles!
By a strange caprice
I had banished from that spectacle
Irregular vegetation,

And, a painter proud of my talent,
I enjoyed in my picture
The intoxicating monotony
Of metal, marble and water.

(...) 

Architect of my own fantasies,
I made pass, at will,
Under a tunnel of precious stones
A conquered ocean;

And everything, even the color black,
Seemed polished, clear, prismatic;
The liquid encased its glory
In the crystallized ray.

There was no star, no vestige
Of a sun, even at the horizon of the sky,
To illumine these prodigies,
Which shone with a personal fire!

And over these moving marvels
Hovered (a terrifying novelty!
Everything for the eye, nothing for the ear!)
A silence of eternity.”

389
Dedicated to Constantin Guys, the verses above contain *in nuce* some of the major elements of Baudelaire’s seminal aesthetic theory, which is in direct opposition to the prevalent conception of art as mere imitation of *physis* or a sterile cult of history. In addition, the poem indicates the path that makes him the first writer to apply the term “modernité” in regard to the transient character of contemporary life and arts.

“All forms of beauty contain, as all possible phenomena, something eternal and something transitory – something absolute and something specific. Absolute eternal beauty does not exist, or at best it is a mere abstraction drawn superficially from the surface of several kinds of beauty. The particular element of each beauty comes from the passions of man, as we have a particular passion, so we have our beauty.”

Considering modernity’s *pathos* for novelty (*nouveauté*), its ideal could reveal no less than the unique – but at the same time, ephemeral or transient – character of its beauty. In this respect, the poem “To a passer-by” (À une passante) illustrates Baudelaire’s attraction for such a “fleeting beauty”.

“The street about me roared with a deafening sound.
Tall, slender, in heavy mourning, majestic grief,
A woman passed, with a glittering hand
Raising, swinging the hem and flounces of her skirt;

Agile and graceful, her leg was like a statue’s.
Tense as in a delirium, I drank
From her eyes, pale sky where tempests germinate,
The sweetness that enthralls and the pleasure that kills.

A lightning flash... then night! Fleeting beauty
By whose glance I was suddenly reborn,
Will I see you no more before eternity?

Elsewhere, far, far from here! too late! *never* perhaps!
For I know not where you fled, you know not where I go,
O you whom I would have loved, O you who knew it!”
Passages as modern Vanitas

It is precisely this attraction for the evanescent or transitory features of modernity that moves Benjamin to work on his presentation of the Parisian arcades as the core of his current research compiled in the *Passagenarbeit*. Not by chance the term “Passage” itself – as a synonym for transition or threshold (Schwelle) – is enlightened by multiple meanings in several juxtaposed dimensions: 1) historiographically it denotes the passage between the Age of Revolution (1789-1848) to the Age of Capital (1848-1914); 2) architectonically it implies the passage between the ancient and the modern city of Paris; 3) aesthetically it suggests passage between arts and commodities; 4) politically it insinuates the passage between public and private space. Certainly all these senses are somehow present in the Benjaminian configuration of the galleries or arcades as a kind of modern temple primarily conceived for the profane cult of novelty.

Built in the first half of the 19th century, the so-called arcades or passages are usually considered the forerunners of department stores and a prelude to contemporary malls. Born as a result of the boom in the textile trade as well as the emergence of the use of iron in architectonic construction, the Parisian arcades were approximately 150 in number up to 1850, but most of them were demolished by the “haussmannization” of the city – that is, the urbanistic enterprise led by Baron Haussmann which would give rise to the large avenues and boulevards of the modern plan of Paris. Rediscovered some decades later by the Surrealists, the passages were already decadent when Benjamin writes his project and portrays them as “ruins of the bourgeoisie”. In the “Exposé de 1935”, the author quotes an *Illustrated Guide to Paris* and gives a brief description of these rather typical *Art Nouveau* constructions:

“These arcades, a recent invention of industrial luxury, are glass-roofed, marble-paneled corridors extending through whole blocks of buildings, whose owners have joined together for such enterprise. Lining both sides of the arcade, which gets its light from above, are the most elegant shops, so that the passage is a city, a world in miniature”.9

Likewise in the book on the Baroque, the “world in miniature” in *The Arcades Project* is dominated by the same natural-historical immanence prevalent in German *Trauerspiel* and summed up in the *Memento mori*’s powerful warning: “Remember you will pass away.” That is the reason why the configuration of *Vanitas* is still valid for describing the typical impermanence of people and commodities in constant circulation through the passages of Paris. In place of skulls, there are dolls and mannequins. Instead of allegorical objects, there are *specialties* and commodities: flowers are replaced by perfumes; chocolate substitutes fruits; cigarettes take the place of can-
dles; books are superseded by magazines and newspapers. In short, painting is supplanted by advertisement. Always new, always identical: all is vanity! Not coincidentally, fashion is the perpetual motion of this eternal cycle of production and consuming of goods. Benjamin notes:

“Fashion prescribes the ritual according to which the commodity fetish demands to be worshipped. Grandville extends the authority of fashion to objects of everyday use, as well as to the cosmos. In taking it to an extreme, he reveals its nature. It couples the living body to the inorganic world. To the living, it defends the rights of the corpse. The fetishism which thus succumbs to the sex appeal of the inorganic is its vital nerve”.10

Moved by the “sex-appeal of the inorganic”, fashion allows nature to incorporate to its own domains even the human body.

“The fantasies of Grandville correspond to the spirit of fashion that Apollinaire later described with this image: ‘Any material from nature’s domain can now be introduced into the composition of women’s clothes. I saw a charming dress made of corks... Steel, wool, sandstone, and files have suddenly entered the vestimentary arts... They’re doing shoes in Venetian glass and hats in Baccarat crystal’”.11

That is why Benjamin infers:

“Grandville’s masking of nature with the fashions of midcentury – nature understood as the cosmos, as well as the world of animals and plants – lets history, in the guise of fashion, be derived from the eternal cycle of nature. When Grandville presents a new fan as the ‘fan of Iris’, when the Milky Way appears as an ‘avenue’ illuminated at night by gas lamps, when ‘the moon (a self-portrait)’ reposes on fashionable velvet cushions instead of on clouds, then history is being secularized and drawn into a natural context as relentlessly as it was three hundred years earlier with allegory”.12

Meaningfully Paris – specially the Paris of the Second Empire – was chosen to be the emblematic space-time to materialize Benjamin’s configuration of modernity as a kind of second nature or “oneiric Zeitgeist” dominated by the enchanting fetish of commodity. To be sure such constellation takes on a multifolded conception in which history is presented as a rather complex arrangement of pieces or “layers” of time. Thus, Benjamin’s flanerie throughout the Paris of the 30’s implies, simultaneously, an arche-
ological and surrealistic journey through its several strata of constructions and ruins. In the steps of Baudelaire and Aragon, the author attempts to reveal the real – or even the surreal – face of the great metropolis, drawing attention to some of its most dream-like phantasmagorias: fashion, photography and advertising. In his view, fashion updates the Baroque wisdom of Ecclesiastes, incorporating what is described as the natural-historical “eternal return of the new” – the pivotal motto of the hellish capitalist faeries. Photography follows the Baudelairian maxim of “extracting the eternal from the transitory”, confirming the “loss of aura” as one of the most prominent features of the work of art in the age of its technical reproduction. Advertising, in turn, represents the cunning by which the “images of desire” (Wunschbilder) penetrate in the realm of industry, bringing to the light the fantasies and dreams of the collective.

To conclude, these three contemporary phenomena constitute the major tripod of Benjamin’s primal history of the nineteenth century. The reason for which his Arcades Project (Passagenarbeit) provides substantial documentation for the montage of a fascinating yet uncomplete puzzle of modernity hosted by a distinctive environment in which people and things are naturally supposed to pass away. That is why whoever looks carefully at such eclectic piles of merchandises - showcased to be desired and – of course – consumed may perhaps hear an ironical advice of Madam Death: Remember all is vanity.

Bibliographical References


Notes

4 Walter Benjamin, Origin of the German Tragic Drama, p. 178.
5 From the original: “Rappelez-vous l’objet que nous vîmes, mon âme,/ Ce beau matin d’été si doux:/ Au détour d’un sentier une charogne infâme/ Sur un lit semé de cailloux,/ Les jambes en l’air, comme une femme lubrique,/ Brûlante et suant les poisons,/ Ouvrait d’une façon nonchalante et cynique/ Son ventre plein d’exhalaisons./ Le soleil rayonnait sur cette pourriture,/ Comme afin de la cuire à point./ Et rendre au
centuple à la grande Nature/ Tout ce qu’ensemble elle avait joint.// (...) Les formes s’effaçaient et n’étaient plus qu’un rêve./ Une ébauche lent à venir./ Sur la toile oubliée, et que l’artiste achève/ Seulement par le souvenir.// (...) Oui! Telle vous serez, ô la rein des grâces./ Après les derniers sacrements./ Quand vous irez, sous l’herbe et les floraisons grasses./ Moisir parmi les ossements./ Alors, ô ma beauté! Dites à la vermine/ Que j’ai gardé la forme et l’essence divine/ De mes amours décomposés!”.


6 From the original: “De ce terrible paysage,/ Tel que jamais mortel n’en vit./ Ce matin encore l’image./ Vague et lointaine, me ravit./ Le sommeil est plein de miracles!/ Par un caprice singulier/ J’avais banni de ces spectacles/ Le végétal irrégulier./ E, peintre fier de mon génie./ Je savourais dans mon tableau/ L’envivante monotonie/ Du métal, du marbre et de l’eau.// (...) Architecte de mes fées./ Je faisais, à ma volonté./ Sous un tunnel de piergeries/ Passer un océan dompté;// Et tout, même la couleur noire./ Semblait fourbi, clair, irisé;/ Le liquide enchâssait sa gloire/ Dans le rayon cristallisé./ Nul astre d’ailleurs, nuls vestiges./ De soleil, même au bas du ciel./ Pour illuminer ces prodiges./ Qui brillaient d’un feu personnel;/ Et sur ces mouvantes merveilles/ Planait (terrible nouveauté!/ Tout pour l’œil, rien pour les oreilles!)/ Un silence d’éternité”. Charles Baudelaire, *Flowers of Evil and other writings*, p. 79-81.

7 Charles Baudelaire, *Flowers of Evil and other works*, p. 165.

8 In the original: “La rue assourdissante autour de moi hurlait./ Longue, mince, en grand deuil, douleur majestueuse./ Une femme passa, d’une main fastueuse/ Soulevant, balançant le feston et l’ourlet;/ Agile et noble, avec sa jambe de statue./ Moi, je buvais, crispé comme un extravagant./ Dans son oeil, ciel livide où germe l’ouragan./ La douceur qui fascine et le plaisir qui tue./ Un éclair... puis la nuit!/ Fugitive beauté/ Dont le regard m’a fait soudainement renaître./ Ne te verrai-je plus que dans l’éternité?// Ailleurs, bien loin d’ici! trop tard!/ jamais peut-être!/ Car j’ignore où tu fusis, tu ne sais où je vais./ Ô toi que j’eusse aimée, ô toi qui le savais!””, Baudelaire, Charles. *Flowers of Evil*.


1. Seoul, the Capital City of Korea

Over six hundred years have passed, since Seoul became the capital of the Joseon dynasty (1392–1897) in 1394. Hanyang, the old name of Seoul, had a population of 100,000 at that time, but now has grown to ten millions. The city’s boundaries have expanded as well, from 16.5 to 605.25. Over the years, Seoul has changed from a fortress town into a gigantic metropolis.

The area where Seoul is found today first came into prominence as Wiryeseong, capital of the Baekje Kingdom (18 B.C.–660), and has maintained its role as the geopolitical center of Korea ever since. After further expansion and the formation of its rudimentary structure during the Goryeo dynasty (918–1392), Hanyang was chosen as the capital city of the Joseon dynasty by the founder King Taejo.

Construction of the palace began in December 1394 under the supervision of Jeong Dojeon, a merit subject. Jeong himself named the Gyeongbok palace, which means the ‘palace of shining blessings’, after a phrase found several times in the Chinese Book of Odes. The first phase of construction was completed in less than 10 months, including the two main halls of Geunjeongjeon and Sajeongjeon in the central courtyard. To protect the palace and the growing capital a wall was built in a loop that ran about 16 kilometers along the ridges of mountains. Nine gates provided access through the walls. The 600 year-long history of the city began thereafter.

We can enumerate the historical and cultural meanings of Seoul city as following.
- Seoul is a city with over 2,000 years of history.
- Seoul has been the capital city of Korea for more than 600 years.
- Seoul is a city vibrant with tradition and history coexisting with the dynamic, cutting-edge technology of the 21st century.
- Seoul is a city that has overcome the sorrows of war and national division and has achieved the world-renowned ‘Miracle on the Han River.’
- Seoul is a city of festivals that hosted the 1988 Summer Olympics and the 2002 World Cup with millions of cheering Red Devils.
- Today, Seoul seeks to transform itself yet again. The city that achieved such rapid growth over the past century is preparing to transform itself into a city that values de-
sign. By joining the UNESCO Creative Cities Network, Seoul seeks to become a part of the global network of the creative cities in the world. The hope is to share experiences and to discover possibilities through deeper communication with other cities.

In addition, Seoul is nominated as the place where the 20th International Congress of Aesthetics will be held in 2016.

In this paper, I will illuminate the significance of the location and structure of the capital city Seoul in terms of East Asian geomancy or ‘fengshui’ theory.

2. Fengshui and Sites for Dwellings

The question of where to live both in this word and the next one has long been one of humanity’s fundamental concerns. Where and how to build a home that promises ‘happiness’ has been a common concern in East Asia and Western Europe. However, when it comes to considering life after this world, Europeans seem to have been mainly worried about the destination of their soul in ‘paradise’ and have had relatively minor concerns about where their bodies were buried. East Asians, on the other hand, have taken their place of burial seriously and in many cases have given it greater consideration than where to live in this world.

In East Asia, the process of selecting a favorable house or gravesite and the proper constructions of them gradually developed into a system called ‘geomancy.’ As used here, the term refers to the ancient Chinese art of selecting an auspicious site. This art is known as ‘fengshui’ in China, ‘poongsu’ in Korea, and ‘fusui’ in Japan, which literally means ‘wind and water.’ Although the English word ‘geomancy’ originally meant “divination by random figures formed when a handful of earth is cast on the ground,” and it does not have the same connotations as the Chinese word fengshui, it is used here because it has been widely accepted by Western scholars.

Fengshui is often identified as a form of geomancy, or divination by geographic features, but it is mainly concerned with understanding the relationships between nature and human beings, in order to create harmony. Early fengshui relied on astronomy to find correlations between humans and the universe. Fengshui is the practice of bringing about good fortune among the living, the dead and the spiritual world by making sure objects placed in a landscape or space are in harmony with the universe.

Also known as geomancy, fengshui is often expressed in terms of Chinese and Taoist cosmology and is said to be over 3,500 years old. Fengshui has been practiced in various forms by a number of cultures throughout history. Believers regard it not as a religion or superstition but as a science whose goal is to create balance and harmony among the five elements of nature—water, fire, wind, wood and earth. We may say that fengshui is an East Asian art of living in harmony with the environment. It is not a miracle. It is not magic. It is like a catalyst.
Entire cities in Korea have been laid out according to fengshui principals. Seoul was established along the Han River by fengshui masters who were looking for a place where the energies of the wind, water and earth would bode well for the future. They liked the site because of the relationship between the winding Han River and the eight surrounding mountains. In the old days many buildings in Beijing were oriented with the fengshui in mind, namely with their backs towards the north and the mountains and their fronts facing towards water and the south.

Ideally, fengshui masters are consulted before buildings are built and designs are drawn up. It is not unheard of for recently constructed buildings to be torn down, or for people to refuse to occupy them, because they are out of harmony or face the wrong direction. Sometimes the buildings can be saved if certain countermeasures are taken, such as locating mirrors at key areas. Other times people are undeterred and move in anyway.

There are probably few ideas in the world more closely related to the natural environment than fengshui. Its premise is that certain locales are more auspicious as sites for dwellings or geomantic harmony of nature by discriminately modifying either natural or cultural landscapes. Moreover, for the attainment of one’s prosperity, the selection of an auspicious site for a house or grave must be made according to geomantic principles. It is difficult to place geomancy in a Western category such as religion, superstition, or science, as it includes all three elements. Therefore, geomancy is best defined as the unique and highly systemized ancient East Asian art of selecting auspicious sites and arranging harmonious structures such as graves, houses, and cities on them by evaluating the surrounding landscape and cosmological directions. Geomancy has had a deep and extensive impact on Korean culture. The use of land can hardly be understood apart from it.

The story of the choice of Seoul as the capital in 1394 through applying geomantic ideas is one of the best documented cases of such influence among all East Asian cities, including Beijing, Nanjing, Kyoto and Nara.

Geomancy has played a vital role in city planning in East Asia. It has been a key factor in determining urban locations and planning urban landscapes there. An auspicious city site is typically a flat basin with protective hills in the background. A useful watercourse such as a river, stream, or lake is situated in front. The watercourse should not form a straight line but flow slowly in meandering shape, giving the impression that it loves the auspicious site and is reluctant to flow away from it. The site should face an auspicious cosmological direction, which is normally south, as it allows the maximum amount of sunshine. This direction can only be determined with the aid of a ‘geomantic compasses’ by a geomancer. In the construction of palaces and other city structures, the choice of an auspicious direction is considered extremely important.

Geomancers say that no matter how auspicious the surrounding landforms and watercourses may be, a wrong choice of direction can bring great misfortune to the place.
The hills in back of the site should form the end of an undulating mountain range called the main mountain. They should be shaped like a horseshoe and have arms extending forwards on either side, as if to protect the site. The most auspicious site at the foothill of the main mountain is known as the ‘geomancy cave’ (xue). It is not literally a cave but an auspicious site where the palace or administrative headquarters should be built. The front of an auspicious site should be an open space. And the size of the site should be suitable for its purpose.

Of course, vital energy is believed to accumulate in such a site. It flows under the ground and can give birth to and invigorate living creatures, including humans. Thus, the aim of finding an auspicious site for a city is to utilize the vital energy that is there.

‘Iconographic warfare’ reflects the new trend in cultural geography. It was related closely to fengshui theory. There was a fierce battle between Japanese colonialism and Korean nationalism over the landscape icon of Korean sovereignty. ‘Gyeongbok Palace’ of the Joseon dynasty, was constructed in 1395 on the most geomantically auspicious spot in Seoul and has been the symbol of Korean government authority ever since. When Japan colonized Korea in the early of 20th century, the Japanese colonial government mutilated the palace by destroying many of its buildings and by constructing the Japanese icon of colonial rule. In 1995, exactly fifty years after the liberation of Korea from Japanese colonial rule, the Korean government demolished the Japanese colonial building to reconstruct the icon of Korean sovereignty, Gyeongbok Palace, to its former glory.

