

LANGUAGE AND ARCHITECTURE: LOCATING THE EVENT

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I. Introduction

A number of trends exist in architectural practice. These range from the continuing process of globalization, the media attention placed on architects that encourages differentiation, and the continued dominance of the icons that result in the need to grapple with the productization of space, prefabrication, and affordability. In discussing these concerns, architects, critics, and theorists often speak directly to the current problem and the way that the primary parties frame it. They rarely look at the broader theoretical foundation on which the architect may have built their practice and how that theoretical foundation is playing out in the present work. In the process, criticism and interpretation run the risk of remaining confined to a particular realm of the world, how we inhabit it, way of talking about building, and capacity to get something out of the space in which we live. In this sense, conversations often reference a small subset of discourse without considering the expanded field that determines the conditions of that subset. This conversation fails to take into account the series of translations that take place between different levels and spheres of discourse, material flows, political authorities, subjectivities, temporal structures, purposes, ends, and frameworks of judgement that together have profound consequences on how we conceptualize space, inhabit it, and encounter something called architecture along the way.

The consequence of this omission is that we often find ourselves confronted with an investment that has been made in something that the owners and builders consider to be architecture, but that those who will ultimately inhabit it do not like. This is essentially a situation where a particular collection of subjects do not want to live their lives within the sway of a particular architect author. While one could say that they should just escape to another locale, doing so runs the risk of negating a particular investment as well as opens the possibility of a broader disjunction that could exclude a vast range of people from a capacity to influence how the space they inhabit is designed. Further, by cutting off people from determining what is architecture, it opens the possibility that the work of architects becomes increasingly focused on problems that are internal to architecture and divorced from the problems of people. If the works of architecture are intended to serve some higher purpose and function in an elevated manner for the inhabitants, it also cuts people off from such contact and how that contact can function for us all.

In order to address this concern, we need to consider how we talk about space, building, dwelling, and architecture by examining a series of theoretical terms that have been used in the past to characterize architecture. We must do so in the contemporary context of globalization, how capital is structured, and the varieties of types of people that inhabit the world in order to understand the ultimate purpose of investing in something called architecture and how it can perform for an expanded group of people rather than a limited number with access. At heart, the question is one of judgment. What do we want to call architecture? What does calling something architecture accomplish? And, what does what we call architecture accomplish? In this sense, we must come up with a framework for determining what we want to get out of something called architecture. On one hand, we could say that this question is pointless and that we should simply say that architects design buildings and so buildings are architecture. Some of these buildings are quite simple and cost very little. Other buildings are incredibly complex and cost a tremendous amount of money. An aesthetic system in turn helps us to

determine what we value within this range. Even if we follow this path, we come up against the question of how we judge one design of a stadium to be better than another, how we evaluate its performance, and how we determine which architect to select in the future.

With this in mind, we might say that once a building passes a certain threshold of quality, we can consider it architecture. We arrive at an evaluative framework that can help us to understand how to allocate the large sums of money that go into the construction of the built environment towards a particular goal – and the reasonable expectation of accomplishing that goal. Moreover, we can do so in such a way that will cut through the onslaught of competitions, RFQs, media coverage, and competing polemics in order to understand what has a meaningful chance of working as opposed to ending up as a partially built or uninhabited city that fails or functions for a very small subset of the population.

In answering how we judge something to be architecture, we could easily say that it is just a matter of selecting an aesthetic system. We can select a Kantian, Hegelian, Wittgensteinian, or Post-Structural framework via how subsequent authors have translated them into the field of architecture. While it is important to rely on the method these authors have developed, none offer a framework that is completely suited to the present moment. In many ways, each considers a subset of the expanded field in the same way that a range of architecture discourse has done. In this sense, we need to assemble a range of tools from the different frameworks in order to approach the real problems facing the future of our built environment.

While a full examination of the theoretical ground on which we should base this discussion is well beyond the scope of this essay, it is important to offer a few points of orientation. At a foundational level, we are working with a fundamental understanding of a Platonic conceptualization of ideal form as the building blocks that allow us to describe and intervene in our world and make or describe something that we might call a reality. From here, we understand the germination of architecture in a choric space and tempering of plans for a structure to a world always at odds with the ideal. The Cartesian and Euclidean characterization imposes a scientific layer onto space that removes the disjunction between ideal and real by resolving the divine problem – black box – via removing its impact from the field under consideration. The critical philosophy of Kant introduces the rebuttal that the location and nature of such a black box has a profound impact on the field and by extension how we characterize and inhabit space and time. In this context, judgment is introduced to synthesize pure and practical reason as regulated by the transcendent table that preserves pure language and ideal form. Judgment replaces the role of tempering in bridging the ideal and real world and aids navigation of space and time and their lived reality as geography and narrative. This epistemic idealism is juxtaposed to the metaphysical idealism driven by a dialectical understanding of history and space that Hegel introduces. Hegel turns away from abstract thought and to the formation of self-consciousness through history as characterized by being, nothingness, movement, geography, cultures, and spirit into his logic. In the process, God no longer is an anthropomorphic concept, but an abstract underlying substance – the Absolute. This decision to entangle the material history of the world with philosophy and the theory of knowledge creates a connection to politics and the reality of the built environment rather than an ideal system of proportions and form. This confrontation of real and ideal calls the notion of a pure ideal architecture into question. This occurs in a way that was not explicit in

classical theories and results in integrating and differentiating the faculties. This opens the possibility of a return to Plato and an era in thought with a much tighter link between “the faculties” as well as to the natural lived world into which one is thrown and which the faculties attempt to make sense. This ultimately makes it possible to consider a return to unity before the demystification of the world we inhabit. Nietzsche introduces the capacity to understand space directly via the perspective of the subject rather than as part of some broader ideal system. Heidegger then reconciles the radical claim that western thought has failed to ask about the direct will that extends from the subject rather than a will that is discovered and cultivated as extending or born from some other system bigger than that of man (i.e. that man creates all power) by saying that this has really been what western thought has been all along, but that having failed to realize this power structure, relied on a range of false metaphysical systems and that by recognizing this and recharacterizing past thought via hermeneutics, the proper meaning can be restored and the problem of metaphysics can be overcome.

If this is the foundation, we would then add an understanding of “the critique of space.” Such a critique, challenges the capacity of any one theory to dominate our conception of space. It also exposes the disjunction between imagined space and lived space as well as the extent to which space has been used as a weapon, tool, and means of controlling people. Such an understanding would be based in Marx’s dialectical materialism that helps us to understand how natural resources are transformed through production and reproduction and how this process in turn dictates the form that society takes and by extension the cities in which we live. Simmel contributes an analysis of how money moves within and forms urban systems, codes, languages, communities, habits, and habitats and how it is connected to style and our theory of knowledge and our subjectivity more broadly. Benjamin compliments this work through his analysis of the built environment and art in his work on the arcades. Finally, contemporary theorists such as David Harvey help to situate this economic geography as defining and defined by the current power structures of globalism.

This economic geography intersects with the work of Bataille who helps us to understand how the subject is affected by the movement of capital, magic, myth, and sensuality through a space and time that they are each equally involved in forming. His work is complimented by that of Duchamp and Breton who help us understand how the psychological – drawing on Freud and eventually extending to Lacan – influences the way in which we conceptualize and navigate space. This work is naturally complimented by other artists – Picasso, Matisse, Braque, Brancusi, Naguchi, etc. – and architects – Le Corbusier, Mies, Frank Lloyd Wright, Gropius, Taut – who offer expanded ways of measuring, designing, and controlling space. They are complimented by Merleau-Ponty and Bachelard who define a phenomenology of perception and poetics of space respectively. Bachelard, through his works *Earth and the Reveries of Will* and *Earth and the Reveries of Repose*, in particular, highlights the role that fundamental materials, natural elements, tools, and objects play in how we have created mythologies of life on earth that have helped us to navigate challenges and ultimately contributed to our philosophic systems. These ways of characterizing the world and our orientation within it are brought together as a system comprised at times of conflicting ways of operating and seeing. This system makes visible – one might even say describes – the economic, phenomenal, and poetic geography of space as the ground on which we build that might hold buildings judged to be architecture.

To this ground and foundation we add a series of theories that seek to integrate the two around a particular focal point. Foucault offers a theory largely centered around the subject that replaces the existential dimension with a political dimension. In making this addition, he introduces a range of spaces from panopticon's to prisons and utopias whose structure and history would have previously fallen outside of either philosophy or aesthetics. Bruno Latour extends this work by attempting to resolve the objection that the terms that Foucault proposes merely reflect a specific manifestation of an underlying system and therefore are not universal in their own right and connect the subject to an underlying system as a network of actors that are not all necessarily human agents.

This work on the subject is complimented by work on sense, sensation, difference, and repetition carried out by Deleuze. Deleuze extends some of the insight by Simondon to better understand how the world is structured through a temporal unfolding at different levels and in different spheres occurring outside of any direct agency and instead as the result of underlying forces ranging from capital to the collective subconscious. Badiou adds his theory of being and event and logic of worlds to this while Jean-Luc Nancy adds his theory of disenclosure. Each tries to resolve the modern dilemma that Habermas describes as a matter of what comes after metaphysics and the fact that each one's system is thrown back through the language on which it is built. The ones that we are mentioning succeed at either offering a compelling alternative in a novel logical system such as Badiou or convincing that overcoming metaphysics is not as big of a concern as how a mashed up critical theory can help us discern what is going on around us and bring the latent to the surface via explication. This is Sloterdijk's ultimate position. Sloterdijk adds an integrative theory of atmosphere in which all of this occurs. Finally, Ricoeur explores a detailed analysis of how narrative time structures this process and the role of metaphor in language that has considerable applicability to architecture. Together, these theories integrate geometry, geography, space, time, and subject.

