



# TRADITIONAL DWELLINGS AND SETTLEMENTS REVIEW

JOURNAL OF THE INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION FOR THE STUDY OF TRADITIONAL ENVIRONMENTS

**YOU CAN'T GO  
HOME AGAIN**

*Robert Brown*

**THE PROPHECY OF  
CODE 46**

*Yasser Elsheshtawy*

**PABLO NERUDA'S HOUSE  
IN ISLA NEGRA**

*Patricia Morgado*

**BORDERLESS VILLAGE**

*Jieheerah Yun*

**AUTOMOBILE UTOPIAS  
AND TRADITIONAL URBAN  
INFRASTRUCTURE**

*Ted Shelton*

**BOOK REVIEWS**

*Stuart Elden*

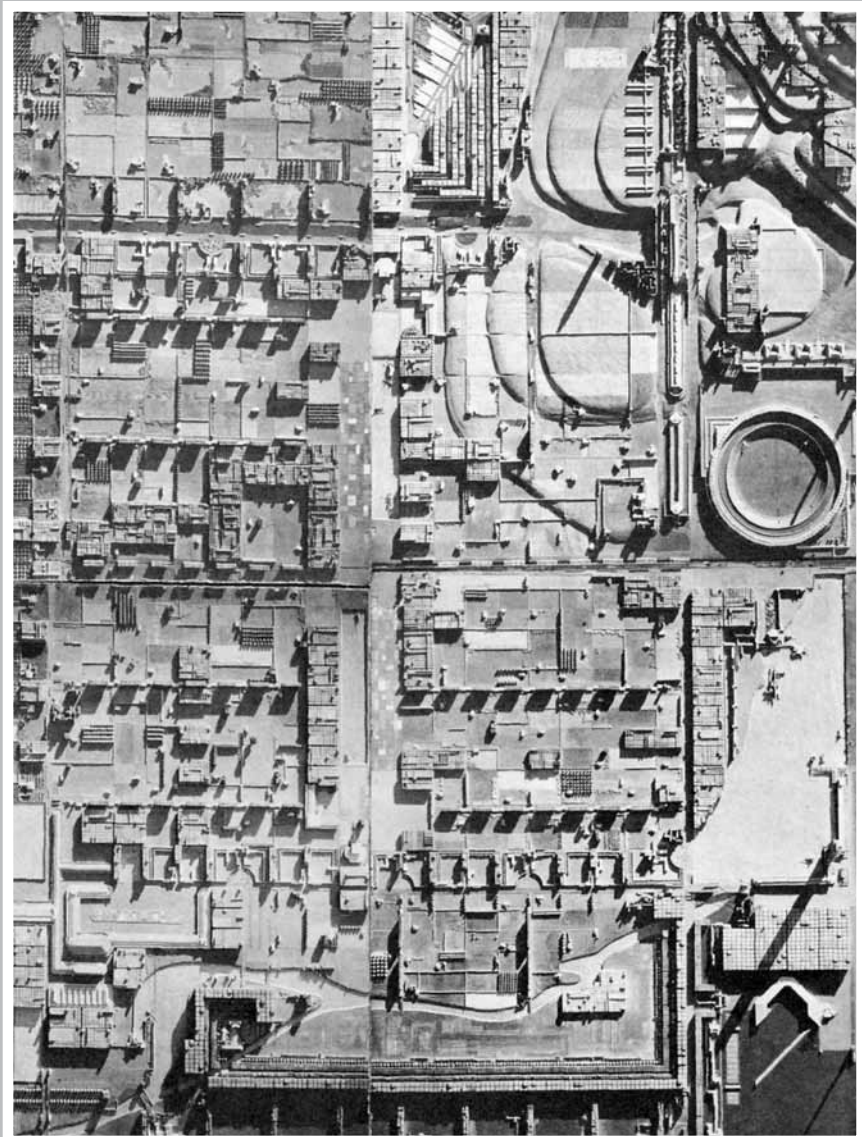
*Jilly Traganou and  
Miodrag Mitrašinić*

*Jean-François Lejeune and  
Michelangelo Sabatino*

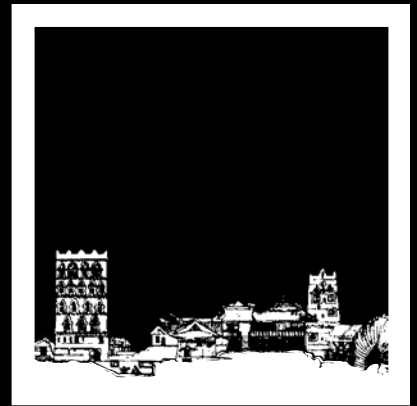
*Steven W. Semes*

*Lineu Castello*

*Fernando Varanda*









*Nezar AlSayyad*, Editor  
*David Moffat*, Managing Editor  
*Annabelle Ison*, Art Director  
*Stuart Chan*, Production Coordinator  
*Sophie Gonick*, IASTE Coordinator  
*Vicky Garcia*, CEDR Manager

The International Association for the Study of Traditional Environments (IASTE) was established at the First International Symposium on Traditional Dwellings and Settlements held at Berkeley in April 1988. IASTE is an interdisciplinary forum where scholars from various disciplines and countries can exchange ideas, discuss methods and approaches, and share findings. As opposed to disciplinary associations, IASTE is a nonprofit organization concerned with the comparative and cross-cultural understanding of traditional habitat as an expression of informal cultural conventions. IASTE's purpose is to serve as an umbrella association for all scholars studying vernacular, indigenous, popular and traditional environments. Current activities of IASTE include the organization of biennial conferences on selected themes in traditional-environments research, the publication of edited books on selected themes, a public outreach program which includes supporting films and documentaries, and the publication of the Traditional Dwellings and Settlements Working Paper Series, which includes all papers presented at IASTE conferences and accepted for publication.

*Traditional Dwellings and Settlements Review* is the official publication of IASTE. As a semi-annual refereed journal, *TDSR* acts as a forum for the exchange of ideas and a means to disseminate information and report on research activities. All articles submitted to *TDSR* are evaluated through a blind peer-review process. *TDSR* has been funded by grants from the Graham Foundation, the Getty Publication Program, the National Endowment for the Arts, the Center for Environmental Design Research, and the office of the Provost at the University of California at Berkeley.

IASTE membership is open to all who are interested in traditional environments and their related studies. In addition to receiving the Association's semi-annual journal, members are eligible to attend the biennial conference at reduced rates. Subscription to the journal is available only with membership in IASTE. Domestic annual order rates are as follows: Individual, \$60; Institutional, \$120; Corporations, \$180. Foreign members add \$15 for mailing. Libraries, museums, and academic organizations qualify as institutions. Subscriptions are payable in U.S. dollars only (by check drawn on a U.S. bank, U.S. money order, or international bank draft). Send inquiries to:

IASTE  
Center for Environmental Design Research  
390 Wurster Hall  
University of California  
Berkeley, ca 94720-1839  
Tel: 510.642.6801 Fax: 510.643.5571  
E-mail: [IASTE@berkeley.edu](mailto:IASTE@berkeley.edu)  
<http://iaste.berkeley.edu>

# TRADITIONAL DWELLINGS AND SETTLEMENTS REVIEW

*Journal of the International Association for the Study of Traditional Environments*

**FOUNDER / CO-FOUNDER**

*Nezar AlSayyad / Jean-Paul Bourdier*

**PRESIDENT & CHAIR**

**EXECUTIVE BOARD**

*Nezar AlSayyad*  
University of California  
Berkeley, U.S.A.

**DIRECTOR**

*Mark Gillem*  
University of Oregon  
Eugene, U.S.A.

**EXECUTIVE BOARD**

*Hesham Khairy Abdelfatah*  
Cairo University  
Egypt

*Heba Ahmed*  
Cairo University  
Egypt

*Howayda Al-Harithy*  
American University of Beirut  
Lebanon

*Duanfang Lu*  
University of Sydney  
Australia

*Sylvia Nam*  
University of California  
Berkeley, U.S.A.

*Mrinalini Rajagopalan*  
University of Pittsburgh  
U.S.A.

*Romala Sanyal*  
University of Newcastle-upon-Tyne  
Newcastle, U.K.

*Ipek Tureli*  
Brown University  
Providence, U.S.A.

*Montira Horayangura Unakul*  
UNESCO  
Bangkok, Thailand

**ADVISORY COUNCIL**

*Janet Abu-Lughod*  
New School for Social Research  
New York, U.S.A.

*Joe Aranha*  
Texas Tech University  
Lubbock, Texas

*William Bechhoefer*  
University of Maryland  
College Park, U.S.A.

*Anne-Marie Broudehoux*  
University of Quebec  
Montreal, Canada

*C. Greig Cryslar*  
University of California  
Berkeley, U.S.A.

*Dalila Elkerdany*  
Cairo University  
Egypt

*Mia Fuller*  
University of California  
Berkeley, U.S.A.

*Henry Glassie*  
University of Indiana  
Bloomington, U.S.A.

*Clara Irazabal*  
Columbia University  
New York, U.S.A.

*Hasan-Uddin Khan*  
Roger Williams University  
Bristol, U.S.A.

*Anthony King*  
Binghamton University  
Binghamton, U.S.A.

*Morna Livingston*  
Philadelphia University  
Philadelphia, U.S.A.

*Keith Loftin*  
University of Colorado  
Denver, U.S.A.

*Robert Mugerauer*  
University of Washington  
Seattle, U.S.A.

*Alona Nitzan-Shiftan*  
Technion  
Haifa, Israel

*Paul Oliver*  
Oxford Brookes University  
Oxford, U.K.

*Amos Rapoport*  
University of Wisconsin  
Milwaukee, U.S.A.

*Mike Robinson*  
Leeds Metropolitan University  
Leeds, U.K.

*Ananya Roy*  
University of California  
Berkeley, U.S.A.

*Gunawan Tjahjono*  
University of Indonesia  
Jakarta, Indonesia

*Dell Upton*  
University of California  
Los Angeles, U.S.A.

*Donald J. Watts*  
Kansas State University  
Manhattan, U.S.A.

*Jennifer Wolch*  
University of California  
Berkeley, U.S.A.

**INTERNATIONAL CORRESPONDENTS  
AND EDITORIAL ADVISORS**

*Eeva Aarrevaara*  
Finland

*Stefan Al*  
Hong Kong

*Juan F. Bontempo*  
Mexico

*Jeffrey Cody*  
California, U.S.A.

*Howard Davis*  
Oregon, U.S.A.

*Mui Ho*  
California, U.S.A.

*Anne Hublin*  
France

*Basel Kamel*  
Egypt

*Heng Chye Kiang*  
Singapore

*Daniel Maudlin*  
United Kingdom

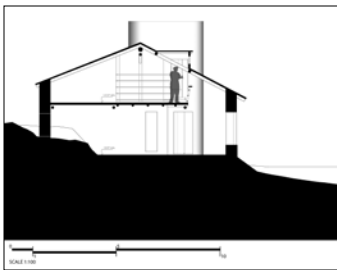
*Attilio Petruccioli*  
Italy

*Marcela Pizzi*  
Chile

*Fernando Varanda*  
Portugal

*Marcel Vellinga*  
United Kingdom

# Contents



## 6 EDITOR'S NOTE

### FICTION AND SCIENCE FICTION

- 7 You Can't Go Home Again: The Place of Tradition in *Firefly's* Dystopian Utopia and Utopian Dystopia  
*Robert Brown*

- 19 The Prophecy of *Code 46: Afuera* in Dubai, or Our Urban Future  
*Yasser Elsheshtawy*

- 33 "Stone upon Stone": From Pablo Neruda's House in Isla Negra to *The Heights of Macchu Picchu*  
*Patricia Morgado*

### FEATURE ARTICLES

- 49 Borderless Village: Challenging the Globalist Dystopia in Ansan, South Korea  
*Jieheerah Yun*

- 63 Automobile Utopias and Traditional Urban Infrastructure: Visions of the Coming Conflict, 1925–1940  
*Ted Shelton*

### 77 BOOK REVIEWS

*Terror and Territory: The Spatial Extent of Sovereignty*, by Stuart Elden

REVIEWED BY MEJGAN MASSOUMI

*Travel, Space, Architecture*, edited by Jilly Traganou and Miodrag Mitrašinić

REVIEWED BY MIKE ROBINSON

*Modern Architecture and the Mediterranean: Vernacular Dialogues and Contested Identities*, edited by Jean-François Lejeune and Michelangelo Sabatino

REVIEWED BY ANNA GOODMAN

*The Future of the Past: A Conservation Ethic for Architecture, Urbanism, and Historic Preservation*, by Steven W. Semes

REVIEWED BY KATHLEEN CORBETT

*Rethinking the Meaning of Place: Conceiving Place in Architecture-Urbanism*, by Lineu Castello

REVIEWED BY CARLOS BALSAS

*Art of Building in Yemen*, second edition, by Fernando Varanda

REVIEWED BY JOSEPH ARANHA

## 86 CONFERENCES AND EVENTS

### 88 2012 IASTE CONFERENCE CALL FOR PAPERS

### 90 GUIDE FOR PREPARATION OF MANUSCRIPTS

## Editor's Note

Following a successful conference in Beirut, Lebanon, on the topic of “The Utopia of Tradition,” this issue of *Traditional Dwellings and Settlements Review* explores many of the themes that emerged from that very productive encounter. Perhaps at this contemporary moment of revolution, in which the populations of countries throughout the Middle East and North Africa are struggling to redefine their political destinies, the notion of utopia as it relates to tradition can help us engage in an epistemic exercise to imagine alternatives.

This issue of *TDSR* begins with three articles organized around the theme “Fiction and Science Fiction.” The authors of these articles draw liberally from literary and filmic representations to explore the ideas of tradition and the built environment. First is Robert Brown’s analysis of the now-defunct cult television show *Firefly*. Brown posits that through this particular extended narrative we can understand utopian fantasies as emerging largely from a desire for a return to origins. Next, Yasser Elsheshtawy uses the film *Code 46* to look at Dubai’s marginal Satwa district as a means of interrogating dystopian imaginaries. This expansion of his 2010 Jeffrey Cook award-winning paper goes on to advocate for these alternate views as a means to further understand contemporary cities. Finally, Patricia Morgado examines how the poet and statesman Pablo Neruda’s experience of adding to his writer’s retreat at Isla Negra on the Chilean coast influenced his work on *The Heights of Macchu Picchu*, a classic work of Latin American literature.

Our opening section is followed by two additional feature articles on urban development, utopia, and tradition. Jieheerah Yun explores a planned industrial city in South Korea whose landscape has undergone a series of transformations. The article argues that the perversion of initial planning goals has created the basis for a new community on a site once marked by dystopic conditions. Finally, Ted Shelton analyses five twentieth-century automobile utopias that sought to utilize the new technologies of speed and large-scale construction. The article reveals the tensions these plans hoped to resolve between modern tools of urbanization and traditional aspects of city life at a smaller scale.

It is my pleasure to announce that the IASTE 2012 conference will be held in Portland, Oregon. Its theme will be “The Myths of Tradition.” Please review the call for papers at the end of this issue and check our website (<http://iaste.berkeley.edu>) for updates.

Finally, I wish to bring the attention of the *TDSR* readership to a recently completed project: IASTE has managed to digitize and make available all back issues of *TDSR* from its inception in 1988. The issues can be found in their entirety, free of charge, on the IASTE website.

*Nezar AlSayyad*

---



# You Can't Go Home Again: The Place of Tradition in *Firefly's* Dystopian Utopia and Utopian Dystopia

ROBERT BROWN

Science fiction has long been a site in which utopian-dystopian visions have been articulated. This article uses one exemplar of this genre as a springboard into a discussion of the desire for a return to origin and of flawed attempts to impose an image of that origin, with discussions into illustrations drawn from contemporary conditions. In opposition to the hegemonic and reductive tendencies inherent in such attempts, the article proposes an alternative which engages with the everyday reality of life. Intrinsic to this proposition is that our traditions and utopias must be founded upon a continual (re)making in the everyday.

*Humanity is what it is, wherever it goes. No matter how far out we travel, we can't ever escape ourselves.<sup>1</sup>*

*That's part of . . . [our] . . . way, going back to when it was an unexplored territory and if you got in trouble, your neighbor was your only hope. We'd find a way to make each day a little better than the one before if we could manage it.<sup>2</sup>*

The genre of science fiction has long been a site in which utopian and dystopian visions have been articulated, from Robert Heinlein's *Stranger in a Strange Land* and Ursula Le Guin's *The Dispossessed*, through Stanley Kubrick's *2001: A Space Odyssey* and Ridley Scott's *Blade Runner*. A common (mis)perception of the genre is that its narratives and settings draw upon the imaginings of its authors to depict some fantasy; a more careful reading recognizes that theirs is a universe whose representations both expand upon prevailing cultural, political and social discourses of their day and reexamine archetypal traditions. It is as if by looking into space (whether literally, or into the figurative space of science fiction), we see ourselves. As Geoff King and Tanya Krzywinska have pointed out, science fiction "can be seen as an arena in which we can explore exactly what it is to be

*Robert Brown is Head of Architecture at the School of Architecture, Design and Environment, University of Plymouth, U.K.*

‘human.’”<sup>3</sup> It tells us the truth about ourselves and our world through the lens of a created one.<sup>4</sup>

The short-lived (though fanatically followed) television show *Firefly*, which aired on the Fox Network in the U.S. and Canada in 2002, and the subsequent feature film *Serenity* is an exemplar of this convention.<sup>5</sup> Set against mankind’s future migration from Earth out into the cosmos, it poses questions regarding family, gender roles, politics, religion, and the nature of our being. For those familiar with the *Firefly* universe, these themes have been well explored in both fan conventions and academic discourse; less examined is what *Firefly* says about where we have come from, and where we want to go. Indeed, buried within the “stuff behind the stuff” is the presence of a challenging polemic: a desire for a return to origins and the inherently flawed attempt to do so.<sup>6</sup>

This dilemma is revealed in *Firefly* through the juxtaposition of a dystopian utopia and a utopian dystopia. The first lies at the center of the *Firefly* universe: echoing modernist tradition, it promises a future built on humanity’s enlightenment situated in an idealized landscape. The counterpart is an ostensibly more dystopian archetype — that of the homeless. Displaced from the center, the wandering and seemingly dysfunctional crew of the spaceship *Serenity* eke out an existence at the margins of inhabited space. Their ship literally falling apart around them, they are seemingly dislocated from any of our received traditions of home.

We are reminded through the *Firefly* narrative that the desire for a return to origins, which lies behind the center’s utopian vision, however well-intended, is flawed; it assumes that a re-presentation of that origin’s image will, *ipso facto*, result in the realization of a utopian way of life attributed to it. By interrogating this predisposition, it becomes apparent that its implementation is only possible through reductive, homogenizing and hegemonic tendencies that disregard alternative views in pursuit of one absolute truth. Such a paradigm is, however, unsustainable. Projected in its place is an alternative — not a singular utopia, but a space which not only recognizes but embraces the fragmentation and diversity of everyday life. Echoing discourse on modernity and the erosion of home, in the context of this dystopia *Serenity*’s crew remake home on a daily basis.

In this article I will utilize *Firefly* as a prompt to explore arguments of a common place of origin for humans and of the utopian desire for a return to these origins. I will consider both the potency of tradition and its recurrent resurrections in envisioned utopias, and the failings inherent in such grand visions. In place of such narratives, we need to acknowledge and aim to navigate the ambiguities, contradictions and complexities inherent in the multiplicity of everyday life. Finally, I will contend that despite its impossibility, our dreams of utopia (and of home and traditions) remain present through their continual (re)making in the everyday.

## SETTING THE SCENE: DISLOCATION AND DYSFUNCTION

*Firefly* is set five hundred years in the future. The human population, having outgrown Earth and stripped its resources bare, has found and relocated to a new solar system with dozens of planets and hundreds of moons.<sup>7</sup> Each of these has been terra-formed to accommodate human and other animal and plant life. Lying at the center of this system is the Alliance, an interplanetary governmental body that envisions itself as a bastion of civilization and enlightenment. Lying on the periphery are the border planets and moons, more recently settled and less developed. The *Firefly* story starts six years after the end of a destructive civil war won by the Alliance over the Independents — i.e., between the central government, which wanted to unify all the inhabited worlds, and those at the periphery, who sought independence. Though now over, the fundamental sentiments underlying the positions people chose in the war still linger.

The focus of the *Firefly* story is the ship *Serenity*, named after the valley in which the last and most horrific battle of the war took place, and in which *Serenity*’s captain, Malcolm Reynolds, fought on the losing side. With the end of the war, Malcolm, together with his former comrade-in-arms, Zoe, headed off to the frontier of the solar system, where they hoped to reclaim a bit of their lost freedom by inhabiting the sky — living on board *Serenity* while ferrying passengers and cargo (sometimes illegally) between various worlds. Along the way they have acquired a crew — a disparate collection of misfits of the universe, including a pilot (now Zoe’s husband), a mechanic, a mercenary who provides muscle, a registered courtesan, a preacher, a doctor named Simon, and his prodigiously gifted sister River. Each contributes to life on board, whether through direct involvement in *Serenity*’s line of work or through other means. More significantly, each of these characters has fled something in their past, and in his/her own way is somehow both noble and flawed — that is, human (FIG. 1).

On first appearance, the ship *Serenity* leaves more than a little to be desired. A relic of a bygone era, it requires that its mechanic wage a never-ending battle to keep it flying, with desperately needed new parts left unpurchased owing to ongoing cash-flow problems (FIG. 2). The lives of those on board are no less problematic, as they face a constant struggle to avoid trouble with the Alliance, untrustworthy business partners, and marauding savages. Meanwhile, the core of the solar system stands in marked contrast to life aboard the ship. It is home to an advanced society, whose buildings heroically express design creativity and advanced technology (i.e., culture and the wealth underlying it). It is equally a place of enlightenment, if only in its cleanliness (i.e., safety and security).

On closer examination, however, the center has problems too. There is pressure to conform, to keep quiet in the face of unasked and unanswered questions about the political system



FIGURE 1. Crew of Serenity. Artist's impression, courtesy of K. Sammons.

and those at the receiving end of its policies and actions. More significant are the steps this "civilized" government takes to manipulate and control both people and information. It is not above coercing its citizens into acquiescence and compliance through propaganda and the formal education of its youth, while its more covert activities extend to planting subliminal messages in telecommunications. More disturbing is an invasive form of mind control that is revealed by the story of River prior to her arrival on the ship. Having been sent to a school for the gifted, she was effectively kidnapped by the government and subjected to an experimental program of drugs, operations and testing, until rescued by Simon. The program was part of a government attempt to exploit her telepathic powers and turn her into a psychic-assassin, the underlying intention of which was presumably to control the populace. That the government would be willing to engage in such an effort is evidenced by its willingness to kill even innocent bystanders who inadvertently discover secrets that might hurt it.

In this sense, *Firefly* reflects traditions of utopia as portrayed in the genre of science fiction. A government sits at the center, projecting itself as an advanced society. Lying beneath the surface, of course, is a far more ambiguous condition, less benevolent and often more insidious. It also echoes Henri Lefebvre's view that "each state claims to produce a space . . . where something is brought to perfection: namely a unified and homogenous society."<sup>8</sup> Yet as King and Krzywinska have pointed out, attempts to engineer a perfect world are doomed to fail.<sup>9</sup> Such states have the potential, and a tendency, to become collectivist and bureaucratic; by their nature, they become institutionalized.<sup>10</sup> That is, as institutions, they do things because that is what maintains them as institutions.<sup>11</sup> What emerges is a controlling entity, one which maintains its position by imposing its own interests on those around it. And this control and influence is exercised not for the public good, but for the privileged interests of the center. This scenario exists, of course, in our cities today in the convergence of political-economic forces. Through plan-

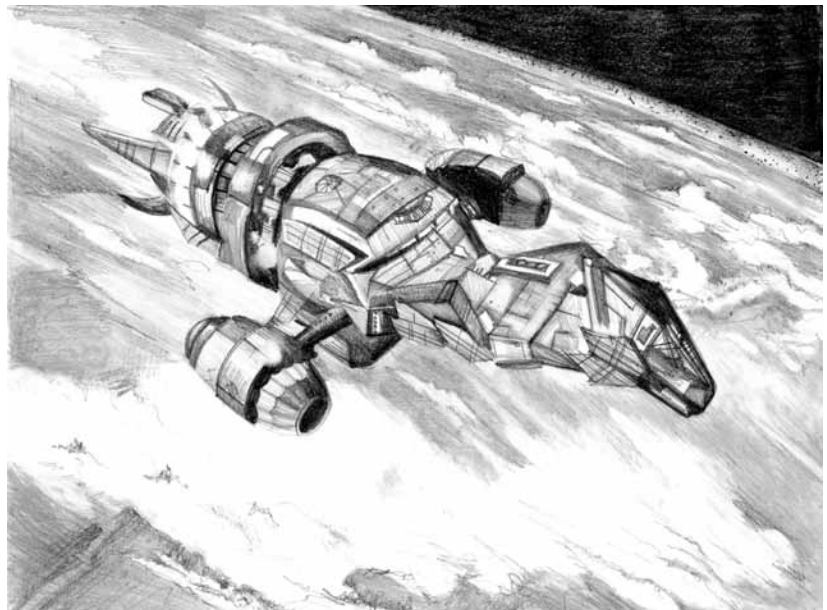


FIGURE 2. Serenity. Artist's impression, courtesy of K. Sammons.

ning policies, funding initiatives, and political positions the sense of the public good has shifted from the well-being of all inhabitants to the establishment of a physical environment that prioritizes economic interests over all others.<sup>12</sup>

Lefebvre suggested that such a government establishes a fixed and privileged focal point, which acts as the locus of information and wealth. Concurrently, it seeks to put its stamp on ever-widening peripheral areas, which increasingly come under its control.<sup>13</sup> This state is actually a framework of power that

*. . . makes decisions in such a way to ensure that the interests of certain minorities, of certain classes of factions of classes, are imposed on society — so effectively imposed, in fact, that they become undistinguishable from the general interest. . . . [W]e are speaking of a space where centralized power sets itself above other power and eliminates it; where a proclaimed “sovereign” nation pushes aside any other nationality, often crushing it in the process. . . . [and] makes it possible for a certain type of non-critical thought simply to register the resultant “reality” and accept it at face value.<sup>14</sup>*

The primary critique here is not, however, limited to the center. Indeed, the center (e.g., the city) has long been positioned in conventions of utopia as physically and socially rotten and corrupting.<sup>15</sup> Nor is it about its traditional opposite (i.e., the rural condition) as some Arcadian ideal in contrast to the overwhelming scale and complexities of the city. As

depicted in *Firefly*, both center and periphery exist as forms of dystopia — the former more covertly, and the latter more overtly in its lawlessness and savagery. While worth noting, what is of far more interest here is what *Firefly* has to say about how we attempt to make our utopias — that is, the models we refer to, and how they are put in place.

#### THE SAVANNAH AS ORIGIN

At the beginning of the film *Serenity* viewers are presented with a defining image of the central planets. Accompanied by a voiceover explaining that “the central planets . . . are the most advanced, embodying civilization at its peak,” the film shows futuristic buildings set apart from each other in a greened landscape.<sup>16</sup> Within this space lie pools of water and scattered groups of trees with low, spreading canopies, between which we might wander to discover something new or momentarily seek privacy or refuge from the elements. Though partially enclosed, this space is also open, allowing views across it and vistas of distant hills; and it offers variety in its forms and textures — but not with so much complexity as to become illegible (FIG. 3).<sup>17</sup> This savannah-like landscape is similar to other projections of an idealized future — for example, a Star Fleet Academy training compound depicted in the television series *Star Trek: Voyager*.<sup>18</sup> Fundamental to each of these views is not any particular building, however idiosyncratic, but the landscape itself. That this image is used to depict the Alliance’s vision in *Serenity* is not

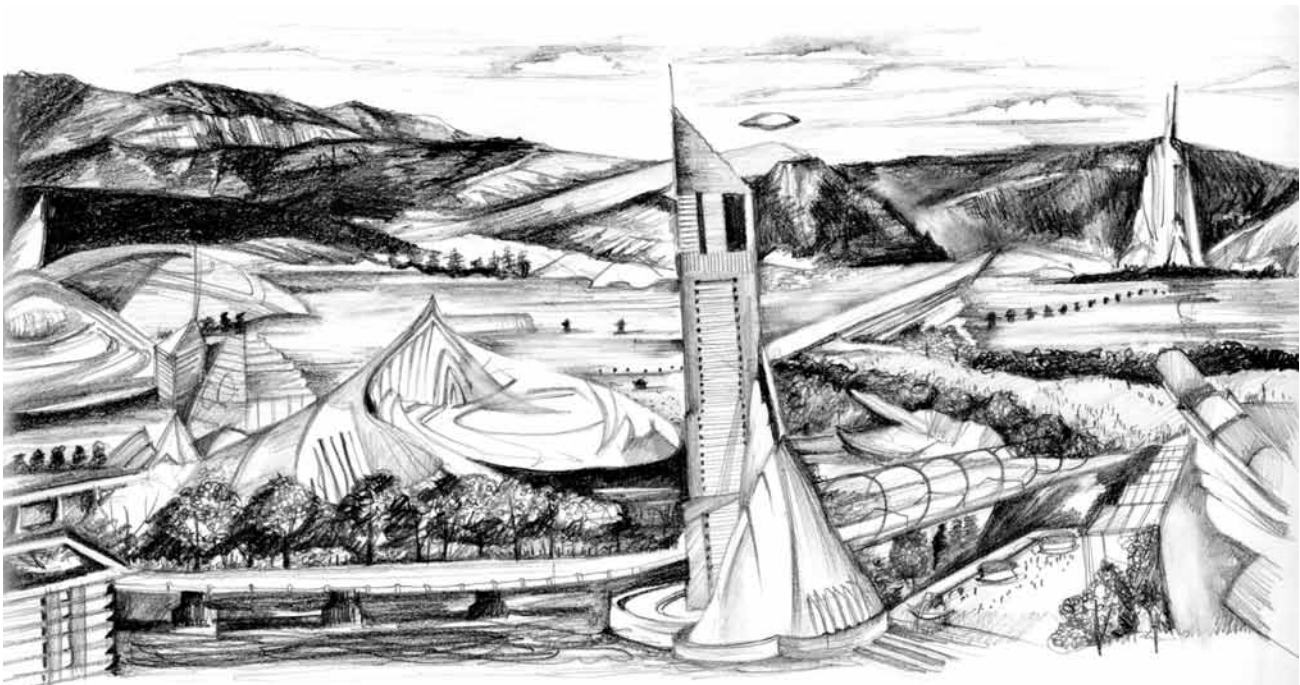


FIGURE 3. *The familiar landscape of the central planets. Artist's impression, courtesy of K. Sammons.*



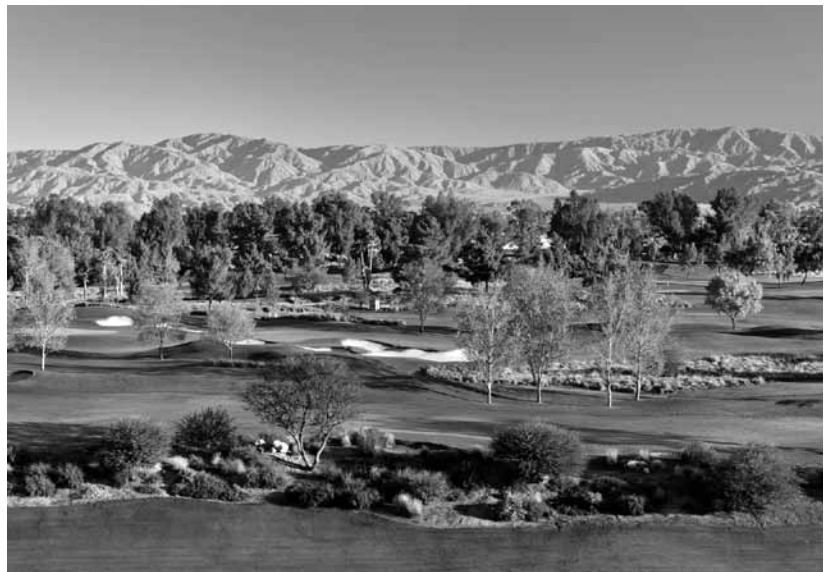


**FIGURE 4.** *The savannah of eastern Africa. Image courtesy of iStockphoto LP.*

coincidental; even when representing another world, it offers the sense of something familiar and appealing, evoking allusions to an Arcadian past.