The evaluation of the site for a city is based on complicated geomantic principles recorded in various geomantic manuals and carried out by professional geomancers who may employ mystic and vague jargon to justify their choice of site. However, the traditional geomancers and geomancy textbooks generally agree that the three important factors in determining an auspicious site are the landform conditions, the availability of water, and cosmic orientation. The obvious question now is how were these principles for evaluating a site developed into the art of geomancy?

3. Principles and Elements of Fengshui

What are the key concepts and structure of fengshui theory? Korean fengshui is composed with the following three parts.

First, it involves examining the ‘qi’ (cosmic energy or life force) of a land, then determining use of the site that is suited to its qi. What sites or areas are suitable for graves? What locations are suitable for homes, temples, or schools? What areas have the potential to become cities? Fengshui is typically applied to these three areas: fengshui for gravesites, fengshui for residential sites, and fengshui for village and city sites, even the case of capital of a country.
Second, after determining suitable use for the land, fengshui is used to determine the spatial arrangement and structural layout of the selected site in accordance with the ‘basic properties of East Asian thoughts’: yin-yang, the five elements, eight trigrams and the unique theory of fengshui. In the case of a residence, fengshui is applied to determine the physical layout of such elements as the front gate, bedroom and kitchen. Today, this type of fengshui is quite well known in the United States and Western Europe as well.

Third, a central tenet of fengshui calls for the alteration of sites that do not correspond with the two aforementioned principles so that they conform to fengshui concepts. This is known as complementary and suppressive fengshui; such that, ‘good’ sites are complemented, ‘bad’ sites are suppressed.

According to fengshui theory, if a person lives on a good site he or she will be influenced by that site and become successful (housing site fengshui), and if an ancestor is buried at a good site, his descendants will prosper, but if an ancestor is buried at a bad site, his descendants will suffer misfortune. A ‘good site’ is one that satisfies the principles of fengshui. Propitious sites are determined by the lay of the land, which requires a balance among the blue dragon (of the east), white tiger (of the west), red phoenix (of the south), black tortoise (of the north) and another conditions.

Where is the ideal fengshui site? Fengshui defines the conditions of propitious sites for graves and housing lots. Those propitious sites refer to the lay of the land which is surrounded in equilibrium by the blue dragon, the white tiger, the red phoenix and the black tortoise - which direct themselves to easterly stretches of the hills, the westerly stretches of the hills, the southerly lay of the land, and the northerly lay of the land respectively.

Then, how can we interpret fortune from the four surrounding components, pit-hole of energy concentration, shape of mountain, water, etc., which are located on or around graves and housing lots. (Fig.1 Diagram of Fengshui Principle)

1) Black Tortoise (Main Mountain)

Source of ‘vital energy’: concentration or non-concentration, capacity, strength and weakness of vital energy depend on its size, shape, soil condition etc. It means source of good fortune, prosperity, long life, wealth of one’s family.

2) Blue Dragon

The task of blue dragon is to keep the vital energy in good condition on the left
site of graves or housing lots. In the interpretation on the fortune in viewpoint of feng-shui, it is connected with son and grandson, especially first-born son and first-born grandson, honor, power, government position, and with direct descent staffs etc.

3) White Tiger
The task of white tiger is to keep the vital energy in good condition on the right site of graves or housing lots. In the interpretation on the fortune in viewpoint of feng-shui, it is connected with daughter, wife, money of one’s family, and with subsidiary followers.

4) Red Phoenix
The task of red phoenix is to keep the vital energy in good condition in the front of graves or housing lots. Its shape should be beautiful, in order to be considered as having affection. In the interpretation on the fortune in viewpoint of feng-shui, it is connected with sort and pattern of success or vice versa of misfortune etc.

5) Mountain Ridges (Oncoming Dragon)
   It is the part between the main mountain (black tortoise) and the pit-hole of energy concentration. It is very important part, because it transports the vital energy from black tortoise to pit-hole of energy concentration. Therefore mountain ridges are classified into many categories according to feng-shui criteria: dead and living, main and branch, concurrent and anti-concurrent, strong and weak, concealed and appeared etc. Without it no good fortune (career in government, wealth, prosperity of descendants etc.) is possible, as if the electric light without electric current would not be lighted.

6) Propitious Site (Pithole)
   It is ‘good places’ for the living and the dead, in which the vital energy is concentrated. People, who are inhabitants on the propitious sites or descendants of ancestors buried on the propitious sites, can obtain the fortune only through the vital energy, which is concentrated on propitious sites beneath the ground.

   According to the shape, the propitious sites are classified into 4 categories, and these 4 categories are again classified in details, which determine the capacity, sort and term of good fortune.

7) Water around the Propitious Sites
   New Text for Fengshui, which was a main fengshui text to prepare the certification test for state administrative fengshui master in Joseon dynasty, defines ‘water’ in feng-shui as follows.

   “The mountain, a static material, belongs to yin. Water, a dynamic material, belongs to yang. The characteristic of yin is constancy, and that of yang is primarily change. Now, the matter of auspiciousness or inauspiciousness is fundamentally related to the observation of water. Generally, the mountain is comparable to the body, and the watercourse to the blood vessels of human body. The matter of the growing or perishing of human bodies depends on the condition of the blood vessels. When blood is circulated around the body and flows orderly, the person is healthy and strong. However, in
the opposite case of above, everyone is subject to disease or death. No one is an exception to this natural principle. This principle then requires the correct water flows, and a right location of mountains in order to form an auspicious place.\textsuperscript{5}

According to certain criteria (taste, color, temperature, flow course, volume and location of water), ‘water in fengshui’ is classified in several categories. Each kind of water has its own function in the formation of fortune and misfortune. Especially water is connected with increase or decrease of wealth of one’s family.

8) Bright Yard

Bright yard is the area in front of propitious sites (pit-hole), in which farmers do farming in the country, students play the game in school, or habitants make a garden. Bright yard is classified into various categories according to certain criteria (scale, distance, inclination, etc.)

Another Joseon dynasty fengshui book \textit{Text on the Clarifying the Mountain} classifies bright yard into 30 categories based on size and sort of fortune.\textsuperscript{6}

9) Direction of Mountains and Watercourse

There are two schools in fengshui, namely ‘form-school’ and ‘compass school’. Compass school examines the direction of mountain and watercourse by the geomantic compass. The theory of compass school can be found in \textit{New Text for Fengshui}. The purpose of the examination of direction of mountains and watercourse is to tell the fortune of the habitants and the descendants.

Fengshui masters ‘examine and analyze’ all possible factors, which are mentioned above. Their main task is to ‘read’ the lay or configuration of the land in pursuit of propitious sites ranging in quality from poor to excellent. All fengshui master do not come to the same conclusion, even they observe the same graves or the same birthplaces at the same time. Their personal experiences as geomancers and scholastic ability in the fengshui texts lead them to different conclusions. Only well trained geomancers to a high degree can ‘read’ the ‘earth’ at one glance with the aids of his knowledge and experiences in fengshui. A good geomancer can be defined as the man, who can integrate all factors in one word. At this moment mountains and watercourse around a grave or a birthplace appears in a form of one animate or inanimate thing. The stage of this ‘reading on earth’ can be called ‘intuitive seeing acts’.

We can get fengshui intuition only when long and steady study opens our intuitive eyes. Mother earth tells us her story after we observe and admire her long enough period of time.

4. Seoul as an Ideal Geomancy Model

The original site of Seoul was obviously located in a geomantically auspicious site. Gyeongbok Palace is located in the geomancy cave of the city. The original city is sur-
rounded by mountain ranges, especially its northern end. Bukak Mountain is the main mountain or the ‘black tortoise’ of the city. From there a mountain range extends in an arch flanking both sides of the city. The Inwang Mountain range encircles Seoul on the right side of the main mountains, becoming the ‘white tiger’ of the city. Naksan is the hill that encircles Seoul to the left, hence it’s the ‘blue dragon’. Namsan, the south mountain, is the peace mountain of Seoul, and Gwanak Mountain is the homage mountain. These two mountains thus become the ‘red phoenix’ of Seoul. A long mountain range behind Bukak Mountain represents the ancestral mountains of the main mountain. Seoul has a relatively large basin that becomes the bright yard of the city located among the main mountain black tortoise, blue dragon, white tiger, and the peace mountain. Small streams from the nearby main mountain flow into the center of Seoul, while the large Han River flows in front of the city. <Fig.2 Fengshui of Seoul City>

Seoul thus has highly auspicious geomantic harmony. As many geomancers have noted, it is one of the most qualified capital sites of Korea. Within the naturally formed geomantically harmonious landscape, the Joseon dynasty developed a city of balanced size that fits well into the basin. On the ridges of the mountain range that surround Seoul, the city wall was built to define the city boundary and complete the city landscape.

Historically, many kings and officials in China, Japan and Korea were keen to shift their capital cities to auspicious sites. The process of making Seoul the capital of the Joseon dynasty shows how eager rulers of a new dynasty in East Asia could be in their search for a new capital site.

For Taejo, the first king of the Joseon dynasty, geomancy was critically influential in his choice of Seoul as the capital. The city was laid out according to geomantic principles and Gyeongbok Palace was built in the city’s most auspicious location. The Annals of the King Taejo vividly traced the story of the impact of geomancy on the selection and lay out of Seoul.

Let us now briefly reiterate the auspicious geomantic qualities of Seoul. The original city is encircled by a mountain range from the north, east and south, and the main palace of the city is located at the foothill of the south of the southern slope of encircling hills. At a somewhat distant location south of this palace, a lower hill fences the city, and further south from the hill a river flows from east to west. Within the landmarks of the four directions, a relatively large basin developed and the original city of Seoul was built on this flat land. With such a situation, Seoul has highly auspicious geomantic harmony. As many geomancers have noted, it is certainly one of the most qualified capital sites of Korea.

Within the existing geomantic harmony, the Joseon dynasty developed a city of balanced size that fits well into the surrounding environment. The important mountains around the city have been carefully protected from denudation. However, presently the geomantic balance of Seoul is being ignored and destroyed by the developments of a large metropolitan area. The downtown area is now filled with tall buildings, the
small streams inside the old city are covered with concrete, and the sacred mountains and hills are covered with houses and apartments.

When one observes the landforms surrounding traditional Korean cities, including Seoul, one can usually see the geomantic reasons for their sites. But traditional city sites are now becoming indistinguishable in appearance from modern ones. Because the modern areas have generally expanded in size and have replaced the buildings of the older areas with western style buildings. Almost all administrative cities of Korea built before 1910 have their main offices, such as the royal palace and the local government offices, in the most auspicious area of town. These cities are located where all the necessary geomantic objects (such as the main mountains, blue dragon, and white tiger) are found.

The country offices or city halls during the Joseon dynasty were located at the foothill of these main mountains. The places where local country offices were considered as administrative urban centers were usually enclosed by city walls. A significant portion of the population inside the walls was people who had non-agricultural occupations such as civil servants, merchants, artisans, and entertainers. The location of the main mountain of every county indicated in the geography book is evidence that each administrative urban center of Korea was placed in a geomantically auspicious site.

5. City, Fengshui and Politics

Now, let’s see the issue of transition in the viewpoints of fengshui and the capital position in Korean history. Seoul was founded as a capital city of Korea during the Joseon dynasty. However, even before the Joseon dynasty, moving the capital from Gaegyeong (the old capital city of Goryeo dynasty) to Hanyang (former name of Seoul) had already been argued about during the Goryeo dynasty. At that time, there were lots of anxieties, accidents and affairs in the country, which wise men attributed to the weakened energy of Gaegyeong.

People have believed that there was certain energy in the land that influenced the rise and fall of a nation. There were always problems once negative energy from the people soaked into the land. A city is not only a physical space that consists of buildings and roads, but also a psychological and cultural space constituted by a network of human relationships. Once the ruling party exclusively occupies a specific place and accumulates social and cultural properties, it negatively influences the fate of a nation. The hereditary and unofficial power caused instability in government policies and disconnection in communication channels.

The retainers and commanders of Goryeo founded the Joseon dynasty. Without clear justification, the movement of the capital city from Gaegyeong to Hanyang(Seoul) would have not been possible because they didn’t want to lose their
support base. Hanyang was cautiously recommended by fengshui experts, who took all possible facts into consideration. The government officials and fengshui experts kept adding their efforts to preserve the divine energy of Hanyang and protect it from possible misfortune. The major mountains surrounding Seoul were named to protect the capital city and five major gates in each direction, east, west, south, north and center, were built to maximize the fate of the country.

After moving the capital city to Hanyang, Joseon dynasty achieved glorious success, both politically and culturally. They hired not only natives but the talents from the provinces. Hanyang became a melting pot to gather and create new cultures from different provinces. It was considered as a land of opportunity. As time passed, factions, feuds and greed for power and wealth soaked the city again.

Entering 21st century, now, Korean government is planning to move an administrative capital to a new settlement area Sejong city. Now the problem is not Sejong itself but Seoul as a capital city. Seoul needs to purify the vicious energy in the city once again to make it a land of opportunity. Lessening the burden of Seoul can be a solution by moving part of its functions.

Fengshui is the art of strategic placement of space in order to achieve harmony with the environment. It is applicable any time when spacing and arranging of items, including cities, in an environment is necessary. The unique spacing mandated by fengshui creates a fluid environment, allowing the life force \( qi \) to freely flow through a space and its occupants. The result is harmony, balance, lack of confusion, minimal stress, better health, and further happy life.

Recently, landscape ecologists find traditional fengshui an interesting study. In many cases, the only remaining patches of old forest in East Asia are ‘fengshui woods,’ which strongly suggests the ‘healthy homes,’ or sustainability. Environmental components of ancient fengshui techniques should not be easily dismissed.

Fengshui theory was originated from the East Asian human consciousness and attitude toward nature and natural landscapes. The cognitive and empirical topographical notion of fengshui seems compatible with modern landscape ecological perspectives. For instance, the notion of ecological sustainability which depends on the combination of adaptability and change in ecological and human systems is consistent with the central tenet of fengshui theory that has a major bearing on the urban planning and landscape management in East Asia.
Notes

1 Webster’s New World Dictionary of the American Language, 1966, p.605.
3 Hong-key Yoon, Geomantic Relationships between Culture and Nature in Korea, Taipei: The Orient Culture Service, 1976, p.234.
IX - Ecological and Aesthetic concerns
1. We do not want to and we can’t grapple with the problem of the validity of the concept of megalopolis, as formulated by Jean Gottmann in 1961 when he dealt with the urban continuum extending from Boston to New York, Philadelphia, Baltimore as far as Washington; that is the concept of increasing urbanization connected with the industrial development, which was a source of economic growth and welfare. Centre of organization, direction and administration with an influence beyond its boundaries. Increasing importance of tertiary industries. Actually the rapid interruption of demographic concentration and the diffusion of suburbanization restricts the validity of this concept.

Nevertheless, the crisis of the idea of megalopolis begins with globalization, since the eighties, with changes in the world of work and production (deindustrialization, delocalization), with the development of computerization and of communications, with the internationalization of financial markets, with the formation of worldwide power networks.

It has been subsequently spoken of mega-cities (over 5 million inhabitants, nowadays there are more than 45), of super-giant cities (over 20-25 million residents), of world cities, and global cities. “After megalopolis the global city” Gottmann will write in 1991. Vittorio Gregotti speaks of postmetropolis to indicate the characteristics of the globalized metropolis, the city where the service industry predominates, with a delocalized organization of production (He meant emancipation from the places according to the principle of economic profit and automation of the very production).

However the phenomenon of urbanization, for different reasons, constitutes an important constant and growing aspect: today the urban population includes over half of mankind. And if in Europe the greatest urbanization is linked to globalization, in the Third World (where industrialization remains poor) it is due to the migrations from the country and to the endogenous demographic growth. In the Third World megalopolies unemployment and underemployment flourish together with informal and marginal economies, the building complex is surrounded by shanties without essential facilities: poverty, social inequalities due to low income, possibility of employment and social mobility, increase.

With globalization mega-cities become more and more important, new power networks are established, which have no more a local and regional importance but have
reached a planetary level. It has been spoken of world-cities as of places where agencies and international institutions have been established which organize the whole world system of production and exchanges, putting themselves beyond the national power of every single state, exerting a real economic control and as well as the management of the financial market. And starting from the nineties global cities have been spoken of: in the globalized economy a network of cities organizes and controls the running of the system combining financial activities and services (centrality and international trading guidance: New York, Tokyo, London; Sao Paulo, Los Angeles, Montreal, Sydney, Miami). Social inequalities between new elites (financial experts, information technologists, designers, fashion designers) and temporary workers get worse (Divided cities). Illegal work, informal economy, wage cut; poverty, dingy living conditions. Satellite centres (suburbanization). Shanghai works for a rational organization with the program “One City and Nine Towns”. We especially draw all historical information from Petrillo (2004).

More exactly Gregotti speaks of camp-cities (chap.IV) and draws attention to the controlled enclosures which define the richest settlements. Rise of violence (7 millions of USA families live in armoured complexes. Sprawl, slums, shanty towns, mixture of country remains and urban fragments. The difference between the city and the country disappears. The country is considered as arable land, wilderness and protected nature or reserve. Mexico City, Caracas (precariousness), Cairo, Lima, Istanbul. Johannesburg (the city centre is divided into areas according to their multi-ethnic origins). China, South Korea, Japan; India (Bombay).

“Cities – Gregotti writes – all cities, grow… according to the ideology of deregulation which is mistaken for flexibility… perhaps because they all look at the model of postmetropolis as unlimited expansion without rules… cities built as accumulation of tamped and useless objects competeting with one another: higher and higher only for beating one’s neighbor.” “Next to the increasing rise of postcity there grows the nightmare of the lower and lower social standing of suburbs.”

2. We are far from the perspective of an harmonious city founded on civil life in common. The modern city as Metropolis-Macropolis-Ecumenicalpolis, had said Rosario Assunto, the functional city of Prometheus, contradicts the historical-natural city of Amphion-Orpheus, by devasting the landscape by which it had been embraced in the course of time. Assunto, whom we can consider the spokesman of ecological aesthetics ante litteram, resolutely condemns total modern urbanization. Faced with the world distorted by the race for progress and utility Assunto claimed the beauty not as an insignificant epiphenomenon but as a condition of physical and spiritual health. That was the legacy of the beautiful, according to Assunto. The diffusion of industri-
alization and urbanization replaces the free spontaneous nature with universal planning and design. The harmonious relation of the city into the landscape and of the landscape into the city breaks. In fact the aesthetic discovery of a natural landscape is a way of removing nature from its savagery, a humanization of nature, it is the reconciliation between man and nature celebrated in the Orpheus’ myth. Today, even Venice is no more city-in-the-landscape, but city without any landscape, surrounded by urbanized and industrialized spaces.

Assunto did not oppose nature and city but the destruction in the urban landscape of a humanized nature of which he considered the garden eminent symbol. On the other hand, what do we mean by nature? Even the primitive, wild nature, not yet transformed by man, the deserts (Antarctica, Sahara, the Kalahari, Gobi, internal Australia), the equatorial forest (Mato Grosso), the high mountain, the lunar land, and so on (not to speak of the biosphere), this nature is immediately showed to us but not, so to say, “in itself”, it is not known regardless of the technical tools and the states of mind of the observer, and that shows the impossibility of a nature tested apart from culture.