A set of architects and theorists have in turn orientated their work in relationship to this field. Colin Rowe, Dalibor Vassilly, Frampton, Hayes, and Alberto Perez-Gomez play a fundamental role in creating a hinge between this theoretical work and built work. They use a critical lens to understand the work of Le Corbusier and others and how it relates to a material and intellectual tradition. As more analytical tools that were not available to this generation of theorists become available and we understand how they relate through work like the present essay, we can reevaluate the work of past architects, their meaning, and what allowed them to become architecture and the way that they trace form of truth – or, at least make the possibly of truth visible. They have informed Eisenman's work that seeks to reclaim the latent capacity of the modern movement that the historic direction that it took with the international style and coopting of that style by capital failed to realize. This has occurred via a fundamental reliance on language, optically, presentness, and a quest for the non-representational. It has also informed the work of Daniel Libeskind who, along with Zaha Hadid, has sought to introduce radical representational tools that calls into question the hegemony of how space is structured by power that build off of the work of the Russian Constructivists. It has informed those architects who lean towards a phenomenology of perception (Holl), those relying on a theory of the sign (Venturi), and those who lean towards a phenomenology of the material (Herzog and de Meuron). Koolhaas adds to this discourse by conceptualizing how the process

of globalization impacts architectural practice and, in the process, perhaps better than any other, understand how the flow of capital impacts space. In many ways, his work offers an ideal correspondence to the work of Sloterdijk and his work *In the World Interior of Capital* in particular. Easterling compliments this way of seeing the subject of architecture by creating a path by which critical thought on geography and space can be connected to the appearance of architectural form. It is the theoretical work of Demos and the artists that he examines in the realm of art and Diller and Scofidio in the realm of architecture that restores a lived critical subjectivity to this global process of motion and travel. An architect such as Nouvel modifies this approach by focusing the interaction between inhabitant and building on the technical capacity of the building and the extent to which it can excel through traditional components. We will discuss this technical capacity and the technicity of the building in greater detail when considering the role of the interface in determining architecture.

Their work has been mentioned because incorporating the questions that they raise into a future built environment will enhance the quality of that space and help us to collectively agree that something is exceptional and should be called architecture. In what follows, we assemble components of the work of the above thinkers as a “cohesive” system that will help us to discern value. Given the constraints of this essay, I will leave citing specific elements and advocating for their particular connection for another time. At the moment, we must begin by seeing the multiple groups for whom architecture might exist as a range of subjects that constitute and are constituted by space. Buildings rarely fully understand the subject that will inhabit it, the time they occupy and generate, and their ultimate goals and ends. This failure is one of design as well as how we understand value – often as tied to investment, return on investment, and investors rather than on the attributes of a space that allow the inhabitant to thrive.

What we call architecture – a cathedral vs. shopping mall for example – occurs at the level of language. We say that a vaulted stone arch doorway is an element of architecture while a prefabricated aluminum door is something for a building. But, in connecting language and architecture as running from idea and concept through analysis to tectonics to built form, we should be careful not to rely on an overly direct correspondence where built space functions analogously or as a language. We often assume that the language of architecture is comprised of a series of tectonic objects – doors, windows, columns, walls, floors, etc. – that accommodate a particular program and that are given a particular style based on location and building tradition. This can be as simple as selecting a language and then defining grammar and location for the sentences to occur and the audience that will hear it. As abstractions, these terms and their combination to create space does not necessarily yield a particular atmosphere.

Space and language are intertwined via the living being, collective memory, and textual record. Language already incorporates space and by extension architecture into how it is conceptualized and vis-versa. The consequence of this confusion and relying on a direct analogy between language and architecture that seeks to have the elements of architecture perform as language via some grammar is that one gets formally innovative spaces – as one might get formally innovative poetry or jazz – that don't perform for a set of inhabitants, that speak to themselves, and that don't deliver the true return on investment that society

requires. The way that the building is written, read, and the source of meaning has yet to be located. This must occur through a specific set of local combinations of desires, ideas, concepts, solutions, tools, interfaces, and interactions subject to space and time via air, light, temperature, sound, and humidity. Once subject to these conditions in a here and now via the various aggregates of sensation they can then begin to form a sentence, work, atmosphere, and mood.

The following analysis will then aim to resituate what we call architecture as exceptional built space that delivers the maximum return on investment. We will do so while retaining a reliance on language and how words are used to describe space and how it functions. Moreover, we will explore the criteria for locating the event of a built space becoming architecture. The steps that we take will set up a method of locating this event. They will also offer tools for maximizing the likelihood of something becoming architecture via practice. Doing so will address the extent to which architecture discourse has become largely concerned with a subset of how space is defined and created and built by looking at the expanded field. In essence, this will be to look at what Peter Eisenman might identify as being anterior to architecture and that he and others have been loath to fully confront. Doing so would be to follow the path charted by Krauss and Foster among others in situating art within an expanded field of understanding. Architecture theory could then incorporate the connection between aesthetics, value, and material form. Moreover, theories of performance, cultural appropriation and critique, identity, meditation, movement, lived practice, and community engagement could all be beneficial in supporting the speculative and conceptual realm of architecture that we will discuss further in what follows.

We will do so by considering how the subject moves through that field, the relationship that the subject has to such “limited architecture,” the way this “limited architecture is integrated into the broader system, and how its potential and presentness in the process. This will help us to understand the range of motivations for creating new spaces to inhabit and for maintaining the spaces that already exist that defines the current moment in the history of architecture, building, and the city. It will allow us to better see how these motivations are integrally linked to a system of authorization that determines who is able to build what, where, and when. This system is defined by legal, monetary, social, and political authority and comes together at particular sites to define how the built environment is constructed and maintained. In the process, built space is often both used and abused towards a particular end. At the same time, rare moments arise that allow us to see these underlying latent forces – moments that we will argue characterize architecture. What follows will then be about situating where this occur, for whom, when, and towards what ends and how the answers to the above might impact what we build. In order to begin, we will explore the subject as who will conceive and deliver space, building, and narrative.

II. The Subject

The human being existing within a space can be characterized in many ways. They bring a wide range of preconceptions and memories relating to the history and use of space. They feel limited and empowered in a number of ways. They also expect space to function for them in a particular manner. Through their presence, they introduce the horizon of judgment that creates the capacity for a building to be understood as exceptional as performing at a higher level than others in our world. We might refer to this person as a subject of or in space, a user, an inhabitant, or a receiver of some attribute of the space through which they pass. Each exposes a variation in the way of situating, understanding, and ontologizing man in relation to the space and possibility of an inhabited architecture.

Situating the subject – both as authorial and receiver – within a particular inhabitable material construct requires a clear understanding of the nature of that subject. This involves understanding how they are oriented and the way in which they critically perceive the contrast between the materiality of the architecture, the latent forces that inform it, the expectations and histories that they have brought with them, and the atmosphere they occupy and help to generate. The result is a feeling of being deeply enmeshed, engaged, and supported by the built environment in such a way that one does not feel alienated and has the capacity to use their built environment to serve their particular purpose.

The following offer the range of ways of characterizing this subject:

- 1) As the builder and owner who creates a space for one's personal use that is tailored to their needs. Man remains entirely at the center of how it is defined and used as an individual and via their family. They retain agency over the space both separately and as a collective. They have an equality with the space. The terms of definition are local and largely determined by a network of similar individuals with a similar horizon. The Resident as suggesting some contract and responsibility for the building in question.
- 2) As the building and owner who does not live in that building. This person subjects the tenant to a set of rules that may diminish their agency over the space. They want something out of that space. They want it to perform in a particular manner that often connects the space to a broader network that places particular restrictions and opportunities on the space.
- 3) The tenant who is subject to the rules of the owner but who is also able to impose their own rules on the space. These rules might reflect a degree of liberty because they are not responsible for the prolonged care of the space. They also do not have capital tied down in the building. This might make them more inclined to make temporary additions or modify the space via a collection of objects.
- 4) The transient service provider who visits a space from time to time. They are intimately connected to its operation and maintenance. They are subject to a specific set of rules and time frames. They are caught up in the economy of the building and of real estate more broadly.

- 5) The worker as always performing a task in the building during a prolonged time frame. They might be a factory worker, server, banker, surgeon, architects, etc. who wants their space to meet the terms of employment and allow them to do more faster with less resources. They can also feel exploited by their space if not given tools to make changes.
- 6) The legislator who sets rules on spaces that they don't own. This often occurs by popular agreement and often to mitigate the rules that an owner might impose without regulation. They create a standard and provide for public safety. This role can often take up questions of the ideal and philosophy of the city.
- 7) The enforcer who ensures that the rules are being followed. They introduce the horizon of punishment for not doing so and the question of justice. They determine whether space is being justly allocated and administered. Their existence also introduces the horizon of protest against the abuse of space.
- 8) The transient without attachment to property. This person could range from a shepherd to being homeless. They often must conform to the state and needs of their body and those people and spaces who will host them.
- 9) The god, genius, or guru who is both within and beyond the space. They draw people and subjects together under a particular horizon of transformation. They are ultimately subject to laws of a higher space, transcendence, and ends.
- 10) The inhabitant that does not relate to ownership and instead just to being there such as the guest, visitor, or tourist.
- 11) The subject as indicating a particular power structure, relationality, and agency within a system. In some contexts, they might oppose the objectivity of the material building to the subjectivity of man. Some might argue that man cannot truly function as man without this relationship as a horizon of understanding, becoming, and death providing orientation.
- 12) The receiver and contributor who is not beholden to a classic dichotomy or the material and animistic limits. This characterization assumes a varied contribution between the surfaces and people that looks at the entire building as information that is constantly being exchanged and used to inform those exchanging and the future condition of the situation.
- 13) The producer and consumer that frames those occupying with an economic relationship that historically has structured where people live. This sets up a horizon of transformation based on how well one does either and the value that is assigned.
- 14) As gendered that structures where people can go and what people can do there including what they look like and the stories that are told. It sets up conformity to a particular economy and code.