The theory of biophilia suggests that human beings have a seeming predisposition toward the environment in which we evolved; evidence of human evolution suggests that much of this took place on the savannahs of East Africa, and that only relatively recently have we moved into other ecosystems.<sup>19</sup> The argument continues that the prehistoric savannahs of Africa were an environment that provided primitive humans with what they needed: food that was relatively easy to obtain; trees that offered protection from the sun or that could be climbed to escape predators; distant, uninterrupted views; changes in elevation allowing for orientation; and water (FIG. 4).<sup>20</sup> A landscape that offers such qualities

today is, as Ian Whyte suggested, “something that appeals to ancient survival needs buried deep in the human psyche.”<sup>21</sup> Whyte has also cited arguments that this evolutionary bias translates into an aesthetic appreciation of landscape, even if the importance of evaluations for basic survival has vanished.<sup>22</sup> Gordon Orians has reinforced this contention, suggesting that the landscape features characteristic of African savannahs have continuing appeal to humans and evoke strong positive emotions — as evidenced in the design of parks and gardens, which are generally savannah types.<sup>23</sup> A similar argument has been made for another typology: the golf course (FIG. 5).<sup>24</sup> I would extend this argument further to include another setting — the campus — whether with regard to colleges and universities or the grounds of business and research parks.



**FIGURE 5.** *The golf course as a re-creation of the savannah landscape. Image courtesy of iStockphoto LP.*

“All over the world,” Darwinian aestheticist Christina Suetterlin has noted, “people want to see grassland, a lake, some trees, but not a solid forest, and some distant mountains for refuge.”<sup>25</sup> Cross-cultural research examining distinct landscapes types (and particular features associated with those landscapes) has given credence to the argument that savannah-like environments are consistently better liked than others.<sup>26</sup> And studies measuring both physiological response and aesthetic preference have found that a savannah setting is markedly more effective in reducing physiological stress than other settings — even among study participants who claimed to dislike it.<sup>27</sup>

There are, of course, both exceptions and objections to this hypothesis. Orians has noted that responses to an environment can vary with a person’s age, social status, and physiological state.<sup>28</sup> Suetterlin has suggested that landscape preference is greatly influenced by the setting one experienced during the formative years of puberty.<sup>29</sup> And William Bird has argued that the hypothesis does not recognize variants such as fear or hostility toward nature or love of manmade environments.<sup>30</sup> Perhaps most emphatically, however, cultural geographers such as Denis Cosgrove have argued that “in landscape we are dealing with an ideologically-charged and very complex cultural product.”<sup>31</sup> Thus, as Orians and Judith Heerwagen have conceded, not all people or cultures may identify the savannah as a preferred or even ideal type. But they have noted that the evidence does suggest that the savannah environment is positively experienced by many people.<sup>32</sup> The point in all of this is not to position the savannah as the quintessential human landscape. While there are some strong findings to suggest it has qualities which appeal to many people, the evidence is not conclusive. What is significant is the reoccurring adoption of the savannah as an idealized landscape image and what this suggests about a desire for a return to origins.

#### A CRITIQUE OF ORIGIN AS A PLACE OF UTOPIAN RETURN

At the beginning of the *Firefly* story, the human race has fled Earth, looking to escape the failings of the past and start anew. This narrative is part of the utopian tradition; yet, embedded in humanity’s attempt to create a new home is another tradition, that of trying to forge something new by going back to and resurrecting something from the past. The search for and reaching back to origins is a recurrent theme in the utopian tradition.<sup>33</sup> The makers of *Firefly* evoke it by choosing the landscape of the savannah as the setting for the Alliance’s utopian vision. It presents an image that is appealing and familiar, and it echoes a place where and a time when life was (seemingly) simpler, less compromised, and more authentic.

A similar aspiration runs through design discussions about the making of place, involving both appeals to and

proclamations of a sense of origin. In architectural literature this belief is exemplified most notably by the idea of the primitive hut. Positioned as the first architecture, this mythical dwelling has been envisioned as pure and unspoiled, undistorted by the various forces that defile architectural authenticity.<sup>34</sup> Claims to its ethical, moral, and/or spiritual authority and calls for a return to it run strongest at times of crisis, when it is sought as a source of rebirth and salvation.<sup>35</sup>

Such tendencies are paralleled in (re)constructions of identity and the embedding of identity in place. Notable in this regard are not the actions of socio-cultural groups in the everyday, who tend to pursue their livelihoods through an enculturated and (generally) unconscious practice.<sup>36</sup> Rather more determining are the policies and pursuits of various governmental and quasi-governmental authorities to forge a shared sense of identity and inscribe these upon the physical landscape.<sup>37</sup> This intention is reflective of Lefebvre’s contention that all subjects are situated in space, and that every society creates its own space.<sup>38</sup> It further resonates with views that such spatial representations are underpinned by ideologies which posit absolute truths to justify both their claims to authority and right of autonomous reconstruction of the landscape.<sup>39</sup>

Inherent in the appeal to origin is a belief that the meaning of the thing is synonymous with the thing itself: that is, an object in and of itself carries an implicit denotation of specific beliefs and values. This frequently parallels the conviction that the provision of a physical setting, whether as building or landscape, will in some positivist sense, *ipso facto*, automatically generate a certain way of life. In the utopian tradition of ideal cities, architecture is thus conceived as “. . . the physical embodiment of . . . all that is needed for the cultivation of the good life.”<sup>40</sup> Inherent in these propositions is a belief that the architecture equates to the ideal life. The visions of ideal cities throughout history — from the Greeks and Romans through the Renaissance, to some notable modern examples such as Ebenezer Howard’s Garden City or Frank Lloyd Wright’s Broadacre City — represent a long tradition of linking physical form with a particular ethos. In drawing upon the utopian tradition of the savannah for the landscape of the central planets in *Firefly*, the suggestion is that this setting itself embodies the “comfort and enlightenment of true civilization.”<sup>41</sup> This is the question that *Firefly* challenges us to consider. Can the positioning of a utopian image intrinsically enable the fulfillment of a utopian life? Can a setting, by the very form of its spaces, foster cultural and political enlightenment and social well-being and serve as a site of ethical, moral and spiritual authority, as presumed by the Alliance in *Firefly*?

When depicted on the television or movie screen, we can, of course, immediately see the fallacy of such convictions. Yet these very same principles have been consistently invoked in architectural discourse, starting with the very first known treatise on architecture by Vitruvius some two thousand years ago. Other examples include the implications of

authority in Augustin Pugin's advocacy of "honesty of expression" in the nineteenth century and Le Corbusier's call in the early twentieth century for an architecture which "rings within us in tune with a universe whose laws we obey, recognise and respect."<sup>42</sup> The theme continues in more contemporary discussions, such as Alberto Perez-Gomes's claim that "architecture is the re-creation of a symbolic order."<sup>43</sup>

These declarations are paralleled in the way landscape design has been positioned. For example, James Corner has noted how "eighteenth-century developments in European landscape equated images of landscape with wealth, high culture and power, an equation that was encoded not only in garden art but also in painting, literature and poetry."<sup>44</sup> As Cosgrove has further insisted, landscape is "a way of seeing' rooted in ideology."<sup>45</sup>

*Firefly* communicates a counterpoint to such beliefs, notably in the episode "Objects in Space." Throughout the episode questions are raised about the substance of things, both organic (i.e., the crew and the episode's antagonist, the bounty hunter Jubal Early) and inorganic (e.g., even the ship *Serenity*). Equally examined are what these objects convey and how people interpret them. A notable example are two guns which appear in different scenes. For the bounty hunter, his own gun is a tool, the beauty of which is that it allows him to carry out a task (shooting another person — which he, in fact, does in the episode). However, another misplaced gun, which River stumbles upon, appears to her as a branch; it is just an object, as she points out when she says, "It's not what you think." This dialogue echoes director Whedon's

own meditations on the nature of things. In a commentary on the episode, he drew on Jean-Paul Sartre, who wrote that things have no inherent meaning; the only meaning they have is what we bring to them.<sup>46</sup>

Some commentaries on contemporary architecture reflect this challenge. A telling example is Greig Crysler's critique of the architectural avant-garde's adoption of Deleuzian aesthetics and its assumption that physical forms "... are presumed, by virtue of their formal qualities alone, to be capable of inducing liberatory political conditions."<sup>47</sup> Equally challenging is Andrea Kahn's critique of business improvement districts in the U.S., in which she attacks the appropriation of architectural forms as totalizing representations of urbanity. It is as if the reproductions of form alone could carry all the underlying cultural, economic, political and social interaction that once informed their making, when in reality they are only simulacra.<sup>48</sup> Corner's critique of traditions of landscape design is equally sharp. He has noted how both the state and its allies (e.g., designers) tend to regard landscapes as objectified scenes, aestheticized images, which displace and distance viewers.<sup>49</sup> The result is to veil both the underlying hegemonic ideology and specific interests that generate their formation and the "inequities and problems of the present."<sup>50</sup> The landscape image is thus intended to control viewers and "foster in them the feeling that they are in possession of a beautiful and innocent past" (FIG. 6).<sup>51</sup>

Corner's reference to the objectified scene alludes to another failing that the makers of architecture and landscapes have too often been party to. The objectified scene inherently



FIGURE 6. *The landscape objectified: Claude, Landscape with Aeneas at Delos* © The National Gallery, London.

gives primacy to the formal qualities of place and the meaning these forms are intended to represent (as envisioned by the designer) — that is, it emphasizes what it is rather than what it does. Marginalized or even negated in this process is what it means to inhabit that place on an everyday basis. As various critical theorists have noted, this implies valuing abstract, formal, geometric, mathematical space over lived space.<sup>52</sup> Such actions are equally reflective of the utopian tradition. As Krishan Kumar has pointed out, “the central feature of . . . (utopian) conceptions was that they elevated the land, the physical landscape, over the people.”<sup>53</sup> In *Firefly* this is embodied by the emphasis the Alliance places on abstract values over (indeed, at the expense of) lived values.<sup>54</sup>

Further intrinsic to the objectified scene is its failure to deal with the realities of the everyday. Instead, it demands conformity to a singular vision. Thus, in lieu of addressing problems or critiques — or even acknowledging them — it brushes them aside, suppresses and hides them from view. By its very nature, the singular proposition can’t deal with the ambiguities, contradictions and complexities that are a part of quotidian life; these, in effect, “spoil” the desired nonambiguity of the picture and its intended message. The message is clear: don’t look under the surface, but accept it and the values being presented. Reduced to simplistic metaphorical conceptualizations that are easily and uncritically absorbed, these spatial representations are intended to obscure the ideologies and interests that underpin them.<sup>55</sup> In a related vein, Ian Whyte has observed how, in the context of landscape, similar spatial formations represent

*. . . a way in which certain classes of people have signified themselves and their world . . . and through which they have underlined and communicated their social role and that of others. . . . It is an artist’s, an elite, way of seeing the world.*<sup>56</sup>

Omitted from consideration are alternative values, typically those marginalized from the prevailing and hegemonic cultural establishment. Thus, there is inherent danger in the plea for a return to some state of origin. Left unconsidered is the prospect that this identified essential is not commonly shared, but rather represents a worldview that is fashioned and authorized by a self-defined elite, which is then imposed upon others.<sup>57</sup>

The position of a singular universal is within the tradition of utopias. Michel de Certeau has articulated how in their making (and as reflected in traditional approaches to urban planning), all the existing conditions of place and inhabitation are ignored. Thus, instead of working with and building upon found conditions, the site is sterilized, freed of the limitations these conditions might impose. On this purified ground, architects, planners, and the economic-political powers behind them can “. . . write in cement the composition created in the laboratory. . . .”<sup>58</sup> Place is treated as an ab-

stract space, as a *tabula rasa*, upon which might be projected the hopes and aspirations of its makers.<sup>59</sup> Utopias thus produce their own space in their own time, repressing any other spatial and temporal actions.<sup>60</sup>

Something similar is apparent not only in *Firefly*’s depiction of the “utopian” central planets, but in our own cities today, notably those which operate as or aspire to become global cities. These sites situate themselves within a much larger (i.e., global) network tied into an exchange not only of goods and financial capital but of culture as a form of economic currency.<sup>61</sup> The systems behind these forms of exchange operate syncretically to generate a new, marketable identity for these urban constructions. What is projected is an elitist view of the city as a place of cultural and economic vitality, the primary aim being to attract further capital investment and consumerist consumption. The inhabitants who once occupied these sites, and the activities that once took place there, are soon displaced; the residual landscape is buffed and polished to appear new, so that any lingering vestiges of its past are reduced to only momentary and romanticized (i.e., sanitized) echoes. What is projected is the city not as a place in which different interests and values come together to negotiate a common ground, but a privileged center for those who can afford it.

In opposition to the imposition of a singular view — which, as Robert Fishman has noted, is intrinsic to utopian visions<sup>62</sup> — what is necessary is recognition of the diversity, complexity and individuality present in real lives and communities. We need to reject proclamations of essential truth grounded in a self-defined and authorized spiritual core. As Peter Madsen has argued, the idea of such an absolute stands in contrast to the world “experienced as moving, changing and continually in flux.”<sup>63</sup> Doreen Massey has also warned of the dangers of grand narratives, arguing that life is not reducible to such visions.<sup>64</sup>

What is necessary then is to engage with the multiplicity present in any found condition. Instead of trying to create a single space underpinned by universal truth, designers and planners need to recognize place as composed of a plurality of cultural, ecological, economic, political and social forces. Discourse from Lefebvre through Andrea Kahn has understood our world not as a predetermined absolute, static, homogenous or singular, but as constructed, changing, heterogeneous, and operating at multiple scales simultaneously.<sup>65</sup> Such a conceptualization enables acknowledgment and engagement with the multiplicity of alternative actions, beliefs and narratives generated in, by, and projected onto place. Consistent with this proposition is recognition that place is in a continual state of becoming, the product of various interactions of people with each other and with that place. As Massey noted, space is a product of dynamic relations always under construction.<sup>66</sup> In a literal sense, this reading equally recognizes landscape as an active surface, one which allows new relationships and interactions to occur, as opposed to



conceptualizations which would fix understanding according to a unified spatial-temporal narrative.<sup>67</sup> Perhaps most significantly for the present discussion, this proposition reflects our understanding of tradition. Recent scholarship has repositioned “tradition” as permeable and malleable, shifting and evolving in response to changing conditions.<sup>68</sup>

#### (RE)MAKING HOME IN THE EVERYDAY

When viewers first meet Malcolm Reynolds in *Firefly*, he is on the losing side of the last battle of the civil war. Despite the numerically and technologically superior forces he faces, he retains his faith that they will survive and win the day; it is only when he realizes that his leaders are not going to support him and his comrades, and instead leave them behind, that he despairs. His world having come crashing down around him, he flees where he is from (not only physically but spiritually) and attempts to start life anew. Like the inhabitants of Earth-that-was, he has been displaced from his place of origin and is now homeless. Yet unlike them, Mal “has no rudder” — he has no false faith to guide him, no power that presents him with a representation of home in which to live out simulacra of the good life. Indeed, he has no faith; like the rest of the crew on the *Serenity*, he has lost something of who he is and was. Yet in wandering around seemingly homeless, Mal and his crew create for themselves a home. However flawed they might be as individuals, they come together as a family — not a real one, but one constructed from new relationships. Ultimately, it is in making this family, first with each other on the ship, and then with others who they don’t even know outside the ship, that, as director Whedon noted, they become whole again (FIG. 7).<sup>69</sup>

*Firefly* reminds us that home is not merely an object and that it cannot be spontaneously generated merely by the projection of an image. As Juhani Pallasmaa has noted, home is a set of rituals, personal rhythms, and routines of everyday life; it is not produced at once but rather has a time dimension, and is a gradual product of the dweller’s adaptation to

the world.<sup>70</sup> He added that essential to the construct of home is a process of discovery.<sup>71</sup> This process is something more, however, than merely a slowly unfolding spatial experience as one moves through a dwelling; nor is it just the build-up of experiences over time that foster a changing perspective. More significantly, this discovery is generated through making. In a literal sense we make a place, constructing both its structure and its content, and through this effort invest ourselves in that place. In a more figurative sense, we construct ourselves through this making, finding something of ourselves through that act.

This idea of making, of the act, is one that was well articulated by Mari Hvattum in her insightful critique of the idea of the primitive hut. In contrast to conceptualizations which emphasize the form of the artifact, she drew on Gustav Klemm, Karl Boetticher, and Gottfried Semper, who, though writing individually, articulated a shared alternative. Central to it was the idea that the origins of architecture should not be sought in form itself, but in the urges and ritualized acts that give shape to form.<sup>72</sup> This dialogue was echoed by John Turner, who declared, “the most important thing about housing is not what it is, but what it does in people’s lives.”<sup>73</sup> The idea of home is grounded in our making of it and the meaning we find in that making.

The making of home is, however, fraught with challenges; indeed, drawing on discourses of modernity, and related concepts of super-modernity and hyper-modernity, it is possible to question the very viability of the concept of home. Hilde Heynen has suggested that the modern condition has affected our lives so significantly that it is questionable whether any authenticity of dwelling still exists.<sup>74</sup> Meanwhile, Bernd Happauf and Maiken Umbach have claimed that the concept of home is the antithesis of the modern.<sup>75</sup> While dwelling as a place of inhabitation is still a physical construct, what these critiques propose is that the underlying meaning of home has been eroded both from within and without. In Western culture the concept of home has traditionally been imbued with associations of comfort, security and warmth. Yet, as Kimberly Dovey has remarked, “to speak of the expe-



FIGURE 7. Making *Serenity* into a home. Artist’s impression, courtesy of K. Sammons.

rience of home in such universal terms is also problematic. The 'home' is too often where the horror is; its 'sanctity' deployed as a cover for violence . . . and oppression."<sup>76</sup> Sarah Kent has further warned of tyranny, domination and abuse.<sup>77</sup> Pallasmaa has added that home can be a place of distress and fear.<sup>78</sup> Meanwhile, social injustices happening outside our door permeate within, and render us mentally, emotionally and spiritually incapable of being at home.<sup>79</sup> Thus, Happauf and Umbach further suggested that the notion of home, when applied in a broader context of the region/state, while defining a sense of belonging, has also been manipulated and abused throughout history for purposes of exclusion and xenophobia toward those outside — i.e., the *other*.<sup>80</sup>

It has also been posited that the notion of home, both in relation to and within the urban realm, has come to end. With the infiltration of the public domain inward (via, for example, the Internet, mobile telephones, and television), the private domain has become ever more open to the outside world. Concurrently, what has traditionally constituted the public domain has been eroded — as, for example, through the privatizing of public space and economic segregation.<sup>81</sup> Such conditions have led to proclamations that the dialectic of inside and outside (that is, home) is no longer relevant.<sup>82</sup> In this context, as Neil Leach, drawing on Paul Virilio, has noted, "the paradigm of the dynamic 'wanderer' has replaced that of the static 'dweller'."<sup>83</sup>

Home is not an easy option; it requires constant attention, commitment and tolerance. Otto Bollnow thus warned against taking the safety of home for granted: "Man must keep an inner freedom that makes him strong enough to survive the loss of home, but . . . we must on the other hand find a trust in the world, strong enough to survive to build homes."<sup>84</sup> As Tomas Wikstrom added, the home is "something that is continually re-created by everyday praxis, by daily routines which to a large extent are not reflected on but become clear in a situation of change."<sup>85</sup> Witold Rybcynski has further remarked that home "is something repeated daily, and is evidence of how individuals can transform a place, and hence make it particular, not by grand design but by the small celebrations of everyday life."<sup>86</sup> Indeed, as Heynen proposed, to be at home we must continually rewrite and renew its forms and meaning through our own actions in the everyday.<sup>87</sup>

#### AN UNATTAINABLE RETURN AND A CONTINUAL (RE)CONSTRUCTION

In positioning his work in a philosophical context, the architect Stanley Tigerman alluded to Adam and Eve's banishment from the Garden of Eden. In exile, they were confronted by oppositions — good and evil, the sacred and profane, purity and sin — which they were not able to resolve. In a continuous quest to try to achieve closure of these polemics, the



**FIGURE 8.** Albrecht Altdorfer, German, c.1480–1538, *The Expulsion from Paradise*, from the *Fall and Redemption of Man*, n.d., Woodcut on paper, 73 x 49 mm. Gift of Mr. & Mrs. Potter Palmer Jr., 1926.38, *The Art Institute of Chicago*. Photography © *The Art Institute of Chicago*.

place of origin is cast as an ideal, a place in which humans once lived in a state of innocence and were not conflicted by the challenges and uncertainty of life. This origin remains elusive, however; though a figurative return is an understandable human desire, it presents a task that is intrinsically flawed, a goal that is ultimately unattainable (FIG. 8).<sup>88</sup>

*Firefly* reminds us of the impossibility of any attempt to return to a place of origin — to search for, define and (re) create some spiritual core. Though the place itself may still exist as a remnant of what it once was — or even as something that has been re-created — it does not hold that it will retain the same meaning. The meaning of a thing is what we bring to it — in terms of past associations and experiences, yes, but also in terms of how we interact with it and remake it through that interaction. It is equally subject to changing cultural, ecological, economic, political and social conditions and beliefs. Thus meaning is never fixed or certain but always in a state of flux. Sense of place, therefore, cannot

be attained through the imposition of tradition grounded in any real or imagined origin; nor can it be achieved through the deification of any supposed singular universal truth as reified in any spatial form. It can only be achieved through a constant process of making that deals with everyday realities. Indeed, the form of the object — dare I say architecture and landscape — are not as important as many might like to think they are.

Place is not just what it is (i.e., the meaning of the form), but equally — and I would argue, more significantly — what it does, and what that doing means to us. Home, tradition, utopia — these are not embedded by their very nature in an

object. If they are anything, they are an intention, an act, and finally a belief; and meaning (however flawed) emerges only through our making of them.

This is a lesson that *Firefly* assuredly conveys in its very last scene, one tinged with both hope and challenge. Mal is, if not whole again, at least in some sense restored. Together with and through his crew he has once again found his faith through the making of home. Yet as the ship flies off into the horizon of space, a part of it flies loose. It tells us once again that making and maintaining our homes, our traditions, our utopias, are not easy endeavors, but rather must be (re)made constantly in the everyday reality of life.<sup>89</sup>

## REFERENCE NOTES

1. L. Adams Wright, "Asian Objects in Space," in J. Espenson, ed., *Finding Serenity: Anti-Heroes, Lost Shepherds and Space Hookers in Joss Whedon's Firefly* (Dallas: Benbella Books, 2004), p.35.
2. L. Dixon, "The Reward, the Details, the Devils, the Due," in Espenson, ed., *Finding Serenity*, p.14.
3. G. King and T. Krzywinska, *Science Fiction Cinema: From Outerspace to Cyberspace* (London: Wallflower, 2000), p.12.
4. M. Burns, "Mars Needs Women: How a Dress, a Cake, and a Goofy Hat Will Save Science Fiction," in J. Espenson, ed., *Serenity Found: More Unauthorized Essays on Joss Whedon's Firefly Universe* (Dallas: Ben Bella Books, 2007), pp.15–25.
5. I use the term *Firefly* throughout the article; unless specifically stated, however, the reference is to both the television series and the movie.
6. *Firefly* writer Jane Espenson notes that *Firefly* creator Joss Whedon "is never about the stuff, but about the stuff behind the stuff." J. Espenson, "Introduction," in Espenson, ed., *Finding Serenity*, pp.1–3.
7. I would suggest not spending too much time debating the veracity of such a solar system, and instead simply acknowledge the artistic license of *Firefly*'s creator. Moreover, focusing too closely on scientific and/or technological aspects of *Firefly* misses the point of the show.
8. H. Lefebvre, *The Production of Space*, D. Nicholson-Smith, trans. (Malden: Blackwell, 1991 [1974]), p.281.
9. King and Krzywinska, *Science Fiction Cinema*.
10. J. Whedon, *Firefly: The Official Companion, Volume 1* (London: Titan Books, 2006).
11. C. Rogers, *Freedom to Learn for the 80's* (Columbus: Charles E. Merrill, 1983).
12. See, for example, A. Minton, *Ground Control: Fear and Happiness in the Twenty-First Century City* (London: Penguin Books, 2009); and A. Kahn, "Imaging New York," in P. Madsen and R. Plunz, eds., *The Urban Lifeworld: Formation, Perception, Representation* (London: Routledge, 2002), pp.237–51.
13. Lefebvre, *The Production of Space*.
14. *Ibid.*, p.281.
15. See, for example, R. Fishman, *Urban Utopias in the Twentieth Century* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1977); K. Kumar, *Utopia and Anti-Utopia in Modern Times* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1987); and J. Jacobs, *The Death and Life of Great American Cities* (New York: Random House, 1961).
16. J. Whedon, *Serenity: The Official Visual Companion* (London: Titan Books, 2005), p.42. For this vision of the future, Whedon notes that they looked at recent architecture in Germany and Holland for inspiration. See J. Whedon, "Director's Commentary," *Serenity* (Universal Studios, 2005). A later scene in the movie also draws upon contemporary architecture to provide an image of the future: for the setting of Miranda, the filmmakers used Diamond Ranch High School in Pomona, California, designed by Morphosis Architects.
17. This description is drawn from the scene in *Serenity*, but it equally owes a debt to descriptions of the landscape underlying this scene in W. Bird, "Natural Thinking," A Report for the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds (June, 2007). Available at: [http://www.rspb.org.uk/Images/naturalthinking\\_tcm9-161856.pdf](http://www.rspb.org.uk/Images/naturalthinking_tcm9-161856.pdf). Accessed March 23, 2010.
18. "In the Flesh," *Star Trek: Voyager*, Episode 98, Season 5 (CBS Paramount, 1998).
19. G. Orians, "An Ecological and Evolutionary Approach to Landscape Aesthetics," in E. Penning-Roswell and D. Lowenthal, eds., *Landscape Meanings and Values* (London: Allen and Unwin, 1986), pp.3–22; and G. Orians, "An Evolutionary Perspective on Aesthetics," *Bulletin of Psychology & the Arts*, Sample Issue Evolution, Creativity, and Aesthetics, available at <http://www.apa.org/divisions/div10/articles/orians/html>, accessed March 23 2010).
20. G. Orians and J. Heerwagen, "Evolved Responses to Landscapes," in J. Barkow, L. Cosmides, and J. Tooby, eds., *The Adapted Mind: Evolutionary Psychology and the Generation of Culture* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1992), pp.555–79.
21. I. Whyte, *Landscape and History Since 1500* (London: Reaktion Books, 2002), p.19.
22. J. Appleton, *The Experience of Landscape* (London, 1975), as cited in Whyte, *Landscape and History Since 1500*.
23. Orians, "An Ecological and Evolutionary Approach to Landscape Aesthetics."
24. S. Sailer, "The World According to Golf" (2002). Available at: [http://www.isteve.com/Golf\\_the\\_World\\_According\\_to\\_Golf.html](http://www.isteve.com/Golf_the_World_According_to_Golf.html). Accessed March 23, 2010.
25. C. Suetterlin, as cited in Sailer, "The World According to Golf."
26. P. Kahn, "Developmental Psychology and the Biophilia Hypothesis," *Children's Affiliation with Nature Development Review*, 17 (1997), pp.1–61, as cited in Bird, "Natural Thinking," p.29; S. Kaplan, "Environmental Preference in a Knowledge-Seeking, Knowledge-Using Organism," in Barkow, Cosmides, and Tooby, eds., *The Adapted Mind*, pp.581–98; Orians and Heerwagen, "Evolved Responses to Landscapes"; and R. Sommer and J. Summit, "Cross-National Rankings of Tree Shape," *Ecological Psychology*, 8 (1996), pp.327–41, as cited in Orians, "An Evolutionary Perspective on Aesthetics."
27. Wise and Rosenberg, 1988, cited in D. Relf, "Human Issues in Horticulture," *HortTechnology*, vol.2, no.2 (April/June, 1992), pp.159–71.
28. Orians, "An Evolutionary Perspective on Aesthetics."
29. Suetterlin, cited in Sailer, "The World According to Golf."
30. Bird, "Natural Thinking."
31. D. Cosgrove, *Social Formation and Symbolic Landscape* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1984, 1988), p.11.
32. Orians and Heerwagen, "Evolved Responses to Landscapes."