It is also true, all human history is a history of the adaptation of nature to man and of man to nature, that man pursues for his advantage and his life. The meeting of nature and culture, in the broad sense of cultural anthropology, does not imply the destruction of nature but its conformation to the ideal of aesthetic harmony and pleasant existential stay, to the ideal of happiness and beauty pursued by man. We can say nature and culture must find their relation in the context of ethos.

The ancient Greek word ethos (ἦθος) means residence, habitation, habitual stay of men and peoples and also den of animals, and that brings us back to nature, but to a nature which is already culture. Moreover ethos means habit, usages and customs, and that belongs to culture, but a culture which sinks its roots in nature, in the residence. We can show with the concept of ethos the harmonious relation of nature and culture; in this context, in ethos, architecture, town planning, the megalopolis itself take place. Without this unitary form, this experienced meaning, without this close ductile relation, breaks the harmony between city and landscape, between city and the country, the very basis of civilization is shaky. The revenge of nature as primordial strength, as structure on which culture can rise, which does not allow to be commanded, is then unavoidable.

The unlimited enlargement of modern city reduces the individualized place to space, the landscape to territory, Assunto said. We must remember that according to Heidegger the very things are the places, the place is not in the space given in advance like technical-scientific space, but this space spreads out first of all from the dominion of the places of one land. So sculpture is to become body of the truth of the being in its work which is founder of places, and it does not place itself in a uniform space given in advance. We can go back to the origin of the work of art (1936): built on the rock, the temple opens a world and, at the same time, it brings it back to the earth, that only then is revealed as native ground.
The place, as the seat of existential reality itself, as immediateness of the living experience, not the space, is the point of reference of our daily acting and of our life. We must also remember that according to Marc Augé the non-place is an anonymous space, which cannot be defined either as identifying or relational or historical. The birth is the birth in a place, the birth place constitutes the individual identity. The anthropological place is identifying: the residence rules, the quarters, the squares, the territory correspond for every person to a whole of both spatial and social possibilities and instructions. The passenger of non-places finds his identity only at the customs examination, at the tollgate or at the cash register. The place is relational, where distinguished peculiar components are distributed according to relations of coexistence, in an overall configuration. The anthropological places create an organic sociality, non-places create a solitary contract. The place is historical, its resident lives in history, he can recognize points of reference in the history people have lived. On the contrary up-to-dateness and urgency of the moment reign in non-places. The space of the non-place does not create either identity or relation, but solitude and similitude; it is the opposite of residence and dwelling. And the hypermodernity produces non-places: motorways, railway stations, airports, hotel chains, amusement parks, supermarkets, the tangle web and so on. In the non-places we simultaneously experience perpetual present and self-meeting:

“...ce quadragénaire élégant qui semble goûter des bonheurs ineffables sous le regard attentif d’une hôtesse blonde, c’est lui; ce pilote au regard assuré qui lance sa turbo-diesel sur on ne sait quelle piste africaine, c’est lui; cet homme au masque viril qu’une femme contemple amoureusement parce qu’il utilise une eau de toilette au parfum sauvage, c’est encore lui.”

The temptation of narcissism is more charming because it seems to express the common law to behave like the others to be themselves. The non-place is the contrary of utopia: it exists and does not give hospitality to any organic society. Perhaps it is by now the time for an ethnology of solitude. So Marc Augé.

3. Zygmunt Bauman as well emphasizes the importance of the place: in places human experience takes shape, mounts up and is shared, and its sense is elaborated, assimilated and negotiated; in the places, and thanks to places, wishes develop themselves and take form, increased by the hope of coming true, even if nevertheless they risk disappointment, and, to tell the truth, they are often disappointed. But the situation of global society is even more complex from the strictly social-economic-political point of view. In the world of globalization and in the megalopolis precariousness and uncertainty make the construction and the finding of a place to give sense to our existence, impossible. Paradoxically, cities, originally built-up for the security of all their residents,
now, more and more frequently, rather than to security they are joined to danger.

Bauman speaks of transition from the solid to the liquid stage of modernity. Social forms, institutions, behavioural models, break and dissolve quickly, and they cannot again be considered as points of reference any more. The divorce is effected between power and politics, individuals are exposed to the oddity of goods and labour markets, flexibility means uncertainty, planning and action are impossible in the long term: environmental fears and obsessions for the security spread out. Exclusion from active participation seems more and more irrevocable and excluded persons turn into dangerous classes. The step from redundant workers to useless and inactive persons, who are forming the underclass, and from that class to criminals, it becomes shorter and shorter.

Our globalization, Bauman continues, up to now is completely negative, that is greatly selective of trades and capitals, of surveillance and information, of coercion and of weapons (crime and terrorism – all phenomena that now despise the territorial sovereignty and do not respect any state frontier). Today the long-awaited open society is not self-determination, but the terrible experience of heteronomous and vulnerable populations, overcome by forces that they do not control or understand, unable as they are to put up a defence, obsessed about the security of their own boundaries. In the global world, populated by societies necessarily open, where the destiny of anyone influences the destiny of all the others and at the same time it is influenced by them, security, freedom and democracy cannot be attained and guaranteed only in one country or in a number of countries. Global illegality and armed violence increase and strengthen each other. Safe shelters where to hide do not exist. We all are in danger and we all are a danger to one another. Without any compass, without any guide. It is the end of utopia, we must look for and recognize whomever and what, in the middle of the hell, is not hell, asserts Bauman quoting Calvino (*Città invisibili*). I would like to define Bauman a pragmatist, not a pessimist, because of his awareness on the open problematic of global reality and actual situation.

4. What aesthetics in the globalization world? If, with the word aesthetics, we grasp all the range of the sensitive experience, from sensation to perception and imagination, till we can embrace the field of feeling, certainly in practical-gnoseological relation, so to say, each time with its contents and/or objects, that is with the whole of the sensitive world and of phenomenal reality; and then we consider all this experience from the point of view of sentiment of pleasure and regret: then the question rises according to two different perspectives. The aesthetics of designers, of *creativi*, of fashion designers, of beauty parlours, of consumerism, of tourism, of cruises, of farm holidays, of fitness centres, and so on; or the aesthetics of the slums, of shanty towns, of urban and nuclear waste, of the vortex of waste in the Pacific Ocean, of galloping pollution,
of the greenhouse effect and of the planet superheating, of the ozone hole, of the irre-
versible damage made by modernity until globalization. Aesthetics of pleasure, of the
beautiful and beauty or aesthetics of the ugliness, of the unlike and the difformity, of
the obscene and of the disgust? Surely we all wish aesthetics of beauty, even if beauty
has been for too long abused and inflated, and not aesthetics of the ugliness. But one
cannot survive without the other and the two aesthetics are complementary in the glob-
alization world. No megalopolis without waste, no society without uncertainty and
myxophobia. Also in the Maldives a tourist paradise there is an island overloaded with
waste overflowing into the sea. Do we wish to speak of a liquid aesthetics? and, if we
speak of it, what sense, and above all what value, has this liquid aesthetics?

Bibliography


liana, Supplemento II: pp.864-875.


U.P.

Berleant, A. 1997. Living in the Landscape. Towards an Aesthetics of Environment. Lawrence:


(eds), La città prossima ventura. Bari: Laterza, pp. VII-XXIII.


Supplemento III: pp. 157-164.
IS LANDSCAPE AS ENERGY A USEFUL THEORETICAL TOOL FOR THINKING ABOUT CITY AS NATURE IN RENEWABLE ENERGY TRANSITION?

Silvia Minichino

1. Landscape as Energy and City as Nature

«Energy needs space» Ghoson, 2010

Energy questions are closely related to space utilisation and space perception. In Landscape of Energy (2010) Rania Ghosn affirms that energy is actually visible in space and it needs space. Therefore Energy is closely related with spatial planning (Owens, 1986), landscape design (Zass-Bangham, 2009, Stremke, 2011) and several public policy areas (Nadai et al.2011). Spatial organisation of society results from energy production and consumption systems. Energy and societal structures are the main components of a socio-technical system (Verbong & Geels, 2007). This text argues that ways to produce and consume energy come from the technological and aesthetic perception of possibility in space transformations. Furthermore, the knotted problem is the relationship between aesthetics and technology in the spatial transformation process, in other words in the design process. Here, energy means electricity from renewable sources. Existing new targets in European energy policies underline the role of electricity in conceiving and designing spatial transformation. Spatial transformation of European regions are envisioned by Landscape (European Landscape Convention, Florence 2000) both at a policy level and a professional - people level.

In this article, Landscape is considered as a product in order to argue a possible operational approach in energy embodiment in spatial transformation and especially in landscape transformation. To sum up this concept, it is possible to affirm that Landscape is a product of sectoral policies (Pedroli, 2010), a product of individual and collective choices (Ferrario, 2011), and a product of cognitive perception (Farina, 2009). These three processes of production refer to three different disciplines: landscape architecture, spatial planning, and landscape ecology. Landscape is not considered an object in any of the three cases, but a tool to interpret policies, collective and individual ideas and finally involvement of activities in territory. In fact, Pedroli, while considering landscape as a product of sectoral policies, refers to the geographical concept of landscape, but shifts the emphasis on policy as a tool for viewing transformations. Landscape is firstly a future vision, and then space. Ferrario also starts from the geographical concept of landscape, by considering the relationship between human activ-
ities and land (Sereni, 1972), but she considers the problem from a planning point of view. Landscape becomes a tool to introduce individual choices into planning devices. Farina explicitly states that landscape is not “a manageable subject, but a perceptible object.” Through the concept of *eco-field* (Farina & Belgrano, 2006) he proposes landscape as the tool to reconstruct the relationship between semiotics and individual habitats. Therefore, if one accepts the fact that landscape is a tool for the interpretation and design of spatial transformations in an area, but is not the area itself, landscape will become a general principle of designs (Paolinelli, 2011), here, energy designs. Accordingly, Landscape could be envisaged as a design frame. In conclusion, Landscape is considered a tool to introduce energy issues in the design process and in people’s habits. For these reasons Landscape as Energy could be a useful tool to approach the city’s transformations as transformations in nature. Landscape design has two main targets: to provide ecosystem services, meeting societal needs (Nassawer & Opdam, 2008) and to add odd meanings, meeting people enjoyment (Lassus, 1998). Therefore what should landscape design add to renewable energies projects?

### 2. Built Environment and Energy Landscape

City could be considered both a way to conceive spatial transformation of nature and a particular way in living the natural environment. City is also a concept which is strictly related to the built environment concept. Therefore Landscape as Energy could be basically helpful in conceiving regional planning and changing customs by settlements issues. Indeed, buildings are the actual link between these two dimensions. This point of view has been discussed by previous authors. This text gives two different concepts as examples: Built Environment (Angelucci, 2011) and Energy Landscape (Stremke, 2010). They deal with design and natural elements from two different points of view. The first from that of a technological architectural designer, the second from a landscape designer.

*Energy Landscape* indicates a specific approach in energy land transformation. It focusses on sustainable landscape design. Landscape is considered a machine (Ronken et al, 2011) and energy is a principal structuring design strategy at a regional scale. The term *Energy Landscape* allows the focus on two problems regarding land transformations due to the diffusion of renewable technologies. The first is the spatial planning model. Energy Landscape is regarded as the “[...] part of a physical environment where energy needs can be fulfilled by locally available renewable sources. In order to be sustainable, the provision of energy services must not harm other landscape, biodiversity or landscape qualities” (Stremke, 2010). Designing spaces by energy principles deals with the ecological functioning of the territory. Changes are designed at the regional scale and they affect flows and spatial organisation. The second problem con-
cerns the technological issue at an architectural level. *Energy Landscape* should also be constructed by a technological frame. “The landscape construction process is basically analysed and interpreted in visible characters, applying only aesthetic aspects and energy and bioclimatic elements are neglected [...]” (Angelucci, 2011:69). Regarding architectural design, a contamination with landscape design principle is necessary. These authors have very similar conclusions from two different fields. Although approaches maintain a scientific discipline in conceiving landscape and in proposing design solutions, a precondition for a common strategy creation is made: designing new living scenarios. In the Energy Landscape concept, the term landscape is interpreted as a mechanism which is capable of regulating territorial functioning and in the Built Environment concept as an urban, human-made space. Both authors identify the necessity of energy-conscious design. Using the Energy Landscape term means thinking about the design of everyday places through the energy category, with the aim of transforming and improving their functional and symbolic workings. Therefore the expression Built Environment is about how to interpret housing and producing.

Separately, Energy and Landscape indicate two different approaches to human habitats designing. Together, they express a new approach to design land transformations and especially city transformations. This means that two cultures, landscape ecology and technological architecture, which are always kept separate, are brought together: energy is embodied in dwelling cultures. This promising contamination, including aesthetics issues, could contribute in putting into practice many renewable energies issues. A new technological area, energy production from renewable sources, requires a convergence of two different ways of looking at places: landscape culture and technological culture. The involvement of technology in landscape has not yet been thoroughly investigated (Jakobs, 2008) and the increased use of renewable technologies calls for it.

3. Energy Transition and Landscape Transition

The gradual transition process from an electricity production fossil fuel-based system, to one based on renewable sources, is a type of Energy Transition (Odum, 1976). This process could result in a different organisation of living spaces due to a substantial change in density, structure, regulation and management in electricity production and consumption (Tsoutsos & Stamboulis, 2005). With the term Energy Transition, this text refers to renewable energy transition. This analysis focusses on possible spatial organisation in this energy transition. The spaces, or rather places, where the phenomenon takes shape, become central elements in a Landscape Transition (Nadai et al. 2011). Landscape Transition could also be interpreted as an incremental change in the behaviour of individuals and communities, public and private choices regarding energy, spatial regional configurations and finally imaginations associated with them. Indeed,
the modality of energy production is able to pattern built spaces, both considered as technological infrastructure, physically present in lands, and considered an intangible component of network. (Perrotti, 2012)

Spatial implications in energy production and consumption are elements linked to the concept of landscape, interpreted as a product and a principle of general design. A short and not exhaustive diachronic analysis indicates that since 1930, when “[…] l’usage du pétrole se démocratise” (Rabourdin, 2011), the shape of human settlements and anthropic spaces have been gradually transformed into what it still is: landscapes of network, first vertical and then horizontal cities (Pavia, 2002). The 1973 oil crisis introduced the issue of electricity production solely from fossil fuels in the international debate. The European energy policy for renewable energies started with the White Paper: Energy for the future - renewable sources of Energy (COM 97 599). The widespread diffusion of renewable energies sources started in Europe thanks to this initiative.

How is Landscape involved in these transformations?

Regarding the relationship between landscape and renewable energies, two different scenarios can be included in the summary, only partially realised: on one hand, the construction of large plants for electricity production. This scenario is linked to the design approach and could be called overlay. It comes from the environmental mitigation attitude. On the other hand, there is a distributed energy generation according to a design approach, which could be called re-configuration. The second scenario involves the entire territory, therefore a lot of ‘actors’ take part in landscape transformation. Market forecasts and European energy policy guidelines indicate a possible growth of distributed energy generation mainly concerning photovoltaic technology. This is because of simple use and the possibility of integrating or embodying this technology with existing buildings (De Von Beck, 2010). This is an important change in conceiving buildings and in the architectural/regional scale relationship. Governmental and business initiatives are supporting this renewable technology spread. The European Convention (Florence, 2000), defines Landscape as “a zone or area as perceived by local people or visitors, whose visual features and character are the result of the action of natural and/or cultural (that is, human) factors. This definition reflects the idea that landscapes evolve through time, as a result of being acted upon by natural forces and human beings. It also underlines that landscape is a whole, whose natural and cultural components are taken together, not separately.” It seems possible to find a link between landscape and energy production in this definition: energy production is strictly related to natural characters and renewable energy production depends on local features of land and community. To sum up, energy and landscape are tools to design a more sustainable transformation of human settlements. In other words, landscape transformation blending in energy production could be a convergent subject to achieve landscape qualities goals. In conclusion, landscape could be considered an energy policies product.

Energy policies, as well as other sectoral policies, are involved in a “territorialisa-
tion” process. “[...] territorialisation is the production of territory which is in turn a space produced by the action carried out by syntagmatic actors” (Dansero & Putilli, 2010:325). This concerns the political paradigm of landscape (Jackson, 2003, Olwig & Mitchell, 2007; Fortin, 2007; Bedard, 2009). Jackson explains that a political landscape is always designed and technologies and customs are able to pattern it. In this sense, it also becomes a political device. Olwig and Mitchell argue that landscape is not simply the visible forms of the land, it is also the social, material and economic processes that it produces that enables us to call it a political landscape. It is the relationship of power that ultimately shapes this landscape, though this shaping might apparently be counteractive to material and social sustainability. According to Fortin, this substantially influences policies affected by landscape especially European Community policies. Geopolitical dimensions are also involved in local dimensions through the political landscape paradigm.

Sure enough European policies, especially those relating to energy matters, are considered a paradigmatic example in describing the phenomenon of the territorialisation of policies. Indeed, they influence the organisation of space, (Fortin, 2007; Brovarone & Putilli, 2008) and are implemented and adapted to particular territories by institutional rules and people’s customs (Raffestin, 1980). Policies structure lands because they build choices which shape space. This process reveals a knotted problem: the relationship between policies and design (Sgard, 2010). Landscape and consequently, landscape design could be useful tools to overcome this theoretical and operational leap.

The hypothesis is that landscape design can effectively link spatial transformation to the making of energy policies. This issue refers to the more general hypothesis that “landscape design can effectively link science and society in knowledge innovation for sustainable landscape change.” (Nassauer & Opdam, 2008). Namely these authors make inquiries about the inventions of technology and design in decision making. Starting from these considerations, this paper aims to explore the energy policies - landscape design –landscape transformation relationship.

Technology represents a common background for the abovementioned elements. Accordingly, the technological architectural approach to design is considered in order to explore the possible contribution of the landscape design approach to (1) spatial transformations due to photovoltaic diffusion and therefore (2) in photovoltaic policies making.

The first step concerns technology and the exploration of the landscape relationship. Some photovoltaic applications are analysed in order to identify elements that can define a landscape dimension in Italian photovoltaic policies. These Italian experiences are envisioned by design as a “product and action” (Nassauer & Opdam, 2008) because professionals’ perceptions of problems are considered a crucial point in developing design-policies integration strategies.
4. Technology and Landscape

Technology is “the total sum of knowledge and processes that contribute to extending the human capacity to adapt to the environment and to evolve in it” (Ciribini, 1984:24). Starting from this definition, here, noun technology has two meanings: on one hand, the body of knowledge, methodological and procedural issues that take a technological approach to architectural design (Angelucci, 2011). On the other hand, photovoltaic devices are considered technology.