- 15) The deviant, voyeur, pervert, exhibitionist, showman, artist, and politician who breaks the norms based on personal experience and causes others to be inspired and captivated. This character might be considered a charismatic leader and may potential intersect with the religious figure.

Each of these ways of characterizing man in relationship to space has specific social, spatial, economic, political, and architectural consequences. They are attached to specific typologies and styles of building. Together, they form the complex web of spaces and systems that comprise the built world. At the same time, it is important to understand the extent to which man is an active subject constituting and experiencing an architecture through the intersection of a variety of subjectivities, times, and ends as defined by structuration and the relationship between figure and ground. Man is in a constant state of negotiating the field through which they move and understanding how they and others relate to each other and the field. They are both informed by these other figures and the rules that they place on each other and the space that they share. We are, in this sense, a set of active subjects that limit each other both together and independently. Before discussing what each of these subjects will build, we will discuss how space is striated such that these subjectivities are sorted and ordered under a power structure – the objective field – that has a concrete materiality that takes traces over time. It defines what can be inhabited and ultimately the geography of our world and the limitation of what can be built.

III. The Uses and Abuses of Space

What we will call the uses and abuses of space are effectively ways of collecting and categorizing how the rules governing how space is constructed, maintained, and functions are applied. They are a collection of common tactics that can either contribute a positive or negative impact of space on a particular group of people. As such, they can affect different groups in different manners such that space can operate both positively and negatively. If we were to draw this line between use and abuse as a set of overlaid authorities and temporalities that impact a particular site and situation in different ways based on what is constructed and maintained and where that site sits within the broader system, we might consider the following groupings:

Uses

- 1) For the specifically stated programmatic end that serves some specific social function.
- 2) As part of a system connected to the production of a good or service. This might range from connecting to a food supply network to the collection of homes that house factory workers that make a pill that prevents the transmission of a virus. This use forms a contentious line connected different types of spaces. It plays a significant role in determining the other forces that could either be understood to be a use or abuse.
- 3) As an experiment that could improve how space is used more broadly. This might include a laboratory. It could also include innovative structures and infrastructures that might proliferate after proving valuable.

- 4) As “natural” or un-used by man. This could be virgin land that has been preserved or it could be an ecological system that can still function and prosper as a whole alongside humans inhabiting the earth.
- 5) For the transcendent as connected to exploiting, orchestrating, staging, installing a set of material and psychological conditions that help inhabitants see the latent forces behind the site and situation.

Abuses

- 1) The corruption of the intent behind the uses, the changing circumstances in which that attempt comes to be situation, and the passage of control of who owns and directs that intent. In many cases, this is driven by a need to maintain profit for an expanding group of related people even as the source of wealth of that group might become increasingly scarce.
- 2) Malicious intent driven by explicitly by exploitation ranging from forced labor camps to illegal prisons. This group extends to the moments when the norms are abandoned and violence erupts and murder occurs.
- 3) War as not necessarily an abuse, but as increasingly used as such. It is often entangled with how uses and abuses are perceived.
- 4) Terror as a means of both fighting and protesting violence by those with limited state power. This often occurs from the margins and again is not necessarily an abuse, but so often co-opted as such.
- 5) The legalization, authorization, coding, making language, historicizing, and gendering of space. This is again not necessarily an abuse, but so often brought into an ideology. At the same time, it is often the first means of making the other abuses latent.

In many ways, the categorization is a deviation from a neutral point in which these tactics remain purely potential. In considering the neutral tactics, it is important to note the work of Roland Barthes on the subject. While he does not mention architecture or critical spatial discourse more broadly, he provides a critical framework for how neutrality can be seen within language and poetry. From this framework, we can extrapolate a framework used to evaluate space. The neutral “tactics” and rules that form the vocabulary of the use and abuse of space include the following: the operations / conceptual structuring of the idea (opposition / comparison, exclusion / inclusion, replacement, transference, reference, displacement, differentiation / integration), materials (stone, wood, metal, glass, plastic, etc.), elements (window, wall, door, etc.), performance (instruments, standards, capacity for public opinion, etc.), program (as one of mediation or without any assignation), and the building blocks of operation and concepts (sign, symbol, icon, image, line, shape, color, form, figure, grounds, adjective, verb, noun, and metaphor).

These terms are then sited in the world via the anticipation of the inhabitant by the designer, their rites and rituals, and the way that a specific idea gives material form. The relationship between the neutral as encountered in meditation, law, space, and architecture occurs via durational and collective perception that constructs and maintains the built environment. It structures the decisions that will be made and what will be built. In this sense, the neutral – or the desire for the neutral – defines an ideal relationship between things. With the introduction of the will and activity of the subject comes representation as the sole relationship between subject and object to mirror and negotiate the relationship between figure and ground. The feeling subject makes and encounters this representation as structuring their status in achieving this ideal relationship. The difference between feeling and relationship is encountered through the distance between sensation at the level of the body and a representation beyond. It is an encounter that draws the subject into the frame of vision and invites participation in things. Ultimately, this gives rise to a revision of a relationship between things and the ideal and the range of desires for different ideals that begin to differentiate how space as containing the subject and representation is used and potentially abused.

The existence of uses and abuses of space are part of the logical system of how space is created and inhabited. They not only frame architecture, but the subject. They define what the subject can expect to encounter in space and limits what they can hope to achieve. They define the available tools. In essence, the use or abuse of space is the *per ergon* that frames architecture. In so doing, a classification system is created that sets up who we can expect to find where and when. This sets up what sort of structures we might expect to build there and the extent to which if this work is “just building” it re-enforces the existing power structure, but if it is “architecture” it elevates the subject through “added value” conferred at some point(s) in space or time as an event or set of events. In this sense – and drawing on the work of Badiou – we begin to see the definition of architecture as a collection of effort and elements that is more than the sum of its parts. It has the capacity to resist the use of space passing into abuse through usury or other tactics that might be employed. In so doing, it has the capacity to restore what we might hope to get out of space through personal and collective use to a wide range of subjects that have been confined to camps, ghettos, or land at the fringe.

The interaction of use and abuse defines the quality of the space that architecture will then exist within. In this sense, use or abuse is not necessarily good or bad, true or false. Good architecture can be judged to exist in a bad space as a paradigm for how that space might improve. As frame, however, they set up the reference point for the “style” – in the sense of mood, mode, and comportment – that an architecture work might take on. As we see use and abuse through larger global forces and less through local building typologies ranging from the church to the prison, we might begin to see the style of the building less as a formal expression referenced to an “originary” state and more as a “way of operating” akin to Weizman’s *Forensic Architecture*. The uses and abuses of space, in this sense, are the predicate of architecture. They anticipate the program ultimately defined and inhabited by people and systems that are not immediately at hand as the broader infrastructure to which it is connected. They define how it is limited by what those spaces are used for and how it is abused as well as how much they cost and who is present there.

Defining the line between the two is a question of how specific connections are made and whether those connections are justified by the common interest as opposed to that of an entity that is vested in controlling and using spaces in a particular manner. It is also a matter of the tactics – as a form of mediation – that are used to convey and transmit this preferred use and how those tools are brought into the open when the use of space is called into question. Given that more and more space is contested as the result of well-reasoned theories based on evidence that the dominant use of space has negatively impacted the environment and the people who inhabit it, it becomes more convincing to argue for a constant and ubiquitous effort to bring those latent forces into the open through a process of explication. In many ways, this is essentially what a forensic architecture is arguing for via a specific selection for politico-material forces. It is also what an architecture driven by a critical reexamination of form generation or representation offers at the level of how the world is drawn in plan, section, and perspective versus how it is experienced haptically by the inhabitant. In many ways, we need to acknowledge the propensity to deviate and fall into abuse and the promise that architects make of some form of restoration of use through the architectural intervention. This restoration cannot be taken as a given. It requires a critical approach and framework. The result will locate the event that propels the discourse forward.

IV. Subject Negotiating Use and Abuse

This section will explore how the subject moves through the range of uses and abuses of space to achieve orientation, how they contributes to determining what we collectively call architecture, how they want to exist in space, and how they want to use space. In this sense, the following describe what characters can do based on the situation in which they find themselves:

- 1) A capacity to go anywhere, meet any person, acquire any piece of information, and pursue whatever path one wants as a result of their coming into being in the world.
- 2) Equipped with all the social and financial resources to do so, but unable to direct one's attention to the world and instead directing it inward towards the self as a result of a desire for personal transcendence, mental or physical health problems, a disability, or an addiction. These characteristics are often conflated.
- 3) Generally having access to resources, but having no clear orientation. This essentially involves not knowing what is unknown and not knowing where to begin. As a result, one remains largely grounded in whatever intellectual framework one has been born. A capacity is, nevertheless, retained for later in life journeys of discovery that reflect whatever status and accumulation has occurred over the course of a given life.
- 4) Limited access to resources and clear expectations of the way that the person should be in the world. Mobility is limited mobility and there is a limited view outside of the milieu into which the person is born. This comes with very specific health implications. Many working blue collar jobs and in the service industry are confronted with this situation.

- 5) Abject poverty without the basic goods and services that are generally required to stay alive. This leads to a struggle very early on to survive and can lead to violence or equally a deep honesty, humility, and truth about the inequality of the human condition.
- 6) The exception as the one who stands out in whatever milieu into which they are born. They are recognized for a capacity to overcome the circumstances into which they were born through recognition often embodying a curiosity and way of seeing the world that serves as a broader inspiration for others. These people structure the ideal and help others.