33. Kumar, *Utopia and Anti-Utopia in Modern Times*.
34. A. Forty, "Primitive: The Word and Concept," in J. Odgers, F. Samuel, and A. Sharr, eds., *Primitive: Original Matters in Architecture* (London: Routledge, 2006), pp.3–14; and J. Rykwert, *On Adam's House in Paradise* (New York: Museum of Modern Art, 1972).
35. S. Cairns, "Notes for an Alternative History of the Primitive Hut," in Odgers, Samuel, and Sharr, eds., *Primitive: Original Matters in Architecture*, pp.86–95; and Rykwert, *On Adam's House in Paradise*.
36. P. Bourdieu, *Outline of a Theory of Practice*, R. Nice, trans. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1977).
37. See, for example, N. AlSayyad and M. Massoumi, eds., *The Fundamentalist City: Religiosity and the Remaking of Urban Space* (London: Routledge, 2011); I. Powell, *Ndebele: A People & Their Art* (London: New Holland, 1995); and J. Robertson, ed., *A Companion to the Anthropology of Japan* (Malden: Blackwell, 2005).
38. Lefebvre, *The Production of Space*.
39. T. Adorno, *The Jargon of Authenticity*, K. Tarnowski and F. Will, trans. (London: Routledge Classics, 2003 [1973, 1964]); N. AlSayyad, "The Fundamentalist City," in AlSayyad and Massoumi, eds., *The Fundamentalist City*, pp.3–26; Lefebvre, *The Production of Space*; and D. Massey, *For Space* (London: Sage Publications, 2005).
40. Kumar, *Utopia and Anti-Utopia in Modern Times*, p.6.
41. Whedon, *Serenity: The Official Visual Companion*, p.42.
42. Le Corbusier, *Towards a New Architecture*, J. Rodker, trans. (Dover: Mineola, 1986 [1931]).
43. A. Perez-Gomez, "Architecture as Embodied Knowledge," *Journal of Architectural Education*, 40 (Spring 1987), p.87, cited in D. Ghirardo, "Introduction," in D. Ghirardo, ed., *Out of Site* (Seattle: Bay Press, 1991), pp.9–16.
44. J. Corner, "Introduction: Recovering Landscape as a Critical Cultural Practice," in J. Corner, ed., *Recovering Landscape* (New York: Princeton Architectural Press, 1999), p.7.
45. Denis Cosgrove, cited in Whyte, *Landscape and History Since 1500*, p.20.
46. J. Whedon, "Objects In Space: Director's Commentary," *Firefly*, Episode 15 (Twentieth Century Fox Television, 2002).
47. G. Crysler, *Writing Spaces: Discourses of Architecture, Urbanism, and the Built Environment, 1960–2000* (New York: Routledge, 2003). See also G. Kester, "(Not) Going with the Flow," in A. Kumar, ed., *Poetics/Politics: Radical Aesthetics for the Classroom* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1999), pp.17–38.
48. A. Kahn, "Defining Urban Sites," in C. Burns and A. Kahn, eds., *Site Matters* (New York: Routledge, 2005), p.281–96.
49. Corner, "Introduction: Recovering Landscape as a Critical Cultural Practice."
50. *Ibid.*, p.156.
51. *Ibid.*, p.157.
52. I. Borden, "Architecture, Not," in A. Hardy and N. Teymur, eds., *Architectural History and the Studio* (London: Question Press, 1996), pp.135–48; M. de Certeau, *The Practice of Everyday Life* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1984); K. Dovey, "Putting Geometry in Its Place: Toward a Phenomenology of the Design Process," in D. Seamon, ed., *Dwelling, Seeing, and Designing: Toward a Phenomenological Ecology* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1993), pp.247–69; Lefebvre, *The Production of Space*; and T. Wikstrom, "The Home and Housing Modernization," in D. Benjamin and D. Stea, eds., *The Home: Words, Interpretations, Meanings and Environments* (Aldershot: Avebury, 1995), pp.267–82.
53. Kumar, *Utopia and Anti-Utopia in Modern Times*, p.71.
54. E. Greene, "The Good Book," in Espenson, ed., *Serenity Found*, pp.79–93.
55. R. Shields, "A Guide to Urban Representation and What to Do About It," in A. King, ed., *Re-Presenting the City: Ethnicity, Capital and Culture in the 21st Century Metropolis* (New York: New York University Press, 1996), pp.227–52.
56. Whyte, *Landscape and History Since 1500*, pp.20–21.
57. R. Brown, "A Critique of Origins, or the Case for Palimpsest," in J. Savage and M. Miles, eds., *Nutopia: A Critical View of Future Cities* (Plymouth: University of Plymouth Press, 2011).
58. De Certeau, *The Practice of Everyday Life*, p.200.
59. *Ibid.*
60. *Ibid.*
61. S. Sassen, "Analytical Borderlands: Race, Gender and Representation in the New City," in King, ed., *Re-Presenting the City*, pp.183–202.
62. Fishman, *Urban Utopias in the Twentieth Century*.
63. P. Madsen, "Introduction," in Madsen and Plunz, eds., *The Urban Lifeworld*, p.10.
64. Massey, *For Space*.
65. Kahn, "Defining Urban Sites," p.281–96; and Lefebvre, *The Production of Space*.
66. Massey, *For Space*.
67. A. Wall, "Programming the Urban Surface," in Corner, ed., *Recovering Landscape*, pp.233–49.
68. R. Brown and D. Maudlin, "Concepts of Vernacular Architecture," in G. Crysler, K. Heynen, and S. Cairns, eds., *Handbook of Architectural Theory* (London: Sage, 2011).
69. J. Whedon, "Serenity: Director's Commentary," *Firefly*, Episode 1 (Twentieth Century Fox Television, 2002).
70. J. Pallasmaa, "Identity, Intimacy and Domicile: Notes on the Phenomenology of Home," in Benjamin and Stea, eds., *The Home*, pp.131–47.
71. *Ibid.*
72. M. Hvattum, "Origins Redefined: A Tale of Pigs and Primitive Huts," in Odgers, Samuel, and Sharr, eds., *Primitive*, pp.33–42. The use of the word "ritualized" here draws on Catherine Bell, who defines it as a process of expressing and mastering meanings, not as a static thing, but as part of an ongoing process of making, remaking, and transforming shaped culture. C. Bell, *Ritual Theory, Ritual Practice* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1992).
73. Colin Ward citing John Turner. C. Ward, "Preface," in J. Turner, *Housing by People: Towards Autonomy in Building Environments* (London: Marion Boyars, 1976), p.5.
74. H. Heynen, *Architecture and Modernity: A Critique* (Cambridge, MA: Massachusetts Institute of Technology, 1999).
75. B. Happauf and M. Umbach, "Introduction: Vernacular Modernism," in M. Umbach and B. Happauf, eds., *Vernacular Modernism* (Palo Alto: Stanford University Press, 2005), pp.1–24.
76. K. Dovey, *Framing Places: Mediating Power in Built Form* (London: Routledge, 1999), p.140.
77. S. Kent, "Ethnoarchaeology and the Concept of Home: A Cross-Cultural Analysis," in Benjamin and Stea, eds., *The Home*, pp.163–80.
78. Pallasmaa, "Identity, Intimacy and Domicile."
79. Heynen, *Architecture and Modernity*.
80. Happauf and Umbach, "Introduction: Vernacular Modernism."
81. G. Bridge, *Reason in the City of Difference: Pragmatism, Communicative Action and Contemporary Urbanism* (London: Routledge, 2005).
82. M. Hardt and A. Negri, *Empire* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2000).
83. N. Leach, "Virilio and Architecture," in J. Armitage, ed., *Paul Virilio: From Modernism to Hypermodernism and Beyond* (London: Sage Publications, 2000), p.77.
84. O. Bollnow, *Mensch and Raum* (Stuttgart: Kohlhammer, 1990), as cited in Wikstrom, "The Home and Housing Modernization," p.280.
85. Wikstrom, "The Home and Housing Modernization," p.276.
86. W. Rybcynski, *The Most Beautiful House in the World* (New York: Penguin Books, 1989).
87. Heynen, *Architecture and Modernity*.
88. S. Tigerman, "Introduction," in S. Mollman Underhill, ed., *Stanley Tigerman: Buildings and Projects, 1966–1989* (New York: Rizzoli, 1989), pp.8–14.
89. Though this discussion is my own, I defer to Loni Peristere's similar observations, which are expressed far more eloquently than my own. See L. Peristere, "Mutant Enemy U," in Espenson, ed., *Serenity Found*, pp.117–29.

# The Prophecy of *Code 46*: *Afuera* in Dubai, or Our Urban Future

YASSER ELSHESHTAWY

Using the premise of *Code 46* — a science fiction film whose setting blends existing cities and locales to envision a global metropolis — the article argues that the city of Dubai is emblematic of this imagined dystopian future. The movie is pertinent since it relies on existing locales in Shanghai, Dubai and Seattle, rather than stage sets, and thus evokes a future that is thoroughly grounded in the present. Following a discussion on the role of dystopia in urban studies and science fiction, the article shifts to an investigation of Dubai, focusing on its marginalized district of Satwa. Satwa is revealing because of its outsider status, its proximity to glamorous new developments, and the currently stalled effort to replace it according to a utopian urban renewal plan. The case of Satwa perfectly captures what can be termed the Dubai paradox, containing as it does both utopic and dystopic conditions. As such, it evokes a poignant sense of realness and humanity, a recurring theme within the utopian discourse of science fiction. The article concludes with a discussion of the relevance of such analysis to our understanding of globalizing cities.

*They don't care what you think if you are afuera — to them you don't exist.*

— *Code 46*

*Yasser Elsheshtawy is an Associate Professor in the Department of Architectural Engineering, UAE University, Al-Ain.*

The director Michael Winterbottom's 2003 film *Code 46* presents a dystopian vision of a society in the near future in which major cities have been transformed into gated centers protected from the dangers and unpredictability of those on the margins of society, who are dubbed *afuera*, or "outside" in Spanish. The cities depicted represent an amalgam of the deserts and highrises of Dubai, the gleaming towers of Shanghai and Hong Kong, and the villages of Rajasthan. Within these cityscapes a new managerial class moves freely, seemingly uninterrupted, from one space to the next — an intentional strategy the

filmmakers have described as a form of “creative geography” using “found spaces.”

Yet what is striking about the movie is that its dystopian vision relies not on stage sets, but on real spaces. By blending images of existing places, it evokes a future that is thoroughly grounded in the present. The city of Dubai plays a key role in this scenography through incongruous images of its business and residential towers rising from the desert, juxtaposed against its marginal spaces. The movie’s protagonists escape to Dubai (*afuera*) from the sterile and minimal settings of “high-class” Shanghai, and in its spaces they find solace and peace, a sense of realness that has escaped them elsewhere. Winterbottom has said that his choice of Dubai as a setting was based on its large transient population and the fact that it epitomizes a multicultural future. Utopia thus becomes, according to urban scholar Malcolm Miles, “an intellectual space of criticality.”<sup>1</sup>

Using this premise as a point of departure, I will examine here how the city of Dubai is currently emblematic of this dystopian future. My aim is twofold. First, I offer an alternative dystopian narrative, one that does not rely on apocalyptic visions of a city buried under mounds of sand — a trope in use as long ago as the early-nineteenth-century poem “Ozymandias” by Percy Bysshe Shelley. Specifically, by adopting the vision and strategies of *Code 46*, I will examine Dubai’s Satwa district, the quintessential space of *afuera*. Until the recent financial crisis, efforts were underway to replace it with Jumeirah Gardens, a futuristic development scaled to overshadow all that has been built in Dubai to date. Second, through an interrogation of how cities have been represented in science fiction movies, I will reveal themes pertinent to the current discourse on globalizing cities. Operating under the guise of neoliberal urbanization policies, such cities have become sites of homogeneity, alienation, inequality and loneliness. The depiction of these cities in science fiction as “dystopic sites” — places of humanity and resistance, where a sense of realness competes against the artificiality of spaces of global capital — potentially offers many lessons for architects and planners.

My analysis here is divided into four sections. First, I look at how cities have been represented in science fiction movies, focusing on the concept of dystopia. As part of this effort, I attempt to understand the emphasis on dystopic aspects of urban life in contemporary urban theory; I examine the extent to which this has been used to envision the city of the future; and I discuss specific movies and their spatial strategies to establish a conceptual and theoretical framework for understanding *Code 46* and critiquing Dubai. In the second part, I elaborate on *Code 46* and the degree to which it extends the science fiction genre and offers a prescient view of contemporary urban conditions and their pitfalls. In the third section, I discuss the city of Dubai. I have labeled this section “The Dubai Paradox” because the city, in my view, contains both utopic and dystopic conditions. I conclude by

looking at how such analysis can shape understanding of cities today and offer lessons to guide their development.

## CITIES AND SCIENCE FICTION

*The Dystopian City of the Present.* From its inception, the science fiction movie genre has displayed a fascination with dystopia (the opposite of utopia), a negative version of a futuristic society. Dystopian elements in these films are usually based on aspects of the present, and in this regard they mirror the present fixation on disorder within urban studies. The question is, why has there been such interest in dystopia — whether in fiction, movies, or urban studies?<sup>2</sup> The question is particularly important because it has implications for spatial practices.

Andy Merrifield has dubbed those fascinated by the practice of disorder “dystopian urbanists,” who “subvert received meanings of pain and pleasure in the city [and] graphically illustrate that there is a perverse allure to urban horror and pain and squalor.”<sup>3</sup> In an article on the “Dialectics of Dystopia,” he questioned the basis for our attraction to squalor, which he described as both titillating, thrilling and appalling. Such views have been echoed by other writers. Elizabeth Wilson, for example, has talked about the romantic vision of the city as dystopia.<sup>4</sup> And Susan Sontag has elaborated on the notion of disaster as being quintessentially futuristic.<sup>5</sup>

Merrifield traced such ambiguity in perceiving and reacting to the city to the work of Baudelaire, who was fascinated by both the high and low life of Paris. He observed how Baudelaire saw in urban loneliness — in losing oneself in the crowd and being exposed to the unpredictable — a sign of freedom and liberation that often lies at the core of urban living and constitutes a way to strengthen one’s identity. The writings of Dostoevsky were based on a similar vision. As Merrifield wrote, Dostoevsky “craves for intensity of experience [and] the darker side of humanity,” which he “finds . . . in the city’s depths, in the shady underworld of Russia’s great imperial capital.”<sup>6</sup> Poor tenement blocks, back alleys, and dingy streets are the settings where Dostoevsky’s tormented protagonists act out their twisted impulses. The writer thus conveyed both the intensity and the hidden “luminosity” of the city. The disorderly, with its accompanying sense of surprise, eroticism and fantasy, is what characterizes great cities — which partially explains their fascination. According to Merrifield, “painful and dangerous encounters offer an intensity of experience and feeling which equips us to be whole people.”<sup>7</sup>

Ackbar Abbas, echoing Roland Barthes, has expressed a similar appreciation for the eroticism of urban settings, derived from “uncertain sociality.”<sup>8</sup> Conflict is at the heart of urban living, and spaces such as New York’s Times Square and Lower East Side and London’s King Cross were once all energized by it. Yet, given the sanitization these spaces have recently been subject to, Merrifield argued, our “current fas-

cination with the dystopian city is similarly symptomatic of our very own cultural collapse.” It is a reaction of sorts to the homogenizing influences of “multinational capitalism.”<sup>9</sup>

Yet, clearly, the fixation on the dystopian — even characterizing it as such — may have its downside, as it suggests or projects a negative image that may not be useful. Gordon MacLeod and Kevin Ward, in discussing the contemporary city, have argued that even though efforts are geared toward creating “utopias,” there is a “flip-side”: “spaces that remain untouched by such endeavours are gradually assuming dystopian characteristics.”<sup>10</sup> Their reference, of course, is to neo-liberal urban policies, which have catered to the privileged and relegated the less privileged to the urban edge. Their marginalization in ghettos and enclaves is a form of “spatial apartheid” that has been observed by other commentators. Yet, as MacLeod and Ward have pointed out, the discussion seems to rule out the role of agency, since “for some groups not incorporated as part of the contemporary ‘imageable city’, the urban spaces popularly represented as dystopias may actually be practised as essential havens, transgressive lived spaces of escape, refuge, employment and entertainment.”<sup>11</sup> The use of language is critical here, since the incorporation of terms such as “deprivation” or “peripheral housing estates” can lead to a “process of ‘othering’” that may obscure the various social and economic relationships that constitute the essence of these so-called “dystopian” spaces.<sup>12</sup> It seems it is these positive qualities — both in how they are perceived as well as in their spatial dimension — that are now being used by writers and filmmakers to depict the city of the future.

*The Dystopian City of the Future.* In film, the city of the future is usually envisioned as a dystopian place. Urban historian Nezar AlSayyad, for example, has observed that in movies, the utopian and dystopian are “inextricably intertwined.”<sup>13</sup> In this assessment he echoed other writers such as Janet Staiger, who has noted that “Utopia is the harbinger of dystopia.”<sup>14</sup> This fixation on the dysfunction was forcefully expressed by Sontag in her 1965 essay “The Imagination of Disaster.” As she put it, “science fiction films are not about science. They are about disaster.” The genre is largely concerned with the aesthetics of destruction and the “peculiar” beauty to be found in wreaking havoc. As she observed, it is “in the imagery of destruction that the core of good science fiction movie lies.”<sup>15</sup> Such films reflect “the deepest anxieties about contemporary existence” as well as the “condition of the individual psyche.”<sup>16</sup> Staiger made a similar observation with respect to the depiction of cities in science fiction — that they are “commentaries about the hopes and failures of today or, inversely, dystopian propositions, implicit criticisms of modern urban life and the economic system that produces it.”<sup>17</sup> Thus, they adopt a strategy in which the “signifiers of modern life” are transformed into signs of a troubled society.<sup>18</sup> These psychological underpinnings have likewise been identified by Frederic Jameson, who has argued that science fiction “defamiliarizes and restructures our experience of our

own present,” and that because we cannot envision the future, science fiction must be dystopic.<sup>19</sup>

In an examination of cities and cinema, Barbara Mennel has further observed that, beginning with the first science fiction movies, such as Fritz Lang’s *Metropolis* (1927), the city represented the future, and was thus a prime site for the negotiation of utopian and dystopian visions — a pattern that has continued ever since. According to Mennel, “contemporary, postmodern science fictions narrate the difficulty of distinguishing reality and representation from one another.” Thus, “the more we move into the future, the more these films show cities of the past or in decay.” For her, science fiction movies — especially in their depiction of decay starting in the 1960s and continuing through the 1970s — are above all a disillusionment with modernity.<sup>20</sup>

According to the film critic Lucius Shepard, science fiction movies dealing with this dystopian future fall into two categories: the postapocalyptic and the Orwellian. In recent years, given ecological disasters, technological threats, and a sharpening distinction between rich and poor, the latter has become more dominant. As Shepard put it, “what remains are essentially variants on the Orwellian dystopia.”<sup>21</sup> The term Orwellian, of course, refers to the futuristic society depicted by George Orwell in his novel 1984: a society dominated by a totalitarian government. AlSayyad has made it clear, however, that this choice of “Orwellian modernity” enabled the relationship “between people and the state, and people and machines . . . [to] be charted, explored and contested.”<sup>22</sup> At another level, AlSayyad argued, these dystopian films have also continued a tradition that started with *Metropolis* of using an architectural language of “towering high-rises occupied by the ruling classes, and a medieval underground allocated to labourers and common folk.” This division and expression of a striated society has been a way to “critique the false utopian visions of corporate and state monopoly capitalism.”<sup>23</sup> It is thus an expression of alienation and disillusionment with contemporary conditions.

*Dystopian Cities in Movies.* I will now turn to a brief discussion of some well-known dystopian films to illustrate the significance of *Code 46* within the genre of science fiction movies. I am particularly interested in their settings, which generally adopt one of two approaches: confine oneself to what already exists, or create different things in accordance with the dictates of the imagination.<sup>24</sup>

As Mennel has explained, in later science fiction films the city is no longer the site of modernity and technological innovation, but a grimy place of the present and the past that has more in common with the city of film noir — i.e., with explorations of rundown ghettos and barrios. Thus, the cities of *Dark City*, *The Matrix*, and *Blade Runner* are dystopian sites of decay that embody a view of technological advancement not as utopian fantasy but as extreme dystopia.<sup>25</sup>

Lang’s *Metropolis* is the quintessential example cited in any discussion of futuristic cities. Its repeated shots of mag-

nificent, towering skyscrapers, creating canyons crisscrossed by overlapping highways through which airplanes travel, produced one of the most memorable scenes in modern film — and one of the most influential. But perhaps equally important, as David Desser has noted, are its linked associations between high and low, inside and outside, self and other.<sup>26</sup> The movie expresses an age-old dilemma: the distinctions between rich and poor; and in this case it is represented spatially, with workers relegated to cavernous underground spaces while the rich cavort in sunlit gardens above ground. Yet, according to Mennel, the movie also fetishizes the city and technology. In actuality, this city of the future was created using a fantastic film set whose references were drawn from H.G. Wells, Le Corbusier, the Bauhaus, and New York City.<sup>27</sup> Indeed, urban historian John Gold has argued that the film was strongly anchored in the present: “*Metropolis* was less a prediction of the world of 2000 AD than it was a model of the 1920s scalped up to nightmare proportions and overlain with a pastiche of the latest New York could offer.”<sup>28</sup>

In its reliance on stage sets, *Metropolis* paved the way for such later films as Ridley Scott’s *Blade Runner* (1982) and Alex Proyas’s *Dark City* (1998). *Blade Runner* attempts to depict Los Angeles in 2019 through an amalgam of references, contrasting modernist pyramid-like structures for the elite with a ghetto for impoverished migrants. People move through its spaces in floating cars — passing next to neon-lit advertising in one memorable scene. Similarly, *Dark City* relies on technology to portray the dystopian future — although it also borrows elements from Depression-era New York. Vivian Sobchak noted that its entire stage set (and the fact that the city literally changes overnight according to the dictates of the narrative) creates a sense of dislocation.<sup>29</sup>

By relying on constructed sets rather than existing locales, these depictions proved highly influential. However, as the modern city evolved, and as disillusionment with its premises set in, other films began to find in the alienating spaces of modernity itself new ways to articulate the dystopian city of the future. For instance, Jean-Luc Goddard’s *Alphaville* (1965) was filmed in Paris, but without reference to any of the typical signifiers of that city. According to Sontag, the movie’s locales were “in unretouched sites and buildings existing around the Paris of mid-1960s.” Thus, “the fables of the future are at the same times essays about today.”<sup>30</sup> This allowed the effect of alienation to be achieved not by “estrangement in design,” but by seeing the familiar in unfamiliar ways.<sup>31</sup> The movie’s haunting images of modernist highrise blocks, long and sterile corridors, and endless highways provide the backdrop for an Orwellian society controlled by a computer, whose citizens have become mindless and robotic. The movie likewise suggests that this futuristic utopia/dystopia is located in opposition to a “real” place, whose inhabitants have retained their emotions and to which the protagonists escape in the end. A similar theme is present in *Code 46*, and, as I will show, is also a reflection of the urban conditions of Dubai.

Among other films, Andrei Tarkovsky’s *Solaris* (1972), while mostly taking place in a pastoral setting or aboard a spaceship, includes a similar brief scene of a city of the future. Early on in the movie, a scientist drives his car through what seems like an endless succession of tunnels leading to the city. As he arrives from below, viewers are confronted with a cityscape that seems familiar, consisting of highrise concrete blocks, intersecting highways filled with moving cars, and signs. But the views seem unfamiliar because they were shot in Japan. Some have noted that the director had to rely on existing cityscapes due to budgetary constraints. In addition, for a Soviet audience in the 1970s the sight of a Japanese city would have been as futuristic an image as any. But there is also a slightly disconcerting quality to the portrayal because it is accompanied by an increasingly loud electronic soundtrack.

Likewise, the by-now-classic movie *Brazil* (1985), directed by Terry Gilliam, also uses defamiliarization to convey a sense of the future, although its settings were strategically enhanced with elaborate stage sets and decorative juxtapositions. In line with the movie’s theme — the oppressiveness of state bureaucracy and the powerlessness of the individual — it emphasizes a monumental architecture. Ministry scenes, for example, were appropriated from unused industrial buildings, and other scenes were based on buildings by postmodern architect Ricardo Boffill. The torture chamber at the end of the movie is located within an abandoned power plant (now demolished), and the interior of the reconstructive surgery clinic is within the famous “Arab room” of Leighton house in London.<sup>32</sup> This collage-like collection of locales is intended to avoid direct reference to any specific city; instead, it offers glimpses of industrial wastelands hidden behind billboards continuously placed along highways. Unlike *Alphaville* or *Solaris*, which do rely on existing sites without alteration, *Brazil* exaggerates the present, thus creating a heightened reality.

Perhaps the common theme uniting these movies is a desire to depict contrasting conditions of urban life. Starting from *Metropolis*, where the privileged live in highrise towers and the deprived underground, such a spatial strategy has reappeared in varying forms. These include the pastoral setting of *Solaris* vs. the inhumane qualities of the spaceship; the slums of Los Angeles as opposed to the oppressive spaces of the “Corporation” in *Blade Runner*; the menacing alleyways of *Dark City* contrasted with highly stylized interior spaces and a utopian dream-like island; and, of course, *Alphaville*’s disturbing portrayal of the oppressive qualities of modern environments. Furthermore, the films all display empathy toward alternative sites, which are portrayed as being “real,” and which accordingly suggest a sense of humanity — what urban sociologist Richard Sennett has referred to as “lived-in spaces,” which stand in stark contrast to modernist, stylized settings.<sup>33</sup>



## THE GLOBAL METROPOLIS OF CODE 46

Director Michael Winterbottom's 2003 *Code 46* continues the genre of the science fiction movies discussed above, picking up their theme of alienation. Similar to *Alphaville* and to some extent *Dark City*, it evokes the future without relying on elaborate stage sets or fetishizing technology. Technology here is the "wet" variety — i.e., advances in genetic engineering and biotechnology. According to Brian Goss, it "pivots on a deepening of primordial human experiences. Viruses that enable empathy or learning new languages intensify capacities that are already written into the DNA of the species."<sup>34</sup> In this manner it approximates Andrew Niccol's 1997 *Gattaca*, which envisions a future dominated by genetic testing.

The movie takes place in an unspecified distant future, where damage to the ozone layer has caused large swaths of land to be turned into desert wasteland. People are confined to cities, which are entered via elaborate checkpoints, and movement is controlled through a system of *papelles*, identification cards containing, among other things, genetic information about the carrier. Those without *papelle* — the poor, the disenfranchised, criminals and violators — are not allowed into cities. They are instead confined to living outside, or *afuera*, in a realm where freedom of thought and movement coexist with danger and deprivation.<sup>35</sup> "Code 46" of the title refers to a law that criminalizes any cohabitation between two people of a substantially similar genetic code, which is necessary because of genetic tinkering and excessive bioengineering.

The narrative revolves around the film's heroine, Maria Gonzales, and a corporate investigator, William (FIGS. 1, 2). Looming in the background is a large, anonymous transnational corporation that produces the *papelles* and in general controls the lives of the city's inhabitants. The investigator moves deftly between various locales: his home town (Seattle), sleek airport interiors, endless highways, extensive security checkpoints surrounded by swarms of informal vendors (*afuera*), and ultimately the site of his investigations (Shanghai). He meets Maria during an interrogation involving the production of false *papelles*, suspects that she is behind this, and falls in love with her. Subsequent developments involve their entanglement, a suspected "Code 46" violation, and their escape to *afuera*, or what is referred to in the movie as "Jebel Ali" — i.e., Dubai. Their sites of encounter are contrasted: gleaming and anonymous office environments and sterile and hygienic hospital rooms and corridors vs. the vibrancy and vitality of nightclubs, Metro railways (the London Jubilee line), and ethnic restaurants. The final scenes in "Jebel Ali" were actually filmed in the slums of Rajasthan, but could as well have been in Dubai. They depict a somewhat rundown but nevertheless comforting hotel, which Maria and William reach after crossing Dubai Creek in an *abra*, or wooden boat, and after traversing the crowded streets of Deira, home of the city's South Asian migrant population.