In this context, the Landscape and Technology relationship is analysed by comparing two pairs of concepts: Energy - Landscape and Nature – City. The first duo is considered a conceptual device to frame a possible interpretation for the second one.

Nature, as biosphere, becomes Energy through design concepts. City as inhabited Territory becomes Landscape «as process and practice» (Nadai, 2011).

How could scholars, professionals and individuals contribute in changing these meanings?

Changing Nature to Energy comes from the introduction of the renewable energy issue into the scientific debate. Natural elements, for instance light radiated by sun, could become the main element in design processes. Nature as biosphere, id est the set of natural elements, becomes energy as a complex exchange system from natural elements to settlements.

This process also requires a technological approach to landscape transformations. Conceptual transition from Energy to Landscape and from Nature to City results from debates on nature and society (Bertrand, 1998). Bertrand argues that societal change to space transformation is related to three processing classes:

- **Unity of action** or production. Changes are due to cultural and material systems.
- **Unity of time**, which corresponds to a defined period of the transformation process.
- **Unity of place** that defines transformation space.

They are all complex phenomena and landscape is a useful paradigm to describe land transformation by human activities. Therefore City is a partial term to describe the entirety of human actions. A lot of knowledge from different disciplines is needed to solve a great number of problems.

To sum up, the Landscape - Energy duo indicates a new process approach to spatial transformation and highlights unpredictability in some built space transformations and for this reason we can have a conceptual change from the term City to the term Landscape. Political practices provide a principle of spatial organisation (Nadai et al., 2011) and therefore concerns landscape issues. Landscape, rather than City, adds a possible plurality of actors’ involvement in design by a discursive practice.

Conceptual moving from Nature - City to Energy - Landscape takes places from the «Mind and Nature paradigm» (Beteson, 1984) revisited in the «Mind and Landscape approach» (Morelli, 2011). Mind is the unfolding of the whole system of rela-
tions constituted by the multi-sensory involvement. Nature, that becomes Landscape, is an emergent property of physical elements in collective decisions and individual choices. In the second approach, the link between mind and landscape is described by a cognitive dimension. In the Beteson paradigm, relationships, also descriptions of reality and learning processes, have a central role. Landscape further highlights the special role of humankind and the environment relationship. Landscape becomes both an instrument and a learning field. Knowledge achieved by landscape is both scientific and concerning everyday practices.

The European energy situation highlights the need for a new interpretation of the relationship between energy and land. Landscape, as a result of the reflection on this concept and its operational implications in the last twenty years, appears as a central element. This phenomenon, especially concerning widespread renewable energy, could replace centralised models of large facilities. By analysing these dynamics, it is clear that energy policies affect the presence of these technologies in landscape and a new process in structuring built environment is starting. Most effective mechanisms are governmental incentives.

Therefore Landscape comes into policies across the board and there is a call for landscape integration in policies. A reflection on the policies and landscape regarding renewable energy is a knotted problem to be investigated. The first problem to be solved is to understand what this integration means and then the possible way of communicating landscape dimension in energy policy. How could this integration take place? Technological design and knowledge from landscape design are considered the starting point.

5. Landscape design and photovoltaic policies

This last part analyses two different cases of PV systems:
- PCUBE (Parametric Pavilion Photovoltaic) is a PV installation furniture made by Officina Creativa in collaboration with Nitens, spin-off at the University of Salento in 2008.
- FTCC (Floating, Tracking, Cooling, Concentration) undertaken by SIT in collaboration with Koinè Multimedia in the municipality of San Giuliano Terme in 2011.

These two applications represent two samples of a larger group of analysed projects with the aim of creating a taxonomy to bring out design processes and design attitudes.

The rule by which taxonomy is waxed comes from following question: what is the relationship between Energy (electricity produced by PV system) and Landscape from a designer’s point of view?

The development of PV technologies occurred very swifly and this was caused mainly by the mode of incentive allotment. Fast changes generally occurred in a non-
sufficiently reasoned way, both in the planning and in the siting. For this reason production design is perceived as an opportunity to understand what the operating procedures actually are and what is its relationship with the landscape. Those Italian planning laws and regulations which had the task of providing guidance on this transformation were designed mainly according to a protection perspective in certain specific portions of the territory and no tools were able to influence the ways of the transformations. So the choice of the design attitudes analysis provides an adequate key to understand the phenomenon. The categories presented above correspond to the many transformations of landform: large areas of land occupied by solar panels, especially in rural areas; small-scale but widespread in rural, peri-urban and industrial areas with a substantial reorganisation of the infrastructure of the electricity distribution system; and lastly, small or very small sized-devices, especially in the urban context.

The design attitudes identified are: plant design - customary, odd, imagery-, land use - zoning, new praxis, exchange-, architectural - overlapping, envelope, concept-, multilayer - infrastructural, public space, landmark-. The first category (plant design) collects the traditional design logic linked to plants for the production of electricity. Production takes place in a particular site and is centralized. This is a design approach which is even present in an unusual location, such as creative plants (floating plants), or plants with strong symbolic value (solar fields). The second category (land use) corresponds to a design approach which considers energy production as use of land, hence the design focuses on finding the correct way to implant placement. The choice of where to place the plant has a central role in this type of approach with regard to the new uses of industrial sites and in equalisation energy. The third category (architectural) envisions photovoltaic technology as closely related to architectural design, either in existing buildings or new buildings. The fourth category (multilayer) collects those designs with multiple possibilities of interpretation.

The design attitudes that emerge from these categories are used to reflect on the technology- landscape relationship. (fig.1)

In analysing the relationship between technology and landscape in the photovoltaic design, the following questions are asked:

1) Regarding the technological approach to design: does it take landscape into account as a general principle of design? This question aims to make the technological approach (performance approach) stand out as a landscaping process.

2) Regarding the technological approach to design: does it provide useful tools for the analysis of landscape? An ex-post analysis of design strives to understand what the transformations and their characteristics are. Therefore the question seeks to determine whether it is possible, on the technology side, to conduct an analysis of landscape features.

3) Regarding technology: is it able to clearly communicate the level of innovation related to landscape transformation? The ability a project has in communicating its
essence and the meanings attached is considered an essential element in the relationship between technology and aesthetic dimension. Each design depends on the ability to understand and be able to use technology in the construction of landscape transformations.

4) Regarding landscape as a general principle of design, is there an exchange of knowledge and skills from technology to aesthetics and vice versa? This last question raises the issue of how an exchange of skills and knowledge can occur at the conception time and what the possible language to be used is.

PCUBE (Parametric Photovoltaic Pavilion) is a mobile installation in public spaces. The design approach adopted is multilayer / public space.

This realisation is useful to understand what some possible modes of interaction are, coming from technological and landscape culture in design process. The project goal was to try to provide an element to be placed in a public space that used standard solar panels to create a new meeting space in residential areas. Methodology took into account two different types of parameters: maximum energy production, and adaptability of architectural spaces and places. (1) The design approach was of a technological kind and, although not explicitly, landscape was considered a general design principle. Space was taken into account as a main element to achieve project goals. (2) The technological approach involved both the location of photovoltaic panels in order to have optimal radiant and solar collection, and maximum use. This application shows a possible point of contact between technology and landscape. (3) One of the project aims was to communicate the possible use of photovoltaic technology. (4) Indeed a PV pavilion is a place where anyone can carry out exchanges of skills and knowledge.

FTCC (Floating, Tracking, Cooling, Concentration) is a technology patented by SIT, Science, Industry and Technology. This case is a pilot project in Colognole in the municipality of San Giuliano Terme, province of Pisa. This project belongs to the category plant design / odd. The project involved placing a small installation of floating solar panels in tanks of artificial irrigation. The technological approach resulted in finding a good location for solar panels: small reservoirs characterize many areas therefore it was an
easy opportunity to repeat the experience. The realisation came from a private initiative. (1) Landscape design does not enter explicitly in the strategy statement of this project. However, the presence of artificial lakes and elements characterising transformations of this area, were the basis in the design concept. (2) Project transformations overlapped an existing transformation. (3) Design ability to communicate technology innovation was effective. (4) In this case there was not an exchange of explicit knowledge. Therefore no relations were found between the field of knowledge related to technology and the one connected to landscape from the point of view of design strategy.

Previous cases represent two types of specific interventions characterized by their repeatability in a wider setting. They are located in public spaces and in production areas. Both provide a way to read energy conversion of land from small intervention.

5. Conclusion

This article explains some staring points to develop a doctoral thesis entitled “Renewable energy and Landscape. Policies and Design to build new landscapes.” It therefore shows partial results.

The actual problem about the relationship between policies and design is evident especially in renewable energy matters. Landscape as defined by the European Landscape Convention (Florence, 2000) is strictly involved in energy transformation. Landscape design as a process is able to provide ecosystem services meeting societal needs (Nas-sawer & Opdam, 2008) and to add something more in spatial transformations (Lassus, 1998). For these reasons it could have a central role in the making of energy policies.

References:

Angelucci,F.(2011), La costruzione del paesaggio energetico, Franco Angeli, Milano
Anguillari, E. et al. (2011), Paesaggio e Benessere, Franco Angeli, Milano
Bateson, G. (1984), Mente e Natura. Un’unità necessaria, Adelphi, Milano
Bédard, M. (2009), Le paysage. Un project politique, Presse Universitè du Quebec
Dansero,E.and Putilli, M.(2010), Territory and energy sustainability: the challenge of renewable energy sources in Journal of Environmental Planning and Management, Volume 53, Issue 4
Jakobs, M.(2008), Le paysage, Infolio, Colletion Archigraph Poche, Paris
Ferrario, V.(2011), Il paesaggio e il futuro del territorio (osservare e programmare) in Paolinelli,
IS ENERGY-LANDSCAPE A USEFUL THEORETICAL TOOL FOR THINKING ABOUT SPRAWL-CITY IN ENERGY TRANSITION?


Indovina, F. (2009), *Dalla città diffusa all’arcipelago metropolitano*, Franco Angeli, Milano


Pedrol, B. (2010) *Anticipating landscape policy; driving forces*, in Landscape and driving forces, 8th meeting of the Council of Europe workshops for the implementation of the European Landscape Convention proceedings


Sereni, E. (1972), *Storia del paesaggio agrario italiano*, Laterza, Bari

Sgarde A. (2010), *Le paysage en politique in development durable et territoires, vol. 1 settembre 2012*


Zaas-Bangham L. (2009), *Sustainable Landscape Design*, Lavosier Paris
The city is an urbanized area works as living organism since its dynamic aspects perceived as a network of social interactions. A unique aura of social memory in relation with social interactions of the citizens are often shaped by the physical appearance of the city. American urban planner Kevin Lynch states in his book *The Image of the City* (1960) that urban inhabitants should be able to actively form their own stories and create new activities. According to Lynch our placement within the city, and our surroundings are also important. Lynch considers the city as text and to “read” chiefly concerning with “The Image of the Environment”. He says, “Every citizen has had long associations with some part of the city, and his image is soaked in memories and meanings.” (Lynch, 1960)

The city features provide very rich identity and at the same time allow for an environmental image in the experienced urban scale. “The city itself is thus a powerful symbol of a complex society. An environmental image has three components: identity (the recognition of urban elements as separate entities), structure (the relation of urban elements to other objects and to the observer), and meaning (its practical and emotional value to the observer). It is important that these urban elements are not hermetically designed into precise and final detail but present an open-ended order.” (Lynch 1960) Socially and culturally changing aspects of the city as a continuous development on the architecture and landmarks provide diverse and livable environment for the urbanites. “Looking at cities can give a special pleasure. Like a piece of architecture, the city is a construction in space, but of a vast scale, perceived only in the course of long spans of time. …Nothing is experienced by itself, but always in relation to its surroundings, the sequences of events leading up to it, the memory of past experiences. Every citizen has had long associations with some part of his city, and his image is soaked in memories and meanings.” (Lynch:1960) Therefore the historical consciousness and identity is very important for cities in order to provide vital / stable environment for the urbanites in a socio-cultural space.

Criticizing the loss of human dimension on modern cities, the theorist of postmodernity, Fredric Jameson (1991) quotes that the alienated city is a space in which people are unable to map (in their minds) either their own positions or the urban totality in which none of the traditional markers (monuments, nodes, natural boundaries, built perspectives) obtain, are the most obvious examples. Disalienation in the traditional city, then,
involves the practical reconquest of a sense of place and the construction or reconstruction of an articulated ensemble which can be retained in memory. (Lynch1960) Hence, deciphering the layers of a city as the matrices of chronological sequences of past in the historical urban environment provide common consciousness for the urbanites.

The traditional markers of an urban environment is considered the Cultural Heritage Assets which contribute the cities’ system of values as ethnographical, historical, geographical evidences through with the economical, social, political parameters. “The urban cultural heritage assets provide continuity and a link with the past with a ‘sense of place’ at local, regional and national levels to contribute to community cohesion and identity. Also these assets are increasingly important as a focus for economic regeneration as the bedrock for tourism in the city with their aesthetically pleasing and widely enjoyed authentic structures.” (CIWEM)

The experience of historical assets in socio-cultural space depends on one’s relation with the space. Exploring the presence of time and history in the urban environment, and therefore how these external factors affect people Lynch states that the first, straightforward approach to the city, taken by every individual, is looking at it, which constitutes a 5-sense aesthetical experience through space and time. An urban system can therefore be either perceived as stable or in constant change, which is the most noticeable effect of external factors affecting any environment (Jameson, 1991). Hence, the experience of space in terms of space-time relationship plays with the realm of our perception while functioning on the city’s architecture, demographics, and legislation by redefining them from time to time. The grasp of different and rich experience, states of these layers offered by a city, space-time relation can be understood in terms of experience of space. While the time is the duration of motion in the rotating frame of reference, the space is an ontic state of experiment in an inertial frame of reference.

Space and time phenomenon works as a structural element of the environmental layers. Space-time relation plays with the realm of our perception while functioning on the city’s architecture, demographics, and law by redefining them from time to time as well. With this respect, transformation of the cities over time through the interventions of its inhabitants provides also continuity and evolution in time-space terms. Reading the city as the matrices of chronological sequences with different layers of past and present, through space and time relationship creates different dynamics of perception of the cultural heritage assets in a pluralistic environment.

Gradually Expanding Metropolitan City: Istanbul

Driving force for reading the space required the potential of the probabilities in the nature of the spatial order. Reading the place does not that the observer is dominant over the space. The reading space necessitate the interrelation between observer and space...
through the of space-time and process relationship as a whole. Simultaneous coexistence of perceived recipient enables to read the space through time, and vise versa. The spatiality of time and the temporality of the space, the relationship between space, time and place;, requires the mutual perception of the interaction process in “Reading” space as a whole dimensions of life. In this case, the temporality of the space /spatiality of time is the paradigm experienced simultaneously, as dynamic structure created the tension through emerging contradictions. In the context of this paradigm, the spatial experience of the human body are intricately intertwined and mutually “engaged” with space through past, present and future. (Merleau-Ponty, 1962)

In this respect, as a gradually expanding metropolitan city, Istanbul is a unique city with its different and rich perceivable states of natural environment, historical and archeological heritage as well as its very vivid socio-cultural life. With its geography’s strategic importance in a historical landmark and with its diversity and differences, Istanbul needs to be viewed as a pluralistic environmental experience which oscillates between the past and present, east and west, old and new in terms of time and space. The conflict and harmony of different cultures, simultaneous struggle for survival and dominance in new structures respout continually from the tides of the past and the future in space.

As a traditional city, Istanbul is in the process of gradually expanding metropolitan city, in a new form of human settlements. In terms of dramatically transformation into the metropolis, center and periphery are problematic terms and may be misleading, especially when applied literally to areas and metaphorically to ideas of the ancient Greek world, because center and periphery imply power and influence exerted and sustained. An area or city-state that may have been a periphery may gradually become a center and vice versa. (Tzifopoulos, 2011) Being dragged into such a vortex creates multi-layered structure with some kind of deformation resulting in the shift of interest from center to periphery.

Istanbul, is a unique city with its natural environment, historical and archeological heritage and with socio-cultural life, evolved its own distinctive identity and culture that is expressed in its timeless arts, architecture, literature and music. Hence İstanbul
should be evaluated with the historical consciousness towards an understanding of urban environment, streetscape, social and cultural aspects of the city.

As the only city in the world is situated on two continents; Asia and Europe, Istanbul is a world metropolis with its sprawling boundaries. The fact that Istanbul is located astride two continents, as a bridge for the movement of peoples between Asia and Europe, has exposed the whole region to diverse influences in essence and in culture. A unique historical heritage, that comprises a wide range of natural and cultural treasures like the Historic Peninsula, the Golden Horn and the Bosphorus. These features provide a rich identity and at the same time allow for a powerful urban image. Within the comprehensive image of Istanbul, Golden Horn is a sub-region with strong elements of identity since the cultural and environmental potential of it that provides a comprehensive investigation on the sub-regional identity.

The Historic Peninsula in Istanbul

Strolling around historical corners of the peninsula, one comes across an historically precious heritages on cobbled streets as one trace its narrow alleyways and ancient squares. The Greek Orthodox Patriarchate, the magnificent Neo-Gothic, Neo Baroque St. Stephens Church, one of Istanbul’s surviving mediaeval synagogues (Okhrida), the Chora museum with the Byzantine marvel of mosaics and frescos, the outstanding Imperial Fatih Mosque dominates the skyline as an indication of a universal peace while the traditional houses exemplify the authentic architectures and cultures the in the district.

The Case of Cibali District

Especially, the itineraries the Historic Areas of Istanbul and the outstanding silhouette of the city are vulnerable to development. The Historic Areas of Istanbul include the key attributes that convey the Outstanding Universal Value of Istanbul as the parts of the historical peninsula, had remained under threat major changes and deterioration in the 19th and 20th centuries. For example; the vernacular timber housing in the Cibali quarters, is vulnerable and under the threat of pressure for change, and perish in time, since the insufficient efforts in order to conserve and strengthen the timber structures within the site. Changes in the social structure within the area have also affected the use of those structures. The urban fabric is threatened by lack of maintenance and pressure for change. Although the local authority is attempting to rehabilitate the area to revive its degraded parts, the effort is not sufficient enough to protect many of them. Especially the lack of legislation regulations on the urban law and management plans endanger many of these old buildings - especially the vernacular wooden buildings- that are facing of vanishing.
The transformation of Cibali-Fener-Balat district, which is one of the oldest settlements in the historical peninsula, has been underway via renovation construction projects for more than fifteen years. Despite the historical importance of the district, renovation projects have had so insufficient influence on the space that many of the old and historical buildings couldn’t be saved from destruction. Although piecemeal efforts have been observed especially in the Fener, Balat and Zeyrek district of historic peninsula throughout the these years by the local government which have frequently displayed a fragmented approach in the preparation of area developmental plans, the timber housing settlement in Cibali district has been neglected.