This active subject has an extraordinarily diverse set of experiences. They are exposed to and master a wide range of levels and spheres. They are always equally constituted by being thrown into the world under a particular authority and subject to the same biological and psychological horizon. At the same time, they are afforded different access and opportunity based on the specific situation into which they are born. Language is spread over space and “control” is assigned based on traits. What once might have been more profoundly differentiated based on geography, climate, culture, and history has now been defined based on class and education. This leads to an extremely stratified state that leaves some with access to tools that can aid in their mental and physical development that reflects a situation in the world as currently made by man. It makes the horizon of that world visible and in some cases accessible. In other cases, people remain trapped outside with diminished agency that contributes to how they imagine themselves and the world. This leaves them without many common characteristics of the subject. They are cut off from the elements capable of allowing them to live a dignified existence. They lack the technical tools that might support their advancement. The result is a differentiation of spaces. Differentiated space now requires specific religious and belief systems to pair with the specific technical capacity. This in turn leads to a situation where many different varieties of subjectivities are overlaid on a space that one might reside in or pass through. It will be these people and how they relate to space that will make architecture as aligned and extended from how this language makes the world visible as well as the appearance of a particular horizon from different people.

Before speaking of architecture, we will have to speak of architecture(s) extending from the range of subjective vantage points. It is not about locating an event, but many events and understanding how they are related and contribute to common sense. Instead of designing a singular wall addressed to an idealized subject, we should think about a multiplicity of walls. We should not just do so when designing specific projects for different clients, but when designing buildings that will be encountered by many. We need to think of multiple overlapping walls that are visible and perceived differently by different subjectivities. This would imply a deconstructed architecture achieving a new level of “high performance” where architecture informs and is informed by different subjectivities in a reciprocal relationship. It would involve creating a situation where these differences and overlaps contribute to the constitution of the different varieties of subjectivities. Ultimately, they would help to constitute identity and create a geography defining desire and value. This would raise the question of collective agreement and “weighted rights.” This process would be connected to the broader structure of the economy. In particular, it is tied to the way we have come to value rather ethereal money driven professions such as finance and real estate. These professions

are often led by the people who set the terms of what is built, but not necessarily what one considers architecture. They exist in stark contrast to those tied to manual labor and independent cultivation of the land.

The division between professions, their objects, aesthetics, and how they control and make space is discussed at length in the work of Bourdieu and Leffebvre in *Distinctions*, *The Field of Cultural Production*, and *The Production of Space*. These works explore the extent to which objects of different types existing in different levels and spheres are collectively or individually valued and the mechanism for doing so. This occurs as sedimentation of material that reflects styles as negatively constituted in relation to what has been. This process is intimately connected to the relationship between magic, the gift, and money. It would require elevating the belief and faith required for each to an extreme that directly reflects the number of generations of accumulation of wealth and the number of people who currently live on earth. The result might be to create greater mobility between the modes of characterizing people and what those people can do. In many ways, these varieties are further striated by intelligence and demeanor. These types of subjectivities and functional application suggest a unique set of aesthetic values that are distinguished from each other. This leads to an aesthetic language for each that approximates a unified world. It simulates balance and completion that makes sense of the appearance of both the exceptional and the everyday as part of a broader aesthetic system that offers unity. It helps us to conceptualize a world before such a radical splitting of the subject and alienation of such a vast portion of the global population from their labor, tools, space, and even themselves.

V. The Time of the Subject

The subject negotiates the potential uses and abuses and how they are oriented to them via a temporal process. This temporal process is traced in a variety of manners. These exist strictly for the subject via characteristics such as how long they have lived in a house, how long they have dated a person, the duration of working a particular job, the number of jobs held over time, the number of trips, books read, and systems learned, and generally all the temporal frames that structure the narrative of our life and help us remember what has happened. The temporal process is also traced directly in the space that they pass through via clocks, layers of paint on the walls, layers of dirt accumulated, layers of the city built one on top of the other, elements that emerge from another era, decay of structures, patina, and really any of the traces created by the interaction of the time of the material with the time of inhabitation and nature.

The question arises of how the dynamic relationship between the “time of the subject” and “the time of the space” unfolds. In some cases, it is a coincidental relationship and in other cases it is an active relationship that contributes to the success of the subject. In the latter, parts of the space become an interface that has the capacity of affecting the broader configuration of space across time. Ultimately, the success of this encounter between subject and the material interface in space is determined by a framework of judgment that we will discuss in greater detail in what follows. This moment is one between two forms of the face – the face of man and the face of the technical object that mirrors man and extends their desires and desire for change and control into the world. When measured or recorded, this encounter of

the subject with space characterizes the uniqueness of the subject. The way that the subject manipulates space with tools via the interaction with an interface differentiates them from other subjectivities. It occurs in the present in a “now” that is inherently neutral that contains the potentiality of all the neutral terms that we discussed earlier. Through a succession of these nows, introduction of ideas, and aggregation of this mediation in a medium, a character and mood forms in repetition and variation.

This “now” is related to a particular place through its occurrence to and in an embodied subject located in space and oriented to that space through the technical tools and interfaces that we have discussed. In this sense, the “now” will be the location at which architecture is constituted through agency that renders repetition intelligible. The variation of this agency – how needs evolve over the course of a day, year, or life – constitute mood that desires a particular atmosphere in which to exist. This succession over an extended period of time creates opportunities for recording, traces of past ways of doing things, and the production of a particular style. These occur through a range of technical processes that we have been discussing. It is a moment when all the elements that we are discussing, defining, and relating come together via judgment. On one hand, an embodied experience of now supports sense perception at the most heightened level because one is not distracted by a broader narrative or annotation of reality. This allows for perception to awaken to an experience exclusively mediated by the human sensory apparatus. On the other hand, it opens to a set of norms, limits, languages, and codes that have been agreed upon that support shared use of space and broader functioning of a productive society that makes it possible for large numbers of people to live together.

It is also a question of imagination in terms of what the mind can conceive as a difference from the present set of narratives (what ought to be) as what comes to mind – perhaps as an awareness of the true nature of a place unmediated by culture – when the narratives quiet down and as fantasy or imagination as connected to a subconscious plane. This is not an escape, but contact and access to the building blocks and perception apparatus that disclose our engrained hopes and fears that make up our narratives. This occurs in line with inquisitiveness, orientation, and exploration based on the cues that one gets from the environment. It is also an inquisitiveness connected to imagination and what might exist beyond the immediately perceptible – the divine. It is the poetic dimension of a work or space that discloses this. At the same time, it opens up the need to think more via the speculative and the conceptual field that we will explore in what follows.

These narratives are spread across a range of categories that affect the constitution of architecture. While each is equally comprised of a succession of nows, they are each used to convey a particular meaning. This is not necessarily about architecture, but the time of the different types of spaces through which the subjects passes. Each has their own language and are traced in their own manner. They include the following:

- 1) As driven by the time that it takes to conceive, design, and build the project. This is followed by the horizon of occupancy and decay. It is driven by the timeframe of the procurement of material, the mining of the earth as well as the time that it takes to transform the material condition and the resistance that exists and the tools that

have been invented to overcome this resistance. It is deeply tied to an underlying capitalist economy that controls the sites of extraction and the transformation of what is extracted.

- 2) The time of Capital as driven by reporting cycles, interest rates, returns on investment for particular people and funds that allow people to eat, live, inhabit the world tied to how long it once and now takes goods to travel around the world. This is not just a physical entity, but a virtual set of constructs, networks, and communities connected to the careers of executives and owners and the corporate space that have arisen throughout history to support this process.
- 3) The time of the human body as tied to longevity, agency, and what one does over the course of the day as well as what the body needs out of space in that time that gives way to programming and that connects to the phenomenology of space.
- 4) Perceived time that can be characterized and explained in a variety of manners. We are particularly compelled by those that explore ways that space and how we inhabit it inform our perception of time. This is the best way to engage and situate “philosophies of space” within a contemporary theory of architecture.
- 5) The divine time as tied to ritual, understanding ecological time, the transformation of the earth over the seasons, natural disasters, the origin and end of the world / universe, and all as connected to a particular culture.
- 6) Narrative time as an approximation of divine time that secularizes it and introduces an aesthetic philosophy as distinct from theology hagiography. This can take over the surface of architecture and is connected to rhetoric.
- 7) Work time and the extent to which it leads to configuration of architectural elements to support work. This might include the lighting conditions, clocks, and devices that make the space work and that often leaves the space inactive during particular periods of time. It is connected and controlled to those people and companies and forces that occupy other varieties of time and the extent to which it is highly diverse and distributed across all the varieties of work and the many machines that are employed and that carry with them a particular rhythm and duration of material transformation.
- 8) Ecological time that ostensibly could be applied to the entire range of nature on earth. It is defined by a number of overlapping time frames connected to life cycles of species, the duration of seasons around the world, the regeneration following a natural disaster as well as the broader frame of how long the different ecologies took to form and the time frame of the planet and cosmos that is the site of historical narrative time.
- 9) Scientific time specifically of the experiment as the terms and system of measurement. This would include the instruments used and the reaction that takes place as situated in narrative time, but without the same directionality. This would include experiments that can be repeated as well as the framework of hypotheses and proof that often impacts

architecture through the new materials that are introduced and via the instruments that help us with tasks.

- 10) Information as on one hand, the time that it takes to code some set of things so that they can be easily transmitted and the duration of that transmission. This requires specific spaces for coding, transmission, and waiting. It that requires infrastructure often connected to routes by which material is moved; that required fidelity; that risks corruption and decay; that might require a specific energy system and that introduces security and the duration of something / place as protected and exclusive.
- 11) Play time as fundamental and connected to our earliest experiences of living. It helps us to make sense of our body and how it is situated in a world as well as how we relate to others in that world. Hierarchies and relationships result whose limits can be tested by experimenting outside broader ramifications. It implies an architecture and spatiality of the game.
- 12) Travel as tied to the speed of the means of conveyance and situated in relation to the context of the trip. The time of the journey and pilgrimage is evoked and connected to a broader moment in the life of the person that requires an architecture of stations and hotel rooms that might involve visiting a piece of iconic architecture and encountering the temporality of other civilizations.
- 13) Retreat as stepping out of one's standard flow of time and practicing a system that "betters" the body and mind. This often occurs through concentration, focus, and purification in order to set up habits that will be carried over into the daily life of the person after they return to daily responsibilities and multiple competing times and spaces and other people and interactions that might be stressful.