Throughout the movie these locales are to some extent interchangeable; in other words, they blend into each other — a deliberate strategy used by the filmmakers to mark this new future and introduce an unsettling element to help defamiliarize the present. Everything looks familiar but seems strange at the same time. The filmmakers have referred to their strategy as a form of "creative geography," made possible through the use of "found spaces" and "guerilla filmmaking."<sup>36</sup> Right at the outset, the movie introduces viewers to this approach by seamlessly splicing together scenes from the desert, slums, and the highrises of Shanghai. Moreover, inhabitants of this futuristic world speak a language that is a mixture of English, Mandarin, Arabic and Spanish, further highlighting its transnational, cosmopolitan and interconnected character — by which it resembles present-day Dubai, home to more than 180 nationalities.



FIGURE 1. Maria, walking through the streets of the future. Source: MGM Media Licensing.



FIGURE 2. William, standing triumphantly in front of Dubai's Emirates Towers. This scene did not appear in the movie, but was used in promotional material (DVD covers and the like). Source: MGM Media Licensing.

Compared to its counterparts — *Blade Runner*, *Brazil*, or *Dark City* — *Code 46* has not received critical acclaim or cult status. Instead, it has been criticized for its slightly exaggerated narrative and acting. Yet, as many movie critics have pointed out, it is a highly stylized film, in which the director uses various strategies to evoke a mood suggestive of the future, including voiceovers, dream sequences, overlit and overexposed shots, discontinuous cutting, point-of-view shots (mainly from William's perspective), and canted compositions rolling across the screen.<sup>37</sup> These qualities were observed by the London *Guardian's* Peter Bradshaw, for instance, who located the film in "an alternative present," buttressed with imagery, "profoundly mysterious and intriguing, that lingered stubbornly in my mind for days."<sup>38</sup> *New York Times* movie critic A.O. Scott noted that Winterbottom "delineates a time of global mobility, extreme inequality, and radical loneliness, distilling the fugitive moods of contemporary life into an ambience of muted, abstracted longing."<sup>39</sup>

Science fiction movies are, of course, invariably a critique of the present, and *Code 46* is no exception. It hauntingly reflects a time of global mobility, when increasing numbers of migrant workers live a transient existence in anonymous global cities, in which there is an intensification of social divisions, and where extreme squalor coexists with pristine, gleaming new architecture. As such, its use of existing locales seems to further intensify this notion without great exaggeration. In his discussion of the "New Metropolis" and the role of *Code 46*, Scott wrote that "there is luxury and squalor, a mobile elite served and enriched by an army of transient workers, an architectural hodge-podge of pristine newness and ancient disorder."<sup>40</sup> This is the very stuff that dominates contemporary literature on global cities. Indeed, as Scott keenly noted, this is "the kind of thing you see everywhere." Similarly, architectural critic Geoff Manaugh has argued that the movie "finds trace elements of tomorrow in the unremarked landscapes of today."<sup>41</sup> Brian Goss, in perhaps the only scholarly discussion of the movie, made a somewhat similar claim, observing that *Code 46* is a clear critique of the present, explicating a spatialized, striated global class by highlighting the inside/outside division. Thus, the movie "interrogates and refuses a facile assumption of a 'Narrative of Progress,'" and becomes a "penetratingly critical re-visioning of Now."<sup>42</sup>

The choice of Shanghai, Hong Kong, London and Seattle as settings for the film is no surprise, since these cities are representative of a Western/Asian modernity, and thus are suited to casting the city of the future. However, the choice of Dubai to enhance and intensify the narrative — especially some of the chosen locales within it — is intriguing. As I will show in the next section, however, the choice was deliberate and reflects characteristics of the city's contemporary population, architecture and landscape that make it quintessential as a representative of the city of the future.

## THE DUBAI PARADOX

*Dubai as a Fictional Site.* In *Code 46*, the city of Dubai, referred to as Jebel Ali, offers the two protagonists a haven, a refuge. Parts of it are *afuera*, but it is in these places that they are finally at peace — in the midst of a mix of cultures, languages and people. Interestingly, these scenes were shot in the alleys of Deira — Dubai's historic center — across the Khor (Creek) from and in the shadow of its skyscrapers. It is here that Maria and William manage into escape to a run-down hotel for a passionate encounter, away from the prying eyes of an all-powerful corporation. These scenes, taking place at the end of the movie, are key to our understanding of the paradox of Dubai — the juxtaposition of the utopian and the dystopian.

It is rare for Dubai to be represented in movies. There are a few exceptions, including the political thrillers *Syriana* (Stephen Gaghan, 2005) and *Body of Lies* (Ridley Scott, 2008). The former, in particular, delves into social/political commentaries pertaining to the city, and it uses its skyline as a backdrop for the unfolding of the narrative. Both films, however, play on the notion of Dubai as a transit point for goods, ideas and people. Along these same lines, Dubai is briefly noted as a global magnet for call girls in Steven Soderbergh's *The Girlfriend Experience* (2009). In addition, a recent local movie by the Emirati filmmaker Ali Mostafa, *City of Life* (2009), focuses on the lives of Dubai's migrant and local population — more or less exposing clichés about various ethnic groups. The use of the city as a backdrop for science fiction is unique to *Code 46*, however, even though its rapid growth, spectacular (and sometimes bizarre) architecture, and elaborate infrastructure (roads, metro, etc.) might lend it to futuristic visions. Dubai's demographic composition, consisting of a majority of transient workers and a minority local population, raises further pertinent issues about the future of cities in an age of globalization and transnational networks.

These same issues were cited by Michael Winterbottom when he was asked about his choice of Dubai as a locale. First, he pointed out that his selection was partially based on the city's "look" — skyscrapers rising from the flat desert — which is an "artificial, arbitrary kind of building." He compared this to the recent rise of Pudong/Shanghai, since both cities have been developed in a short time and thus defy easy categorization. But he also said he was interested in the social/political implications of a city that is not directly part of a nation, and one whose population is largely transient. "You're in the system or outside the system," he said.<sup>43</sup> Brian Goss, in his analysis of the movie's locale, made a similar claim, noting that Jebel Ali (Dubai) is "presented as a 'free port' that is Outside of the regime of metropolises that are incorporated into the global management/production/consumption chain." In a further insightful description of the liberating qualities of *afuera*, he suggested that the director deliberately presented the city as "lively and full of visual

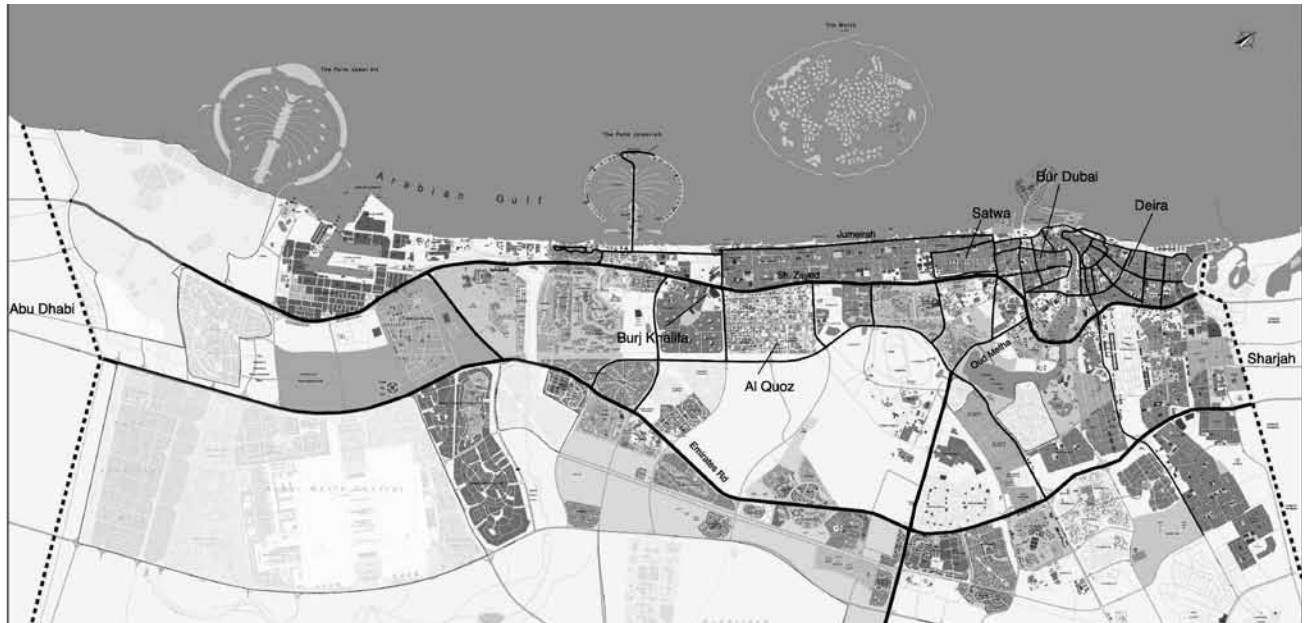


FIGURE 3. Map showing Sheikh Zayed Road and the district of Satwa within the larger context of the city. Drawing by author based on map from the Road and Transportation Authority, Dubai.

idiosyncrasy as compared with the sterile vistas inside the globally-incorporated metropolises. . . . [T]he place is neither sentimentalized nor pathologized.<sup>44</sup>

The scenes involving Dubai may be familiar to those who have lived in the city, but they may appear wildly exotic to others. For example, they do not include any of the city's familiar landmarks; instead, its architecture is framed within a context that highlights the surrounding desert. Early on, the film offers a swooping aerial view of the desert, showing isolated compounds and huts in the foreground with high-rises emerging in the background — a magical and highly unsettling portrayal. Another recurring image is of moving endlessly along a highway through the desert. And perhaps the movie's most poignant and romantic moment comes when the two protagonist are on a wooden boat (*abra*) crossing the creek, surrounded by an army of transient workers from the Indian subcontinent. Subsequent scenes merge/blend streets and alleyways of Dubai and India.

*The Context of Dubai.* The particular choice of Dubai as a locale for a science fiction movie is intriguing, but it seems perfectly appropriate given that the city contains both utopian and dystopian elements in its built environment. It is beyond the scope of this article to delve into the city's specific patterns of urban growth, but I should note that it has grown in a way that has led to this futuristic appearance.<sup>45</sup> Its linear extension from the historic core of Deira/Bur Dubai toward the manmade free port of Jebel Ali, at the border with Abu Dhabi — a stretch of approximately 40 kilometers, mostly along Sheikh Zayed Road — has created a settlement pattern characterized by isolated communities and “cities” branch-

ing from a single axis (FIG. 3). This narrow expanse is surrounded by desert areas still waiting to be filled, which creates a situation where new buildings are set off against a prevailing emptiness. The recent opening of Dubai Metro, whose raised viaduct traces this linear pattern, further contributes to the sense of futuristic alienation (FIG. 4).

Given the financial crisis, many of the projects planned to fill in spaces along this development axis have been either cancelled or put on hold. They were, however, coming to rely increasingly on the bizarre and utopian, with each new plan seemingly more spectacular than the last. These included the ill-fated Waterfront by Rem Koolhaas, a bizarre attempt to transplant Manhattan into the desert (FIG. 5); the massive Arabian Canal project, which aimed to carve a canal — reaching a width of more than 200 meters in places — through the desert; and the Bawadi project, which would have contained the world's largest hotel, Asia-Asia, and a re-creation of the Las Vegas strip (without the vice). These ultra-luxurious developments were planned to rise in sight of scenes of extreme squalor and deprivation — in true dystopian fashion. These include the city's notorious labor camps in Sonapur and Jebel Ali, set in remote areas of the desert. But they also include areas within the city itself, such as Al Quoz, which contains numerous worker accommodations, and illegal residences in Deira, Jaffiyah and Satwa.

The presence of these sites intensifies societal divisions and spatializes inequality. In this way the divisions expressed in *Metropolis*, *Blade Runner*, *Brazil*, and *Dark City* find affirmation in Dubai. *Dark City*, in particular, in its depiction of a constantly shifting cityscape, echoing the disloca-



**FIGURE 4.** *The viaduct of Dubai Metro as it traverses Sheikh Zayed Road. Photo by author.*



tion of its inhabitants, seems to resemble the Dubai of today with its constantly changing skyline and rapid urban growth (until the financial crisis). And in *Blade Runner*, where the streets of Los Angeles are taken over by migrants speaking multiple languages, the extent of deprivation comes close to that in some parts of Dubai. Yet what is of more interest to

me is the coexistence of squalor and wealth and the degree to which residents in these spaces have carved out an existence that seems to defy marginalization.<sup>46</sup>

*The Case of Satwa.* The one site which truly evokes the Dubai paradox — that best captures these utopian/dystopian imaginaries, and thus perhaps the ultimate location of



**FIGURE 5.** *The Waterfront project by OMA/Rem Koolhaas. Courtesy of Nakheel Media Center.*

*afuera* (without the checkpoints) — is the Satwa district. It exemplifies the modern urban condition and is a site of contention and struggle involving the state, local citizens, and migrant workers (both legal and illegal). Its very location and existence defies the official Dubai narrative, suggesting an alternative mode of urbanity that is indicative of a potentially more viable future.

The district is nestled in the shadows of Dubai's skyscrapers on Sheikh Zayed Road, and was developed in the late 1960s by Sheikh Rashid, the city's previous ruler, to provide decent housing for the local population on identical 60 x 60-foot plots. Nationals eventually moved to outlying suburbs in the 1970s and 80s, and turned their houses over to low-income workers. Today these houses are mostly occupied by people from the Indian subcontinent, but they are also home to a sizeable population of Arabs and, interestingly, Bidoon, who are stateless people, immigrants from the 1970s who for various reasons did not apply for citizenship when the United Arab Emirates was formed in 1971. They and their descendants are without official papers — *papelles* — and thus are deprived of various privileges allotted to Emiratis. Many Bidoon hail from Iran and belong to the Shiite sect, further adding to their marginalization. Some symbols of their presence exist, such as yellow flags indicating political allegiance to Shiite factions in Lebanon, as well as the presence of Husseiniyas, sites of religious celebrations.

Satwa is among the most densely populated areas of Dubai, housing more than 100,000 people. Given the high concentrations of low-income workers and illegal residents (those whose permits have expired — another allusion to the *papelle* system), the area is popularly perceived among locals as a site of criminal activity and gangsterism. This sense of insecurity is intensified as one enters the district, passing down its narrow alleyways. There one can observe various signs of “disorder” such as graffiti, broken sidewalks, outdoor drying of laundry — all a stone's throw from the city's most visible landmarks: the Emirates Tower, seat of Dubai government, and the massive Burj Khalifa. Some of these houses are nothing more than metal shacks cobbled together from found materials; others feature living areas — sofas and couches surrounded by wooden fences — outdoors. At night the district's alleyways become sites of gathering for residents and visitors, who appear as shadowy figures among the ruins (FIG. 6).

The neighborhood's reputation as a home to outlaws, a space that defies the city's official representation, and its closeness to the seat of power eventually prompted officials to plan for its redevelopment. This task was allocated to a governmental entity, Meraas Holding, which was supposed to operate as a real estate agency, developing various sectors of old Dubai, including Satwa. Detailed plans were kept under wraps until October 2008, when a model of the development was unveiled at the Cityscape exhibition under the name “Jumeirah Gardens.” The cost of the project was estimated at Dh350 billion (US\$95.28 billion). It was described as “a



FIGURE 6. An outdoor living room in Satwa. The skyline of Sheikh Zayed Road appears in the back. Photo by author.

fully integrated, mixed-use development project located in the old Satwa area west of Sheikh Zayed Road and flanked by Al Diyafa Street and Safa Park,” which would cater to 50,000 to 60,000 residents. According to the developer, “[It] will redefine living in one of the most popular neighbourhoods of Dubai,” which, it was casually observed, is “currently undergoing demolition to pave the way for the new project.”<sup>47</sup>

The master plan included three buildings by the Chicago architects Adrian Smith and Gordon Gill (Smith+Gill). The centerpiece was 1 Dubai, a building comprising three towers connected by sky bridges. Other buildings would be spread throughout the gigantic development, along with smaller towers and a park “half the size of Central Park.” Among its features were also seven islands to be built just off the coast as sites for mostly lowrise, residential buildings. A 14-kilometer boulevard with a tram system would snake through the project, while water taxis would be available on a network of canals. According to Gill, the project was envisioned as a utopian site — given the lavishness and extravagance of its architecture — implicitly acknowledging that it was not that realistic to begin with.<sup>48</sup> But this was not how the government saw it. It announced that Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid, vice president of the U.A.E. and ruler of Dubai, had created Meraas to help “make Dubai a global city.” It also noted the significance of this project for Dubai by observing, “Every great city has a great park. London has its Hyde Park, New York has its Central Park. This will be Dubai Park” (FIG. 7 A & B).<sup>49</sup>

Various media reports have since lamented the old district's supposed demise — describing it in almost mythical terms as Dubai's version of New York's Greenwich Village — a multicultural nirvana. Yet, clearly, this vision was in conflict with how officials viewed it — as a blight on Dubai's urban landscape. To them, the demolition was necessary because of the large number of “illegals” residing in the area. “Around 60–70 per cent of people in Satwa don't have pass-

**FIGURE 7 (A&B).** *The Jumeirah Gardens Project model during the Cityscape 2008 exhibition in Dubai. Photos by author.*



ports or UAE visas,” according to the developer of Jumeirah Gardens. “They live, six to a room, in buildings completely unsuitable for inhabitation. When the Land Department come round to research how many people need rehousing, they have already scarpereed.”<sup>50</sup> This view is shared by many local residents who have told me that they would never dream of setting foot in Satwa, since it is place infested with gangsters and illegal residents. No doubt such views have been encouraged by media reports.

Thus, following the announcement of the project, steps began in earnest to implement it. Residents were issued eviction notices, and building owners — all locals — were compensated in a somewhat contentious process. Some houses were marked for demolition using large green signs, and a large open area was cleared for the developer. Subsequently, fences were erected among some houses and actual demolition began. However, in 2009, following the slowdown of the real estate market in

Dubai, the development was put on hold. Consequently, evicted tenants began to return to their “homes.”<sup>51</sup> All that is left of the Jumeirah Gardens fantasy today are fences used to mark houses slated for demolition and a lonely sign heralding the construction site lying on the street, a reminder of the results of excess, greed, and unbridled ambition (FIG. 8 A & B). Moreover, some of the remaining ruins have become sites for nightly criminal activities such as consumption of drugs and liquor, and others have turned into makeshift residences for illegals. Satwa, it seems, has received a new lease on life.

Satwa does, in my view, exemplify the modern urban condition by being both a site of utopian ambition as well as a dystopian space — marked by otherness and marginalization. Its residents are excluded and perceived as a threat. Yet, as I have pointed out already, the discourse on the dystopian marks an otherness that may disguise real and innovative ways in which spaces are utilized. For instance, for me, one of the most





FIGURE 8 (A & B). Remnants of the project can be found throughout the district. Photos by author.

memorable sights from Satwa came during Ramadan in 2007. It is quite common in various parts of the city to set up what are known as Iftar tents, areas for the city's low-income Muslim population to break their fast. These also serve as communal gathering spaces where residents can reinforce their sense of religious identity and belonging. While they are usually indoors, in this case a large parking space adjacent to the Satwa bus stop was used. The ground was covered with large pieces of cloth while volunteers dispensed food to hundreds of people. In the background to this rather remarkable scene was the Sheikh Zayed Road skyline — representing a stark contrast to the more down-to-earth activity in front of me (FIG. 9).

On my way to the Iftar area I also passed various street vendors selling traditional food from India and Pakistan. These scenes provided a stark counterpoint to the flashy image of Dubai. Poor and not-so-poor immigrants gathered together to celebrate a religious event, which in some way

also represented an attempt to subvert the surrounding spectacle. Similar to the *afuera* in *Code 46*, it was also a space of comfort and freedom.

#### THE FUTURE HAS ARRIVED IN DUBAI

*“My name is Ozymandias, king of kings:  
Look on my works, ye Mighty, and despair!  
Nothing beside remains. Round the decay  
Of that colossal wreck, boundless and bare  
The lone and level sands stretch far away.*

— Percy Bysshe Shelley, 1818

According to some observers, Dubai is a present-day version of Winterbottom's future. It is a land of contrasts — rich and poor, desert and greenery, big and small, real and sur-

FIGURE 9. A gathering of low-income Muslims during Iftar (breaking of the fast) in a parking lot in Satwa. Photo by author.



real.<sup>52</sup> And some of its most iconic landmarks, such as the Burj Khalifa, have been inspired — it seems — by fictional movies. Indeed, Adrian Smith, its architect, has admitted to being influenced by the gleaming towers of Emerald City in *The Wizard of Oz* rising in the midst of poppy fields: “I just remembered the glassy, crystalline structure coming up in the middle of what seemed like nowhere.”<sup>53</sup>

This notion of buildings rising from the desert, and being surrounded by the desert, was a drawing factor for the director of *Code 46* as well. But, as I have tried to argue here, the surreal landscape and architecture, while certainly evoking the future, does not suffice to explain the utopian/dystopian qualities of Dubai. Instead, my focus has been on its marginal spaces, inhabited by the excluded and the forgotten, a recurrent theme in most science fiction movies — and one that is particularly pertinent in interrogating the city of Dubai and its place within the global network of cities and as a site for a migrant and transient population.

What should be noted is that these “marginal sites,” by definition, cannot be “designed.” They are places that celebrate the informal, the spontaneous, and the incidental. Providing design recipes in the form of guidelines, for example, would undermine their very essence. Instead, architects and planners need to develop an empathetic understanding and provide a framework that allows for such settings to develop without hindrance. Literature on informal urbanism already deals with this issue in great detail.<sup>54</sup> Policies should not be aimed at sanitizing spaces and removing unsightly activities — a common thread uniting all aspects of urban development in the Gulf region; rather, they should be inclusive, aiming to incorporate all aspects of city life, instead of focusing only on what is deemed appropriate or safe.

In the final scene of *Code 46*, Maria has been relegated to *afuera*. She is lonely, aged and desolate, but finally free and

liberated, as can be glimpsed from the glimmer in her eyes and her fond remembrance of William. This is contrasted with his mindless existence — induced by forced amnesia — in Seattle, going about his daily routine in the midst of gleaming towers and an immaculate apartment. While there is certainly a danger here of romanticizing deprivation, such imagery suggests an implicit critique of present-day conditions which relegate inhabitants of global cities to anonymity and deprive them of their humanity. Instead, these sites of resistance have important human qualities and testify to the resilience of the human spirit in a manner that is sometimes forgotten by urbanists and planners. Urban sociologist Abdoumalig Simone has poignantly noted that in striving to make cities more livable for all, architects and planners should not just focus on the “misery” of inhabitants, which will inevitably make their conditions worse. Instead, they need to uncover the world that these residents inhabit, “however insalubrious, violent, and banal they might often be.”<sup>55</sup>

The choice of Dubai as a site for the examination of these issues is significant because it suggests that the future has already arrived in this city — unlikely as that may seem. More common are references to Shelley’s “Ozymandias” in the wake of the financial crisis, suggesting that the city has reached a dead end and that it will finally be swallowed by the desert. If the focus is on the spectacular and the unusual, such prophecies may have some value; but the city has much more to offer, and in its forgotten spaces are the locales and sites of our urban future.<sup>56</sup> As Merrifield has noted, while we may invent utopias, we never really want to live in them, for “living in them means the end of novelty, fantasy and curiosity; everything would become routine, never adventure, the death-knell to the human spirit.”<sup>57</sup>

## REFERENCE NOTES

1. M. Miles, *Urban Utopias: The Built and Social Architectures of Alternative Settlements* (London: Routledge, 2007), p.17.
2. See, for example, M. Davis, *City of Quartz: Excavating the Future in Los Angeles* (London: Verso, 2006). Also, E. Soja, *Postmetropolis: Critical Studies of Cities and Regions* (London: Wiley-Blackwell, 2000).
3. A. Merrifield, “The Dialectics of Dystopia: Disorder and Zero Tolerance in the City,” *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research*, vol.24, no.2 (2000), p.473.
4. E. Wilson, “The Rhetoric of Urban Space,” *New Left Review*, 209 (1995), pp.146–60.
5. S. Sontag, “The Imagination of Disaster,” *Commentary*, October 1965, pp.42–48. Available at <http://www.iiiiiiiiiii.net/random/id/id.pdf>. Accessed July 13, 2010.
6. Merrifield, “The Dialectics of Dystopia,” p.476.
7. *Ibid.* p.480
8. A. Abbas, “Cinema, the City and the Cinematic,” in L. Krause and P. Petro, eds., *Global Cities: Cinema, Architecture and Urbanism in a Digital Age* (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 2003), pp.142–56.
9. Merrifield, “The Dialectics of Dystopia,” p.487.
10. G. MacLeod and K. Ward, “Spaces of Utopia and Dystopia: Landscaping the Contemporary City,” *Geografiska Annaler*, 84 B (2002), p.161.
11. *Ibid.* p.164.
12. In this regard, see also A. Amin and N. Thrift, *Cities: Reimagining the Urban* (Cambridge: Polity, 2002); and G. Doron, “The Dead Zone and the Architecture of Transgression,” *City*, 4 (2000), pp.247–63.
13. N. AlSayyad, *Cinematic Urbanism: A History of the Modern from Reel to Real* (London: Routledge, 2006), p.7.
14. J. Staiger, “Future Noir: Contemporary Representations of Visionary Cities,” in A. Kuhn, ed., *Alien Zone II: The Spaces of Science Fiction Cinema* (London: Verso, 1999), p.91.
15. Sontag, “The Imagination of Disaster,” p.44.
16. *Ibid.*, p.47.
17. Staiger, “Future Noir,” p.99.
18. *Ibid.*, p.120.
19. F. Jameson, “Progress Versus Utopia: Or Can We Imagine the Urban Future?” in *Art after Modernism: Rethinking Representation* (New York: The New Museum of



- Contemporary Art, 1984), p.92
20. B. Mennel, *Cities and Cinema* (London: Routledge, 2008), pp.130–31.
21. L. Shepard, “Blade Runner had a Baby,” *Fantasy & Scientific Fiction*, January 2005, p.130.
22. AlSaiyad, *Cinematic Urbanism*, p.92.
23. *Ibid.*, p.72.
24. G. Nowell-Smith, “Cities: Real and Imagined,” in M. Shiel and T. Fitzmaurice, eds., *Cinema and the City: Film and Urban Societies in a Global Context* (Oxford: Blackwell Publishers, 2001), p.100.
25. Mennel, *Cities and Cinema*, p.140.
26. D. Desser, “Race, Space and Class: The Politics of Cityscapes in Science-Fiction Films,” in Kuhn, ed., *Alien Zone II*, p.82.
27. Mennel, *Cities and Cinema*, p.132.
28. J. Gold, “From ‘Metropolis’ to the ‘City’: Film Visions of the Future Equity, 1919–39,” in J. Gold and J. Burgess, eds., *Geography, the Media and Popular Culture* (London: Croom Helm, 1985), p.125.
29. “The entire narrative explicitly foregrounds and visually concretizes the rootless, vertiginous and insecure sense that the city is groundless in both time and place. . . . The city’s inhabitants (if, indeed, they can be called such) are increasingly dislocated in space — and, dislocated, their very identities shift and become displaced and undergrounded. Thus, it is not a coincidental that this mode of urban science-fiction film is as concerned with time and memory as it is with space and place.” V. Sobchak, “Cities on the Edge of Time: The Urban Science-Fiction Film,” in Kuhn, ed., *Alien Zone II*, p.140.
30. Susan Sontag, quoted in A.O. Scott, “Metropolis Now,” *New York Times Magazine*, June 8, 2008. Available at: [http://www.nytimes.com/2008/06/08/magazine/08wwln-lede-t.html?ref=philip\\_k\\_dick](http://www.nytimes.com/2008/06/08/magazine/08wwln-lede-t.html?ref=philip_k_dick). Accessed July 13, 2010.
31. Mennel, *Cities and Cinema*, p.134.
32. <http://www.movie-locations.com/movies/b/brazil.html>. Accessed July 8, 2010.
33. R. Sennett, “The Open City,” in R. Burdett and D. Sudjic, eds., *The Endless City* (London: Phaidon, 2007), pp.290–97.
34. B.M. Goss, “Taking Cover From Progress: Michael Winterbottom’s *Code 46*,” *Journal of Communication Inquiry*, vol.31, no.1 (2007), pp.62–78.
35. A.O. Scott, “Movie Review (Code 46): A Future More Nasty Because It’s So Near,” *New York Times*, August 6, 2004. Available at: <http://movies.nytimes.com/movie/review?res=9C05E3DE123CF935A3575BC0A9629C8B63>. Accessed July 13, 2010.
36. According to the producers, “The locations in Shanghai and Dubai were chosen because of what they could offer to the film’s narrative, but also because they could be utilised quickly and inexpensively as part of what Andrew Eaton has referred to as ‘guerilla filmmaking.’ The crew for the location shooting was little more than Winterbottom, camera and sound crew navigating themselves around one of the world’s busiest and most ‘futuristic’ cities.” In *The Case for Global Film*. Available at: <http://itpworld.wordpress.com/2005/10/25/code-46-uk-2003/>. Accessed July 13, 2010. Also, in the film’s original publicity material, production designer Mark Tildesley describes this as a kind of “creative geography”: “We thought that the most interesting thing to do would be to try to fool the audience by taking the most interesting bits from each location. So you’d have the impression that you were walking out of a door in one city, but you’d actually end up walking out of it into a completely different place, somewhere else entirely.” In G. Manaugh, *Architecture on Film*, 2008. Available at: <http://www.architecturefoundation.org.uk/programme/2009/architecture-on-film/code-46-michael-winterbottom-qanda>. Accessed July 13, 2010.
37. Goss, “Taking Cover From Progress.”
38. As quoted in *Ibid.*
39. Scott, “Movie Review (Code 46).”
40. Scott, “Metropolis Now.”
41. Manaugh, *Architecture on Film*.
42. Goss, “Taking Cover From Progress.”
43. W. Mitchell, “Michael Winterbottom on ‘Code 46’: Typical Love Story in an Atypical World,” *indieWIRE*, August 6, 2004. Available at: [http://www.indiewire.com/article/michael\\_winterbottom\\_on\\_code\\_46\\_typical\\_love\\_story\\_in\\_an\\_atypical\\_world/](http://www.indiewire.com/article/michael_winterbottom_on_code_46_typical_love_story_in_an_atypical_world/). Accessed July 11, 2010.
44. Goss, “Taking Cover From Progress.” Also see the following review: “William and Maria enter the ‘afuera,’ the outside, the desert world beyond the cities where those without paperelles are forced to scratch out their ultra-low-tech living. Significantly, the afuera strongly resembles the third-world countries we’ve most recently been bombing, and the visual contrast between the inner privileged world of the cities and the outer world of the dead and desiccated is stunning and, dare I say it, politically courageous as well.” P. Brunette, “Winterbottom’s Imaginative Look Ahead, ‘Code 46,’” *indieWIRE*, 2004. Available at: [http://www.indiewire.com/article/winterbottoms\\_imaginative\\_look\\_ahead\\_code\\_46](http://www.indiewire.com/article/winterbottoms_imaginative_look_ahead_code_46). Accessed July 11, 2010.
45. For more details, see Y. Elsheshtawy, *Dubai: Behind an Urban Spectacle* (London: Routledge, 2010).
46. For more, see Y. Elsheshtawy, “Transitory Sites: Mapping Dubai’s ‘Forgotten’ Urban Public Spaces,” *The International Journal of Urban & Regional Research*, vol.32, no.4 (2008), pp.968–88.
47. A. Sanka, “Staying in Touch Using Rusty Cassette Players,” *Gulf News*, November 22, 2008, p.2.
48. Gordon Gill, personal communication, during a presentation at the Louvre Auditorium/Paris, December 2009.
49. S. Fenton, “DH350b Makeover for Dubai,” *Gulf News*, October 7, 2008, p.1.
50. B. Hope, “Meraas Takes Wraps off Dh350bn Development,” *The National*, October 7, 2008, p.4.
51. H Naylor, “Desperate Lives of Dubai’s Car Washers,” *The National*, May 9, 2010. Available at: <http://www.thenational.ae/apps/pbcs.dll/article?AID=/20100510/NATIONAL/705099940/0/rss>. Accessed June 1, 2010.
52. For example, John Hill, an architect and critic, who operates a popular blog called “A Daily Dose of Architecture,” November 30, 2005. Available at: <http://archidose.blogspot.com/2005/11/dubai-46.html>. Accessed July 14, 2010.
53. R. Beaver, ed., *The Architecture of Adrian Smith, SOM: Toward a Sustainable Future* (Australia: Images Publishing Group, 2007), p.29.
54. The literature on informal urbanism and the significance of the everyday is vast. However, for a recent study focusing on the spatial components of such an approach, see Q. Stevens, *The Ludic City: Exploring the Potential of Public Spaces* (London: Routledge, 2007). Also see my investigation into the importance of the everyday in Abu Dhabi, in which I offer a more detailed review of the informal in urban studies: Y. Elsheshtawy, “(In)formal Encounters: Mapping Abu Dhabi’s Urban Public Spaces,” *Built Environment*, vol.37, no.1 (2011).
55. A. Simone, *City life from Jakarta to Dakar: Movements at the Crossroads* (London: Routledge, 2010), p.333.
56. For a detailed account of the impact of the financial crisis on Dubai’s urban environment, see Y. Elsheshtawy “Little Space, Big Space: Everyday Urbanism in Dubai,” *Brown Journal of World Affairs*, vol.17, no.1 (Fall/Winter 2010), pp.53–71.
57. Merrifield, “The Dialectics of Dystopia,” p.479.