Abondoned herititge in the center

Even though “a process of the city’s conservation planning practice focussed on the preparation of a Conservation Orientated Development Plans for the historic pe-
ninsular started in 1995” not completed until now. Hence, neighbourhoods of authentic Ottoman timber houses in Cibali District with the traditional street layout continued to decay. ‘The listed historic buildings were under the ‘protection’ of the High Council, but many were subject to arson attack, often so that they could make way for profitable car park areas for the City Business District. Some were even destroyed by their occupants—poor migrants - who used the wooden fabric for fuel. Others were simply left to rot as their owners could not, or would not meet the costs of meeting strict conservation planning restrictions and requirements for restoration—a process dubbed ‘preserving for decay.” (Kocabaş, 2006)

Distinctions between cause and effect in conservation / renovation development in urban scale depend on the span of time involved and the size of distructions under consideration. Depending upon the temporal and areal frame of reference, variables such as historical structures may be either dependent or independent. In terms of ontic time, structures represent a stage in an historical cycle and are dependent on time. On a short-term basis, components of conservation context may be regarded as context in dynamic equilibrium or in a steady state and are independent of time.

Over time, space generates demolition and decay through some kind of change in the inverted lives in the “peripheral center”. Such a destruction, caused by the rapid
expansion and velocity of the city, desolates the old center where space functions more slowly over time. The links with “peripheral center” may be carried through the restoration of the wounded face of the city. Destruction caused by the rapid inflate of the city, maybe stoped by putting the abandoned and dated “marginalized center” into circulation again to compensate the speed of life in the metropolis which is hidden in its own dynamics.

The revival of the Cibali quarters is an indispensable since the historical importence of this area. The integrity of the monuments and historical remains within the the Historic Areas are largely intact but they are vulnerable. The area demands an urgent process of cleaning, conservation and restoration to be able to retain the structural and architectural integrity of the district.

The recovery from this perfidy may also be implemented through the awareness of the city’s citizens. As Walter Benjamin points out, “citizens are some kind of flaneurs that wander around, and with every circle we make and every action we undertake we change the whole image of the city. Since movement is something so profound for people, we view the city as an on-going project of every citizen as well as the population in whole. The environmental digups and reading of the historical sides of the city may be releeving for inhabitants also.

References:

Lynch, K., (1960), The Image of the City, MIT Press
Tzifopoulos, Y. Z., (2011), Center, periphery, or peripheral center, The ‘Orphic’ Gold Tablets and Greek Religion Further Along the Path Ed. Radcliffe G. Edmonds, Cambridge University Press, pp.165

Notes

1 Cultural heritage (“national heritage” or just “heritage”) is the legacy of physical artifacts and intangible attributes of a group or society that are inherited from past generations, maintained in the present and bestowed for the benefit of future generations. Cultural heritage includes tangible culture (such as buildings, monuments, landscapes, books, works of art, and artifacts), intangible culture (such as folklore, traditions, language, and knowledge), and natural heritage (including culturally significant landscapes, and biodiver-
The city that has a long history that dates back to the Byzantine Empire when it was founded in the 7th century BC as Byzantium. Significant points in its history includes when it was renamed Constantinople by Emperor Constantine the great in the 4th Century AD, before it was the turn of the Ottoman Turks to make the city their capital City. The historic city of Istanbul became so called after its conquest by the Ottomans in 1453 and its named changed from Constantinople to Istanbul. Under Emperor Justinian I, Istanbul, the cultural and economic capital of modern Turkey had the Hagia Sophia, a magnificent church that remains a quintessence of Byzantine architecture commissioned. The structure was completed in 537 AD and was later further enhanced by four minarets in the 16th century after it was converted to a mosque under Ottoman rule.

The Historic Peninsula of old Istanbul is one of the most important locations in Turkey. Due to its importance these “Historic Areas of Istanbul” were added to the UNESCO World Heritage List in 1985. This area is located on the southern shore of the Golden Horn, which separates the old city centre from the northern and younger parts of the European side. The Historic Peninsula ends with the Theodosian land walls in the west. The peninsula is surrounded by the Sea of Marmara on the south and the Bosphorus on the east.

Golden Horn being a gulf along the Bosphorus is an important region of the urban physical structure and has a special role in the historical and cultural life of Istanbul with its natural, cultural and human environment.
‘THE GARDEN OF EDEN’
GARTENSTADT, SOCIAL REFORMISM AND THE CULT OF SOIL

Andreina Maahsen - Milan

Foreword

In 1902, the idea of a garden city permeated the vibrant atmosphere of post-Jahrhundertwende Germany: such a city was intended to reconcile residential middle-class areas with the brutal and degraded industrial city.

The motto of the Garden City movement was ‘Far from the madding crowd!’; that is, far from chimney smoke, in a healthy, peaceful and restful environment, where the family and social virtues are valued. The proliferation of new working-class estates only served to add to the growing social distress. Entrepreneurs and landowners thought it was essential “to stay away from troubled, unhealthy urban centres” without abandoning control. The idea of Gartenstadt soon instilled the belief that radical choices would have to be made quickly. Young people proposed for the first time a new reading of the anti-urban utopia and postulated a social change in terms of ‘mass strategy’.

The Garden City and Gartenstadt from a Social Engineering Perspective

The U.K. stenographer Ebenezer Howard (1850–1898) was responsible for the idea of a ‘concrete utopia’ where spatial forms were totally subordinate to economic managing criteria. In A Peaceful Path to Real Reform (1898), the author’s technical-scientific point of view is free from any historic-cultural considerations. Nonetheless, it is fraught with American ‘frontier’ romanticism and Ralph W. Emerson’s and Walt Whitman’s lyricism, in addition to the utopian-technological vision of the Calvinist parson, Edward Bellamy (1850–1898), and prefigured applicative models of urban sociology that had become widespread in the U.S. and in Europe.

The ideas underpinning the Garden City movement moderately echoed the eugenics doctrines of Francis Galton (1822–1911) that were derived from the Spenserian idea of giving birth to a sort of social Darwinism. The first theorist of the Garden City, E. Howard, was influenced by the economic theories of Henry George, whom had captivated many people in Europe, including Leo Tolstoj. Howard’s beliefs in the principles of Fabian Reformism social change without overturning existing balances. In the
‘town-country’ debate, the focus was on the criticalities of metropolitan systems, with the pragmatic intent to provide operational and feasible solutions. Howard, the creator of the Garden City movement, stated that it was “[…] not a utopia but a normal operation of urban technique”. This point of view is in stark contrast to that of contemporary intellectuals such as Thomas Hardy (1840–1928), author of the poem the Landscape of Melancholy.

Howard did not simply promote social and urban innovation. He suggested a more political formula to alleviate housing and social tension in industrial districts and metropolises. [fig. 1.a,b]

A Society ‘on the Boil’

In England, as well as in Germany, the explosion of social conflicts and ‘gender’ issues were growing at an alarming rate, threatening the management of social and family order. Although in Germany, the development of the women’s emancipation movement (Frauenrechtsbewegung) was much slower than in England, it rapidly spread among the middle classes. The number of educated women who rejected marriage and motherhood as the only way to improve their social standing and to achieve self-fulfilment increased dramatically.

Women doctors, educators, writers, journalists, femininity and youth were categories that caused unease and hope. Maria Montessori was a product of the Giolitti era in Italy. She was active as an intellectual militant both in Berlin and in London since 1896 where she was involved in the movements for women’s rights.

It is no surprise that she was cited as “the most interesting
woman of Europe” given her statement that “a scientist is the priest of nature.” [Fig. 2a]

‘Der Jugend’, the popular Munich newspaper was addressed in particular to a readership of young people attracted by coffee houses and pubs to discuss politics and lifestyle changes (Lebensreform) [fig. 2b]. These new ‘social youngsters’ mingled with lower social classes, religious minorities (Jews in particular), artists, plotters and theosophists. It was in such coffee houses that intense debates took place about ‘Life’s Reform’, how to live, how to relate to the world, individuality and figuring out innovative forms of housing.

Reality: Rebelliousness, Escapism and Radicalism

In Munich and Berlin, cultural turmoil was increasing and spreading throughout universities and academies. Women’s emancipation movements for the right to vote and study developed out of a desire to live a meaningful and truthful life. The young author Fanny zu Reventlow (1871–1918) choose to live a bohemian Munich lifestyle [fig. 3.a]. She was ostracised socially for living an unconventional life and relinquished aristocratic privileges, opting instead to live in poverty. Her lucid and ironic vision of society offers stark insight into the chauvinist and totalitarian nature of the decadent ideology of the time and reveals its fictions and weaknesses.

Thus, it was the weaving of ideas in the Munich-Schwabing artists’ district that became the breeding ground for extreme ideologies of the century. In the cultural-esoteric circle called Kosmikers, Ludwig Klages (1872–
1956) [fig.3.b], a philosopher and psychologist at the Munich Academy and a friend of the poet Stefan George (1868–1933), was a typical exponent of the climate of escapism from social reality of the early 20th century, together with the classicist Johann Jakob Bachofen (1815–1887) and the visionary clairvoyant Alfred Schuler (1875–1923). The circle was part of a continental breeding ground that, despite its apolitical and eccentric spiritual features, gave rise to the Nazi subculture of the 1920s and 1930s.

*Kosmiker Kreis* followers were inspired by the writings of W. Goethe and A. Nietzsche when they created a neo-pagan movement with the intent to set the German culture free from any Jewish–Christian influences. Based on this vision, Klages was the first to develop the idea of ‘environmental sustainability’ and to document man’s abuse of nature and its resources.8 “The ideological meaning of this environment was to recover ‘dionysiac’ and tel-luric values with a re-evaluation of irrationalism and the esoteric aspects of life and the human being”.9 The liberation was expressed as a desire for ‘real life’, i.e. releasing instincts and sensations “without complexes, guilt or any ideas of sin”. Thus, the idea of ‘heidnische Eros’, or pagan eroticism, was conceived.10 The melancholic and decadent mood of this cult was satirised and stigmatised by Otto Julius Birbaum (1865–1910) in intellectual circles.11

Generally speaking, the *Kosmikers*’ vision set the foundations for the concept of ‘Blut und Boden’12 [Blood and Ground], as proposed by Arthur Moeller van den Bruck (1876–1925). His influence in the conservative reactionary movement was decisive. It gave rise to the doctrinal and phraseological construction of the *National-sozialistische Deutsche Arbeiterpartei (NSDAP)*, in the 1920s following the release of his work ‘Das
"THE GARDEN OF EDEN", GARTENSTADT, SOCIAL REFORMISM AND THE CULT OF SOIL

Dritte Reich’ (1923), which was inspired by the millenarian doctrines of Chiliasm put forward by the freelance journalist Dietrich Eckart (1868–1923).

Frank Wedekind (1864–1918) [fig. 4.a] held similar views about irrational urges in Erdgeist [the spirit of the earth] (1895), earth, nature and primordial forces are released from devastating feminine sexuality In ‘Die Büchse der Pandora’ (1902), the mythical figure of ‘Lulu’ is depicted as a femme fatale, a woman free from inhibitions who lives a life of social emancipation (and becomes a victim this emancipation) [fig. 4b].

In this sultry cultural climate, painting and music represented the urge of embodying this obscure and torturing necessity of beauty. In Munich, the symbolist painter Franz von Stuck (1863–1928) built his own atelier-house13 (1898) placing a shrine to the unsettling and charming figure of ‘Die Sünde’ (1893) who was portrayed as Eve, with the snake that tempted her coiling around her body [fig. 4.c]. The deathly pale colour of her flesh shines in the darkness, and the enigmatic face of the young woman shows no trouble in that unnatural sensual embrace.

Vernacular Architecture and Defence of Germanness

At the turn of the 20th century, the defence of national integrity and the trust in the State and its representatives were still vital and violent, since these provided the only means of seizing opportunities offered by 19th-century technologies. Despite their contradictions and subsequent manipulation, they prompted the most decisive economic and social reforms of the new century.14

Their translation into the arts and architecture was lasting and deep,15 especially in the movements of Heimatbewegung. In 1904, the Deutsche Heimathbund was established in Dresden by the musician Ernst Rudorff (1840–1916) and Robert Mielke (1863–1935), an anthropologist and scholar [fig 5.a,b].

The denomination Heimatschutzarchitektur, i.e. the vernacular architecture and defence of Ger-

Fig. 5.a., Ernst Rudorff (1840-1916).

Fig. 5.b., Magazine ‘Heimatschtz’, 1911.
manness, appeared in 1904 and remained even after the fall of national-socialism. Its reverberations in the urban area persisted well after the second half of the 20th century and deeply affected the post-war reconstruction process.\textsuperscript{16}

**Industry and Power: Continental Deviations of Social Reformism (1900–1914)**

It is well known that the continental version of the reformist movement and the Garden City movement deviated from the original model, accentuating ideological irrational aspects. In the *Gartenstadt*, the anti-urban idea took on an attitude of ecological fundamentalism that was ahead of its time and found expression in movements during and after the *Lebensreform*. Over a five-year period, history recorded fundamental events in influencing mentality and in 20\textsuperscript{th}-century cultural and political-economics options.

The fact that some of the ideas suggested by *Gartenstadt* were in line with the ultra-conservative cultural trends at the time of Wilhelm II can be seen in the favourable attitude of the Reich towards ‘innovative’ housing, which was actually designed to achieve social control. Even the ideas of ‘social innovation’ were perceived as improvements, leaning towards an efficient vision of the national state, although they implied heavy interference in life at the social and individual level.

The prize awarded in 1900 by the steel industry tycoon Friedrich Alfred Krupp (1854–1902) to the Bavarian eugenic Wilhelm Schallmayer (1857–1919) for his innovative political-social research, can be viewed as significant for the subject of his dissertation “Was lernen wir aus den Prinzipien der Deszendenztheorie in Beziehung auf die innenpolitische Entwicklung und Gesetzgebung des Staates?” [What are the teachings of the hereditariety theory in relation to the construction and development of states?]. The author published the revised essay in 1903 under the title “Vererbung und Auslese im Lebenslauf der Völker” [Improvement and selection during the life of people], with a foreword signed by the Monist biologist *Ernst Haeckel* (1934–1919).

The generations of Krupps involved in industry were distinguished by their activities in the area of technological experimentation\textsuperscript{17} and by their construction of residential estates for their employees in the cities of Essen and in *Konzern* in the Ruhr area.\textsuperscript{18} In 1870-76, the tycoon moved his private dwelling and boardroom to Essen-Kettwig, an unpolluted area far from the miasma produced by his factories and blast furnaces. The construction of *Villa Hügel* was not only an extraordinary example of technological experimentation, but also an example of the implementation of the concept of a balance between nature and industrial development, prefigured by the big ‘maitres à penser’ of German Neo-empiricism. The doctor and biologist Alfred Ploetz (1860–1940) was a central figure in the development of Social Darwinism. After his initial interest in social reformism and time spent in the U.S., he turned towards conservatism. When he returned in 1904, he established the magazine ‘*Archiv für Rassen-***
The Housing Cooperative as an Alternative to Class Struggle

In 1896, sociologist Franz Oppenheimer (1864–1943), a friend of Moritz von Egidy’s (1847–1889) and a member of the Berlin Circle, published the essay ‘Die Siedlungsgenossenschaft’ with the significant subtitle ‘Attempt to positively overcome Communism through Cooperatives and agricultural demand’. In the essay, it is interesting to notice the syntactic migration of terms from medicine, biology and natural sciences into the budding discipline of sociology as the ‘study of the social organism’.

In 1893, the industrialist Bruno Wilhelmi founded the ‘Vegetarische Obstbau-Kolonie Eden’ in Oranienburg (Brandenburg), 30 km from Berlin. This pacifist colony was conceived on the principles of Lebensreform and the ideas of natural medicine. The choice of the name ‘Eden’ was a deliberate reference to the Biblical Garden, with the aim of recreating a healthy and natural community far away from the metropolis. Eighty plots, 2,800 sq mt each, were established on uncultivated land, on which farmers could grow fruit trees, vegetables and berries. In this particular colony, land and houses were rented, with the option of transferring the property to heirs. In 1902, after the partial failure of the community, Wilhelmi founded the Woltersdorf ‘Kolonie Schönblick’. This was one of the first settlements inspired by the Garden City movement, which intellectuals and artists elected as their own residence, fascinated by the idea of a return to the soil.19

‘Die Neue Gemeinschaft’ [The new community]:
the Anarchic Reformist Experiment in Berlin

A sunset over smoking chimney stacks has got something demoniac about it.
It looks like a huge fire, more smoke than light and light from pale grey to dark red”
[W. Bölsche, Die Poesie der Großstadt, 1890]

In Berlin in 1902, the brothers Bernhard and Paul Kampffmeyer established the ‘Deutsche Gartenstadt-Gesellschaft-(DGG)’, the first association aimed at spreading the development of the Garden City movement in Germany. Bernhard was a supporter
of social movements inspired by anarchic-socialism. He later became famous for establishing the first cooperative ‘Wohnungbaugenossenschaft’.

The brothers’ experiment was carried out in the village of Friedrichshagen on the outskirts of Berlin. The initiative could be considered a more elaborate form of Künstlerkolonien, colonies which had proliferated in Europe in the last decades of the 19th century. Although their experiment failed, it was sufficient to measure the limits and potentialities of reformist ideas, which were still not fully defined and far removed from the concept of efficient management. Another new community was founded by Heinrich Hart and Gustav Landauer between 1900–1903 in the Berlin neighbourhood of Schlachtensee, on the banks of the homonymous lake, with the enthusiastic participation of the Lebensreformer. Other participants included anarchic intellectuals, artists, political dissidents and some major writers of Naturalism. This initiative also failed. However, this did not discourage the founders, who established a new colony in 1902 in the western part of Berlin’s boundary on the Schlachtensee that was inspired by religious communitarianism. The communitarian idea was partly inspired by Morris’s principles of a garden city, but it included the desire for emancipation from the industrial world and the creation of a radically anti-modern commune. The Neue Gemeinschaft was, in fact, the blueprint for alternative communities in Europe; the most famous and lasting experiment of new sociality was located in Monte Verita’ [Mount Truth], Ascona (Switzerland).

**Poetic Darwinism**

The colony known as ‘Die Neue Gemeinschaft’ had initially developed inside the Friedrichshagener Dichterkreis [Friedrichshagener’s Poetic Circle]. This intellectual circle included the playwrights Gerhart Hauptmann and Frank Wedekind and many writers such as the anarchic-pacifists Erich Mühsam (1878–1934), Gustav Landauer (1870–1919), the brothers Heinrich e Julius Hart and the polemicist critics Wilhelm Bölsche (1861–1939), Bruno Wille (1860–1928) and Peter Hille (1854–1904), as well as the philosopher Martin Buber, poet Else Lasker-Schuler (1869–1945) and art historian Willy Pastor (1867–1933). Within the group, the young graphic designer Hugo Höppener (aka Fidus) stood out as the most visionary member of the group, he was a follower of the symbolist artist and poet Karl Wilhelm Diefenbach (1851–1913). The young Berliners Reformists were inspired by nudism, poverty and nomadism, alongside a total return to nature and the radical rejection of the Bourgeoisie.