These modes of time inform space and are also traced in a variety of locations. These might be clocks, ledgers, books, machines, and ways that spaces are orientated, designed, and decorated. The interfaces within these spaces are often the locations of the narrative and point at which the subject can affect their space. In what follows, we will explore these interfaces, how they are located within a building, and how this process contributes to something that we might call architecture.

VI. Purpose Interface

The interface integrates time and the subject as well as creates an exchange between these different subjectivities and temporalities. It enables the possibilities of what can happen through this exchange. The manifestation of these potentialities as an actuality define what space can be and what that outcomes means for the inhabitant. Without the interface, mood and atmosphere would not be inscribed. The language that we use to striate and control space and set about the possibility of transcendence in architecture would not exist. The interface does so via a diagram specific to the technics of the interface that has co-evolved with it over time. This in turn creates an opportunity for the interface not just to affect how we talk about space, but how that space appears as well as the agency that the creator of

that space has over challenging and aligning different diagrams. The following are options for locating such an interface. Their location will play a role in how the building becomes architecture:

- 1) Not locating the interface. This would imply either no control whatsoever or complete control in the sense that the building is a heavy mass of stone without electricity or the user moves through with an RFID that allows the user to modify the atmosphere based on their desire.
- 2) The manual analog switch such as shutters, doors, screens, curtains, that allow the building to transform in a particular manner in order to accommodate a particular function, express an internal mood of the building, create a degree of privacy or publicity.
- 3) The manual energetic switch that involve burning a particular fuel in order to change the atmosphere through heat, light, humidity. This creates a particular opportunity directly connected to time, how it is defined, and used. It also introduces a degree of risk should that energy be mis-deployed.
- 4) Electrical switches that introduce a new network into the home and that create new opportunity and mitigation of risk. They connect to the full range of electrical devices (fan, heater, etc...) that can replace the basic burning of an energy source.
- 5) The service switch that causes a person to appear to address a particular need. They come with a specifically designed conduit through which they can pass that does not interfere with the "regular" function of the building. They raise the question of how these services have evolved and been brought outside a given building type and into another, how they have been mechanized, personalized, digitized / virtualized, or eliminated altogether. Tracking these changes is a way of understanding the evolution of cities.
- 6) The agglomeration of the above first as something like a kitchen, mechanical room, small factory in a cottage of an estate and then as a "control room" and then as a digital screen that can change any of the above remotely.
- 7) The screen as not tied to an either / or, on / off, inside / outside but to a story, education, information in a one-way manner of reception; sermon, oratorio, book, newspaper, radio, television, movie; reading room, libraries, theaters, or couches.
- 8) The two-way communication device as distinct from a call switch that enhances the capacity of spaces and introduces new programs.
- 9) The computational interface that is concerned with a particular problem such as the game, the puzzle, the calculator, the lesson, and the classroom that both refines and calls into question how abuses are used.

- 10) The artworks that exists and is capable of fitting into the other 9 categories, but also connected to a horizon of mystery and wonder that is transcendent in some cases. This calls the status of the others into question and is capable of rendering a critique of the spatial, social, economic, political framework in which the building and experience is situated. It intersects and grows from the religious interfaces throughout history. In this sense, it is both the first and the last interface. It extends the capacity of the architecture to become an interface in its totality through the artistry of the architecture that ultimately must draw on a specific visual vocabulary and aesthetic system, understanding, and horizon that makes this artistry legible.

The interface supports a virtual clearing house for images that represent goods, services, traditions that are being exchanged. The interface also supports the image of what surrounds it. These include the walls, details, plans, sections, elevations, axons, maps, data sets, and images that describe a building as a whole. This clearing house is made visible when all the elements that pass through it are exported or visualized in a concrete medium. In this sense, it contains all the possibilities, but without any clear order. Sense and judgment are required to give them meaning and create the capacity for actionable intelligence for how we might build the world better in the future through architecture as what summarizes that intelligence. In this sense, we should not ask “whether this is architecture” but “how it is architecture.” How does it combine elements to enhance value? For something to be architecture would be a matter of a collaboration between architect, owner, and inhabitant to get more out of the building and extend profit. This happens rarely because the technical dimension is being built as an addition to an architect’s plan rather than as an integral element of the design and operation of the space. The interaction must be conceived of during the design process and must allow the space to actively mediate between technical systems and infrastructure. If not fully entwined, technical and existential capacity will not be realized and, arguably, architecture will not exist.

To summarize, we can consider the technicity of architecture as mediating between man and world – first expressed as diagram and then installed as tools and technology that can be used (or abused). In the current context, these tools and technology have been increasingly digitized so that they are operated by screens and connected to networks and driven by data. They are part of a vast semi-continuous screen. “Manners” towards that screen in terms of how it is positioned and located in the building and how we face or comport ourselves towards that screen has become increasingly important. In this sense, we might ask whether how this screen is located plays a role in whether the building becomes architecture. A “mannerist” revival would be a deflection from the pure ideal and towards a supplemental – generally human, personal, phenomenal, and lived – system.

These interfaces then must be situated in relationship to the non-interfaces such as the objects that are within this system. This situating is defined by how people relate to and define both objects and interfaces. Sometimes somethings may be classified in one way as an object and at other times as an interface. It really depends on the group and the circumstances. Defining the specific hierarchy and relationship between objects, tools, and interfaces is a question of rhetoric and argument to convince through a speech act that ultimately creates a system of value and economy. These include the glasses, plates, utensils,

clothes, pipes, weapons, pens, furniture, and cabinets among other things. The way in which they are collectively considered, configured, collaged, and layered over time has a particular impact. Over the course of the evolution of different building types, standard placement and hierarchy of the above has developed in such a manner that we can easily and safely navigate an extraordinarily expansive world. This has occurred through the standards, weapons, furnaces, etc. that may have interfaces and that can be tools of use and abuse. They have come to exist and have been imposed through particular authority to the point where space has become increasingly homogenous. It has created situations in which most people are offered limited room in determining how the above are configured and coordinated. Offering such determining power might threaten the power of those who currently own space, charge rent, and use this to maintain the status quo and generally uneven distribution of wealth. Failing to do so, however, results in a haphazard set of relationships that leads to tremendous inefficiency across all the levels and spheres of existence, production, and representation.

VII. Talking about Architecture

This section will explore what the event looks like when people begin to discuss space. We will examine the moment when people start to talk about what using the interface is like and how they might want it to change. Locating the event as the intersection of language and material form via the subject embodied in a here and now gives that subject a capacity to participate in the creation and functioning of their space. Moreover, it stresses the need to have their space function for them as a technical object that aids them in life.

This understanding of the event occurs through discourse and encounter – both in a present and durational sense. In order to locate this process, we have to think about an expanded set of events that impact architecture and contribute to how its system is constituted. They are oriented to three primary events: the idea as genesis of architectural form, the opening / delivering of an architecture in the world, and the inhabitation of that architecture. Each has its own language and exists in a set of venues in which we “talk about” architecture:

- 1) The studio as the place that draws on an architectural discourse that privileges some and that denies other ways of looking at design. It is here that goals are set, ideas established, and a discourse created around a particular problem that “we” want to solve via a particular building. This conversation sets the ideal that will later have to be sited. It defines everything that could be via a strategy for achieving a vision. It would be here that the architect can most effectively draw upon research and the knowledge base of other disciplines. The architect can introduce rhythm analysis, the production of space, the poetics of space, a particular theory of the subject, a goal for society, and understanding of how the work sits in an ecology, the way that the building will sense and be sensed, and how it fits in a broader history.
- 2) The client meeting as what translates those intentions and aligns them with those of the client. During these conversations, particular aspects are highlighted and suppressed. The design becomes a fee proposal, presentation, paragraph, set of bold points, simple diagrams, and eventually a contract. This process formats the building as a narrative and as an argument that is intended to persuade the client and

that ideally ties this persuasion to a higher truth. This could range from an open call or pre-submittal conference to an intimate dinner. It is during this encounter that the space is given terms. It is situated in relation to use, abuse, standards, customs, and goals. It is when evaluation criteria are introduced and expectations set. It is also when a concrete language of the site as well as a design language are set.

- 3) The protest against a particular proposal that presents an alternative or simply a denial that introduces an other into a design process and that can either be actively cultivated or rejected.
- 4) The coordination with consultants and builder that reduces the building to a series of specifications and that aligns each element to be constructed with a group, assigning responsibility and risk in the process. This process aligns the building, through language, with money and the broader economy. It is the moment when it becomes a technical object that performs and functions.
- 5) Dialogue with the end user beyond the client as a community engagement process that might translate the building into a sociological language that opens it up to a whole range of potentialities that may go well beyond the limits of what the architect might consider germane to design.
- 6) The debut, premiere, or opening of the architecture that is phrased as a PR situation that frames the building to blend goals of the client and desire of the community. The result formats the building into different venues such as the journal, the web, the banner, and opening party. Each has their own audiences, voices, and expectations.
- 7) The reception of the inhabitant and how they discuss the building, the way that they occupy the space, how they modify the space, and what that space leads to.
- 8) The legacy of the building, how it is incorporated into architecture discourse, what proved a success and failure, and ultimately what informs a future process.