# “Stone upon Stone”: From Pablo Neruda’s House in Isla Negra to *The Heights of Macchu Picchu*

PATRICIA MORGADO

Pablo Neruda’s long poem *The Heights of Macchu Picchu* (1945) transformed the “lost city of the Incas” into a Latin American symbol. During the two years that passed between his visit to the site and writing the poem, Neruda witnessed the art of cut-stone masonry in the process of adding onto his house at Isla Negra on the Chilean coast northwest of Santiago. By examining the design and building of this addition, the article explores the imprint that both the construction project and his visit to Machu Picchu had on his work.

Perhaps no one has been more inspired by Machu Picchu’s astonishing demonstration of pre-Columbian culture than one of its first visitors, Latin America’s foremost poet and Nobel Laureate (1971), the Chilean Pablo Neruda (1904–73). On October 1943, surrounded by the dramatic topography and magnificent stone structures of the “lost city of the Incas,” Neruda made a fundamental discovery that would, in his own words, “add another layer of growth to my poetry.”<sup>1</sup> Rather than considering this as an exclusive accomplishment of Inca culture, Neruda saw in Machu Picchu “the roots of American history, ‘mixed and below the earth.’”<sup>2</sup>

While most of Neruda’s poems were written within minutes or hours of an inspiring experience, this time he was plagued by unanswered questions: “[W]here were the people? How could they disappear? I felt so strongly about that abysmal loss. I had the feeling that if it was done once, it is possible to do it again.”<sup>3</sup> Thus it was only in September 1945, two years after his visit, that Neruda began working on his poem, completing it by early 1946.<sup>4</sup> During this two-year period between his visit to the archeological site and writing the poem, Neruda carried out his successful campaign to become senator for Tarapacá and Antofagasta (he was elected on March 4, 1945), and he joined Chile’s Communist Party.

Also during this period Neruda commissioned an addition to his writing retreat in the developing coastal hamlet of Isla Negra. Rather than explaining his needs to the ar-

---

*Patricia Morgado is an architect and Associate Professor in the Department of Architecture at North Carolina State University, Raleigh.*

chitect, the Catalanian Germán Rodríguez Arias (1902–1987), archival drawings and letters provide evidence that Neruda sketched floor plans, wrote descriptions, and personally selected materials to be incorporated into the construction. The result was a collaboration in which the poet played the leading role and the architect was limited primarily to translating the poet’s ideas into construction drawings. Two stone structures were added to the existing building: a cylindrical tower for the entrance, and a rectilinear volume for the studio with a ribbon window framing the ocean view. At Neruda’s direction, this latter space integrated a large rock existing on the site, while its fireplace incorporated stones he personally selected and carefully arranged, “stone upon stone.”

Neruda’s visit to the ruins of Machu Picchu, the discovery he made there, and the personal and political experiences that followed were fundamental to the development of his ideology and poetry. But we cannot dismiss his involvement in the addition to his Isla Negra house as a further influential experience. Although there is no formal relationship between the structures (or building techniques) employed in Machu Picchu and the house at Isla Negra (the design was completed prior to Neruda’s visit to Machu Picchu), the construction process allowed the poet to develop an appreciation and understanding for stone in its natural state as well as transformed into ashlar and assembled into walls.

It was precisely in this redesigned house that Neruda wrote his landmark poem *The Heights of Macchu Picchu*.<sup>5</sup> From 1945 to 1973, nine new additions to the house followed, making it almost impossible today to recognize the original structure and the first addition (FIG. 1). But as with the first addition, there was often a direct correspondence between Neruda’s literary production and changes he made to the house. For example, it was after a second addition and remodeling of the dining room that Neruda began to exhibit his collection of objects and wrote his homage to common objects, *Elementary Odes* (1954).

By scrutinizing drawings, letters, photographs, and memoirs, this article reconstructs the dialogue between the client and the architect during the design and construction of the first addition in order to study the influence this building experience had in Neruda’s poetry.

## THE HOUSE

From 1927 to 1943 diplomatic duties kept Neruda away from Chile.<sup>6</sup> Although he recognized great value in his experiences in the Foreign Affairs Ministry, during a brief return to Chile from December 1937 until March 1939, Neruda felt the imperative to return to his homeland. “I can live only in my own country,” he wrote in his *Memoirs*. “I cannot live without having my feet and my hands on it and my ear against it, without feeling the movement of her waters and its shadows, without feeling my roots reach down into

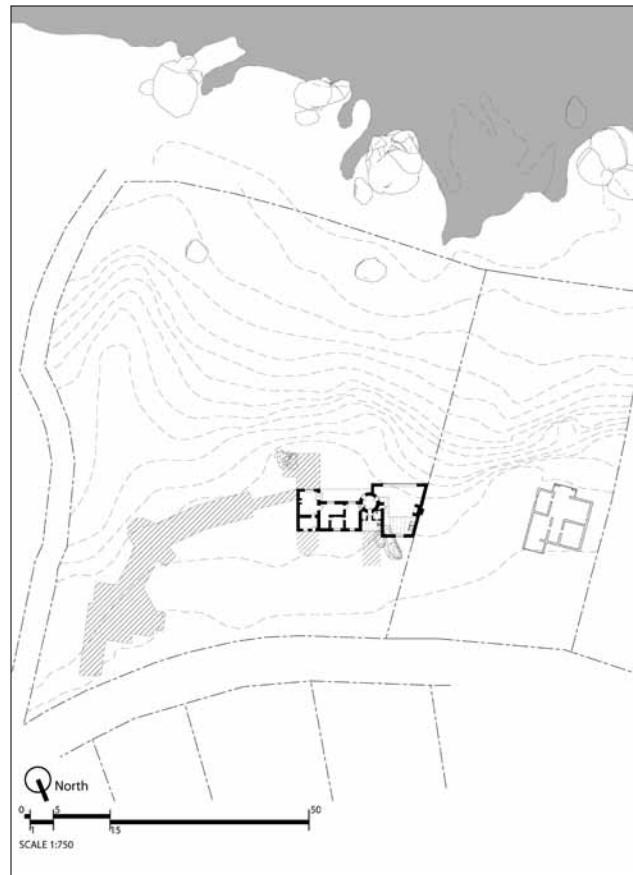


FIGURE 1. Neruda’s house in 1945 and the area occupied by the nine additions made from 1954 to 1973. Drawing by Lorena Paz Akin, based on Elena Mayorga, “Las Casas de Neruda,” *Seminario de Titulación, Universidad de Bío Bío, Facultad de Arquitectura, Concepción, 1996*.

its soil for maternal nourishment.”<sup>7</sup> Moreover, he “felt the pressing need to write a central poem that would bring together the historical events, the geographical situations, the life and the struggles of our [the Chilean] peoples.”<sup>8</sup> The new poem, *Canto General de Chile*, required Neruda to throw himself into his writing “with more devotion and energy.”<sup>9</sup> To do so, he sought to distance himself from Santiago’s noise and distractions.

Through a small newspaper advertisement, the poet and his partner at the time, the Argentinean Delia del Carril, learned of a property in the coastal hamlet of Las Gaviotas. Remote and barely known by anyone except the local fishermen and the two families who vacationed there, it was the perfect place for Neruda to isolate himself and become fully involved in the writing of his new book.<sup>10</sup>

On the summit of a rocky slope devoid of any vegetation but cacti sat a small stone masonry house. Neruda was immediately captivated by the desolate coastal landscape bathed by the “large, wild and blue” Pacific Ocean.<sup>11</sup> As he would later recall, during his first visit to the site he “felt the pang of



**FIGURE 2. A:** *Isla Negra's coastal strip. B:* *Neruda's house from the rocks. Photos by author, 2007.*



this smell of winter at the sea, a mixture of sweet herbs and salty sand, seaweed and thistle.”<sup>12</sup> Similarly, the extraordinary agglomerations of black rocks scattered across the coast spoke to him “in a hoarse and drenching language, a jumble of marine cries and primal warnings.”<sup>13</sup> Even the yellow sand of the beach was “insurmountable” to the poet.<sup>14</sup> Neruda immediately realized that “Isla Negra’s wild coastal strip, with its turbulent ocean, was the place to give myself passionately to the writing of my new song” (FIG. 2).<sup>15</sup>

The landscape, the site, and the view were so striking that neither Neruda nor del Carril saw any inconvenience in the house’s limited area (68 square meters), its brief program (“a dining room, a bathroom and [two] bedrooms,” del Carril recalled<sup>16</sup>), or the fact that it was still unfinished. Therefore, they purchased and completed Neruda’s writing retreat, occupying it from 1938 to January 1939, the date of their departure for Paris, where the poet served as consul for Spanish emigration.<sup>17</sup> During this time, frequents walks along the

coast allowed Neruda to become familiar with the area’s rocks. Like the local fishermen, he saw, in the largest of the rock formations that stood out of the water, a black island. Soon thereafter, he began calling his house, and later the hamlet, Isla Negra.

Isla Negra quickly proved to be inspiring, and consequently, Neruda was productive. In 1938 he wrote the first poem for his book project *Canto General de Chile*, “Winter Ode to the Mapocho River.” And in 1940, also at Isla Negra, he wrote “Botany,” “Atacama,” “Ocean,” “Hymn and Homecoming,” and “Almagro” (later known as “Discoverers of Chile”).<sup>18</sup>

#### THE PROJECT

Despite its inspiring qualities, by early 1940 the house must have felt small and inadequate for Neruda’s writing needs.<sup>19</sup> It had originally been planned as one of three vacation homes



that Eladio Sobrino, a Spanish seafarer, had commissioned to his daughter Luz, an architecture student. The Sobrino family would keep one of the houses and put the other two up for sale.<sup>20</sup> As a real estate property, Sobrino had taken no risks in her design. She positioned the house on the flattest area of the site, between two prominent rocks and at a safe distance (eight meters) from the rocky slope down to the ocean. As a result of its traditional layout and structural system, a cut-stone masonry wall partitioned the interior space along the east-west axis. And with the exception of the dining room (twelve square meters), most likely used as a studio by Neruda, all of the rooms were very similar in size. The size of the windows was also limited (a maximum of two meters in width and 1.20 meters in height) by Sobrino's choice to use timber for the lintels and to set the sills 80 centimeters off the floor (FIGS. 3–5).

The poet soon realized that the placement of the house on the site, its layout, and window sizes did not privilege the breathtaking views of the coast he found so inspiring. However, short of money and nearing his departure for Mexico in August 1940, where he would serve as consul general, Neruda was forced to postpone any ideas he might have had for changes and improvements until his eventual return to Chile in November 1943.<sup>21</sup>

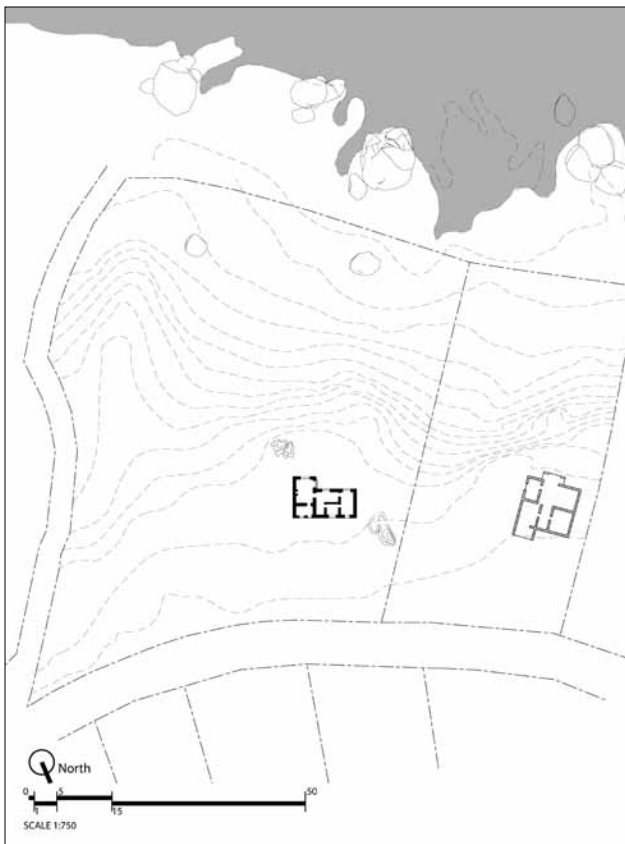


FIGURE 3. Existing house: site plan. Drawing by Lorena Paz Akin, based on Elena Mayorga, “Las Casas de Neruda.”

While in Mexico, the poet would come to the realization of an America he did not know. Impressed by his discovery, he felt a need to “unite our continent, describe it, build it, recover it.”<sup>22</sup> The poem *Canto General de Chile* thus expanded to *Canto General*, a glorious hymn to Latin America. The book was finally completed in 1949 and comprises a collection of 231 poems divided in fifteen sections that trace the history, geography and people of the Americas from 1400 to 1949. While engaged in this project, in 1942, Neruda wrote “America, I Do Not Invoke Your Name in Vain,” tackling varied aspects of Latin America in a single collection of poems.

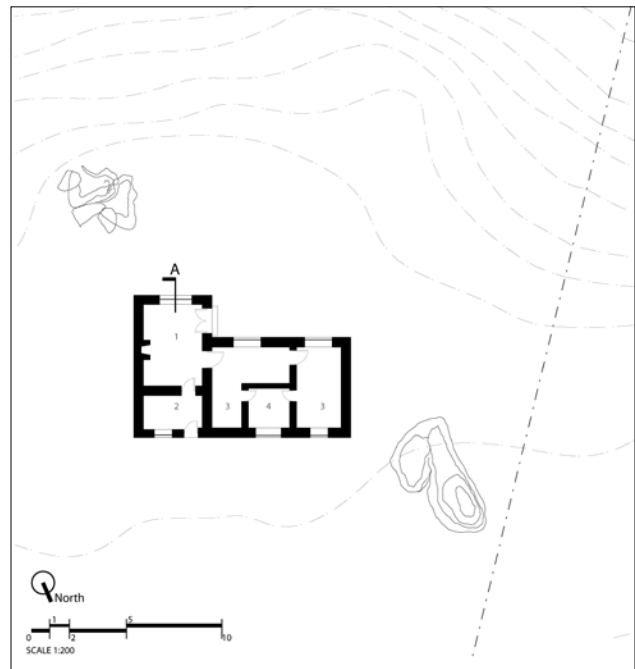


FIGURE 4. Existing house: plan. 1. dining room; 2. kitchen; 3. bedroom; 4. bathroom. Drawing by Lorena Paz Akin, based on Elena Mayorga, “Las Casas de Neruda.”

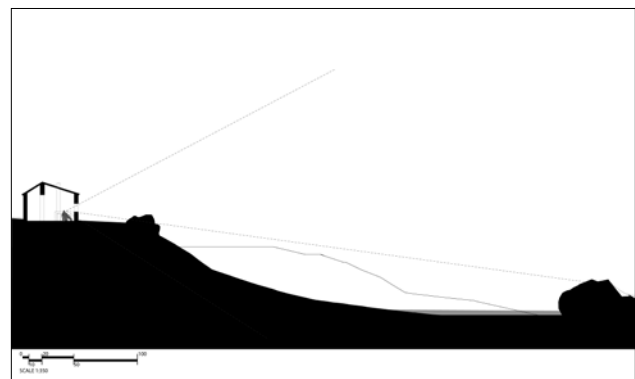


FIGURE 5. Existing house: section A-A. Study of Neruda's view of the ocean and rocks from his studio. Drawing by Lorena Paz Akin, based on drawings by the author.

Stylistically, however, according to Hernán Loyola, “the text will remain isolated, without continuation, attesting to the difficulties Neruda encountered in finding the exact tone for the book [*Canto General*].”<sup>23</sup>

Eager to return to Chile and to a working environment that would contribute to the completion of the book project he had in front of him, sometime in March 1943, nine months ahead of his return to Chile, Neruda commissioned an addition — the first of many — to his Isla Negra house.<sup>24</sup> The architect for the project was Germán Rodríguez Arias, who in the 1920s and 30s, along with Josep Lluís Sert and others, had cofounded a Catalan progressive architecture group called GATAPAC — Grup d’Arquitectes i Tècnics Catalans per el Progrés de l’Arquitectura Contemporània [Group of Catalan Architects and Technical Experts for the Progress of Contemporary Architecture]. He had arrived in Chile from Spain’s Civil War in 1940 under the country’s program for exiles, a program Neruda had encouraged and worked for as Chilean consul for Spanish emigration in Paris.<sup>25</sup> Despite his professional credentials, by 1943 Rodríguez Arias’s degree had not been recognized in Chile (and never would be). Thus, Neruda was one of his first clients.<sup>26</sup>

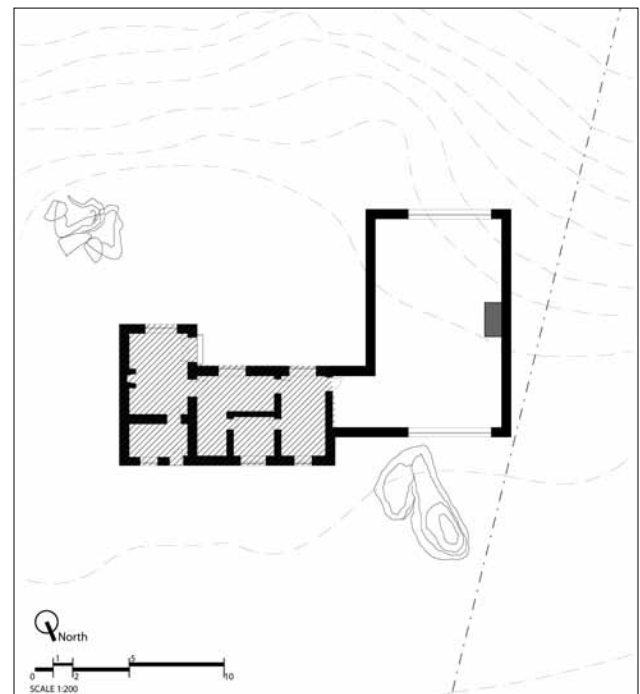
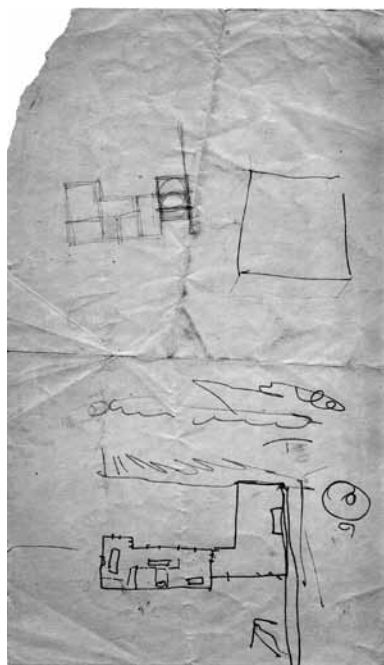
It would be logical to think that by commissioning the addition to Rodríguez Arias, Neruda was expecting a modernist design for his house, particularly given that, as Chile’s consul in Madrid (1934–36), he had lived in the recently completed apartment building Casa de las Flores (1930–32), one of Spain’s earliest examples of avant-garde architecture.<sup>27</sup> Likewise, as consul in charge of the emigration of Spanish refugees in Paris in 1939, Neruda had been particularly interested in the contribution Spanish immigrants could make

to the modernization of Chile. This, however, did not prove to be the case. Rather than simply explaining his ideas to the architect, a series of drawings leading to the project illustrate how a dialogue took place between the poet and the architect. Specifically, they reveal a collaborative practice in which Neruda played a leading role, and in which Rodríguez Arias had to accommodate himself to Neruda’s taste for vernacular design. The resulting project combined modernist principles (basic geometric forms, an open floor plan, horizontal windows) with traditional architecture, employing local materials and construction techniques.

Using his green-ink fountain pen, a signature trait of his writing, Neruda made a sketch of his initial idea. A close look at this apparently naïve drawing reveals how he carefully diagrammed the conditions of the site. For example, the sea is represented by a ship sailing over waves (a customary view from the site); a scribble is used to represent the rocky slope to the south; and a circle is used to show the location of a large group of boulders close to the property line. Despite the availability of more space to the east of the existing building, Neruda chose the steepest area of the site for the addition.<sup>28</sup> He proposed a single “L”-shaped space there, with which he would double the area of the house — and more importantly, secure not only an unobstructed view from his studio to the ocean but also a view to the island of black rocks that gave origin to the name Isla Negra (FIGS. 6, 7).

A small pencil sketch most likely done by Rodríguez Arias contrasts with Neruda’s naïveté. In it, the architect

**FIGURE 6.** Project: Neruda’s first drawing for the project (bottom) and Rodríguez Arias’s first sketch (top left). Drawing by Pablo Neruda and German Rodríguez Arias, © Arxiu Historic del Col·legi d’Arquitectes de Catalunya.



**FIGURE 7.** Project: analysis of the poet’s first proposal on the actual site. Drawing by Lorena Paz Akin based on drawings by the author.

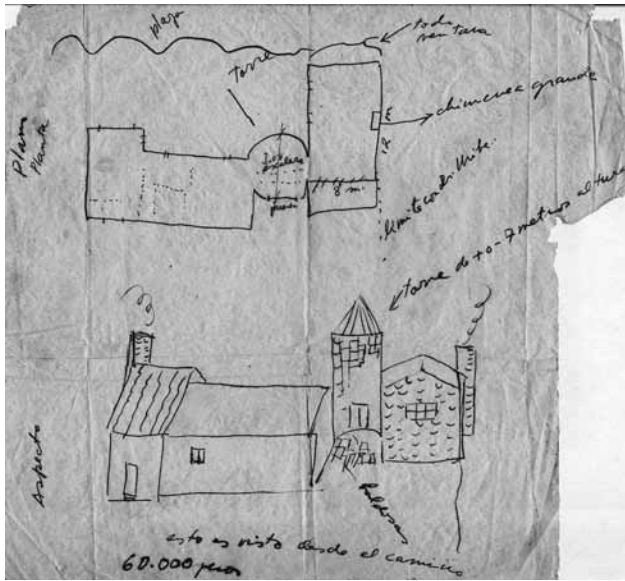


FIGURE 8. Project: Neruda's second drawing for the project. Drawing by Pablo Neruda, © Arxiu Historic del Col·legi d'Arquitectes de Catalunya.

proposed breaking the “L”-shaped area in two to separate programmatic uses: one space to serve as an entry, and another in which to study and write. In accordance to his modernist principles, each of these new spaces was to be inscribed in a distinct but basic geometry: a cylinder for the entry and a rectangle for the studio (implied in the drawing with a single line). Pencil traces show how the circular space was first aligned along the south facade of the existing building and later repositioned to best articulate both the old and the new construction.

In a second drawing, far more detailed than the first, Neruda then presented his ideas for the addition's layout and elevation. The poet adopted Rodríguez Arias's proposed rectangular and circular spaces. He specified the measurements for the studio (eight meters wide by twelve meters long), and he showed it covered by a gable roof running perpendicular to the facade. The entry space would be contained in a seven-meter-tall cylindrical tower with a conical roof. Regarding materials, stone was to be used for all the walls, while the entry was to be paved in ceramic tiles (FIGS. 8, 9).

The poet used text to label the drawings on this sheet of paper (“plan,” and “appearance,” further explaining, “this is viewed from the street”). Moreover, Neruda labeled aspects of the site (beach, street, boundary with Uribe) as well as elements and features of the project (door, staircase, tower, large fireplace, wall-to-wall window). Unlike the first drawing, most likely produced during a meeting with the architect, the use of text suggests that on some occasions Neruda may have been away from Santiago and used letters to interact with Rodríguez Arias. It was thus absolutely critical to make sure

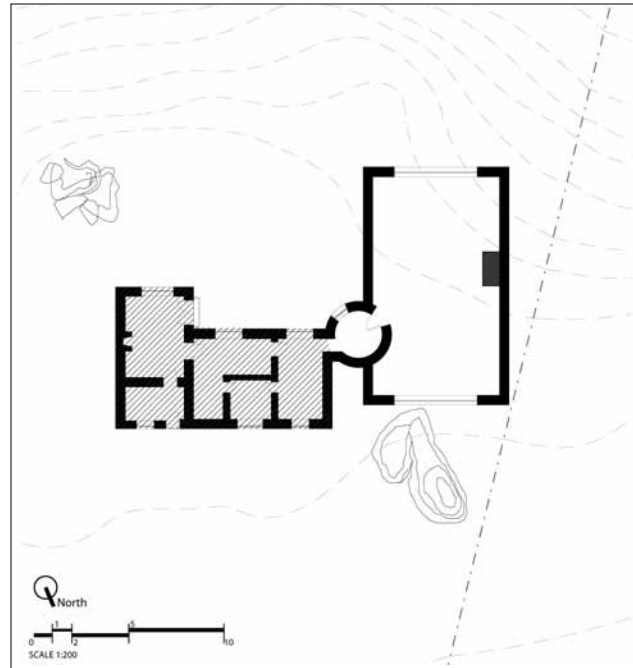


FIGURE 9. Project: analysis of the poet's second proposal on the actual site. Drawing by Lorena Paz Akin, based on drawings by the author.

everything was clear in the drawings. If this was the case, he may have sent this drawing from his consular post in Mexico, or even from Antofagasta (Chile), from where, on March 5, 1943, he sent Rodríguez Arias a postcard.<sup>29</sup>

In fact, a third drawing, this time in pencil, was done on light blue stationery from either a hotel, organization, or the poet's own apartment in Mexico City.<sup>30</sup> Again we find Neruda carefully labeling the drawing, apparently to make sure the architect would, first, identify the “project” within the drawing, and, second, take note of the main features of the house: a large fireplace and a large window at the south end of the study. Additionally, he specified that he expected the tower to surpass the new building by three meters. Although very similar to the second drawing, in this new layout the studio was displaced to the south, possibly acknowledging the proximity of the rocky slope, but also, given the poet's interest, to integrate an existing rock into the studio space (FIGS. 10, 11).