Mühsam and Höppener played a major role in the start-up of the Ascona experiment, together with Ida Hofman and Henry Oedenkoven (1900–1904).

The group intended to draw on and to experiment with the monistic philosophy of Ernst Haeckel, which drew on the ideas of Gustav Th. Fechner (1801–1887). The idea to link philosophy and science through a specific ‘naturphilosophisch’ approach,
i.e. organicist, was a doctrine that deeply influenced writers and poets such as Rainer Maria Rilke (1875–1926) and Ricarda (Octavia) Huch (1864–1947). For the latter, the echoes of the Berliner experience reverberated in the years before WW1, as witnessed by the essay ‘Natur und Geist als die Wurzeln des Lebens und der Kunst’ [Nature and Spirit as Roots of Life and Art], published in Munich in 1914.

Martha Asmus (1844–1909?), the feminist writer and theosophist, deeply absorbed the innovative spirit of the group by proposing revolutionary ideas about social mores and elaborating on the controversial topic of lesbians. Bruno Wille’s philosophical contribution in Philosophie der Befreiung was inspired by Nietzsche’s and Max Stirner’s thoughts and a reinterpretation of Buddhism. In his later works, Wille grew ever closer to the ‘pantheistischen Naturmystik’ [pantheistic mysticism of nature] by developing his ideas on Fechnerian theory.

Within the Berlin Circle discussions, the theory of evolution was used to justify the possibility of perfecting human nature and social organisation. ‘History’ could be interpreted—thanks to the influence of Nietzsche’s writings—as the evolution of the superhomo due to the reconciliation between (scientific) reason and religion. Optimism and the enthusiastic trust in the future prompted the members of Friedrichshagenerkreis to contemplate the myth of ‘new’ (new man, new society, new era) and to experiment with slogans and symbolism (the rising sun). They also adopted emblems used by workers and young people’s movements who were seeking personal fulfilment in combining nature and progress.

The Hart brothers played a fundamental role, as well as Nietzsche, in the emergence of the ‘Zarathustra Land’, and they were eager to be the prophets of a future ‘Third Reich’. In the 1880s, the initial interest in the suffering of the masses by members of Friedrichshagenerkreis gradually faded and shifted towards the development of the ideal profile of the Führer, i.e. an extraordinary individual, a future leader, a guide and a saviour of mankind. This idea had nothing in common with the socialistic doctrines of Lassalle and Bebel, but it did share common traits with M. von Egidy’s ethical socialism and with bohemian individualistic anarchic-idealism.

Conclusion

In a number of interesting studies, architectonic historiography has analysed the role of anarchic radical and reactionary ideologies in the dissemination of Gartenstadt and its merging into the Republic of Weimar. The study of Kleinsiedlungen by H. Tessenow and theorisations of Landschaftarchitekt by Leberecht Migge (1881–1935) have been adequately investigated by historical critics Georges Teysset and Marco De Michelis. Since then, interest in continental roots of alternative movements has progressively declined. Similar disinterest has been shown in the ‘carsic river’, which al-
though impoverished by its progressive social meanings and hardened in the nationalistic cult of race, re-emerged in the nationalistic Siedlungen of the Third Reich, as theorised by Theodor Emil Fritsch (1852–1933). It was partially revived at the end of 1930s in Germany and in the occupied territories in Poland and the Ukraine (1939–1944). In this new political and cultural climate, ‘Eden’ was the longed for Heimland, the synthesis and model of the dreams of two generations, obliterated by wars and betrayed by the cult of Nationalism.

The analysis of these stirrings, which are still present and have never been appeased, can provide new research topics to account for the ecologist and alternative cultures of the Third Millennium.

Notes

3 Spencer, H., The Man Versus The State, 1884.; Spencer H., Principles of Sociology (1876 - 1896)
4 George, H. Progress and Poverty: An Inquiry into the Cause of Industrial Depressions and of Increase of Want with Increase of Wealth: The Remedy, 1879.
12 The critical bibliography about Klages in the Italian language was limited and reduced to radical right wing circles (Cfr. Rimbotti. L.L., La rivoluzione pagana, Relativismo etnico e gerarchia delle forme, Padova,
The main work of Klages was: Der Geist als Widersacher der Seele, (1929–32).


14 “… Feierlich sein ist alles! Sei dumm wie ein Thunfisch, temperamentlos wie eine Qualle, stier besessen wie ein narkotisierter Frosch, aber sei feierlich, und du wirst plötzlich Leute um dich sehen, die vor Bewunderung nicht mehr mäh sagen können” [da: O.J. Bierbaum, Martin Möbius Steckbriefe, 1900]


18 Baader, B.M., Gender, Judaism, and Bourgeois Culture in Germany, 1800-1870, Indiana University Press, 2006.

19 Kluting, E. (edited by), Antimonmodernismus und Reform. Zur Geschichte der deutschen Heimatbewe


21 Maahsen-Milan A., Fabbri K., Technological experimentation and heritage: the preservation of instal-
lations. [Villa Hügel, Essen], Porto, 2012, in press.


24 Ekici, D. “The Laboratory of a New Humanity”: The Concept of Type, Life Reform, and Modern Ar-
chitecture in Hellerau Garden City, 1900–1914, University of Michigan, 2008.

25 Landauer, G, Skepsis und Mystik, 1903. Landauer, was with Mühsam, one of the key figures in the start-up of the Ascona experiment. His participation in the Council Republic of Munich led to his death.

26 Jacobsen, E.P., 2005, From Cosmology to Ecology: The Monist World-View in Germany from 1770 to 1930, Peter Lang, Bern.


28 The work was re-published in 1922 with the title: “Vom Wesen des Menschen. Natur und Geist”, Prien, 1922.


31 Egidy, M. von, Weiteres zu den Ernst Gebenden, Berlin, 1890
X - The Social Aspects of the City
I grew up in the so called “Fashionable Sixties” in Hong Kong when Fashion became the focus of women’s life in the small colony. The majority of HK women of that era came from Canton, one of the southern provinces of China, and from the Northern Mainland regions. Most of them came to Hong Kong as refugees of the 2nd World War and the emergence of Communist China in 1949. The living standard in the early 60’s in HK was still low and most of the women earned their living mainly by working in factories or by doing factory work at home where they could look after their families. At the same time, they devoted their time and energy to following foreign fashion by making their own clothes.

As during the 1960’s in many Western countries, the 60’s in Hong Kong was a restless era during which tremendous political, economic and cultural changes occurred. The dominance of fashion in women’s lives, I believe, calls for more attention than the usual feminist questions concerning consumerism and the subordination of women, as fashion should also be regarded as a locus of struggles for identity. Searching for Identity in fashion in the 60’s in Hong Kong can be read as a response to the friction between East and West in both political and cultural dimensions.

1967, before and after

According to the report of the 1961 census, the HK population was about 3,100,000, more than 1,300,000 of whom were juniors under the age of 15. During February of 1962, thousands of political refugees arrived from China, enormously increasing the population and the labour force of the small colony. A brief account of significant social events of the 60’s is as follows:

1963 Over six thousand industrial enterprises established, with about thirty thousand employees. The younger generation received more and better education.
1965 Rush on banks.
1966 Protests against rate increase of the Star Ferry, thousands of people joining the demonstrations.
1967 Workers at a plastic products factory in Sun Po Kong went on strike, leading to anti-HK British government riots on a large scale. First broadcast of free, non-subscription broadcasting of the Hong Kong Broadcast Co., (TVB) Over 200,000 students were receiving secondary education.

1969 Heavy trading in stock market, new record set in the volume of buying and selling. Wages increased, continuous inflation.

1970 Government approval of equal wages for equal work by male and female teachers, police and nurses.

1970 Women’s incomes increased and their social status was elevated.

It is interesting to note that in the 60’s, the images of women changed. Melancolic figures were replaced by strong, tough and decisive females in Chinese movies, reflecting modifications of women’s identities. The domain of identity was discussed in newspapers and magazines, and the name “Hong Kong people” appeared for the first time. A sense of belonging emerged as the citizens of Hong Kong came out of the poverty of the 1950s, underwent the economic growth and improvement of living standards of the 60’s and made Hong Kong a prosperous industrial city. For these developments, 1967 was the key year.

1967 is commonly regarded as a demarkation point in the history of HK. The political riots in the middle of the year meant that thousands of citizens lived in a chaotic situation, as Chinese Communist supporters fought violently with the HK British government. The Sino-British battle questioned the identity of Hong Kong people, especially those who desperately hoped for stability in Hong Kong. After the riot, the government immediately organised various remedial activities to reinforce citizens’ sense of belonging, focusing on a prosperous image for the city. These activities included the “Hong Kong Festival” and youth nights on which fashion shows were arranged to promote harmony and the concept of modernity in the colony.

It should be noted that Western modernisation had a great impact on Hong Kong. Following the growing import and export trade in the 60’s were the modern fashions of foreign goods and culture which symbolised social progress, good taste and elite style. People were excited about new ideas in industrial design and fashion. They tried to enjoy the modern present and forget the unhappy past in China. In the first “Hong Kong Fashion Festival”, held in 1967 as part of the British government’s attempt to rebuild a prosperous image, local garments were based on designs from Paris. The festival was a success. It laid the foundation for HK’s fashion industry and defined the HK look for the decades to come (Turner, Ngan & Ngai 1994: 5).

The growth in the textile industry and in domestic clothing exports was another factor in the flourishing of fashion in the 60’s when the United States was the biggest market for the clothing industry. It is noted that the number of persons employed and the number of garment factories in the industry increased three times in the 60’s in
which the majority of the workers were women, including those who took work to do at home with their own sewing machines.

**Fashion and the Social Classes**

For political and economic reasons, fashion shows became a form of mass entertainment, popular culture and performing art. Both celebrities and ordinary people organised and participated in fashion activities. The popularity of fashionable garments in the 60’s was promoted by other entertainment activities like go-go dance parties, bowling and pop concerts. Local movie stars and those of Hollywood were the models for fashion. For instance, the hair style of Audrey Hepburn was followed by the young women. Underneath the fashionable looks was vigorous social mobility in response to the growth of capitalism and industrialization. It is interesting to see how fashion has acted as a challenge to the upper class by lower class people.

Women of the lower class used home sewing machines to make their own fashionable clothes based on fashion magazines and paper patterns sold at newspaper stands. These were best-selling items, although the imitation of the sexy images in printing materials and women’s home productions of super mini-skirts did not immediately produce liberated values in sexuality or in the social roles of women. Checking the women characters in the old Cantonese movies of the 60’s, we find fashionable actresses still playing conservative and victimized roles and holding Chinese women’s submissive attitudes. No matter how modern they looked, they continued to portray values of chastity and loyalty to one man.

But this was especially exciting to working girls in the HK 60’s who presented their challenges to the upper class via their home made fashion. Their effort prove the sayings of Susan Kaiser: that working class women challenged the elite control of fashion by remaking existing garments. They enjoyed wearing bright colors and decorations, defying all laws of harmony and taste as they were hearty and vivacious (Kaiser 1990; 437). They followed the main style but added little details, as described by Roland Barthes: “a little nothing that changes everything, the details insure your personality” (Barthes 1983; 243). The upper classes might have responded by using expensive materials, but the textile industry in return supplied their ordinary customers fine machine-made lace and fine imitation materials.

**Development of women’s clothing language in the 60’s**

We have to admit that fashion and western modernisation did challenge the cultural identity of HK people in a general way. Problems of identity were discussed in local
Chinese newspapers in 1967 after the riot. Three models of “Hong Kong People” were analysed:

1. Those who were inclined to conservative Chinese models;
2. Those who were individualistic;
3. Those who simply followed foreign trends.

We can say that HK women in the 60’s attempted to integrate all of these models by eclectically combining traditional Chinese styles with current western trends in fashion, while remaining rather more conservative in their ways of thinking. The result was what we might call the ‘compound look’ of HK fashion of the period. This can be traced by surveying the development of the women’s clothing language in HK.

Life before the 60’s in Hong Kong was remembered as conservative and modest, when society was basically composed of upper and lower classes and when ordinary people dressed similarly, with fashion monopolised by upper class celebrities and actresses. It was said that by the sixties, fashion had ceased in Mainland China, and little was developed in Taiwan and other overseas Chinese communities, so that HK had no standard or language of modern Chinese fashion to follow.

Arriving in the 50’s, the immigration of entrepreneurs from Shanghai to Hong Kong inspired the local garment industry with a strong sense of fashion. There was an upsurge of interest in the ladies’ long gown, the qipao (Szeto 1992; 31). Modeled by women celebrities and movie stars, the qipao developed in various stylish patterns and exerted its influence on women’s fashion in the early 60’s. Qipao emphasized the maturity and the curve of female bodies with silky, thin and soft materials. It required slim bodies and because of its close-fitting nature, controlled women’s bodies and was uncomfortable.

In the early 60’s, ordinary HK women wore shirts, skirts, and trousers of western style in addition to simple qipaos. The styles were simple and the colors were basic. The look of casual dresses was similar to that of the qipao in that they were tight on upper body and slim at the waist, although the lower part was in long flared skirts. Popular patterns of dress materials were scattered sports and lattices. Scotch wool and flannel were fashionable materials in winter, dacron in summer, gradually replacing Chinese gauze and silk fabrics. Fashion techniques and production capacity changed greatly at that time. Attached bags, short and curly hair and new moon-like eyebrows were also fashionable (HKTDC 1992; 36). These brought an early mature look to the young HK ladies, reminding us of the description of fashionable Paris women in the 50’s. We can say the fashionable woman models in the early 60’s posed like sexy images in the soft porn industry.

In the late 60’s, the close-fitting style depicting female maturity was gradually replaced by a simple, girlish and carefree look emphasizing youth. Women all looked like girls, and the slim look was the standard of beauty. Skinny female figures were...
popular in all forms of media. Twiggy was the model with long eyelashes, big eyes and thin legs dangling from a slender body. However, it should be noted that sensuality in women’s fashion was still the concern discussed in fashion magazines.

“Youth Storm” in Fashion History

It is interesting to note that great similarities are found when the fashion development in the West in the 60’s is compared with that of Hong Kong.

Firstly, the so called “Revolutionary 60’s” in the west also signified big changes in fashion techniques and production. Secondly, the new stage of progress which evolved after the two world wars was accompanied by economic growth, social policy development and moderation of the tax system. These had led to the upsurge of the middle class and to a reduction in the polarization of social classes. In response to these changes was the democratic movement in fashion. People of different classes dressed similarly in the west in the 60’s, and this blurred the division of social classes. This coincided with what happened in HK.

Thirdly, while the youth population grew tremendously in the 60’s in HK due to the influx of Chinese refugees in the 50’s, the “Baby Bloom” after the 2nd world war in the west contributed also to the large percentage of youth under the age of 20 in the 60’s. Young people in both places had a higher consuming power than the elder generation and had become the target consumers of the fashion industry. Fashion was made for fashionable youngsters.

The western political and cultural movements of youngsters in the 60s had produced special fashion languages which had direct influence on fashion in the east. For instance, the spirit of the ‘Beat Movement’ and the ‘Flower Movement’, as expressed by loose, carefree leather coats, rough jeans and cotton ‘T’ shirts etc., were signs of anti-industrialization, anti-establishment feeling, and liberation. People in these movements rejected close-fitting styles and artificial clothing materials and enjoyed wearing ‘folk’ dress. Ironically, these preferences were immediately absorbed by fashion designers like Yves St. Laurent, who produced new commercial clothing designs based on ideas initiated by the youth rebels.

Perhaps we can read the fashion in the 60’s as a sign of rebellion:

- Jeans signified rudeness, toughness and freedom from care;
- mini skirts were sexy, girlish, self expressive and liberated;
- bell-bottom trousers signified the equalization of the sexes, or a form of asexuality;
- folk styles signified a return to nature and naivete.
As mentioned, fashion in HK in the late 60’s followed closely that in Paris, as France had become the first in the world in garment export in the same era. However, in addition to mini skirts and bell bottoms were the HK-designed beads dress and modified Chinese clothings. HK was also busy selling exotic images of Chinese femininity to the Westerners.

As the teenage population of HK was approaching 40% in the mid 60’s, it was obvious that the age factor dominated social and cultural ones in terms of fashion as was the case in the West. Despite a similar history of political unrest and economic crisis, the reasons why the youngsters in HK had not developed cult movements like the ‘Beat Movement’ and the ‘Flower Power’ movement might be related to both the traditional Chinese value of social harmony and British colonial government policies. However, the sudden economic growth, internationalisation and modernisation did bring in great cultural challenges. The youth, especially those young HK women who benefited from more education and financial strength, borrowed the language of clothing from others to speak for themselves.

It is to be admitted that HK women in the 60’s still had inferior status in every way. The majority of them were housewives, students, factory workers and social and family dependents. Shortly, however, they began to receive better education and job opportunities and to gain financial independance. They enjoyed more social activities and therefore demanded fashions to cope with the new women’s identity. Even more important was the growing self-awareness discussed below.

**Fashion in the HK 60’s: the new woman identity**

It is said that fashion symbolically provides individuals with a mechanism for detaching from the past, allows people to cope with the stresses of the present in an orderly way by helping to define what is appropriate in a world of uncertainties, and prepares for the immediate future by providing a sense of anticipation or a clue to emerging issues and tastes (Kaiser 1990; 488). We may say these functions met with the needs of young Chinese women growing up in the colony in the era of Sino-British struggles and industrial growth. Involvement in fashion seems to have become a strategy for recreating the fragmented self.

Accompanying the rise of capitalism and industrialization is individualism. Fashion is always an enhancement of individuality and the interest in clothing of women in the HK 60’s could be said to have expressed a safe rebellion against the traditional imperative of women’s conformity. It also provided consolation to individuals as it promoted self-esteem and the language of identity. It exploded out of enthusiasm, as the fashion codes of identity represented leisure, fun, youth and health, open mindness, playfulness, energy, independence, courage and, finally, subjectivity, no matter how contro-
Fashion models became personal dressing models for individuals in the 60’s in HK when fashion shows became a popular form of mass entertainment, as mentioned above. Women projected their self-images and fantasies onto those professional models who from time to time appeared fast, carefree, naughty, sharp, discriminating, balanced, easygoing, sophisticated, coquettish, serious, ingenuous etc. It is said that the multiplication of persons in a single being is always considered by fashion as an index of power (Barthes 1983; 254-6). This can be considered as one of the reasons for the popularity of fashion in HK in the 60’s, a time when women in the colony were finding their power.

It is always difficult to ignore the following feminist questions or criticisms of fashion which can also be applied to the fashion phenomenon in HK:

- that the hedonistic mode of fashion is a disadvantage to women as a whole. Females do not necessarily tend to wear clothing items for the single purpose of appearing sexually attractive to men, but men tend to focus more on sensuality in their perceptions of women’s appearances than do women (Kaiser 1990; 335)
- that the mobility of identities in fashion promote the thinning process of social meaning, standardizing the appearance and style of the female body and constitutes the remainder of control of women inherited from tradition.
- that fashion burns out the energy, spirit and material power of women.
- that research shows that individuals who conform in terms of clothing are likely to have conforming personalities, to be restrained and submissive, to give in to social order, and to want to maintain harmonious relations.
- that the 60’s obsession with popular fashion was for the ordinary girl on the street, who equated the clothes with the good life and also with breaking conventions and with democracy; yet democracy serves only to mask gross inequalities of wealth and opportunity (Wilson 1985; 176).