The “language of architecture” as the relevant words that are going to make something architecture occur in the meeting rooms and encounters that shape and drive the initial desire to transform space. This occurs through sentences that take the form “I want the building to...” It is the second predication of the building in a critical discursive space. It is very different when it occurs in a corporate office vs when it takes place in a small boutique firm. The specific nature of what is said in these different locations and at different times activates the tools and interfaces to reinforce or change an existing use or abuse. The narrative evokes a horizon of transformation that activates available potential through agency and charisma.

This narrative is analyzed via semiotics and semantics. It is made of the things to which words refer. It is given meaning through how it addresses a need or situation that has been given voice – explicated through words, concepts, ideas that give the situation orientation and hierarchy. At the same time, the things that those words describe are cast in a correlated hierarchical system that language makes sense of. In this sense, architecture is a second

order language operating via the clarification of material, world, nature, physics, form, and words. Like language, it exists as a virtuality until it is uttered in the here and now. Architecture is correlated to language via the presence of the architect during the design process, the interpretation and the dialogue with the client, and via the inhabitation of that space. Unlike language, it always is materially present – able to exist beyond the limits of one language culture and able to be adapted into a new situation, demolished, or ignored.

This process involves an entangling of words and what they refer to. Architecture is created via a tectonic system and both its creator and receiver are using language, philosophy, aesthetics, images, and materials to create it. It is an exchange between the different systems of language and its own tectonic system. This begins with the ontology and teleology of architecture rather than imposing some other logic for convenience that locates a theory of architecture at a particular moment and within a particular system that privileges the word and that neglects the rather ancient or even primordial function and origin of architecture as entangled with dance, magic, the arise of tools and technics, magic, and the way that we create a theory of survival that we then put into practice through attuning it to a particular situation. Doing so neglects the role that material philosophy, geography, navigation, comparative culture and postcolonial, feminist, and queer theory all play in figuring architecture.

Carefully defining the relationship between language and architecture has the capacity to reclaim the elements germane to architecture that have been coopted into large systems and institutions. It equally has the capacity to liberate the tools and interfaces from these broad trajectories and, in doing so, restore the nature and time of the subject – giving them greater capacity to blend subjective categories to reflect who they are while also enhancing agency that might have been severely limited by birth and being subject to a broader system. What then is the context of saying, “I want the building to...”? Towards what ends does this question lead?

- 1) The narrative that sells or denounces the building as the story that helps the future inhabitant to imagine what it is like to be there.
- 2) The evocation of a natural, or man-made, or imagined phenomenon in that narrative that can be rendered via a materiality in the building.
- 3) The way in which that phenomenon is tied to an emotional intention of the building.
- 4) A transcendent horizon that evokes wonder and justifies investment of capital.
- 5) The record for posterity and the service that this investment provides. This ultimately will lead to a vocabulary for how atmospheres and phenomenon are evoked via built material precedents.

In many ways, this is all that is ever said at such meeting. The words just take on different scales and are directed to different people, in different tones, and towards different ends. Together, these spaces have the capacity to constitute, design, build, and install – as a process of drawing in various forms and translation between them – the interface that we have

described, orient that interface to a subject in order to expand their agency, do so through the understanding of time, and ultimately create an enhanced ends that ensure that new spaces are used rather than abused and that in the process what we call architecture is enhanced. Doing so provides room for singular moments of architecture that allow us to perceive this system through explication. This will propel the system forward. In many ways, the majority of words about a building project go into justifying the possibility of this exceptional state. The words that are said can gradually aggregate such that consensus begins to build and the process and spaces are imbued with a particular power that attracts people. The building has become an event. Discovering this event is the horizon of architecture. Describing a vision for achieving this goal through a particular expenditure is ultimately the subject matter of architects arguing for the authority to guide the process on a particular parcel of land via the expenditure of a sum of money.

Diagram decodes this process by making it visible. It serves as the bridge between language and world, world and building, building and architecture, architecture and world, architecture and man, and architecture and being. This occurs as transference that is evaluated outside of material via language and judgment. It exists as an independent and eternal process that is able to withstand generational transition. It is not just that words aggregate to become an event that codifies something as architecture, but that once something attains this power as architecture, it continues operating in that manner so long as a community continues to be drawn together. It does so because it fulfills a purpose that we have seen emerge in the distinction between use and abuse and the striated subject whose space and capacity to live and transform is informed by those rules. Architecture then could be characterized as the agglomeration of conversations, opinions, diagrams, designs, and constructs at key points that unify the striated subject and provide orientation to a range of people struggling with different circumstances.

It achieves its purpose via creating a level of heightened understanding and evaluative capacity through encountering, engaging, transforming, and transcending (i.e. moving beyond / advancing) different mediated surfaces in order to arrive at the authentic, original, and totally self-aware space and aesthetic philosophy that returns one to an originary state – presentness – that is not ultimately in service of either technics or religion. Architecture, via the diagram which makes the built environment intelligible and actionable for people via language, creates a platform and opening for aesthetics to mediate between technics and religion as milieu, situation, and event. Aesthetics, in this context, is the system or the study of the relationship between people / subject and the interface specifically as driven by how that interface is differentiated and changes and what the evaluative criteria for determining a positive appearance and outcome are. Architecture is the the capacity for those interfaces / exchanges to appear in the best and most reverent light. In the process, those interfaces become something that we call art when it is sited and appears and enters the realm of an economy of exchange. The interface, which could be art, makes space architecture. Architecture makes the interface art.

In this sense, aesthetics does not achieve re-unification, but holds the space open, dictates the rules between interface, human, generic space, and architecture leaving it to exceptional interfaces that we call art to actually attempt, explore, or challenge collectively

and independently the possibility of unity, origin, and end. Aesthetics supports the force of art and, together with art, counters other systems of authority and power that might want space to appear in one way or another and perhaps for art not to exist. Art offers access to a fundamental earlier state of human evolution tied to seeing value in the field of vision that differentiates the figure from the ground before being liberated when both technics and religion lose their emancipatory power. Aesthetics' goal becomes anchoring judgment to guide how we navigate the interstitial spaces that guide transference and the diagrams employed. It determines how the diagram functions across different aspects of a project and grounds the locus of meaning and capacity of the building to say something. In many cases, this something is a recreation of nature that both demystifies and honors the mystery and mastery of divine light – the sun.

This transference and replacement occurs via a temporality both of design, learning about that design, building, and dwelling. It occurs via the associations that particular materials and proportions and lighting conditions have with a particular activity, story, people, or culture. In order to achieve an understanding of how this takes place in operation, we should begin by examining how those spaces are drawn and given an initial temporality via design. On one hand, this involves the use of CAD, BIM, and other digital drawing tools. On the other, it involves using classical drawing elements such as points, lines, and planes that sit within the broader critical discourse of representation. In many ways, these two modes of drawing have come into increasing conflict. One seeks to exactly replicate the world and the other seeks to make the world into something other. It is a conflict with the capacity to create mystery with the deep desire to specify every last detail and mitigate the risk to which an architect and building is exposed. In many ways, it opens the fundamental question of what a space stands for from the perspective of safety, states, retreat, a class system, luxury, and living one's life. In this sense, this conflict illuminates one of the underlying reasons why it has become difficult to build atmospheres attuned to nature and man.

This incapacity is also deeply tied to the fact that it is often the case that the specific nature of what a space will stand for is a changing variable that can not necessarily be predicted when the structure is erected. Instead, designers opt for a generic approach that leaves a range open and that is often tied to a dominant power structure that controls a vast majority of real estate. This structure is often led by those people who commission, patronize, and inhabit spaces whose atmospheres are exceptional. They are built to stand for something in particular and have very specific rules of access. In this sense, they are subject to a particular set of rules that limit a transference that might occur and that might succeed in elevating a space. It is a question of how a claim or aspiration to some higher capacity of space is staked out on the page in the moment when existing space is modified in some manner or another. An example would be to take program X that is conventionally housed within form Y and consider housing it in form B and then bring in iterated forms B', B'', B''' that create new possibilities for communities to form.

Architecture, in this sense, is deeply connected to epiphora as that moment of seeing – of synthesis – that bridges from pure language and the practice and the creation of images to a phenomenology of perception and imagination. In this sense, Alberto Perez-Gomez was quite accurate in suggesting that language and architecture are related via a metaphorical

proposition that relies on a displacement of meaning and a capacity to connect disparate levels and spheres. In this sense, the intersectionality that we described via the interface and the capacity of the interface to resituate the nature, time, and ends of the subject is a metaphoric one. The moment when this intersectionality is perceived is the event. The diagram helps to locate this event and the extent to which it is experienced by one or many people helps to define the extent to which the building is perceived as architecture – in essence, the extent to which the building can speak.

It is for this reason that it is important to introduce an economy into the system of architecture. It is just as much a stewardship and retention of money as any formal capacity that goes into convincing trust and ultimately realizing a successful building. Doing so involves conveying to multiple constituencies what is special about a potential work of architecture. It involves conveying what part of the building holds meaning and how meaning will be conveyed through a particular force when built. Moreover, how is it different from everything else being said. In this sense, architecture is generated by persuasion. This is the force of both art and architecture. The reason for this force has been outlined in the way that it affects some formal proposition for those who might inhabit the space once constructed. The capacity to operate utilize and direct these latent forces connected to language and fundamental traits of man constitutes the most basic truth of the horizon of the existence of architecture. Whether the direction at the hands of the architect benefits an expanding group of people defines whether this truth is good for our current and future society.

The practice of conceptual architecture provides the capacity to think beyond those terms that have been given by and to the space and people as it stands in order to help imagine an alternative future. In many ways, architecture is often confused with its conceptual and some might say utopian horizon and, in the process, is judged via its capacity to make such a “beyond” manifest. The conceptual, however, can never be derived from the perceived or the image. The conceptual field inscribes meanings as they pull away from the metaphorical process. It is a speculative horizon informed by the capacity to see the plan, section, elevation, and model to evaluate all that is not seen in presence. In this sense, the metaphorical is concerned with the pair of proper and figurative while the conceptual is tied to the metaphysical pair of visible and invisible. Metaphysical and metaphorical raising occurs beyond the visible and intelligible. It is the presentation of the Idea by imagination that forces conceptual thought to “think more.”