Following this dialogue, in the winter of 1943 Rodríguez Arias put together the final project for the addition for Isla Negra.<sup>31</sup> In this final version we can observe two formal modifications. First, to accommodate the project to the topography, the length of the studio was shortened from twelve to nine meters. To compensate for the loss of area, the architect then changed the footprint from a rectangle to a trapezoid and added a loft at the northernmost end of the room.<sup>32</sup> The idea of a loft was not new to Neruda; in his house in Santiago,



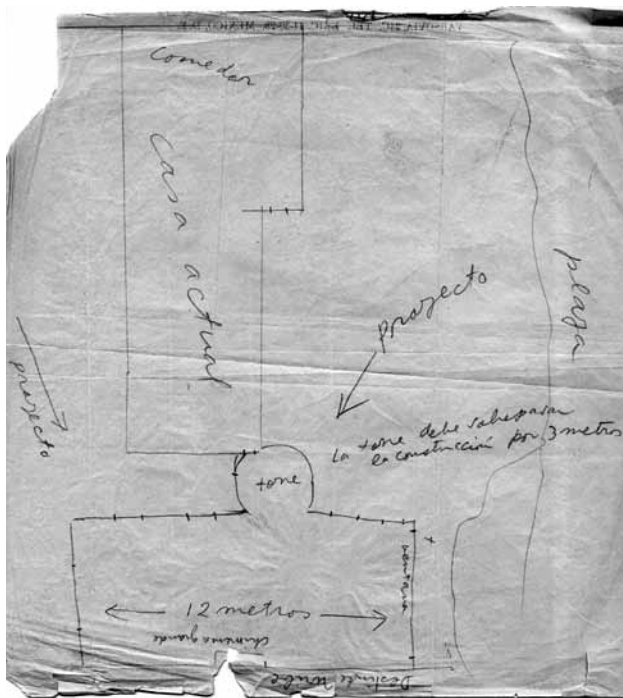


FIGURE 10. Project: Neruda's third drawing for the project. Drawing by Pablo Neruda, © Arxiu Historic del Col·legi d'Arquitectes de Catalunya.

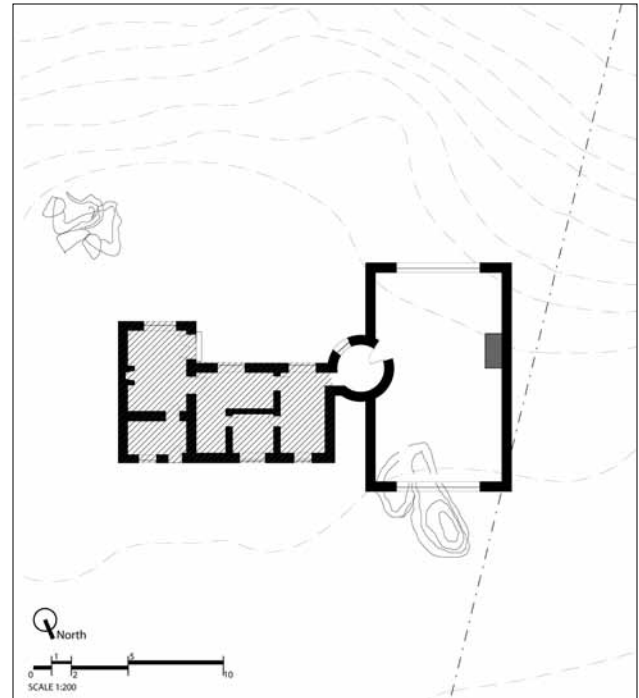


FIGURE 11. Project: analysis of the poet's third proposal on the actual site. Drawing by Lorena Paz Akin, based on drawings by the author.

the studio-library, completed in 1943, was designed as a two-story space with a mezzanine leading to a library (FIG. 12).<sup>33</sup>

The second and most notable change from Neruda's drawings, however, concerned the tower. Rodríguez Arias proposed a more modern version: a flat-roof that recalls a "Mediterranean" structure. Whether this was the poet's or the architect's idea is unclear, particularly since in the late 1960s Neruda had a conical roof added to the tower. However, it is important to note that a draft section drawing of the house from 1943 shows the tower with a flat roof (FIG. 13). Likewise, it appears that the intention behind the eventual change of form was not exclusively aesthetic, but functional. Rodríguez Arias also indicated a narrow opening in the ceiling of the tower's bedroom, through which Neruda could gain access to the rooftop. From there, Neruda would have a privileged view of his entire surroundings.

Attuned to Neruda's fascination with the sea and his description of himself as a "captain on *terra firme*," the solid stone house also incorporated elements and proportions from ship design. Among these were the alignment of openings in the tower; for example, rather than having the door to the garden or the studio directly opposite the access to the house, these were positioned to correspond almost exactly with the cardinal points of a compass (south and west, respectively). This attitude was further evident in the drawings made of the house once the addition was complete (as-built drawings) — particularly on the second floor, where the bedroom window

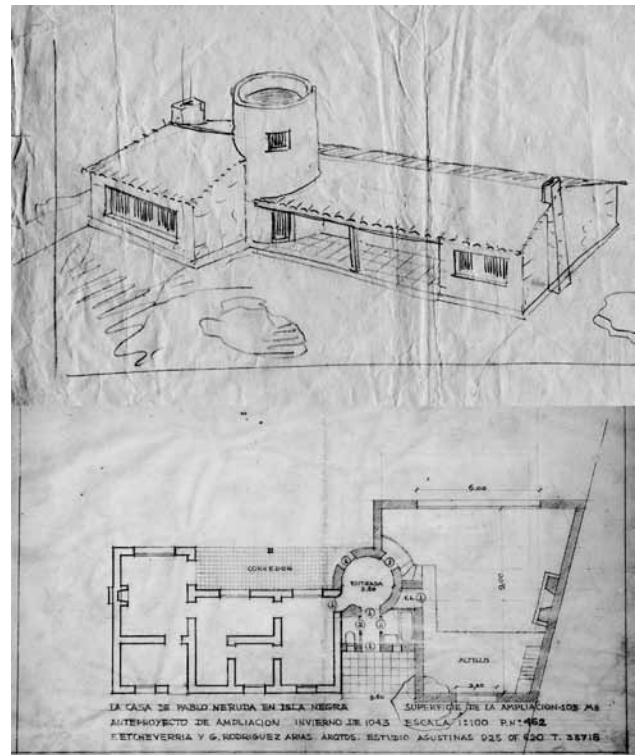
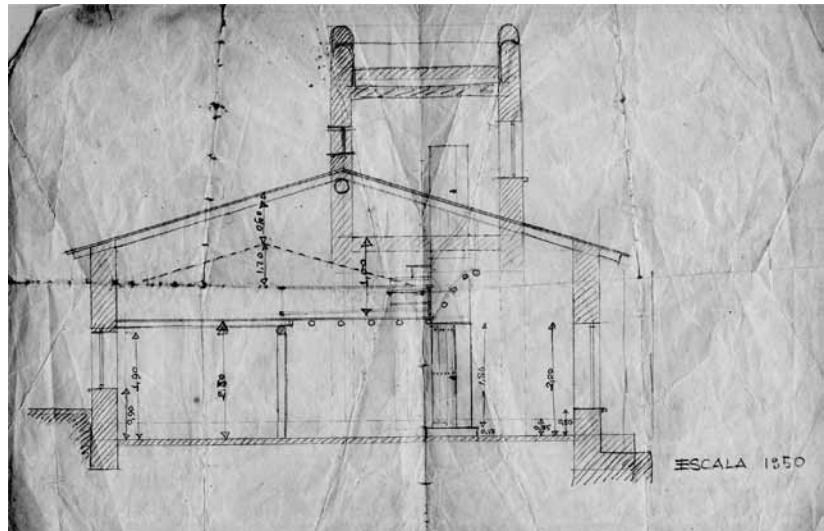


FIGURE 12. Project: axonometric drawing and plan of final project by Rodríguez Arias. Drawings by Germán Rodríguez Arias, © Arxiu Historic del Col·legi d'Arquitectes de Catalunya.

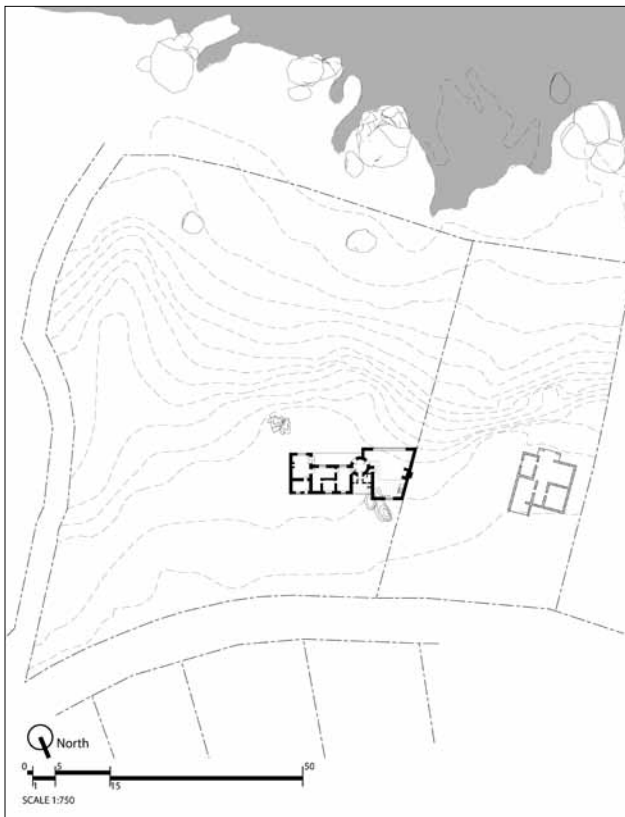
**FIGURE 13.** Project: draft section by Rodríguez Arias. The tower was going to be taller. Drawing by Germán Rodríguez Arias, © Arxiu Historic del Col·legi d'Arquitectes de Catalunya.



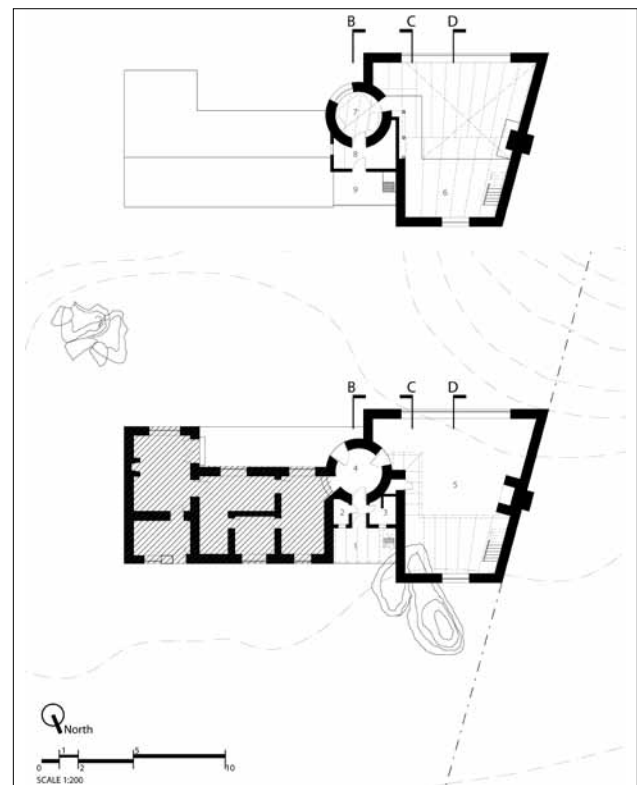
faces directly south so that the bed is oriented in an east-west direction (FIGS. 14–18).

With the exception of the large studio space, the rooms as well as the circulation areas were generally small, as if they

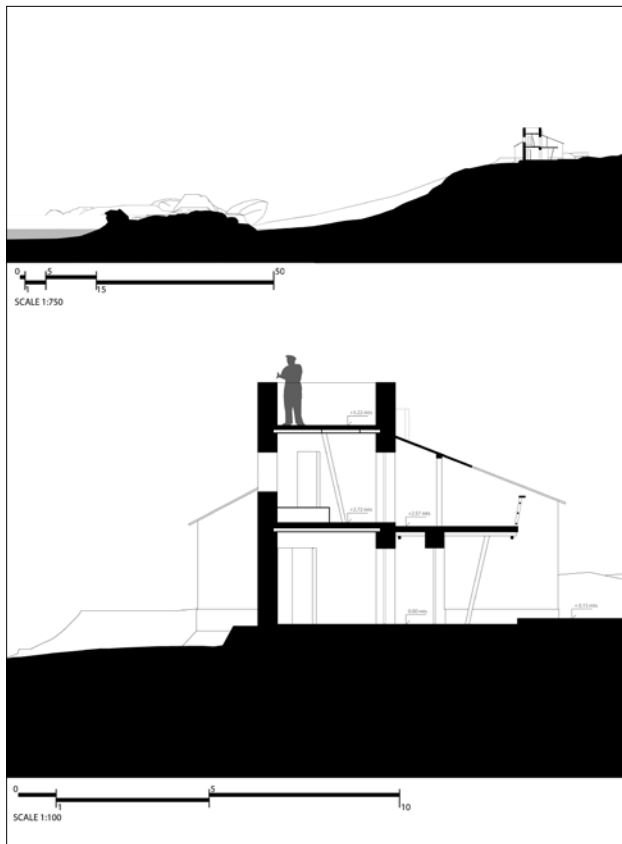
had been specially tailored to Neruda’s size.<sup>34</sup> For example, the floor area of the tower was precisely the minimum size required for a full-size bed. And the circulation spaces lead-



**FIGURE 14.** As-built: site plan. Drawing by Lorena Paz Akin, based on Elena Mayorga, “Las Casas de Neruda.”



**FIGURE 15.** As-built: plans. 1. porch; 2. toilet; 3. bathroom; 4. entry space; 5. studio; 6. loft; 7. tower bedroom; 8. writing quarter; 9. balcony. Drawing by Lorena Paz Akin, based on Elena Mayorga, “Las Casas de Neruda.”



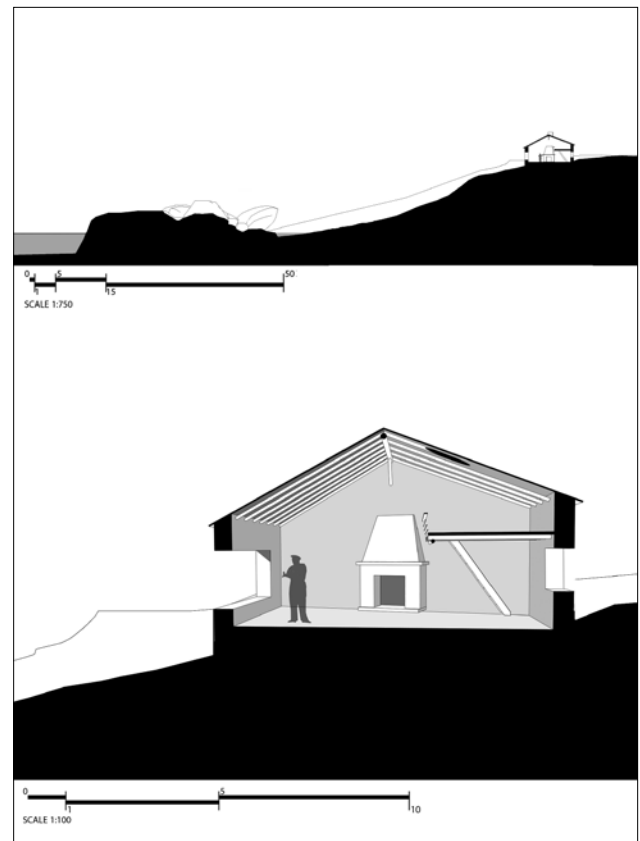
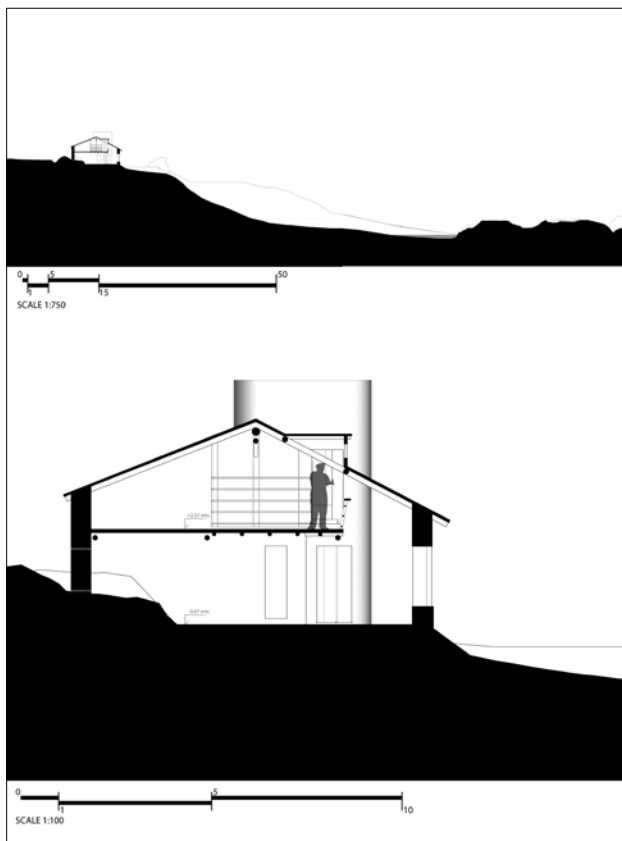
ing to and from the loft and tower were for the most part very tight: the stairs to the loft space were only 70 cm. wide and extremely steep; the balcony leading to the tower bedroom was barely 50 centimeters wide below the dormer window. Likewise, access to the tower roof was through a narrow space, only 60 centimeters in width. The same was true for doorways, which ranged from 1.80 to 1.85 meters in height and from 70 to 80 centimeters in width.

The resulting design was a combination of modern and vernacular architecture (or rather the architecture of the traditional vacationer house).

**FIGURE 16 (LEFT).** *As-built: section B-B through the access and tower. Drawing by Lorena Paz Akin, based on drawings by the author.*

**FIGURE 17 (BOTTOM LEFT).** *As-built: section C-C through balcony leading to the tower bedroom. Drawing by Lorena Paz Akin, based on drawings by the author.*

**FIGURE 18 (BOTTOM RIGHT).** *As-built: section D-D through studio and loft space. Rodríguez Arias carefully distributed the tie-beams to distract attention from the orientation of the west wall. Drawing by Lorena Paz Akin, based on drawings by the author.*



## THE CONSTRUCTION

Although the project dates from mid-1943, construction work must have only started once Neruda and del Carril returned from Mexico in November of that year. Throughout the subsequent two-year period of construction, nothing impeded Neruda from being involved with the addition, not even his political activities during his candidacy for senator from Tarapacá and Antofagasta (from December 1943 to March 1945). Every time he could, he would go to Isla Negra to supervise the progress, and it appears he was personally in charge of hiring the workers. Thus, his close friend Tomás Lago described the arrangements made in July 1944 with Alejandro García, who agreed to complete the work by early 1945 for a reasonable amount.<sup>35</sup>

As the construction progressed, the poet constantly came up with new ideas, to the point that del Carril stopped paying attention to them, annoying him.<sup>36</sup> Though minor, these all meant changes to the initial project. For example, adjacent to the tower bedroom he added a small introspective writing space with a built-in desk.<sup>37</sup> And to allow the light of the rising sun to flood this space and tower bedroom, he chose to have a small window added on the east wall of the new writing quarter.<sup>38</sup> Similarly, given his theatrical character, a second entrance to the house was added. This duplication of circulation permitted the poet to come and go from the studio without being noticed by guests. On some occasions the ideas were playful. For example, Lago recalled how in 1944 Neruda,

*[had some] cacti full of flowers planted in the large stones that penetrate the room under construction. They looked very nicely because there is not roof yet and in front of the sea they are in their natural environment, but later, it is very likely that they will not live enclosed in a room.<sup>39</sup>*

As evidenced in his second drawing, Neruda was very careful about the selection of construction materials. He insisted on using only local stone for the walls and Chilean woods for all other structural elements. Such was his determination that in a June 1968 interview, sitting in the studio across from the fireplace, he proudly claimed that “the entire house was made using Chilean materials.”<sup>40</sup> However, to allow for the six-meter-wide window facing the sea, the poet had to agree to the incorporation of a technology foreign to stone masonry and timber structures: a reinforced concrete beam. In fact, all of the lintels, including those for the smallest of windows, were made of reinforced concrete. In his attempt to be faithful to his principle of using only local materials and technologies, these lintels (and beams) were veneered in stone. This decision was most likely Neruda’s and would become standard practice in later additions. For example, the 1967 documentary film *I Am Pablo Neruda*

shows workers pouring reinforced concrete walls for a new addition then under construction.<sup>41</sup> These were later covered with stones.

In some cases, the selected materials were less traditional, but nothing distracted Neruda from his choices. He would find materials on the site, or nearby, and then would charge the architect with incorporating them into the project.<sup>42</sup> For the fireplace, Neruda personally selected oval stones from a nearby estuary. Covered in rust, urine, or red moss, these had a “very particular ardent color.”<sup>43</sup> Advised about the absolute need to clean the stones prior to using them inside the house, Neruda responded: “it doesn’t matter; they are still very beautiful for their purpose.”<sup>44</sup> At another time, he showed up on the site with a tree trunk to be used in its natural state in place of the single column in the studio. Similarly, he collected shells from the beach to be embedded in the poured concrete pavement of the first floor of the tower; the purpose was to recall the sensation of the beach when stepping barefoot into the house (FIGS. 19, 20).

By the end of July 1944 the construction work was well on its way: walls reached two meters in height, which was close to 50 percent of the total height of the house.<sup>45</sup> And by March 1945, the construction must have been in its finishing stages. By that time, a letter dated March 1, 1945, confirmed Neruda’s leading role in the project. He addressed the architect with authority, giving him clear directions on what he expected should be done in the house. In the letter he asked the architect:

*Why haven’t you bought the glass. Did I leave an order with the firm we already know? . . . Have the pieces of furniture I ordered García for the small room upstairs [next to the tower] been made? . . . Don’t forget to demand our Phoenician friend Aguadé to use well grained pine that is available. . . . Is the staircase to the tower finished?<sup>46</sup>*

It was precisely in this house, recently completed, surrounded by the stone walls he had witnessed being built, where Neruda wrote his landmark poem *The Heights of Macchu Picchu*.

## THE HOUSE AND POETRY

After its purchase, every time Neruda felt the need to write, he retreated to Isla Negra. Thus, the poet’s close involvement in the design and construction was ultimately based on a desire to secure an environment that would stimulate his writing. This was critical in the early 1940s, given the difficulties he faced finding the exact tone for *Canto General*. However, the addition — and the views it framed of rocks and ocean — proved to be inspiring. From its completion in 1945 to February 1948, when Neruda had to go into hiding (and later





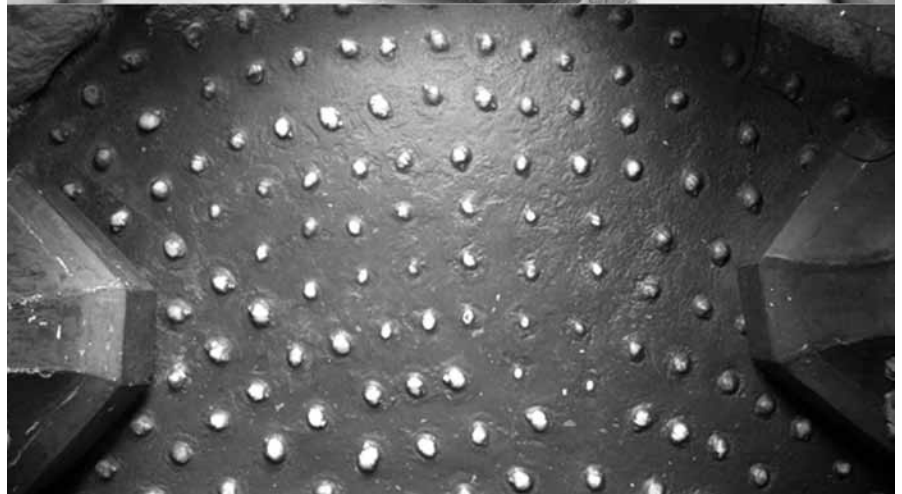
**FIGURE 19. (ABOVE)** Interior of the studio space. Neruda personally selected oval stones from a nearby estuary; these were incorporated in the fireplace. Photo by the author, 2007, with permission of Fundación Neruda.

**FIGURE 20 (RIGHT).** A: Neruda had a tree trunk in its natural state used as the single column in the studio space.

B: Sea shells from the beach were embedded in the pavement of the entry space below the tower. Photos by the author, 2007, with permission of Fundación Neruda.



A



B



exile), he wrote two important sections of *Canto General: The Heights of Macchu Picchu* and “The Flowers of Punitaqui.”<sup>47</sup>

But what was this ideal environment? What would determine its form and materiality?

Neruda’s diplomatic duties had been enlightening; among other things they had allowed him to experience life in Asia and later in the European cities of Barcelona, Madrid and Paris. However, as I have already mentioned, it was during his last position as consul general in Mexico that he made a fundamental discovery that would change his perception of the world. Neruda came to realize how little he knew of the Americas and how much there was for him, and others, to discover. On the one hand, he claimed that in the region there were “rivers which have no names, trees which nobody knows, and birds which nobody has described.”<sup>48</sup> On the other, he saw how the colonial condition imposed on the Americas had produced an “incalculable fracture” in ancient American cultures. “The womb was violated and extinguished. . . . In regards to sculpture, architecture, poetry, accounts, dance, all of this was swallowed by the earth,” he would write in 1972.<sup>49</sup> From his exchange with Mexican intellectuals and artists grew his interest to reverse this situation by promoting Latin America’s cultural autonomy and by looking at the history of the region from its own perspective. More importantly, he realized what his task was to contribute to the discovery of the unknown and forgotten America.

Surprisingly, the poet would pursue this task beyond the realm of literature. Once back in Chile, not only would Neruda impose an unmistakable national style on his Santiago house, filling it with traditional handicrafts and natural elements (stones, logs, seashells, etc.);<sup>50</sup> but he would also contribute to the making of a localized modern architecture with the design and construction of his house in Isla Negra. Influential to Neruda was his friend the Mexican muralist Diego Rivera who, at the time of Neruda’s Mexican sojourn, was engaged in the development of Mexican modern architecture. With assistance of the Mexican architect Juan O’Gorman, the muralist had personally designed his studio-museum Anahuacalli (1942–1957). The project fused building and place by using materials from the site and forms abstracted from Teotihuacan and Mayan architecture. Thus, as he prepared his return to Chile in early 1943, Neruda opted to follow Rivera’s ideas. The addition to his Isla Negra house would combine modern principles (basic geometric forms — a cylindrical and a rectilinear volume — and an ample open-plan studio space with a ribbon window framing the ocean view) with traditional forms (a gable roof) as well as local materials and technologies.

But not all decisions around the design of the house were political; the poet’s interest in the use of cut-stone masonry also responded to his particular love for Isla Negra’s rocky landscape. During his frequent walks along the coast, he became extremely familiar with the local rock formations. Based on form, he named them “Bull,” “Lion,” “Ship,” “Table,”

etc., and eventually a book dedicated to them came to mind, which materialized in 1961 under the title *The Stones of Chile*.<sup>51</sup> Fascinated by this landscape, he had rocks from the site cut into ashlar to be used for the walls of the addition. He had an existing rock left in its natural state (something Rivera had also done at Anahuacalli), and he directed that stones from the nearby estuary be integrated into the studio space. Moreover, shells from the beach were used to pave the entry space, and he was careful that the main window of the studio space framed the view to a large “island” of black rocks. This single space evokes the natural environment of Isla Negra’s coast, strengthening the poet’s intimate relationship to the site. To a certain extent, with his selection of local building materials, he was reconfiguring the landscape into his house. It could not have been otherwise; when questioning the origin and purpose of the rocks of Isla Negra in his poem “Stones,” Neruda concluded that these were placed there so that he “may construct, with iron and wood, a house in the sand.”<sup>52</sup>

Similarly, Neruda was passionate about the ocean; the coastal landscape, ships, and nautical artifacts fascinated him. “Sometimes it is so good I applaud,” he recalled in a 1969 interview.<sup>53</sup> Securing a view to the waves bursting into the rocks was indispensable. Thus, the section drawn across the studio demonstrates how the height of the ribbon window was carefully studied to guarantee Neruda a view of the rocks and ocean when sitting at a table or desk. (Even from the loft, one can see a thin strip of the ocean.) In fact, in his poem “The Sea,” he wrote: “The Pacific Ocean was overflowing the borders of the map. There was no place to put it. It was so large, wild and blue that it didn’t fit anywhere. That’s why it was left in front of my window.”<sup>54</sup>

On September 1, 1943, once the drawings for the addition to the Isla Negra house were complete, Neruda began his return from Mexico to Chile. Intent on discovering the America he did not know, he made stops in Panamá, Colombia, Ecuador and Peru, where he arrived on October 19. Guided by one of the most knowledgeable experts on Cuzco’s pre-Columbian and indigenous culture, José Uriel García, Neruda visited the recently discovered lost city of the Incas, Machu Picchu.<sup>55</sup> In the poet’s own words: “On those difficult heights, among those glorious, scattered ruins, I had found the principles of faith I needed to continue my poetry.”<sup>56</sup>

Hidden in a dramatic topography covered by dense vegetation, Machu Picchu had largely survived the destructive forces of the colonial period. To archeologists and historians, its “discovery” by Hiram Bingham in 1911 provided “a unique opportunity to make a comprehensive review of so much of the manners and customs of an important center of Inca culture.”<sup>57</sup> To intellectuals, Machu Picchu exemplified the achievements and developments of the pre-Columbian cultures, allowing them to question what America’s present would have been like had the development of these cultures not been abruptly interrupted in the 1500s by the Spanish conquest and the colonial period that followed.