An addition to all these queries is the observation that divisions and separations had occurred among women in HK in the 60’s. Fashion was the sphere of young and unmarried women. Once a woman reached her thirties and if married, her sphere was restricted to family cohesion. She was not expected to be concerned about her appearance; she was likely to tuck up her hair to renounce her sexuality and to wear dull colors (Kaiser 1990; 430). This was exactly what happened to my mother’s generation.

Perhaps we have to admit that whether fashion is a place women speak for themselves or whether it is just another powerful form of oppression is an endless feminist
discourse. The uncontroversial statement is that fashion is the battlefield for identity, which an individual perceives as representing or defining the self in a given social situation. This is socially constructed, either achieved or ascribed, and is an identity negotiation in which a wearer and a perceiver are able to understand the wearer’s identity through a process of communication. This interplay works between individuality and conformity, identification and differentiation.

In the light of the above analysis, fashion in the late 60’s in HK was obviously an open resistance to the traditional Chinese control of female bodies. Its popularity represented the active negotiation of a new gender and cultural identity by HK women living in the colony.

Conclusion

It is the saying of Homi Bhabha that in the post-colonial period women can utilize their own peripheral position to challenge the ideologies in the centre (Bhabha 1993;141-153). Fashion facilitated this challenge in the 60’s in HK as it threatened:

1) the feudal Chinese constraints on women by liberating women’s body via fashionable dress;
2) the idea of returning to a backward Communist China by portraying modern Western designs; and
3) the submissive attitudes toward the British government by choosing rebellious ways of dressing and gestures.

We can say that HK women’s fashion in the 60’s was a silent revolution and that the struggle for new identities which it involved was not passive or “imported” but was an active construction initiated by the women themselves.

Work Cited

3. HKTDC, *Hong Kong Fashion History*. Hong Kong: Organisers of *Hong Kong Fashion History*. 1992
FROM DOMINATION TO RESPECT THE EVALUATION OF NATURE THROUGH ITS REPRESENTATION FROM ENLIGHTENMENT TO ROMANTICISM

Zoltán Somhegyi

In my lecture I would like to examine some questions related to the attempt of domestication and domination of Nature in the Enlightenment, and then the Romantic critique of this attempt and its aesthetic consequences, in the hope that this will help us better understand some characteristics of Nature-interpretations and Nature-representations of the 18-19 centuries.

The domestication and domination of Nature was a major desire and never-achieved goal in the 17-18 centuries, while Romanticism realized the impossibility and the almost blasphemous character of this temptation. We can find very interesting parallels and examples of these ideas in the fine arts and gardening- and (town)planning history, for example Humphrey Repton’s “Red Book” and its implicit criticism in Goethe’s 1809 novel “Elective Affinities”, but we could also mention the fashion of French and English gardens, or the change from the classical, descriptive landscape painting of the 17-18 centuries, where the arbitrary selection of elements and their disposition show the wish of domination of Nature (through its vision and representation) to Romantic landscapes that underline the impossibility of this attempt and the almost overwhelming character of Nature on man.

But before examining the ways of representation, let’s start with the distinction between Nature and landscape. It is particularly important to note that while there is Nature in itself, as a self-sufficient or self-sustaining entity, there is no such thing as a landscape in itself. From the neutral Nature we cannot create a neutral landscape. It is impossible to make an “objective” landscape. The role of human beings is an essential feature of the conceptual difference between Nature and landscape; it is a fundamental characteristic of the landscape that it always presents a fragment of Nature as something. It is impossible to conceive of a landscape without the person who sees it as a landscape, takes it for a landscape and presents it as a landscape. Nature becomes landscape through the viewer’s activity. This key interpretation we can see in several scholar’s work, for example in the essay entitled “Landscape” of Georg Simmel from 1913: “When we assert that something is as real as Nature we are referring either to an internal quality, its difference with respect to art and the artificial, with respect to the ideal and the historical, or to the fact that it must serve as a representative and symbol of that global-being, the fact that we hear the whisper of its current in it. “A piece of Nature” is actually an in-
ternal contradiction; Nature has no pieces, it is the unity of all things, and as soon as something is split from it, it ceases to be Nature, for the very reason that it can only be “Nature” inside that seamless unity, only as a wave of that global current.” So, according to Simmel, landscape is born, when the natural elements, originally one besides the other become a special and inseparable unity, and the most important factor and manifestation of this unity is the spirit of Nature.

Exactly half a century later, in 1963 Joachim Ritter wrote his essay on landscape. His main concept is similar to that of Simmel, i.e. examining how and why the vision of Nature becomes part and task not only of philosophy and science (from the Renaissance on) but also of aesthetics. Summarizing his thesis: landscape is aesthetically presented Nature in the vision of the sensible and sensitive viewer. He too, like Simmel, doesn’t consider the elements of Nature as a landscape, but not only because of the lack of their unity, but because, according to his idea, landscape is born only if we look at it without practical aims and intentions, only in free vision and enjoyment. His concept, developed among others through examining Alexander von Humboldt, leads to the affirmation that in the aesthetic vision we can observe Nature, that for science became object of use and exploitation. Therefore, when we cannot define Nature any more with the vocabulary of science, it becomes the responsibility of the aesthetics to make it perceptible. On the other hand, we also need to have a kind of alienation for the creation of an aesthetic interpretation of Nature.

Lastly among the interpreters of landscape, I would like to mention the French Alain Roger, especially his 1997 book “Short treatise on landscape”, where he analyses the act of perception of landscape. His idea is partly a witty development of Oscar Wilde’s saying: life imitates art much more than art imitates Nature. This is not a simple bon mot, especially if we consider the well-known phenomenon, how our previous knowledge and visual memory influences the perception of something new. This is what helps Roger to develop his idea on “double artificialisation”, so, double artificialisation. In this case artificialisation means to make it artificial, to put a distance, a mediation, a transformation. He distinguishes between “artificialisation in situ” and “artificialisation in visu”, so, direct or indirect transformation. An analogy of his makes it easier to understand: taking the body, we can transform the vision of the body by changing it directly (paint over, tattooing etc.) or we can paint a nude – as a pictorial genre. This latter will not be a direct intervention on the look of the body. And this is the same with landscape. We can make an intervention in situ, directly, e. g. landscape architecture, gardening, land art etc., or we can artificialize the vision of landscape by representing it on a landscape painting.

Putting together the most important elements of all the three scholars, we can say: Nature is neutral, but its representation, the landscape is never neutral, always depends from the subject who perceives it. Another important consequence of this is that landscape is indirect not only because it is represented and mediated, but also because it
shows the vision of Nature without men, without the direct impact of men. In order to perceive the piece of Nature presented in the landscape, we need to be able to go out into it from somewhere else, to arrive into it from an alien environment: that is to say, we need the awareness of being a stranger to it. Therefore, to examine the process of the evaluation of landscape before and during Romanticism, it seems useful to refer to the fact that perceiving Nature as aesthetic requires distance, alienation and unnaturalness. A distance which aids the subject’s self-interpretation in the process of separation, as noted by the young Schelling in his “Ideas for a Philosophy of Nature, as Introduction to the Study of this Science” in 1797, when he analyses the opposition of man against the world outside as being the first step towards philosophy. According to Schelling, exactly with this separation reflection starts. But I could also mention Heidegger’s 1939 essay “On the Essence and Concept of Physics in Aristotle’s Physics B,1”, where we read: “(...) beings can be experienced as objects only where human beings have become subjects, those who experience their fundamental relations as the objectification — understood a mastery — of what is encountered.” And even later, at Heinrich Lützeler’s 1950 essay: “On the essence of Landscape Painting” we read: ”Landscape painting can develop only when men experiences not only other fellow-beings or gods, but even Nature as something against him, encountering him.” In short we could say that right after the loss of the naturalness of Nature the questionable character of landscape was born. As soon as landscape became a proper genre (after Renaissance) it became a question, a phenomenon to be analyzed, and interpreted.

One tends to position oneself through the landscape, and grasping Nature leads to the necessity of going out into landscape. Realizing the alienation from Nature, understanding the indirectness towards Nature requires the wish to see, to discover and to encounter Nature, that Nature that is no longer natural to us. Exactly the wish to the analyses of the emotions leads to the wish of discovering Nature. This discovery can be realized only through landscape – we can say that for us Nature is hidden behind landscape. As one goes out into the landscape, the landscape will influence the viewer: the phenomenon of Nature gives rise to feelings to be examined, emotions related to the landscape, whose analysis will aid the subject in recognizing his own position. This is already apparent in the very earliest instances of appreciating the landscape, for example Petrarch’s famed Ascent of Mont Ventoux in 1336, one of the first “climbers”, whose excursion became a beautiful metaphor of the ascension of the spirit – and in the same time made Petrarch one of the first modern men. Modern, since he was the first to realize the impact of landscape and its vision on the spirit, as Jacob Burckhardt wrote in his 1860 book on Renaissance, or, as Ernst Cassirer put it in his 1927 book “The Individual and the Cosmos in Renaissance Philosophy”: „For Petrarch landscape became the living mirror of the ego.” Of course, we can quote other famous examples of the effect of landscape on the emotions, it is also evident in Rousseau’s “Reveries of a Solitary Walker” (first published in 1782), in Schiller’s “The Walk” (1795), the poem
where the vision of landscape leads to a historical-philosophical poem or even Büchner’s “Lenz” (first published in 1839), where the German author constantly puts in parallel the landscape and the dissolving of the protagonist’s mental integrity.

Naturally, the vision of Nature can lead to a strong impact on the viewer’s spirit especially if there are more and stronger categories to describe the impact. In short, we can say that “beautiful” was not enough anymore. Using only the word beautiful would still refer to the neutral, descriptive category of the Enlightenment that was probably the last period that really believed the possible domination of Nature: by measuring everything, writing all our knowledge in encyclopaedias, observing the farthest stars with the telescopes and the smallest beings with microscopes, ruling of even the most frightening elements of Nature can become a reality. Romanticism on the other hand realized the impossibility of this process and stressed the domination of Nature over man. As Isaiah Berlin summarized it in his 1965 Mellon Lectures entitled “The Roots of Romanticism”: “There is peace, there is calm, there is elegant building, there is a belief in the application of universal reason both to human affairs and to artistic practice, to morals, to politics, to philosophy. Then there is a sudden, apparently unaccountable, invasion. Suddenly there is a violent eruption of emotion, enthusiasm. People become interested in Gothic buildings, in introspection. Peoples suddenly become neurotic and melancholy; they begin to admire the unaccountable flight of spontaneous genius.”

Along with this, besides beautiful also sublime became part of the aesthetic discourse to describe the frightening, but in the same time somehow attracting characteristics of specific natural elements. Sublime became the adjective to describe such elements, that earlier were considered either useless, since they don’t help mankind, its industry or agriculture (like a desert), or were even frightening and dangerous like the high mountains and oceans. After realizing the aesthetic value of such places, and after having even a name for them (sublime), these places generated not merely a negative feeling due to the impossibility of their domination, but also became attractive from a gnoseological point of view. Therefore, going out into the alienated Nature helps the subject in the search for his position in the world, i.e. in his self-interpretation.

Just as a short side trip I would like to mention that there is also a reason of a “political” nature in the appreciation of the wild landscape: increasing the value of the irregular, originally repulsive and frightening, later sublime Alps and northern landscapes can be seen as a sort of compensation for the loss of harmonious Mediterranean landscapes. Just a short quote from the middle of the 19th century, from King Charles XV. of Sweden, who himself liked to paint landscapes, and who considered the wild landscape as part of northern identity: „We have a wonderful county, perhaps not radiant in sunshine but all the more in seriousness and vigour. Our history and traditions are rich and poetic, full of noble memories, which with good reason constitute our honour and our pride. And so the history and natural beauty of this, the land of our fathers, shall be the main subjects of our art – together they build a temple, and thus shall the work of
our artists be also the worship of our Lord of Nature, the Almighty God. This is the path by which our art will achieve its goals, bestowing upon a beloved fatherland both honour and glory.” Southern landscapes and the northern ones characterized by chaotic mountains relate to each other as the beautiful does to the sublime. That is how, alongside the Mediterranean, the northern landscape also became aesthetically valuable, what’s more, even more capable than the Mediterranean one of moving the spectator.

We shall add another very important question to all this: the relationship of inner and outer Nature: going out into the landscape (in the search for Nature), leaving the town and civilization in a certain sense was by no means a frequent endeavour until the Middle Ages, or in fact until the 18. century. At the same time, the Romantic gaze had the very result that, with the recognition of the existence of the depths of the soul and the terrors lurking in the depths, outer Nature could become not only an analogy but also a complement to inner nature. Something similar we can read in the famous 1984 book of Barbara Stafford “Voyage into Substance”: „The struggle to reproduce an infinite and mutable Nature, one that could not be dominated in its panoramic totality or captured aspect by aspect through the mimicking force of one’s pen, points to a search for structural congruities between mind and matter. On one hand, the interiorization of images of vastness in the Romantic consciousness heralds a focal shift away from the immensity of outer space to an exploration of inner deeps. On the other hand, the emphasis on the creative imagination offers an architectonic analogy between the tiered mental faculties (building upward from sensible perceptions) and the physical world (actively subsuming, while retaining, its lower forms). Both processes are replicated in the material formation of a work of art stroke by stroke, layer by layer, pigment by pigment.”

The outer and the inner are therefore parallel and contrary at once: they are equally “infinite”, yet their relationship is not exhausted by that simple parallel, as the outer actually became an opportunity for fleeing the inner. So going out into landscape, the Romantic experiment of grasping Nature as landscape was at the same time the experience of a state in which salvation was offered by experiencing the impenetrable and transcendent nature of infinite Nature in its pure innocence. Therefore the relationship between Nature and “human nature” also furnished an opportunity to flee, after the loss of original – real or presumed – harmony with outer Nature – from the demons recognized in the inner to the outer, which retained its innocence. And that can be interpreted as a real turning point, as the outer, which had hitherto been avoided on account of its dangers, became the true resting place, and the experience of tranquillity in the outer lead to the purification of the inner.

In addition to experiencing this, the creator of the truly Romantic landscape would also have the responsibility of transmitting it. And that explains the importance of those pictures in which the painter himself appears in the landscape, either in person, as in portraits, or as an artist in general, working “in the landscape”. Presenting an artist trans-
mitting his landscape-experience and landscape-interpretation became a topic and genre in itself in Romanticism.

Therefore we can say that the landscape painting was no longer a picture of the landscape, the emphasis shifted from the landscape to the image. Landscape, as a place and in the same time as an object (painting) became a means of self-interpretation and self-knowledge. And what is even more interesting, especially in some landscape paintings of Romanticism, the relationship between world and man, the human predicament is not only examined implicitly, but, in addition, this very examination itself is explicitly thematized and represented in the images.

The Romantic landscape, by intending to liberate Nature – and recognizing the power of Nature – facilitated a manner of representation that would also represent its relationship with the subject. Therefore the landscape painting is not merely a picture of the landscape, a representation of Nature, but also a mirror that reflects the judgments about it. And, naturally, the interpreting subject is an indispensable part of that judgment, that interpretation. Encountering the infinite and the emotions that this encounter produces leads us towards ourselves, the landscape refers to us.

The self-knowledge and self-interpretation of the subject is aided by the discovery of Romanticism that it is not the relationship to the theme of the work of art but rather the relationship to the work of art itself that may lead us to ourselves. And the transfer of the power of the image outside the image, into the space between the viewer and the picture, would become the par excellence Romantic form of the subject’s seeking a place for itself in the world, its reflection and self-interpretation.

Viewing unattainable infinity in the image – which resonates with the inner infinity of the viewer – leads to a respect for Him that the viewer respects in the infinite. During its viewing, the painting mediates between the viewer appearing in it and the viewer viewing the painting itself. It is the contrast between the proximity and distance of subject and object that counts, the contrast between being within it and being outside it. The landscape painting, as a work of art, is immediately in front of the viewer, yet the landscape depicted in it demonstrates with its infinite inaccessibility. And that is analogous to the feeling of the figure “going out” into nature, who goes “out” in vain. He is surrounded by nature, yet it remains out of reach.

Summarizing all this, we can say that throughout the 18-19 centuries important changes of the interpretation of Nature can be observed. The attempt to modify Nature – and through the modification also to domesticate and dominate it, or at least show as if it had succeeded – turned to be an unmanageable attempt and impossible wish, since it is Nature that overwhelms man. The vision and admiration of such elements that were earlier useless, frightening subject of an attempt of domination became the most ideal places to reflect the subject’s own position in the world.
Biographies
PAOLA ARDIZZOLA

ANDREA BALDINI
Andrea Baldini studied at the University of Siena and Temple University in Philadelphia, where he was admitted as a Fulbright Fellow. His main interests lay at the intersection between philosophy of art, social theory, and art history. He is currently completing his doctoral dissertation, which aims at providing a philosophical analysis of contemporary public art. He published, both in Italian and in English, articles on the philosophy of music and the philosophy of sports. He also edited and translated into Italian Joseph Margolis’ What, After All, Is a Work of Art?, which has been published in 2011 by Mimesis Edizioni under the title Ma allora, che cos’è un’opera d’arte.

JUSTINE BALIBAR
Justine Balibar is currently doing a PhD in philosophy at the Université de Lille 3 (Lille, France) on the aesthetics of natural landscape. She has published « Moralité et distinction chez Proust : entre sincérité et duplicité », in Nouvelle revue d’esthétique, n°10, PUF, Paris, 2013.

GABRIELE BERSA
Arts and philosophy graduate with the dissertation “Aesthetic problems and concepts in Bergson”. Regular teacher, State Scientific High School, he continued the aesthetic
studies with an ethical interest in the broadest sense of the term and from the point of view of human sciences (sociology, cultural anthropology, semiotics). Several essays and participations at different level. For example: *Arte e azione nel pensiero di Giuseppe Mazzini* (Il pensiero mazziniano, LXI, 2/2006); *Arte e filosofia: un conflitto non necessario* (Bollettino Filosofico della Università della Calabria, 20/2007); *Il pensiero di Aristotele e le storie dell’estetica nel Novecento* (2009). Member of IAA (International Association for Aesthetics), of SIE (Società Italiana d’Estetica) and of ESA (European Society for Aesthetics), from time immemorial he takes an active part in the Aesthetics Congresses. Indipendent Thinker, he is now working in the topic: *Art as Practice and as Ethos*.

ALEXIA BRETAS
Aléxia Bretas is post-doctoral researcher at Universidade Estadual de Campinas (IEL-UNICAMP) and lives in São Paulo. She is author of the books The Dream Constellation in Walter Benjamin (Humanitas/FAPESP, 2008) and From the Romance of Artist to the Permanence of Art: Marcuse and the Aporias of Aesthetical Modernity (Annablume/FAPESP, 2012).