We could then say that in the appearance of architecture as a capacity for seeing and living the unknown exceptional via the above relationship with aesthetic and art, it transcends itself – now concerned with how to reproduce that transcendence as the concern of the conceptual dimension of architecture that only emerges after the demise of religion and the death of God. Architecture then is not reality, but a category of language that makes reality known via an active construction of image, icon, and meaning in relation to language as an encounter and reconciliation of word and space via orientation. Architectural discourse should then be about how we want to use that interface and how we want to talk about personal experience in a collective manner as a question of building consensus around judgment via rhetoric relying on images icons, and metaphors to convince people the direction the future of the built environment should take.

VIII. The Ends of the Subject

The goal, purpose, or ends of the subject is concerned with what we want out of the encounter that determines art and architecture through language. It is a question of how we want to relate to a temporality in the present and future and what we want that interaction to attain. This is a question of the narrative that we want to tell and how we want to be remembered. We will leave it to the final section to explore how we make an architecture out of these interactions to contain those ends as the solidification of a collective judgment and common good in stone – works of religious architecture as well as in the houses connected to particular people and politics – as a marker of truth that orients the next generation.

A science of ends, or teleology, has historically played an important role in constituting architecture. It is expressed in architecture that relates to death as well as architecture related to a vision for how the world might end. In many ways, one could argue that the origin of architecture is in ends traced in a range of religious architecture from temple complexes to the Sistine Chapel. Ultimately, this is a question of imagination and what one wants to see on the horizon coupled with a strategy for convincing others that it should be this way. This involves the discernment of architecture via an event organized by a narrative interaction with interfaces over time that holds a trace of our desire to achieve a goal and a broader ends for our self and others.

Today, ends does not reflect an organized religion, but what the subject wants out of their space, the duration of their use and their death in space, the physical end of a space in demolition, decay, and preservation and the ability of a space to speak to a higher order, purpose, and sense of finality. We can expand these groups as follows:

- 1) Life of man as often connected to the successful mastery of their status as “subject” in and of space and the time that dominates this space. Such success often leads to a particular reward that can cause one’s offspring to have an advantage. This creates continuity between generations and preserves traditions and the spaces in which they are carried out. They are often increasingly subject to other “laws” and expectations that result in a cost structure that might make it difficult to pass on these spaces. In this sense, the end will only ever truly come when everything has been sold and there is no pleasure to get out of goods, services, sitting, and view.
- 2) Death of man as connected to the death bed, the cemeteries, and crematoria. It is also connected to the possibility that death can happen at any point as well as the transformation of general daily space into one of terror and war. This introduces the possibility that it will fall apart and one will die as a result – both as the result of “someone’s” intent and also as an accident, fire, or natural disaster that causes the situation to collapse.
- 3) The end of space beyond the subject as connected to how well the architecture is engineered, what investment is made, and the return on investment that is expected. It is also connected to current standards and the extent to which the building might become absolute. This intersects with ecological time and the end of the world, the

decay that results from water and seasonal storms, and the evolution of cities. It is tied to the notion that there is always something better to come, that the city should always be remade for the next generation and environmental situation, and that the building should pay the price. It also introduces the possibility that the space will be perceived as exemplary even if it does not meet contemporary standards. This is ultimately the horizon of good design and mandate of the architect.

- 4) A broader horizon often expressed via a particular typology or via a phenomenal transcendence of the space. This could be coded in material, atmosphere, or light that could explicitly reference an end, purpose, destruction of a past space or of the inevitable destruction of the planet. This process connects teleology to purpose and aesthetics. In this sense, all beauty and belonging and functioning of space on a level that is genuine to man is tied to cessation or that which it is not and that to which it can provide an approximation. In many cases, this is a connection to those places and experiences that one can only imagine and that are too profound to actually exist. This is a connection to the ideal and that which might be after our current life. This is connected to the absolute mystery that no human can solve as the origin and end of the universe. The shape this takes is coded in cultural, religious, and aesthetic traditions that pervade all styles and manners of doing things in the city. It structures space and become increasingly contentious amidst a global city that causes these systems to overlap, compete, and challenge the very legitimacy of such structuring of space to begin with. In this sense, teleology suggests that it is the end of the system itself and rise of another that plays the most profound role in defining space. It is not about the continuity, but the transition and translation of wealth via a latency that holds hidden and manipulatable value that can mutate and come to the surface to fuel the next major paradigm shift and new spatial order.

Ultimately, would have to ask what the different types of subjectivities want in relation to these 4 categories as the end of the subject and what subjects want in the end. Would this be to no longer be subject? Liberation? Freedom? Immortality? Honor?

IX. Judgment and Technicity

How do you attain those ends with the help of an aesthetic system that provides guidance? The purpose and purposiveness of the architecture can be both good and bad. Whether it is one way or the other and what we hope "it" will accomplish reflects the extent to which the building has accomplished goals over time without being coopted. The extent to which this is possible is defined by the ways in which the work has been invested with a *raison d'être* that extends beyond a particular place and time via backing by a particular power and force that is often an aesthetic system, but is sometimes political, social, cultural, or economic. This process does not occur strictly via external people, criteria, and forces, but through architectural qualities that are integral to the work. These are the things, props, and propositions installed by the architect in and near interfaces that now reciprocally frame the uses and abuses. These qualities serve a particular purpose, create an atmosphere, and inspire a mindset. The intersection of these qualities is tied to how we divide something that we call architecture from mere building. While a building by no means has to become architecture, we have been

arguing that to do so allows the building to be addressed to multiple subjectivities and for the space to allow for greater mobility and horizon of transformation for more people and groups that invites more people into a shared narrative unfolding in that space over time towards a particular end. We have characterized this capacity to become architecture as an event of consensus that judges the metaphors and their summation that the building proposes. This is the transference that allows material, form, program, light, and their combination to stand in for nature, the deal, escape, and sun and to do so in overlapping, competing, and conflicting ways for multiple people to draw them together.

The quality of space is not just what space can do once and alone, but via the collection of similar spaces as well as precedent spaces that draw on that network and legacy to enhance their power and justify and define their existence. As a process that must occur through specific encounters with space in a flow of time, it incorporates the perspective and purpose of the subject and also elements within a building – either visible or invisible – that cannot be incorporated. The capacity, however, to attain this higher value requires that the architectural value that connects beyond a particular location be sufficient and grounded in a sustained system. The existence of such a sustained system gets to the heart of how one invests in space. It is far more affective if one can invest in a system that is then deployed at multiple sites. Networks and webs of meaning play an important role in defining human existence as well as the existence of the objects they use. This occurs through language that situates the object on our table before our horizon in relationship to life and death. It evaluates objects and assigns them specific status within a local and global class structure. Over time, the collection of these objects and the way that we talk about them has become subject to large forceful trajectories of machinery, industrialization, human labor, and capital. This realm has significant trouble reflecting and communicating with what has historically been what we call architecture. The aim of the Bauhaus was, in many ways, to overcome this disjunction by reflecting the world around us by adopting the mechanism and style rather than going to the root of what was driving that style. In doing so, however, modern architecture lost its capacity for displacement and presentness and thus its capacity to be diagrammatic. Since the diagram as we have characterized it is the vehicle of transference, modern architecture loses its capacity to work for many.

Given the vast set of references and precedence on which architecture can draw, it becomes difficult to justify one particular architectural decision versus another beyond some highly localized set of reactions to a specific set of conditions. On the other hand, those practices that seek to break from tradition and establish a new criticality often become lost in a deep self-referentiality or neo-logic stylist system that may at best merely seek to reinvent ways of solving a problem that earlier systems solved better and at worst become just a means of justifying extravagant forms that have little to do with who and how the space will be occupied. The question then becomes how one goes about establishing the use of the classical tools of architecture without resorting to some sort of neo-classicism and while drawing on current networks and power structures as economies that can actually get the building built.

In order to answer this question, we must define the iterative experimental frame for each of the things, people, surfaces, systems, and consultants that go into a building. We must both honor what each can do independently and coordinate them via the focus that leaders working

around a design vision connected to a societal vision can provide. Such a deployment of the “tools and techniques” of architecture and the extent to which the process or product can be coopted for abuse is a function of the extent to which the process and product is concrete or abstract as well as the frame that defines it as such. This is determined by the extent to which it is localized for a community assigning meaning and value or whether it refers to a universal system of some sort. The more concrete the architecture, the less that it can be used for anything and the more that it runs the risk of obsolescence should a trend change. At the same time, it is important to situate it in the context of adaptability and refinement of the technics of a building to the point where all the systems are interacting dynamically with each other.

In this sense, the most concrete building would be an optimized building that performs perfectly within its environment. The most abstract would be the thick earth brick room with no roof and sloping walls. The former, however, is often largely determined by a particular regime while the latter is often connected to some fundamental human need and capacity that is often situated within some broader transcendent horizon. In either case, the building is situated as the deployment, outlet, or connection point to a set of energetic forces ranging from human labor to literal electrical outlets and HVAC systems that render a degree of specificity that gives meaning and that can speak to a wide range of discourses and characteristics of the inhabitant. Some of these are related to how they are situated within the political, social, spiritual, and economic systems. Some are related to how they live. Together, they form the horizon of what architecture can be and serve as criteria for judgment guiding consensus.