In an interview immediately following his return to Chile, Neruda referred to the grandeur of Machu Picchu. For him, the ruins were the most important archeological discovery in the world. “It is something stupendous to sit on those stone benches surrounded by an amphitheater of immense structures at the peak of America’s highest mountains,” he said.<sup>58</sup> And even though excavations and explorations had been underway since 1912, by the date of Neruda’s visit the origin and purpose of the city, as well as the identity of its inhabitants and builders, was still a mystery. The poet found no answer to his questions: “What happened to its builders? What happened to its inhabitants? What did they leave us except for the dignity of the stone to give us news about their lives, their intentions, their disappearance?”<sup>59</sup>

Despite the impression the site made on Neruda, he made no changes to the design of the addition to his house at Isla Negra. However, the construction process was to prove insightful to him, and would help him answer some of his questions. Beyond his appreciation for traditional trades, Neruda admired the people who practiced them, and witnessing them at work excited him. The construction of Isla Negra allowed Neruda to closely observe the art of cut stone. In particular, he remarked on García’s strength when he carried the boulders used to extract the ashlar. He was equally impressed by his knowledge and ability first to cut out the ashlar and later fit each large square-cut stone in place. His poem “El pueblo” (written sometime between 1956 and 1966) is a tribute to García and attests to the poet’s clear understanding of the trade of cut-stone masonry. As Neruda wrote,

*When years later Germán [Rodríguez Arias], the architect, took a hand at it, he had to come to an understanding with the master builder, Don Alejandro [García]. His hands are something to see. There is no stone that can withstand them. . . . There is no stone cutter or carpenter like him, no mason or stupendous drinker of red wine like the Master Builder.*

*Germán verified how Don Alejandro would lift one of those heavy, squared stones, look at it against the light and rapidly trim the edge. The stone would sparkle. And then it would be confined by the application of mortar. In this way the house was like a cluster of granite grapes, which gradually grew in the tremendous hands of the master builder García.*

*And Don Alejandro García hefting the stone block, cutting the granite grapes, and making my house grow as if it were a little tree of stone, planted and raised by his great dark hands.<sup>60</sup>*

Neruda was more specific about the significance cut-stone masonry had for him in the poem “Party’s End.” As he wrote there, “What can I say without touching my palms to the land? // I have built what I could / out of natural stone,

like a native, open-handed, / I have worked with my reason, unreason, my caprices, / my fury, and poise.”<sup>61</sup> He would even go further in his *Memoirs*; in reference to his visit to Machu Picchu, he stated: “I felt that my own hands had labored there at some point in time, digging furrows, polishing the rocks. . . . I felt Chilean, Peruvian, American.”<sup>62</sup>

In *The Heights of Macchu Picchu*, the poet did not detail the construction process itself. In his task as the “spokesman and rescuer of a collective memory,” Neruda saw his main goal as to write the history of this site from a new perspective.<sup>63</sup> Rather than describing Machu Picchu and the ruling class that had inhabited the lost city, Neruda focused his tribute on those who were and are forgotten — the struggling men “who worked the stone and piled it up.”<sup>64</sup> As Neruda’s biographer, Volodia Teitelboim, has pointed out, the ideas developed in the poem reveal Neruda’s position in regard to society and history.<sup>65</sup>

*Stone upon stone, and man, where was he?  
Air upon air, and man, where was he?  
Time upon time, and man, where was he?  
Were you then the broken bit  
of half-spent humankind, and empty eagle, that  
through the streets today, through footsteps,  
through the dead autumn’s leaves,  
keeps crushing its soul until the grave?*

*I question you, salt of the roads  
show me the trowel; architecture, let me  
grind stone stamens with a stick,  
climb every step of air up to the void  
scrape in the wound till i touch man.*

*Macchu Picchu, did you set  
stone upon stone on a base of rags?  
Coal over Coal and at the bottom, tears?  
Fire on the gold and within it, trembling, the red  
splash of blood?  
Give me back the slave you buried!  
Shake from the earth the hard bread  
of the poor, show me the servant’s  
clothes and his window.  
Tell me how he slept while he lived.  
Tell me if his sleep  
was snoring, gaping like a black hole  
that weariness dug in the wall.  
The wall, the wall! If every course of stone  
weighed down his sleep, and if he fell underneath  
as under a moon, with his sleep!<sup>66</sup>*

After *The Heights of Macchu Picchu* and the completion of the first addition to his Isla Negra house, stones became an important part of Neruda’s imagery. He used the imagery of stones in “Stones of the Seaboard,” from the chapter “The Grand Ocean” in *Canto General*; the book *The Stones of Chile*;

“Party’s End” (in *Ceremonial Songs*); and *The House in the Sand*. Similarly, he used cut-stone masonry as a material in other house projects. At Michoacán (1943–1946?) stones personally selected by Neruda were used for the construction of the fireplace and the room surrounding it; at La Chascona (1953–1956) the perimeter walls of the living room were built of cut-stone masonry; and stones were used again in another addition at Isla Negra in the late 1960s. At his house La Sebastiana (1959–1961), where massive stone walls were impossible to build, the poet had his friend, the artist María Martner, incorporate stone mosaic work precisely around the fireplace. Interestingly, Martner was also a friend of O’Gorman.

#### THE POET, THE ARCHITECT

In conclusion, though it is true that Neruda’s house in Isla Negra had already been designed by the time he visited the ruins of Machu Picchu in 1943, there is no doubt that this visit left a tremendous imprint both on his personal and professional life. On the one hand, it enriched his poetic output. But, more importantly, from the standpoint of Neruda and architecture, it developed in him an appreciation not only for objects (such as stones, especially), but for *what* can be done with stones and similar objects. One could argue, in

effect, that the Machu Picchu experience, compounded by his Mexican experience — in particular, his knowledge of Diego Rivera’s project at Anahuacalli — provided the impetus for the addition to the house in Isla Negra that ensued. Granted, Neruda’s house in Isla Negra does not have the monumentality of either of these two megaprojects, to say the least. But where Neruda, the architect, truly revealed himself was in the attention he paid to each and every detail of the nine additions that were ultimately made to it.

As I have shown in this article through an examination of archival drawings, letters, floor plans and sketches, the Chilean poet supervised almost every aspect of the additions, depriving Rodríguez Arias of the freedom to develop his own modernist ideas. In the end, then, the Isla Negra house became a mixture of modernist and traditional styles, giving preference, foremost, to building materials from the site itself, such as black stones, wood, and shells from the beach. But as I have also shown, Neruda’s Machu Picchu experience engendered in him a love and, above all, a much deeper appreciation for Latin America and its people, which had a direct impact on his poetry. From this angle, it is no accident that he should write his magnificent poem *The Heights of Macchu Picchu* in his house in Isla Negra, as if to thank the Inca site for having inspired him and taught him in the first place.

#### REFERENCE NOTES

1. P. Neruda, *Memoirs* (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 1977), p.165.
2. “[V]ió las raíces de la historia americana ‘confundidas y como debajo de la tierra.’” C. Peña, *Pablo Neruda y Otros Ensayos* (Mexico: Ediciones de Andrea, 1955), p.36, cited in P. Neruda, *Canto General*, E.M. Santi, ed. (Madrid: Cátedra, 1990), p.17. Except as otherwise noted, all translations from Spanish to English are the author’s.
3. G.A. Geyer, “Leftist Chilean Poet Controversial Figure: Pablo Neruda, Political Man of Intellect Retains Basic Humanity and Universality,” *Los Angeles Times*, May 8, 1969, p.C7.
4. H. Loyola, “Notes,” in P. Neruda, *Obras Completas I; De “Crepusculario” a “Las uvas y el viento” 1923–1954* (Barcelona: Galaxia Gutenberg-Círculo de Lectores, 1999), p.1203.
5. The name of this archeological site was misspelled in the first edition of the poem. Since then, the poet’s reference to it as well as its published form have maintained this particular spelling.
6. From 1927 to 1943 Neruda served in the following Chilean consulates: Rangoon, Burma, in 1927; Colombo, Ceylon (now Sri Lanka), in 1928; Batavia, Java, in 1930; Singapore in 1930; Buenos Aires, Argentina, in 1933; Barcelona, Spain, in 1934; Madrid from 1935 to 1937; Paris in 1939; and Mexico City from 1940 to 1943. During those sixteen years in service, three interruptions gave him the opportunity to live in Chile for a total of three years: from July 1932 to August 1933; from October 1937 to March 1939; and from January to August 1940.
7. Neruda, *Memoirs*, p.165.
8. *Ibid.*, p.140.
9. *Ibid.*, p.139.
10. Las Gaviotas, now known as Isla Negra, is located 120 kilometers northwest of Santiago. In 1937 only dirt roads reached the area, thus it took three hours to get there from Santiago. Neruda recalls arriving to Isla Negra on horseback. See P. Neruda, “The House,” in P. Neruda, *The House in the Sand* (Minneapolis: Milkweed Editions, 1990), p.43.
11. P. Neruda, “The Sea,” in Neruda, *The House in the Sand*, p.19.
12. P. Neruda, “The House,” in Neruda, *The House in the Sand*, p.43.
13. P. Neruda, *The Stones of Chile* (Fredonia, NY: White Pine Press, 1986), p.1.
14. P. Neruda, “The Sand,” in Neruda, *The House in the Sand*, p.27.
15. Neruda, *Memoirs*, p.140.
16. “Era una casa muy chiquita. Tenía un comedor, un cuarto de baño y dos piezas de dormir.” See V. Vidal, *Hormiga Pinta Caballos: Delia del Carril y Su Mundo (1885–1989)* (Santiago: RIL Editores, 2006), p.72.
17. Although Neruda mentions 1939 as the date when he purchased the house, according to an interview with Luz Sobrino (March 8, 1996), that seems to be the official date of purchase; the poet occupied the house in 1938 even before it was completed. See Neruda, *Memoirs*, p.140. See also E. Mayorga, “Las Casas de Neruda,” Seminario de Titulación [Thesis Seminar], Universidad de Bío Bío, Facultad de Arquitectura, Concepción, 1996, p.79.
18. In these poems Neruda outlined the themes he would later develop in his later book project *Canto General*. “Winter Ode to the Mapocho River,” “Botany,” “Atacama,” “Ocean,” and “Hymn and Homecoming” are found in Section VII, *Canto General de Chile*, while “Discoverers of Chile” is found in Section III, *The Conquistadores*. See Loyola, “Notes,” in Neruda, *Obras Completas I*, p.1202.
19. In a letter to his sister Laura Reyes, Neruda expressed interest in fixing “the little house” of Isla Negra. Letter from Pablo Neruda to his sister Laura Reyes

(February 1940), cited in E.O. Briones, *Pablo Neruda: Los caminos del mundo. Tras las huellas del poeta itinerante III (1940–1950)* (Santiago: LOM EDICIONES, 2004), p.17.

20. Eladio Sobrino purchased a large amount of land in this area for real estate purposes. He subdivided the land into 5,000-square meter lots (the minimum size for rural properties), and had three vacation homes designed and built on them. Sobrino kept one of the houses for his family, while the other two were put up for sale. Dr. Raúl Bulnes purchased one, and Neruda purchased the other. The empty lot west of Neruda's property was sold to Dr. Uribe. See S. Valenzuela, "El museo como casa de placer. Tres bocetos y un proyecto para la fundación Pablo Neruda en Isla Negra," Tesis Projectual para el Grado de Arquitecto y Magister en Arquitectura, Pontificia Universidad Católica de Chile, 2000, p.39.

21. Initially, his idea was to return to Chile by September of 1941. See Letter from Pablo Neruda to his sister Laura Reyes, cited in Briones, *Pablo Neruda*, p.17.

22. P. Neruda, "A la paz por la poesía," *El Siglo* (Santiago), May 31, 1953, cited in Neruda, *Canto General*, p.18.

23. "A nivel estilístico el texto restará aislado, sin prosecución, testimoniando las dificultades que estaba encontrando Neruda para dar con el justo tono de su libro." Loyola, "Notes," in Neruda, *Obras Completas I*, p.1202. "America, I Do Not Invoke Your Name in Vain" is section VI of *Canto General*.

24. This trip is not documented in Neruda's biographies; however, a postcard dated Antofagasta, May 3, 1943, indicates that Neruda was in Chile around that time. See C 1059/311: Dibujos i correspondència de P. Neruda, in Arxiu Històric Col·legi d'Arquitectes de Catalunya (Demarcació de Barcelona).

25. Neruda had plans to offer assistance to Spaniards who would contribute to the modernization of Chile. But the instructions from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs were clear: "in principle, [neither] intellectuals, professors, nor professionals were wanted." The Chilean government wanted only people who would contribute to the growth of the country's agriculture and industry. Therefore, the majority of the Spaniards who arrived in Chile in 1939 (and later in 1940) were "builders, skilled fishermen, experts in paper manufacturing, [and] agronomists." See P.B. Marín, "El exilio español en la orilla Latino-Americana," *Cuadernillos CEXECCI*, no.5, p.9. See also V. Teitelboim, *Neruda: An Intimate Biography* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1991), p.235.

26. Prior to Neruda's commission, in 1941, Rodríguez Arias had designed a house

in Santiago for Manuel Ricalde. As in most of his later projects, the construction documents and permit were signed by Esther Durán de Cantín. From 1941 to 1957 he had worked on more than 25 houses, according to his archive at Arxiu Històric Col·legi d'Arquitectes de Catalunya (Demarcació de Barcelona).

Most of them were small weekend houses, either on the coast or in the mountains, or small suburban houses in Santiago. For information regarding his mountain vacation houses, see F. González de Canales, "Piedra en la piedra. La arquitectura cordillerana de Germán Rodríguez Arias," *ARQ*, no.71 (April 2008), pp.80–84.

27. The project was designed by the Spanish architect Secundino Zuazo.

28. On this area of the site, the slope reaches 42 percent.

29. The postcard simply read: "Un abrazo. Pablo y la Formiga." ["A hug. Pablo and the Ant."] Delia del Carril was known by her friends as "la Hormiga" ["the Ant" in Spanish, "la Formiga" in Catalan]. See C 1059/311: Dibujos i correspondència de P. Neruda, in Arxiu Històric Col·legi d'Arquitectes de Catalunya (Demarcació de Barcelona).

30. The back of the paper has the following address printed: Varsovia 24C Tel Eric. 14-30-28 Mexico D.F., Mexico; the rest is illegible. C 1059/311: Dibujos i correspondència de P. Neruda, in Arxiu Històric Col·legi d'Arquitectes de Catalunya (Demarcació de Barcelona). During Neruda's stay in Mexico, he and del Carril, had the following addresses: Hotel Montejo, near Paseo de la Reforma; Calle Revillagigedo; Quinta Rosa María in the neighboring town of Coyoacán; Calle Elba (now Polanco); and finally, Calle Varsovia. See Vidal, *Hormiga Pinta Caballos*, p.70.

31. The drawing (a plan of the first floor and two elevations), acknowledges Rodríguez Arias's early partner, the Spanish architect Fernando Etcheverría. With him, he would develop primarily interior design projects. See C 821/131 — Primera ampliació del refugi propietat de P. Neruda, in Arxiu Històric Col·legi d'Arquitectes de Catalunya (Demarcació de Barcelona).

32. As built, the addition was shortened by 70 centimeters along the south end and displaced 50 centimeters to the north; thus, the rock occupies a larger area in the interior of the room.

33. In 1941 Neruda and del Carril found a traditional rural property on the then-outskirts of Santiago, now the district of La Reina, which they purchased while he was consul general in Mexico (1940–1943). Vidal, *Hormiga Pinta Caballos*, p.70. The remodeling project was commissioned in 1943 to the architect Réne Meza Campbell. The project suited the Neruda-del Carril couple's needs: a bedroom, a small office,

a library and studio for the poet (with shelves for his shell collection); a living and dining room; and a fireplace-theater space. It also fulfilled Neruda's taste for wood (used in the library) and stone (employed abundantly in the fireplace-theater space). The date of completion is unclear, but it was most likely completed in stages. In his *Memoirs*, Neruda recalls arriving in Chile and occupying the house and library (to the west of the property): "[a]t the end of 1943 I arrived in Santiago . . . I settled down in a house I bought on the installment plan. I piled all my books into this house surrounded by huge trees, and took up the hard life." Neruda, *Memoirs*, p.166. What must have taken longer to complete was the living room, dining room, and fireplace area. These spaces of the house were the ones that underwent major changes from the original structure.

34. Neruda was around 1.75 to 1.80 meters tall.

35. T. Lago, *Ojos y Oídos: Cerca de Neruda* (Santiago: LOM Ediciones, 1999), p.50.

36. *Ibid.*, p.51.

37. See "Carta de Pablo Neruda a Germán Rodríguez Arias, Antofagasta, 1 de marzo de 1945," C 1059/311: Dibujos i correspondència de P. Neruda, in Arxiu Històric Col·legi d'Arquitectes de Catalunya (Demarcació de Barcelona).

38. Neruda would repeat this idea of having an east-facing window in the bedroom he had added to the house later.

39. "[P]lantó (es decir, lo hizo Rubén) sonriendo unos cactus floridos en unas piedras grandes que penetran en la sala en construcción. Se veían muy bien, porque aún no hay techo y frente al mar están en su medio natural, pero después, lo más probable es que no vivan encerrados en una habitación." Lago, *Ojos y Oídos*, p.51.

40. "[T]oda la casa se hizo con materiales chilenos." H. Salas, "Con Neruda en Isla Negra," *Hispanamérica*, año 34, no.100 (April 2005), p.77.

41. H. Mantell, *I am Pablo Neruda* (U.S.: Harold Mantell Inc. [production], Films for the Humanities [distributor], 1967). While later projects by Rodríguez Arias also fall under the category of traditional-modern, in all of them he reveals the materials he uses. In fact, a close look at his designs for vacation houses in Farellones allows us to see that Rodríguez Arias combines wood and stone. Stone walls have no fenestrations, while wood is employed in walls and structural elements (beams, and columns). See F. González de Canales, "Piedra en la piedra," pp.81,83.

42. This was not a new practice; he had done similarly for his house in Santiago. In a 1978 interview, del Carril recalled: "Pablo vio unas piedras fantásticas en La Reina que eran como verdes: toda la chimenea del living está hecha con esas piedras." ["Pablo

saw some fantastic stones in La Reina that were more or less green: the entire fireplace of the living room is made with these stones.”] J. Marchant Lazcano, “Delia del Carril, pasajera de la vida,” *Paula*, Feb. 14, 1978, p.48.

43. “Cuando llegamos al Tabo, frente a la cocina había un gran montón de piedras ovoidales, grandes, llenas de herrumbres, orín o musgo rojizo que les daban un color ardiente muy particular.” Lago, *Ojos y Oídos*, p.50.

44. “Me dijo que no importaba, que de todos modos eran muy bonitas para el objeto.” Lago, *Ojos y Oídos*, p.51.

45. *Ibid.*, p.51.

46. “Porqué no has comprado los vidrios? Dejé el pedido en la firma conocida? . . . Los muebles de la pequeña pieza de arriba que dejé encargado al maestro García, se hicieron? No olvidés exigir a nuestro fenicio amigo Aguadé que ponga pino oregón muy vetado que lo hay. . . . La escalera para subir a la torre está hecha?” See “Carta de Pablo Neruda a Germán Rodríguez Arias, Antofagasta, 1 de marzo de 1945,” C 1059/311: Dibujos i correspondència de P. Neruda, in *Arxiu Històric Col·legi d’Arquitectes de Catalunya* (Demarcació de Barcelona).

47. “The Flowers of Punitaqui” was written from 1946 to 1947. This collection of poems constitutes Section XI of *Canto General*. Loyola, “Notes,” p.1203.

48. Geyer, “Leftist Chilean Poet Controversial Figure,” p.C7.

49. Alguien se preguntará ¿qué relación existe entre las antiguas culturas americanas y las modernas? Reconozco que la condición de colonia le impuso a nuestra América no solamente una obstinada dominación, sino una fractura incalculable. La matriz fue violentada y extinguida. . . . En cuanto a la escultura, la arquitectura, la poesía, la narración, el baile, todo esto se lo

tragó la tierra. P. Neruda, “Nuestra América es vasta e intrincada,” *Cuadernos*, año XI, no.41 (Santiago, 2000), p.5. Available at: <http://www.neruda.uchile.cl/cantogeneral/cuadernos/1.html>. Accessed Oct. 29, 2008. The text was written in 1972 for the presentation of the book *Civilización Andina* by Roberto Magni and Enrique Guidoni.

50. A 1947 article highlighted the poet’s collection of manmade and natural objects (most of them Chilean earthenware and sea shells). See “La casa del poeta,” *Arquitectura y Construcción*, no.10 (September 1947), n.p.

51. For this project he “counted with major help from his companion and sublime photographer Antonio Quintana” [“contaba con la ayuda mayor de mi buen compañero y excelso fotógrafo Antonio Quintana”]. P. Neruda, *Las Piedras de Chile* (Buenos Aires: Editorial Losada, 1961), p.9.

52. P. Neruda, “Stones,” in Neruda, *The House in the Sand*, p.41.

53. Geyer, “Leftist Chilean Poet Controversial Figure,” p.C7.

54. Neruda, “The Sea,” in Neruda, *The House in the Sand*, p.19.

55. Neruda had met José Uriel García previously in 1939 during a brief stop in Lima when returning from France. On that occasion the Chilean poet gave a speech in honor of Uriel García, who had just been elected senator from Cuzco. In 1943 Neruda met with Luis E. Valcárcel and Uriel García in Cuzco. Both Valcárcel and Uriel García played key roles in the development of Cuzco *Indigenista* movement. In fact, Uriel García had published *La Ciudad de los Incas* (1922); *La Arquitectura Incaica* (1924); *Cusco Colonial* (1924); *Guía Histórico Artística del Cusco* (1925); and his landmark book *El Nuevo Indio* (1930), in which he offered a brief description of Machu Picchu. Valcárcel, for his part, had published *Cuzco* (1922), a guide to the city

and nearby archeological sites, including Machu Picchu. According to the catalogue of Neruda’s library (donated to Universidad de Chile in 1954), Neruda owned a copy of Valcárcel’s *Cuzco* (1942) and one of García’s *El Nuevo Indio* (1930). See L.E. Valcárcel, *Cuzco*, 3rd ed. (Lima: Banco de Credito, 1942); and J. Uriel García, *El Nuevo Indio*, 2nd ed. (Cuzco: H.G. Rozas sucesores, 1937), pp.59–60.

56. Neruda, *Memoirs*, p.166.

57. H. Bingham, *Machu Picchu: A Citadel of the Incas* (New York: Hacker Art Books, 1979 [first ed. 1930]), p.v.

58. “Pablo Neruda habla” (interview), *El Siglo* (Santiago), Dec. 5, 1943, cited in J. Felstiner, *Translating Neruda: The Way to Macchu Picchu* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1980), p.141.

59. “¿Qué les sucedió a sus constructores? ¿Qué había sido de sus habitantes? ¿Qué nos dejaron, excepto la dignidad de la piedra, para darnos noticias de su vida, de sus propósitos, de su desaparición?” Neruda, “Nuestra América es vasta e intrincada,” p.4.

60. P. Neruda, “The People,” in Neruda, *The House in the Sand*, p.47. The text in plain type corresponds to a revised translation of words made by the author of this article.

61. P. Neruda, “Party’s End,” B. Belitt, trans., *Poetry*, vol.112, no.3 (June 1968), pp.183–90. The poem is part of the book *Ceremonial Songs*, first published in 1961. This first translation is recited in the 1967 documentary film *I am Pablo Neruda* by H. Mantell.

62. Neruda, *Memoirs*, pp.165–66.

63. Teitelboim, *Neruda*, p.260.

64. *Ibid.*, p.262.

65. *Ibid.*, p.258.

66. P. Neruda, *The Heights of Macchu Picchu*, in J. Felstiner, *Translating Neruda*, pp.231,233.



# Borderless Village: Challenging the Globalist Dystopia in Ansan, South Korea

JIEHEERAH YUN

This article discusses the development of Borderless Village, a multiethnic town in the planned industrial city of Ansan, South Korea. Despite the original vision of Ansan as a clean, self-sufficient model community, its subsequent development resulted in the creation of seemingly dystopic conditions. The perversion of initial planning goals, however, has not been able to prevent the emergence more recently of a vibrant community based on the promotion of global citizenship rights. This article argues that ambiguity within the process of globalization may bring both negative externalities and opportunities to transform dystopia into utopia.

Borderless Village, an NGO promoting the rights of migrant laborers, was born in 2006 when increasing numbers of foreign migrants and questions surrounding their rights as laborers became a central topic in South Korea. Prompted by the Reverend Chun-Eung Park, a representative of Ansan Migrant Shelter, Borderless Village promotes the notion that such laborers are entitled to certain rights regardless of nationality, cultural background, gender, or socioeconomic status.<sup>1</sup>

In addition to being the name of an NGO, Borderless Village is a name used to describe the Wongok-dong area of Ansan, home to many of the migrants. This community emerged in part as a response to the many factories in the nearby Banwall Industrial Complex, which provide a substantial number of blue-collar jobs (FIG. 1). For many centuries Ansan was a rural village, but in the late 1970s the Korean government designated it and surrounding areas as a site onto which to divert pollution-inducing industries and the growing population of Seoul. Like new towns elsewhere, designed to alleviate the pressure of urbanization, Ansan was also envisioned as a clean, self-supporting model community.<sup>2</sup>

In South Korea, regarded as an ethnically homogenous society (despite the recent increase in minorities), the establishment of Borderless Village represents a radical departure from previous labor struggles. Unlike traditional labor movements, which work within the framework of a nation-state, Borderless Village was based on the concept of “border-

*Jieheerah Yun* has recently completed a Ph.D. in Architecture at the University of California, Berkeley.

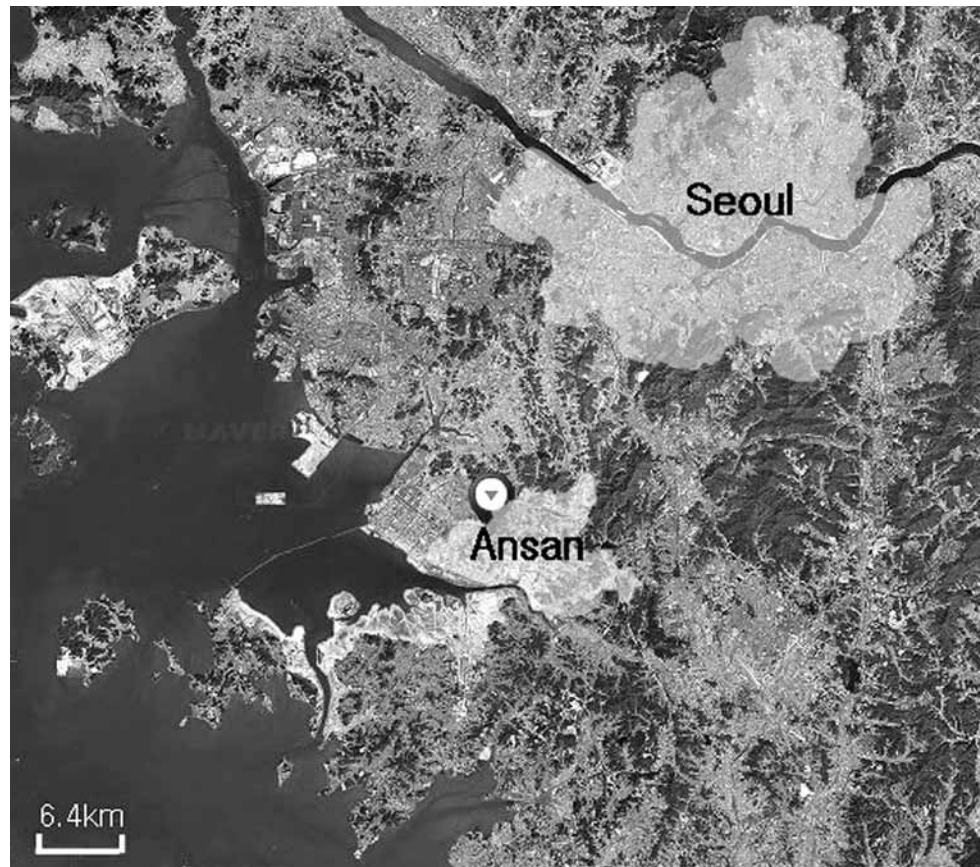
less citizenship” — the idea that certain rights of citizenship should be extended even to foreign migrant workers.

The development of Ansan and the spatial practices of Wongok-dong have two important ramifications for the study of utopian visions and physical environments. First, the status of Ansan as the first comprehensively planned South Korean city meant that the utopian visions of its modernist planners could be relatively freely expressed in its original design. Unlike Seoul, where the presence of historic urban fabric presented structural limits to redevelopment, Ansan was largely a hinterland, with only a small population of farmers and fishermen; and when the decision was made to develop it, hopes were high that a model alternative community could be built out of such a tabula rasa condition. Second, the subsequent perversion of that plan, and later emergence of new spatial practices in Wongok-dong, illustrate how utopian elements can emerge from seemingly dystopian conditions. In particular, the demographic change resulting from international labor migration has presented new opportunities to explore the meaning of utopia.