B.DENIS CALIS-KURAL
B.Deniz Çalış-Kural, architect specialized in Ottoman garden and landscape traditions; MArch Pratt Institute; Ph.D. in Architecture from METU; Harvard University Dumbarton Oaks Fellowship (2003-2004); Hamad Bin Khalifa Fellowship in 2007. Currently teaching design and architectural history at Istanbul Bilgi University Faculty of Architecture; and preparing a book on 18th c.Ottoman public gardens.

CURTIS CARTER
Curtis L. Carter, Professor of Aesthetics, Department of Philosophy, Marquette University and founding Director of the Haggerty Museum, is President of the International Association for Aesthetics. His Publications include essays on contemporary art and aesthetics. He edited the IAA Yearbook on Art and Social Change (2009) and is a frequent lecturer at international conferences. He organized the symposium: Philosophy, Art, Ethics East/West (2011). His current writings include globalization East/West and writings on Chinese Contemporary art. Previously he served as President of the Dance Perspectives Foundation and Secretary-Treasurer of the American Society for Aesthetics. As curator he has organized exhibitions on video art and other topics in contemporary art.

PAUL CORTOIS
Paul Cortois is Associate Professor at the Hoger Instituut voor Wijsbegeerte /Institute of Philosophy, KU Leuven. His fields of interest include philosophy of culture, theory
of symbolism, aesthetics, ritual, the epistemology of the humanities, and modernity debates. Among his recent publications are articles on Susanne Langer and Cassirer, on ritual experience and ritual aesthetics, on the theory of proper names in relation to personal identity, and on the vital import of things that may possess every property but existence, such as ‘symbolic essences’.

BRUCE ELDER
R. Bruce Elder’s last book, Harmony & Dissent Film and Avant-Garde Art Movements in the Early Twentieth Century examined the intellectual response to the advent of cinema, and showed how the cinema helped shaped the artistic programs of Constructivism (including European Constructivism), Productivism, Rayonism, and Russian Cubo-Futurism. It as awarded the Robert Motherwell Book Prize, shortlisted for the Raymond Klubansky Prize, and named a Choice Outstanding Academic Book for 2010. His next book, DADA, Surrealism, and the Cinematic Effect, will appear in March 2013. Rudolf E. Kuenzli wrote of it, “This is that rare book that casts the early twentieth-century avant-garde in a very new light”.

JALE ERZEN
Jale Nejdet Erzen, painter and art historian, publications on Ottoman architecture, painting and aesthetics. Vice president of IAA. Founder and long-time president of Turkish Association of Aesthetics, SANART. Affiliations, Middle East Technical University- Ankara and İzmir University İzmir Turkey. Recent publications on urban aesthetics, contemporary art.

PENG FENG
A Ph.D. of Peking University, PENG Feng is professor of aesthetics and art criticism at Peking University. He is also a playwright, freelance art critic and curator of exhibitions at international level. He has curated over 130 art exhibitions including the China Pavilion at the 54th international art exhibition of Venice Biennale, 2011. He has published 11 academic books including Pervasion: China Pavilion at the 54th International Art Exhibition of La Biennale di Venezia (Beijing: People’s Art Press, 2012), Introduction to Aesthetics (Shanghai: Fudan University, 2011) and Return of Beauty: 11 Issues of Contemporary Aesthetics (Beijing: Peking University Press, 2009), 7 translation books including Nelson Goodman Languages of Art and Richard Shusterman Pragmatist Aesthetics and over 150 papers on aesthetics and contemporary art. Recently, his musical The Red Lantern is showing in Beijing Tianqiao Theater (Jan.15-20, 2013).

HARUHIKO FUJITA
Is Professor of Aesthetics in the Graduate School of Letters at Osaka University. He

OLIVIER GAUDIN
Olivier Gaudin is teaching and preparing a philosophy PhD thesis at the University of Poitiers (France). His research focuses on the epistemology of urban studies, pragmatist social theory, and the aesthetics of urban experience. Since 2011, he has participated at conferences in Paris, Tours, Copenhagen, Atlanta, Florence and Bologna, and was a visiting student at the Collegio Superiore in Bologna for several months. He recently contributed to the volume Lire les villes. Panoramas du monde urbain contemporain, ed. by R. Cattedra and A. Madœuf, PUFR, 2013.

MASAHIRO HAMASHITA

MARK HAYWOOD
Mark Haywood did his PhD at the Royal College of Art. His previous posts include Professor of Fine Art, Rhodes University. He currently tutors for the Open University in Continental Europe, working between homes in Cumbria and Aveyron. During the past year Haywood’s eclectic writings on visual culture have included chapters in New Issues in Contemporary Art (Istanbul), The Reception of Chinese Art across Cultures (Newcastle, UK) and The Non-Human in Anthropology (Prague).

GAO JIANPING
Gao Jianping, born in 1955, graduated at Yangzhou University in 1982 with a Bachelor Degree of Art, and studied in Sweden from 1989 and received a Ph.D in Aesthetics in 1996 at the Uppsala University, Sweden. He is now research fellow of the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences (CASS). He has published several books including The Expressive Act in Chinese Art - From Calligraphy to Painting and Globalism vs. Lo-
calism: Aesthetics and Cultural in a Comparative Perspective.

HELENA CAMARA LACE BRANDAO
Helena Lacé é doctor in Architecture Science by Federal University of Rio de Janeiro since 2009, institute where she works as professor of interior design at Utilities Arts Department of Fine Arts School. She has various article published on books of proceedings, as well as, on scientific reviews. The main recent publication can be find at http://www.vitruvius.com.br/revistas/read/arquitextos/13.147/4457

PATRICIA LAWLER
Patricia Lawler is an Assistant Professor of Humanities at Boğaziçi University in Istanbul. She currently has a book manuscript under contract with Fordham University Press, which investigates the role of bodily figure within the *Leviathan*’s construction of the consenting materialist subject. More broadly, her work interrogates the historical and theoretical processes by which presentations of bodily form shape the “enlightened” modern subject.

TAE-SEUNG LIM
Tae-seung Lim, Ph.D, HK Professor
Academy of East Asian Studies, Sungkyunkwan University, Seoul, Korea
Symbols and Impressions: an Aesthetic Understanding of East Asian Paintings (2007)
Icons and Codes: an Aesthetic Understanding of East Asian Paintings (2006)
The Origin of Confucianism (2004)

VLADIMIR MAKO
Faculty of Architecture, University of Belgrade Bulevar Kralja Aleksandra 73/II 11000 Beograd, Serbia E-mail: makovl@arh.bg.ac.rs Professor in HISTORY OF ART, AESTHETICS AND SYMBOLISM IN ARCHITECTURE AND ART, Faculty of Architecture, University of Belgrade. In the Postgraduate Doctoral Program at the Faculty of Architecture, University of Belgrade, in DESIGN RESEARCH METHODOLOGY, ARCHITECTURE AND THE THEORIES OF THE 20TH CENTURY. Visiting Professor of the European Academy of Architecture. Visiting Professor at the Faculty of Architecture and Civil Engineering, University of Banja Luka, in ARCHITECTURAL THEORY. Visiting Professor at the Faculty of Architecture, University of Montenegro, Podgorica, in AESTHETICS IN ARCHITECTURE, MODERN ARCHITECTURE, ORNAMENT AND DECORUM.

EVA MAN
Prof. Eva Man is a full professor of the Department of Humanities and Creative Writing of the Hong Kong Baptist University. She obtained her doctoral degree in Chinese
Studies (Aesthetics) from The Chinese University of Hong Kong. Her research areas and publications include comparative aesthetics, comparative philosophy, woman studies, feminist philosophy, cultural studies, gender studies, and art and culture. Her recent publication is an edited volume titled, *Contemporary Asian Modernities: Transnationality, Interculturality and Hybridity*.

KATYA MANDOKI
Dr. Katya Mandoki has published six books on the aesthetics of everyday life, among them *Everyday Aesthetics* (2007), *Estética cotidiana y juegos de la cultura* (2006), *Prácticas estéticas e identidades sociales* (2006), *La construcción estética del Estado y de la identidad nacional* (2007) and numerous articles in academic journals on aesthetics and semiotics. She studied Visual Arts, philosophy and art history and presently is full time tenured professor of aesthetics and semiotics at Universidad Autónoma Metropolitana where she heads the research area on Aesthetics, Culture and Semiotics in Postgraduate Studies at the Division of Arts and Sciences of Design. Mandoki received two first national arts’ prizes by the National Institute of Fine Arts in Mexico and is founder and honorary President of Asociación Mexicana de Estudios en Estética.

ANDREINA MAAHSEN-MILAN
Assistant Professor at the University of Bologna, she currently teaches Sustainable Design. *Main topics*: Urban and morpho-typological studies, planning design for urban regeneration. She is author of many essays and articles on urban architectural topics and on relationships between settlements construction and cultural identity.

YANQIN MENG
Yanqin Meng is the Director of Teaching and Researching Office on Fine Arts & Lecturer of Department of Art history Department in the Academy of Fine Arts in Harbin Normal University. He is Member of International Association for Aesthetics. Research Achievements. Frequent participation in domestic and international art exhibitions and multiple artwork prize attainment. Participation in National Social Science Funding research program Hei Longjiang Art History Research, since 2009-10. Responsible for and finished for Education Department of Hei Longjiang Province social science and humanity program Exploration into Aesthetic Appreciation Psychology for Hei Longjiang Regional Ethnical Beauty and the Revelation to Contemporary Arts Creation, 2009.05-2011.08. Participation in National Arts Funding Research Program by the Ministry of Culture, Research of Arts Industry Type and Run Practice, since 2011.08.

RAFFAELE MILANI
Director of the “Laboratory of Research on the Cities” (Institute for Advanced Studies)

JOOSIK MIN
Joosik Min, Professor of Aesthetics at Yeungnam University, Representative of the Culture Management Forum, Co-organizer of the Conference of East Asian Aesthetics. His field of interest is on Korean traditional aesthetics, comparative aesthetics and theory of art. He has published academic books including Language, Culture and Art in East Asia (Tokyo: Maruzen, 2011), Cultural Contents in Time and Space (Seoul: Oskoworld, 2009), and Arts and Aesthetics in East and West (Seoul: Sol, 2007). His recent papers include “Nujeong or Scenic Pavilion: A Space for Elegant Life”(2012), and “Evolving Art: the significace of Art Project ”(2011).

SILVIA MINICHINO
She is a PhD candidate in Progettazione della Città, del Territorio e del Paesaggio (Urban and regional design) at the University of Florence, Faculty of Architecture, and she is visiting student at Wageningen University (Landscape Architecture group).The main research topic is the relationship between renewable energies and landscape. She has an undergraduate degree in Architecture at the University of Florence, with a thesis about the relationship between rural landscape and protected areas in spatial planning. She is a member of Landscape Architecture and Ecology Laboratory (LabAep),University of Florence. In 2010 she took part in a research project about Cultural Routes and planning tools with the Verdiana Network Assotiation (Florence).

LYDIA MUTHUMA
TANJA PLESIVČNIK
Tanja Plešivčnik (1981, Slovenia) has graduated at the University of Arts in Ljubljana, Department of Geography. In 2010 she enrolled in doctoral degree in Philosophy and Theory of Visual Culture at the Faculty of Humanities in Koper, University of Primorska. She is a founding member and president of an organization KVART-Visual Culture and Arts, which implements artistic and landart projects. Recently published: Plešivčnik T. (2012). Creative approaches toward revitalization of dry stone walling within public space. Human cities: civil society reclaims public space: cross perspectives based on research: international symposium proceedings. Bruselj; Ljubljana: Urbanistični inštitut RS, str.108-115

CLAUDIA PORTIOLI

TOM ROCKMORE
Tom Rockmore is McAnulty College Distinguished Professor at Duquesne University (Pittsburgh) and Professor of Philosophy, and Distinguished Visiting Professor at Peking University (Beijing). His most recent books include Art and Truth after Plato (2013); Before and After 9/11: A Philosophical Examination of Globalization, Terror and History; Kant and Phenomenology (2010); Kant and Idealism (2007); In Kant’s Wake: Philosophy in the Twentieth Century (2006).

MARA RUBENE
Mara Rubene is Professor of Aesthetics, University of Latvia, Riga, Latvia, and the president of LEA (Latvian Association of Aesthetics). Recently she has published on Heidegger’s philosophy of art, modernity, poetic time and space. Her book “Aisthēsis. Mimēsis. Theōria” was published in 2010 (in Latvian).

EBRU SALAH
Ebru Salah after graduation from the Department of Architecture of Gazi University has received her master’s degree from the Department of Urban Design at Middle East Technical University in 2005. She is a Ph.D. candidate at the Department of Architecture, Middle East Technical University with her dissertation focusing on the urban and

HÜLYA TOKSÖZ ŞAHİNER

RIFAT ŞAHİNER
Professor Rifat Şahiner’s publications include “The Postmodern Transformations in Art and Deconstruction of Modernity” ( 2008) and articles on “Arts”, “Postmodernism”, “Popular Culture” and “Video Aesthetics” in various journals since 1995. Şahiner has taken part in the organization of an important contemporary art event “Young Art in Ankara-3” in 2000 and also curated the “Ambigious Situations” in 2010. He is currently Professor of Combined Arts Deparment at the Yildiz Technical University’s Faculty of Art and Design and gives theoretical lectures in Işık University Fine Arts Faculty’s BA and MA programmes in Istanbul.

ANTHONY SANTORA
Anthony Santora is a graduate student at the University of Miami in Oxford Ohio. He has his Bachelors in Architecture from Bowling Green State University, also located in Ohio.

CLAUDIO SGARBI
Claudio Sgarbi, Architect (IUAV), MS, Ph.D (University of Pennsylvania), Professor (Carleton University) practicing in Italy and lecturing in several universities in Canada, Europe and United States. His major fields of interest concern: the image, role and gender of the architect; the relation between neurosciences and architecture; the building technologies; the relevance of architectural history in our contemporary debate. He has published several articles and a book: Vitrueo Ferrarese. “De architectura”: la prima versione illustrata, (Franco Cosimo Panini Editore, 2004). His recent discoveries on the Vitruvian manuscript from Ferrara are in course of publication. He is working on a book with the title Misconceptions. The Infertile Belly of the Architect.
ALAN SHEAR
Alan Shear is an educator and independent scholar. He is the Newsletter Editor for the International Association for Aesthetics. Alan earned a B.A. degree from Wilmington College, Ohio, majoring in philosophy, religion and history with Honors; Master of Divinity degree from McCormick Theological Seminary, Chicago; and M.A. degree in Philosophy from Marquette University, Milwaukee. This year marks his 18th year of teaching college.

ZOLTAN SOMHEGYI
Dr. Zoltán Somhegyi (1981) is a Hungarian art historian, art critic and writer based between Budapest and Bologna. As a researcher he is specialized in 18-19 century art and art philosophy, but he is also active in the contemporary arts as a curator, art adviser, art market- and art communication specialist. Currently he is Assistant Professor at the Department of Philosophy of the University of Szeged, Hungary. He is author of three books, twelve catalogues and more than two hundred articles, critiques, essays and art fair reviews.

SEUNGHYE SUN
Seunghye Sun, Ph.D. is HK professor of Art History and Aesthetics at Academy of East Asian Studies at Sungkyunkwan University. She obtained her Ph.D. from the University of Tokyo. She is a former curator of National Museum of Korea and a curator of Korean and Japanese Art at the Cleveland Museum of Art in USA. Her publication includes The Lure of Painted Poetry: Japanese and Korean Art (Cleveland: The Cleveland Museum of Art. 2010) , The Western-style Paintings in Modern Japan (Seoul: National Museum of Korea, 2008), and The Lure of Asia in Japanese Art (Seoul: National Muesum of Korea, 2008)

HIDEMICHI TANAKA
Professor Emeritus of Tohoku University and Visiting Professor of the University of Art in Tokyo, of Roma and of Bologna. Phd. of University of Strasbourg. Former Vice President of the CIHA. Bibliography; Leonardo da Vinci, Tokyo & Roma,.: The Studies of Formology, Tokyo, Ex Oriente lux, The Influences of the Oriental art to European’s, Tokyo: A History of Japanese Art, Tokyo, Akita & Sassari, etc.

KRYSZYNA WILKOSZEWSKA
Krystyna Wilkoszewska - Ph.D. Full Professor at the Jagiellonian University in Krakow, head of the Department of Aesthetics since 1996. President of the Polish Society of Aesthetics since 2002, a delegate in the Executive Committee of the International Association for Aesthetics. Her main fields of interest are: pragmatist aesthetics, contemporary art, eco-aesthetics, Japanese aesthetics, transcultural studies. Editor and

ANNU WILENIUS
Annu Wilenius is a visual artist and independent curator based in Helsinki, Finland. She studied photography at the University of Art and Design Helsinki and history of ideas at the universities of Stockholm and Oulu, completing MA Degrees in both fields. At the moment she is conducting doctoral studies at Aalto University, Department of Art. Her doctoral dissertation – Semi-detached Ger with a Garden: Experience of Self, Community and Environment Through Urbanising Mongolia – combines Mongolian and European experiences of urbanism and looks into exhibition projects as a method of research.

TAINA RAJANTI
Taina Rajanti is Doctor of Political Sciences and works as a research manager and teaches theory of media culture at department of Art of the School of Arts, Design and Architecture of the Aalto University. Her main research interests are the production of urban space, and theory of contemporary global society. She combines theoretical approach and discussion to experimental artistic projects.


MARY WISEMAN
Mary Bittner Wiseman, Professor Emerita of Philosophy at Brooklyn College and The Graduate Center of CUNY. Author of The Ecstases of Roland Barthes (Routledge) and co-editor of Subversive Strategies in Contemporary Chinese Art (Brill). Author also of entries on Roland Barthes and Post-structuralism for the 2nd ed. of Encyclopedia of Aesthetics (Oxford), ed. by Michael Kelly and many articles on the representation of women in art and contemporary Chinese art. “Gender and Literature” is forthcoming in the Routledge Companion to Philosophy of Literature, ed. by Noel Carroll and John Gibson.

LIU YUEDI
Liu Yuedi, is Associate Professor in Institute of Philosophy at Chinese Academy of Social Sciences, Delegate at large of International Association for Aesthetics, Assistant Secretary-General of Chinese Society for Aesthetics, Executive Main-Editor of The Journal of Aesthetics. His recent books include Aesthetics in Everydaylife (2011), Subversive Strategies in Contemporary Chinese Art (Brill, 2011, with Mary B. Wiseman), The History of Analytic Aesthetics (2009).
Finito di stampare nel mese di marzo 2013
TAS SRL - INDUSTRIA GRAFICA
Sassari Z.I. Predda Niedda Sud, strada 10
Tel. e Fax 079 262221
info: editoriaestampa@yahoo.it