This horizon is not the intent of the architect, but the outlook, capacity, and will of the inhabitant that assembles places, rooms, surfaces, and things into a hierarchy. This hierarchy is assigned value through an aesthetic discourse specifically concerned with the architectural object as well as with how the other aesthetic objects – art, design, food, etc. – are situated. These are related to other categories as a complex matrix. This locates the maximum agency of the architect in how these switches and portals are arranged, made visible or not, aligned, accessed, and privileged so that the ultimate user is oriented in one manner as opposed to another. Such an alignment is ultimately cast in relation to other such modes – either similar or dissimilar.

The creation of this arrangement is on one hand, a direct function of the idea in the mind of the architect and, on the other, of how that idea is made into a built reality. The latter process defines the technicity of the building, both in terms of the machines used to manufacture the building and the technical interfaces, tools, and machines that might remain within the building and be used by the inhabitant. This connection between the authorial subject as architect, architectural object, and receiving subject as user of the space is traced in the diagram. The diagram translates between the different levels and spheres in which these groups operate. The diagram has the capacity to open up and disclose – or not disclose – this process and the latent forces that inform it. In this sense, the technicity of a building could be seen as the outcome that makes it usable and functional. It is the result of the goal of achieving a purpose. The success of this technicity determines the effectiveness of how it will be used, how it will transform over time, and the susceptibility to abuse. In this sense, technicity is no longer connected to a visual tectonics of order and style that may once have been tied to how

a stone was carved. It is not the result of a visual harmony and hierarchy, but of the latent active forms that go into determining the building as connected to the diagram as where the conceptual reflections are deployed to be tested.

This implies that “tuning” a building is not a matter of deploying an ideal proportion, but giving a human perspective to the science underlying the building by siting those general expectations in use. This process, often occurs in a particularly mannered way that reflects the background and outlook of the particular architect as well as the quality of their relationship with their client and society at large. The process gives particular architects authorization to act and build in a manner not afforded to their peers. It is connected to a particular person and epoch that is often left behind after death as the “technics” of building as outlet and resource continues. This often relegates effective and sometimes valuable and productive tools and places to the past. It privileges and empowers those who control the technical system and their products. This highlights the necessity and rarity of those manners of doing things that transcend the cult that arose around their activities and work. Figures such as Mies, Le Corbusier, Frank Lloyd Wright, and a handful of contemporary practitioners are, in this sense, extraordinary. They overcome a protest based in economics and return on investment in order to build in a particular manner. Among them, Koolhaas is critical because of his recognition of the transition of what constitutes the technics of architecture away from the crafting of stone and to an engagement with a broader network of material forces. In the present moment, it is important to continue the trend and develop a system that is firmly on “the other side” and deeply engaged in an investigation of how to create tailored refined atmospheres that are attuned at the level of the manifestation of those forces rather than traced back onto the remnants of the material craft driven tradition that now remains a vestige.

The difficulty is that we run the risk of losing contact with where we exist in a meaningful and evolving manner. We are just handed a set of spaces that we rent and must leave as we found them. We must endeavor to instill and install a horizon of transformation that reflects an initial point of view that invites others to contribute in different forms, manners, and times. We need to ask what that specific horizon is for each object and pursue the configurations of the interfaces in a particular manner before ultimately creating an alignment through how they are structured and how that structuration reflects the language and point of view of the architect that frames and enframes the subject. In what follows, we will look at how each are sited across different typologies and for whom they are and are not sited as well as the variety of non-architectural entities that are being mediated.

X. Characteristics of a Future Architecture

Over the course of this essay, we have described how space is conceptualized, the way that buildings come to exist in space, the conversations that go into making those buildings and the experiences that they engender, the process by which something might come to be characterized as architecture, and how that architecture might perform and what it can mean. In the process, we have uncovered a number of traits that might characterize this conception of architecture. They include the following:

- 1) Multi-faceted and multi-walled in order to allow the architecture to be addressed to the diverse nature of the subject.
- 2) Driven by being an interface, determined by what interfaces are selected, and cognizant of the ultimate end that might figure in the liberation of the subject.
- 3) As connected to latent networks of images, languages, and power structures that inform how the architecture works and appears.
- 4) As operating in mediation as a process of assembling, orienting, and judging the success of the architecture through use, occupation, and dwelling.
- 5) As manifesting those networks and mediation in a lived atmosphere that is driven by a phenomenology of perception and poetics that leaves material traces and that points to specific materials capable of supporting and tracing this process.
- 6) That is exceptional and determined to be so via a coordinated collective judgment that points to that architecture as a key point evoking the good and pointing to a broader truth through how that space functions for many.
- 7) As communicated and integrated into language both through design and through evaluation and posterity. In this sense, it would be both exceptional and part of the broader discourse.

Such a future architecture would, in some senses, look a lot like the current state of the world, but would locate a critical departure from the current state. This departure will not be from a way of seeing space and the architectural objects that sit within this state. Doing so would connect the foundation of a future architecture to an ossified western ontology as defined around the existence of the object in a field of vision and knowledge base that we have come to know all too well and that has led architects to somewhat of an impasse. Instead, we should look at the way in which those architectural objects and the experiences they contain is constituted by an unstable ontology made visible through a translation and collection of different horizons of transformation defined by the rules to which the subject is held. This would involve a calculus assembling frames rather than combining frame into a single entity through a linear dialectical process. In this sense, the architecture of the future will turn away from the present field in hopes of reclaiming an architecture defined by an active, to be determined, and still somewhat mysterious and fluctuating ontology that might look to practices such as Amateur Architecture Studio for inspiration.

Architecture is a replacement of one part for another as a transference or a metaphor that must be exposed in search of a better metaphor. The siting, design, and operation of interfaces within different typologies supports this process. If we think about the integration of endless screens into public spaces or throughout offices, it is clear that the mere introduction of the interface is not sufficient. However, if we begin to bring an images of a complex operable façade that allows the building to transform over the course of the day, it becomes clear that the interface can participating in a metaphorical raising the elevates the building.

In the context of residential design, we might imagine locating the interface in such a way that it goes beyond the generic use of touchscreens to relate to and transform the environment. Instead, we might image a greater presence of the screen or interface in determining the layout of the domicile while also integrating this interface seamlessly with the various building systems. In the context of commercial typologies, we might image interfaces that enhance workflows through taking on greater presence in meeting rooms and throughout the office as a whole. In civic or public spaces, we might imagine the trend of specific information screens continuing while at the same time more actively considering how facades can transform to reflects new types of digital interfaces. In the context of transportation building, we might imagine the current set of interfaces that offer travel information becoming increasingly personal while larger interfaces are driven by new programs. Finally, in the context of cultural institutions, we might imagine interfaces become more ubiquitous and generally a platform for artwork, communication, and ambient transformation of space. Ultimately, a vocabulary of the contemporary interface should be developed that incorporates material interfaces as well as digital, temporal, and phenomenal. The matrix of types, locations, and uses can then allow for combination across a range of typologies that will ultimately serve the broader goal of achieving a useful space. This quest is the truth in architecture. It must involve, however, distinguishing poetic truth from metaphorical absurdity. This is a tensional notion of truth that hinges on what it means to be, to be as, what is and is not. Architecture carries and dissolves this tension. “Textural reality” and “poetic truth schema” are born together from this tension. In this sense, arriving at the existence of architecture helps us pass from a foundation or origin in uses and abuses to advantages and disadvantages and from politics to ethics.

In many ways, such an unstable ontology might be far closer to what characterized Renaissance Architecture than the scientific system that has come to define how we live and build. We might see a future architecture as the deviation from the science of enclosure. This deviation would be the systematic violation of the language code – as in poetry – to reconstruct language on a higher level. The everyday reference to the real must be eliminated so that another sort of reference to other dimensions of reality might be liberated. This might be a language that does not refer to reality at all but is complete in itself. It would be comprised of figures in which language spatializes itself as a connoted spaced that is manifested more than pointed to.

As we have noted earlier, it is metaphor that exposes the world in a new light via uncovering latency and explication. It is the diagram that exposes the point or sentence in a building as what drives interest, conversation, focus, and orientation as a collective event that has the capacity to locate architecture as a function of personal and collective judgment. In this sense, the metaphor in architecture is uncovered through consensus. The elements around

which consensus forms is then iterated based on an idea. The specific nature of this idea should be determined by the successes and failures of the collective and singular pursuit of past ideas.

This is determined by how successfully they have been communicated and embraced by constituents. Style traced from the detail to the surface is ultimately what coalesces around the idea as shorthand or trace of the underlying DNA. It allows us to distinguish one work from another, but has no meaning in itself. Increasingly, it has been coopted by other power structures – such as class and social hierarchy – that are divorced from the truth of architecture.

This way of characterizing and anchoring our capacity to create powerful architecture serving an expanded group of people towards an economic end should be restored. This future architecture would be specific to architectural tradition deeply tied to Western Europe, Western Metaphysics, and Western manners of describing space, setting up geographic narrative systems and creating specific hierarchies of access and control. It would also seek to open the conceptual dimension of architecture as what thinks beyond, the more, the exceptional, the supplement to leave Western Metaphysics behind after the death of God and end of the hegemony of space controlled by capital flows.

This can occur via architecture still predicated on the event of consensus, but not on the consensus of those speaking the same language or even those speaking with a common language. We can begin to sense what this could involve structurally by thinking about the misunderstanding that has been brought to architecture via the translation from Greek to Latin to Italian to English. Doing so would involve thinking through the lessons that we can learn from the languages of First Peoples as well as the structuralist and post-structuralist research into language. This investigation, however, will have to be reserved for a future essay. For the time being, we can only hope that the explication of the latent forces that go into the determination of space, its use and abuse, the building of enclosure, and the event of architecture as determined by language and consensus will allow for a better understanding of how our world is built and maintained such that we can build with greater agency and expand the portion of the built environment that we consider to be architecture so that more people can dwell within exceptional atmospheres supporting their goals and horizon of transformation.