The recent history of Ansan provides a revealing case study of how the multiscalar processes of globalization affect built environments. By examining various aspects of the struggle to survive there, this article will highlight how a comprehensively planned built environment may be reappropriated

by new population groups. The development of Ansan originally reflected the design approach of an authoritarian state, but changing demographics and aspects of the natural environment have now triggered very different spatial practices. With the help of NGOs like Borderless Village, physical environments once designed to promote industrial efficiency are being utilized for unorthodox activities that support new livelihoods and opportunities for cultural networking. The transformation of Wongok-dong illustrates that while the general process of globalization may be understood as “flattening the world,” or as increasing existing inequalities, actual local manifestations of these processes may be varied and difficult to predict.<sup>3</sup> The example of Borderless Village also shows that the dependency of a national economy on transnational flows of labor can create new spaces of political agency for migrants. The article thus hypothesizes that, as much as globalization has been shown to create negative externalities such as economic inequality and environmental degradation, it may unexpectedly also bring the opportunity to transform dystopia to utopia.

Before discussing the urban history of Ansan, it is imperative to examine theories of utopia and the way the concept has been defined. I will thus begin by examining traditional utopian visions and some criticisms of them. This will allow a reevaluation and redefinition of the concept of utopia and the establishment of my own position in regard to it.



**FIGURE 1.** Aerial map showing Ansan and Seoul. Based on Naver Map Service ([www.naver.com](http://www.naver.com)).

## UTOPIA OF TRADITION IN DISREPUTE

The notion of utopia has long been a subject of controversy. Most famously used by Thomas More, the term itself contains the double meaning of *eutopia* (good place) and *outopia* (no place). While the concept of utopia appears benign, many scholars and philosophers have been critical of its application. Some have even warned that attempts to construct utopia are a clever disguise for totalitarian and authoritative measures.<sup>4</sup> The failures of Communist states to build classless societies and of modernist urban planning in the cities of the capitalist West have likewise caused some scholars and urban planners to scoff at the naïveté of their predecessors. From the decentralized layout of Broadacre City to the superquadras of Brasilia, it seems that city plans containing utopian elements invariably fail. Furthermore, the megalomaniac scale of such social projects, which rarely afford either specificity or flexibility, bring serious environmental and social consequences.

Some scholars, such as Krishnan Kumar, have observed that the modern utopia is a fundamentally Western phenomenon. While utopia as an abstract notion is also prevalent in non-Western societies, he believes that the process of rationalizing it into specific building plans is largely a result of Western cultural traditions.<sup>5</sup> Kumar has noted that, unlike the nonconcrete nature of non-Western paradises such as El Dorado, the modern concept of utopia originated in novels such as Aldous Huxley's *Brave New World* and Edward Bellamy's *Looking Backward*. And what distinguishes it from previous conceptions is its reliance on plausible mechanisms like advanced technologies and information infrastructures. In the West, such literary descriptions have had important historical consequences; for example, many architectural and planning movements, such as the Garden City Movement, were inspired by utopian societies portrayed in literature.

The repeated failure to construct such modern paradises, however, eventually exhausted the theme of utopia. At its best, the making of utopia came to be considered a daydream without practical application. Disillusionment with modernism and loss of faith in the prospect of human progress thus caused pragmatic-minded scholars to shun discussions of it. Especially once the hopeful scenario of world peace at the end of the Cold War was clouded by a continuation of regional wars, discussions of utopia seemed irrelevant. In architectural practice, social-minded designers advanced far more modest claims than their predecessors. Others withdrew from any claim to promoting social change, entrenching themselves in the pursuit of style. In brief, notions of utopia became unfashionable.

In recent years, however, the concept of utopia has regained traction within academic circles as a result of a growing fatalism over the negative externalities of globalization. Claims by supporters of open markets that the logic of capital is the paramount reality and that a certain level of socioeconomic polarization is inevitable became predominant for both internal and external reasons. Externally, the end of

the Cold War and the conversion of the Chinese and Russian economies to capitalist structures were seen as unequivocal evidence that free markets are the only basis on which to construct a society. Internally, the failure of various social projects, such as public housing programs in the U.S., suggested that the welfare state could not deliver the benefits it claimed. Nevertheless, critics of free-market reforms were quick to discern that such arguments had the effect of discouraging debate on ways to address the consequences of globalization.

In such a historical context, a reexamination of the concept of utopia was seen as a useful strategy to counter the rise of fatalism. Scholars thus began to try to rearticulate the meaning of utopia, moving from a previously static concept to a more dynamic one based on notions of process and heterogeneity. Distinguishing contemporary uses of the term from previous ones, Patrick Hayden, for example, adopted the term "reflexive utopianism" to emphasize the "future-oriented possibility of self-reforming . . . , however imperfect, of justice, human rights, autonomy and democracy. . . ."<sup>6</sup> Similarly, David Harvey used the term "spatiotemporal utopianism" to emphasize the dialectical process of defining utopia both in terms of space and social process.<sup>7</sup>

The concept of modern utopia as the exclusive preserve of Western cultural traditions has also been challenged. Various non-Western literatures have described forms of concrete utopia as radical responses to incompetent dynasties.<sup>8</sup> At the same time, scholars have questioned the West-centric notion of utopia and the rigid dichotomy between the local and the global, and begun to examine liminal spaces as possible alternatives.<sup>9</sup> Thus, contemporary discussions of utopianism are different from those of the past because they are based on an awareness that forms of utopia are diverse, and that they will always belong to the future instead of being within the reach of a decisive moment. To put it differently, admitting the elusiveness of utopian society should not imply the withdrawal of inquiry regarding its definition.

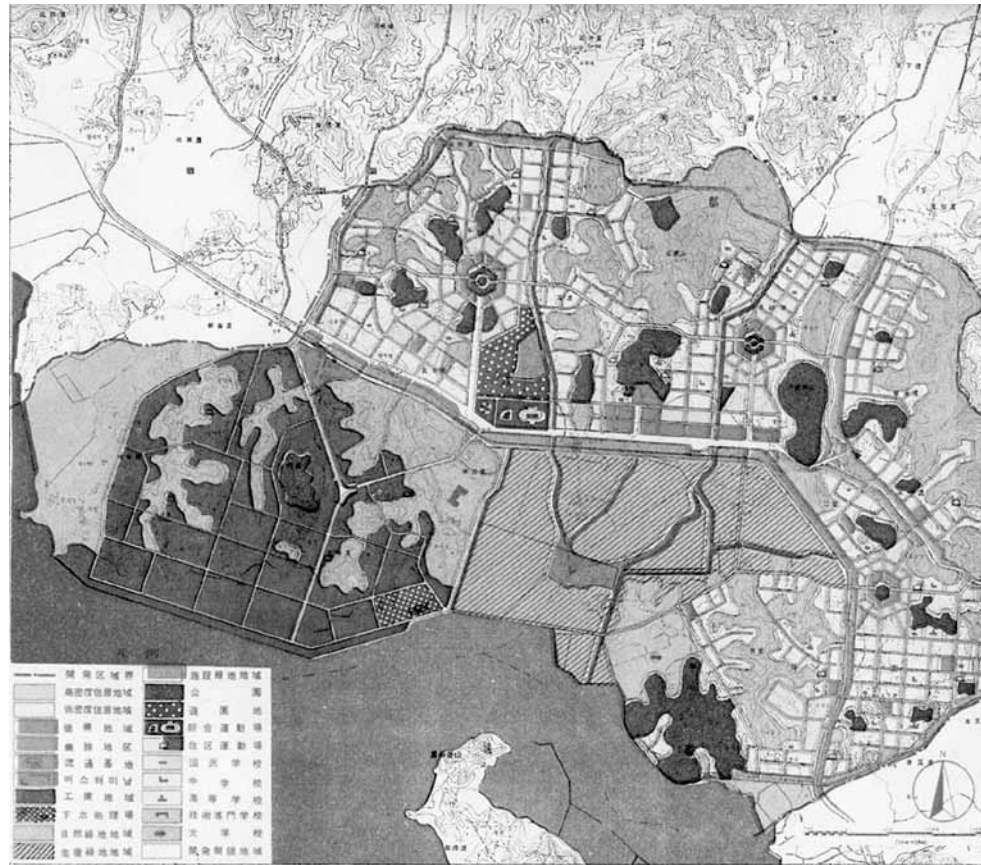
Following these ideas, I have adopted an articulation of utopia that emphasizes the *process* of constructing an ideal society. Instead of the inoperable and naïve notion of utopia as a potentially complete project, I imagine it as a gradual and relentless effort to celebrate difference and promote social justice. It is this vision I have employed in analyzing the case of Ansan and Borderless Village.

## ANSAN AS A UTOPIAN/DYSTOPIAN CITY

From its beginnings, the city plan of Ansan contained utopian elements because it was considered part of the solution to the dystopic conditions of crowded and polluted Seoul. Already in the 1960s, Hochul Lee's popular novel *Seoul un Manwon Ida* [*Seoul Is Full*] had described that city's explosive growth, as well as the various social maladies that had arisen from rapid urbanization and a lack of economic opportunity.<sup>10</sup>



**FIGURE 2.** The master plan of Banwall Industrial Complex and Ansan was influenced by the Garden City Movement as well as by CIAM. Source: Ministry of Land, Transport, and Maritime Affairs (MLTM), Basic Plan for the Development of Banwall New Industrial City (1977).



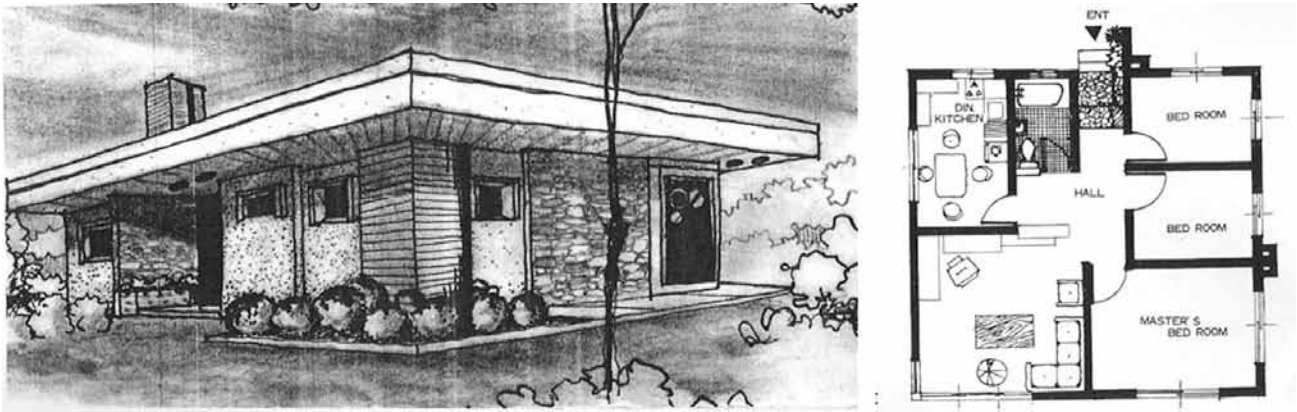
In contrast to Seoul, whose proper functioning depended on the support of rural communities, Ansan was to be self-supporting, combining agricultural, industrial, commercial and residential districts. Although remaking Ansan from a rural village into a self-sufficient city was to be carried out by an authoritarian regime, the intent of the plan was to improve living standards by diverting the growth of Seoul and providing better housing for the urban poor.

As the first South Korean city to be planned entirely from the ground up, Ansan embodied many new approaches, including the strict separation of residential and commercial districts. Considering that most South Korean cities had not previously been subjected to zoning, the plan for Ansan thus reflected a strong Western influence. The 1977 urban plan of Banwall Industrial Complex, prepared by the Ministry of Land, Transportation, and Maritime Affairs (MLTM), covered a significant portion of Ansan (FIG. 2). However, it was based on a peculiar amalgamation of two conflicting Western ideologies: the picturesque qualities of the Garden City Movement and the stark functionality of the Congrès International d'Architecture Moderne (CIAM). The synthesis of the two ideologies thus created a hybrid town — the result of idiosyncratic South Korean modernization policies that simultaneously pursued an enlargement of green space and increased industrial production. The central government played a

dominant role in developing this plan. It considered Ansan a national project, required to ameliorate conditions in Seoul, which was expanding at an unprecedented rate. Thus, until the right to administer the plan was transferred in 1993 to the Ansan city government, it remained the responsibility of the MLTM to make amendments to it.

Reflecting the principles of the Garden City Movement, the plan for Ansan contained substantial green areas and space for residential development. Instead of proposing uniform highrise apartment complexes, a significant portion of the residential area was designated for low-density development. Detached, single-family houses were foreseen as the typical unit in these areas, in an architectural style resembling that of Frank Lloyd Wright (FIG. 3). Ample space was also allotted for parks and greenbelts in this utopian city, to prohibit the total exploitation of nature. And, departing from precedent, the planning of apartment areas in Ansan took account of access to light and natural ventilation, instead of simply arranging the buildings in parallel lines. In contrast to the cramped residential conditions of Seoul, the intent was to build a new community that would provide access to the natural environment as well as adequate production facilities to make it economically self-sufficient.

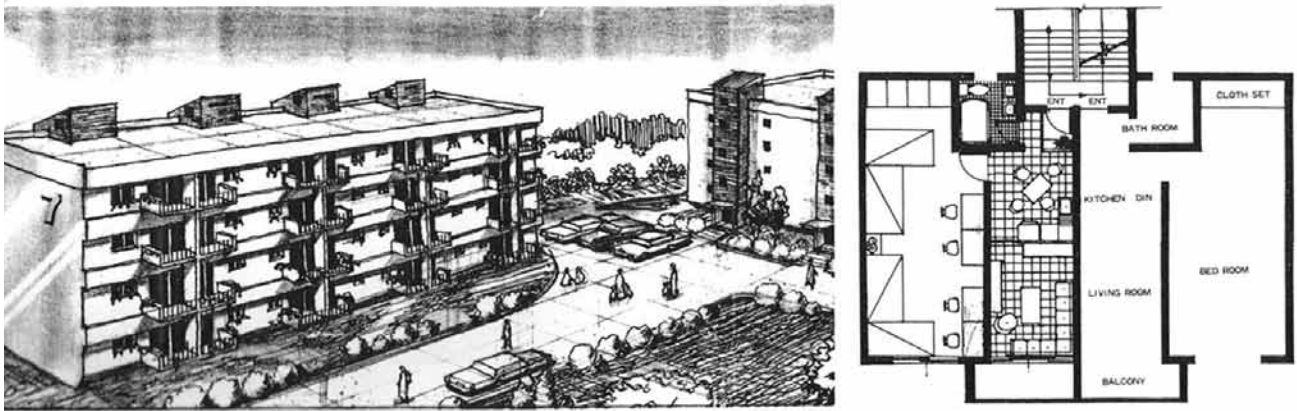
However, since it was simultaneously a plan to disperse the industrial functions of Seoul, the ultimate plan for Ansan



**FIGURE 3.** Architectural drawing and plan of housing for a family of four show a detached house with a garden. Source: MLTM, *Basic Plan for the Development of Banwall New Industrial City* (1977).

also departed significantly from the principles of the Garden City Movement. A new law in 1978 regarding the siting of industrial plants mandated the relocation of many industrial complexes outside Seoul. And while certain industries with lower pollution levels were permitted to remain there, heavy industries with higher pollution levels were targeted for removal. Some scholars have argued that Ansan was thus planned as “a repository for the industrial wastes of Seoul and the larger metropolitan region.”<sup>11</sup> Indeed, as Ansan developed, it came to contain a far greater level of industry than was necessary to achieve self-sufficiency. Ironically, at a time when the principle of self-sufficiency was being applied to new towns like Ansan, it was not applied to the capital city. Thus, the master plan of Banwall Industrial Complex not only emphasized green space, but also a rapid increase in population and the incorporation of modern technologies to achieve a high level of industrial production.

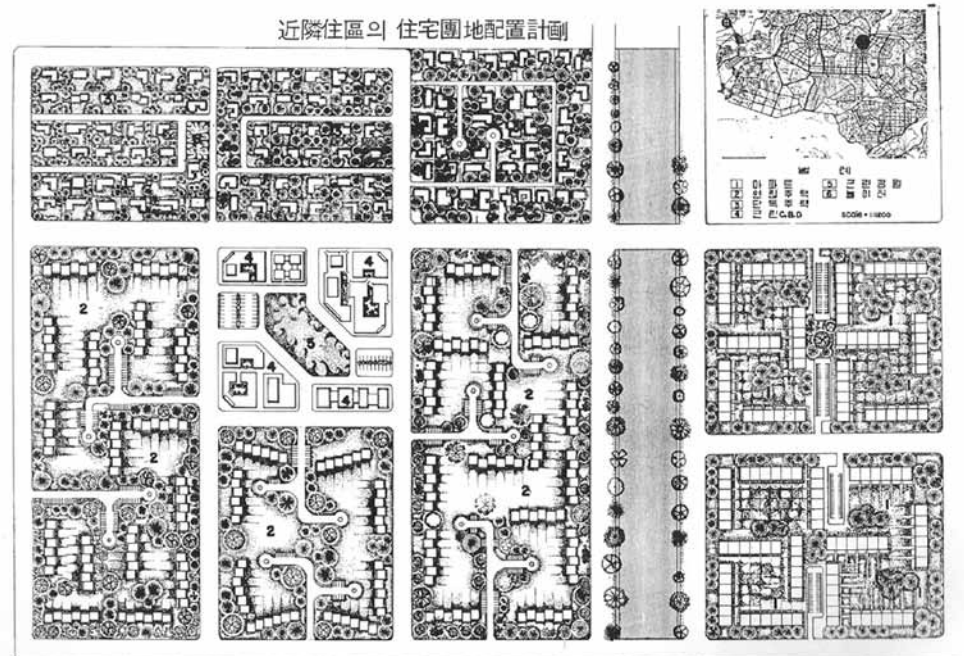
Reflecting the significance of the industrial sector in Ansan, the architectural style of individual buildings also tended to adopt the language of high modernism. In contrast to the detached houses planned for the low-density residential district, a modernist architectural style and concrete construction was encouraged for apartment buildings that would accommodate large numbers of workers (FIG. 4). Although three- to four-story complexes seem far lower in density than contemporary tower-like residential structures, the apartments depicted represented a fairly high density at the time, given that typical apartment structures in Seoul in the mid-1970s were only five stories high. In addition, the construction of the Banwall Industrial Complex in the southern part of Ansan was dominated by a streamlined modernist aesthetic that emphasized efficiency. And, in spite of the generous allocation of green space, the organization of streets and the arrangement of building masses in the residential district followed a rigid geometry (FIG. 5).



**FIGURE 4.** Architectural drawing and plan of housing units for bachelors. According to the plan, four individuals would share a bathroom and a kitchen. Source: MLTM, *Basic Plan for the Development of Banwall New Industrial City* (1977)



**FIGURE 5.** *The housing plan of the neighborhood residential district shows linear street patterns.*  
 Source: MLTM, *Basic Plan for the Development of Banwall New Industrial City* (1977).



#### DISSOLUTION OF THE PLAN: CHANGING RESIDENTIAL ENVIRONMENTS OF ANSAN

Despite the initial dream that Ansan would become a model city with a balance of green and industrial space, the built result was far from such a utopian image. Rapid development meant that the negative externalities associated with its industrial facilities were never adequately addressed. The population of Ansan grew to an estimated 200,000 to 300,000 by 1985, and increased several times over after that.<sup>12</sup> In addition to the explosive increase in population, the shoddy construction of urban infrastructure contributed to a deterioration of the natural environment.<sup>13</sup> The pollution of Sihwa Lake, an artificial lake surrounded by three cities including Ansan, soon became so severe that it was discernible from satellite photos.<sup>14</sup> Moreover, the strict separation of residential and production sites produced undesirable side effects such as long commutes and a lack of housing options.

At the same time, a loosening of central government control following passage of the Local Government Act resulted in decreased enforcement of guidelines and codes specified in the master plan. With the central government no longer able to manage change, and city government lacking the resources to administer the original plan, older residential areas were quickly transformed into slums. Remaining residents of these older districts suffered particularly from the foul smells emanating from the nearby Banwall Industrial Complex; some even complained of sleeplessness because of them. According to an environmental inspection report by the Secretariat of the National Assembly in 1998, the level of lead in the atmosphere of Ansan and Sihwa was the highest

in the country.<sup>15</sup> The level of dioxin — one of the most toxic industrial chemicals, and a byproduct of incineration plants in the Banwall Complex — was another source of concern, and led to several investigations by the Ansan Environmental Technology Development Center.

Another negative result of rapid and reckless industrial development was a lack of cultural and educational infrastructure. According to a 2007 study, education-related services occupied the lowest percentage (0.6 percent) of all business groups in the Wongok-dong area of Ansan, where Borderless Village is located.<sup>16</sup> Considering the proliferation of private educational services and afterschool programs elsewhere in South Korea, the lack of such facilities in Ansan was extremely unusual. And while commercial establishments such as restaurants, small shops, and nightclubs thrived, their absence rendered the industrial town unattractive to families with school-aged children. With worsening living conditions, the construction of large-scale apartment buildings in the eastern part of Ansan during the 1990s brought a further decline in the number of residents of Wongok-dong. This decrease eventually resulted in interruptions of commercial functions.<sup>17</sup> In contrast to the intention of city planners and policy-makers to produce a model industrial town, the result was a dystopic landscape plagued by industrial pollution and waste and labor shortages.

However, the problems of Ansan did not result in complete failure. In spite of rapid population decline and the depletion of natural resources, the Wongok-dong area soon came to be repopulated by foreign migrant workers. Implementation of the Industrial Trainees System in 1993 by the Kim Young Sam administration, which promoted globaliza-



**FIGURE 6.** Goshiwon are very common in the Wongok-dong area, where Borderless Village is located. Most of them are crammed in upper floors of existing buildings. Photo by author.

tion as a political slogan, encouraged a flow of migrant laborers into South Korea.<sup>18</sup> Most of these migrants came from poorer countries, including China and parts of Southeast Asia, and many had only minimal skills. In Ansan, most of the migrant workers were employed on assembly lines in the Banwall and Siheung Industrial Complexes, where they performed repetitious and mechanical jobs. Since most migrant workers were single and lacked enough money to utilize the South Korean rent system of *jeonse*, demand for smaller units skyrocketed.<sup>19</sup> Consequently, in contrast to the master plan, which designated Wongok-dong as a low-density residential district, the area became a site of intensive development. With the decreased role of the central government and a lack of local government resources to administer planning policies, private interests began to take advantage of the high demand for smaller, more affordable housing by subdividing larger units.

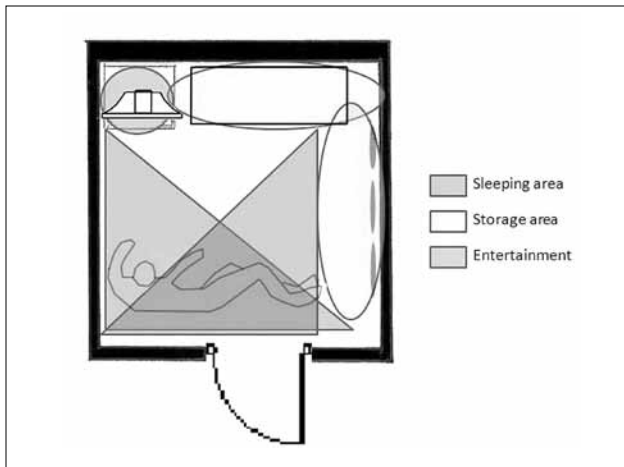
The most extreme example of this demand for low-cost housing are *goshiwon* (高試院), single-room residences that are common in the Wongok-dong part of Ansan (FIG. 6). The term is derived from the small spaces used by students preparing for state examinations, such as the bar exam. Instead of living in an apartment or a house with roommates or family members, students found it more productive to rent small, quiet spaces for themselves. Although *goshiwon* began simply as study spaces with communal bathrooms, they were soon transformed into residential spaces, as students, wishing not to commute, fell asleep at their desks.<sup>20</sup> *Goshiwon* also began to be occupied by more destitute populations such as the chronic jobless, the disabled, and foreign workers who could not afford higher rents elsewhere (FIG. 7). After many South Koreans lost their jobs during the structural-adjustment period of the late 1990s, the percentage of *goshiwon* dwellers not involved in preparing for examinations increased significantly. In fact, less than half (42.7 percent) of those who live in *goshiwon* today are actually preparing for exams, while 57.3 percent are staying there for economic reasons.<sup>21</sup> Originally, since *goshiwon* were not officially

recognized as residences, the illegal subdivision of upper floors required to produce them also placed them technically beyond the scope of legal protection. Some *goshiwon*, such as those in the Sinrim-dong part of Seoul, were developed for students and continue to be used principally by students preparing for exams. However, the *goshiwon* complexes in Wongok-dong were specifically developed to house the new urban poor: neither does the area have a large pool of students, nor is it close to any major academic institution. The proliferation of *goshiwon* illustrates how residential conditions worsened to a significant degree in Ansan despite the outward appearance of lowrise structures reminiscent of the “bachelor” housing units once envisioned in the master plan.

Although there are various types of *goshiwon*, including more luxurious ones with separate bathrooms and kitchens, *goshiwon* in Wongok-dong can be as small as 44 square feet (about four square meters). Usually, they are equipped only with a small TV, since the extremely small living area prevents occupants from accumulating other furniture. In this



**FIGURE 7.** A *goshiwon* complex consists of narrow hallway with minuscule rooms opening on both sides. Photo by author.



**FIGURE 8.** Diagram showing the approximate uses within a goshiwon. Drawing by author.

minimal habitation, every bit of space is used as efficiently as possible. Thus, one side wall is reserved for hanging clothes, while the space next to TV is reserved for the storage of personal items (FIG. 8). Leftover space is for sleeping — a full-grown man can barely lie down across the length of the room, which can make it quite uncomfortable.

Besides their low level of comfort, *goshiwon* may sometimes be accessed only by narrow hallways, creating great potential danger during an emergency. With many doors open simultaneously into such a space, quick escape would be impossible. Indeed, a series of fires in *goshiwon* in other metropolitan regions have resulted in many deaths and injuries. Yet, despite poor safety standards and a lack of comfort, many people choose to stay in *goshiwon* because of their cheap rent, which in Wongok-dong can be as low as 30 thousand Korean won (about US\$30) per month. Considering that studio-type apartments with separate bathrooms and kitchens require at least twenty to thirty thousand Korean won (about US\$200 to US\$300 per month), with an additional security deposit, the cost of *goshiwon* is attractive to the impoverished, many of whom border on becoming homeless.

Such high-density development stands in sharp contrast to the uncongested urban areas and low-density residential complexes envisioned in the Banwall master plan. Moreover, instead of the bucolic neighborhood portrayed in the architectural renderings, the ground level of buildings today is usually occupied by commercial activities. And while the master plan was intended to promote ordered growth, the rigid geometry of its street layout and building blocks could not prevent highly irregular and messy ground-level extensions from springing out to accommodate these activities. Although cylindrical bollards delineating pedestrian areas serve as a general boundary for these activities, the purpose of such devices is often circumvented by shop owners who use them



**FIGURE 9.** Shops on the first floor of goshiwon buildings extend to the street of Wongok-dong, forming a marketplace. Photo by author.

for storage (FIG. 9). A combination of the worsening residential environment and media reports of criminal activities in Wongok-dong has further generated an image of urban dystopia in the minds of many South Koreans. Initiatives by the Ansan Migrant Community Service Center (AMCSC), such as the provision of free medical services to foreign migrants on weekends, help mitigate these conditions. But such gestures produce only one-time benefits without addressing structural problems associated with national labor and immigration policies.

Despite the declining material conditions of Wongok-dong, it is too early to write it off as simply another failed attempt at utopianism. Its messy appearance does not reflect the full capacity of its residents. Although the identity of migrant workers has traditionally been defined principally in economic terms, this view may be challenged if the workers' spatial practices might come to include political and community volunteer activities. Borderless Village thus promotes a concept of borderless citizenship which includes the utopian pursuit of social justice by reducing discrimination against migrants. The case of Borderless Village thus illustrates how the concept of citizenship as fixed status is increasingly being replaced by one of "performative citizenship."<sup>22</sup> Such positions also challenge the strict dichotomy between national identity and deterritorialized cosmopolitanism.

Before delving into specific spatial practices in Borderless Village (which make it a candidate for a "space of hope"<sup>23</sup>), it is necessary to examine articulations of citizenship and theoretical positions regarding global citizenship. Despite the skepticism surrounding the idea, I argue that it is pertinent to understand the political dimensions of contemporary spatial practices that are seemingly unrelated to the exercise of citizenship rights.

## GLOBAL (BORDERLESS) CITIZENSHIP

Despite the widespread presumption that nation-states are being weakened in the age of globalization, many scholars have argued that states remain powerful agents of economic and socio-cultural exchange.<sup>24</sup> In highly asymmetrical processes of transnational exchange, for example, control of borders and national citizenship has become a central method to curb or encourage transnational movements. Contrary to the rosy picture of disintegrating borders and the creation of a worldwide fraternity, the result has been an entrenchment of sectarian politics and the jealous guarding of privileges. Although the development of communication and transportation technology has facilitated movements of people, the benefits of such innovations have not been spread evenly over income and population groups. While those enjoying “flexible citizenship” may take advantage of porous borders, the less fortunate are subject to harsher realities.<sup>25</sup> For instance, the majority of migrant workers in Borderless Village suffer from an ambiguous legal status as well as various forms of social and economic discrimination. One reason is that although most migrant workers enter South Korea legally, their continuing status is dependent on conformance to rules laid out in employment contracts. For instance, those who find better-paying jobs once in the country risk becoming “illegal” if they take them, since existing employment policy does not allow them to change workplaces without the consent of their employers.

While the classical conception of citizenship does not acknowledge the rights of migrant workers, many activists have appealed to the concept of global citizenship to address such forms of social injustice. Yet, despite the widespread use of the term, it lacks fixed definition. Although it generally refers to political rights beyond the boundary of nation-states, the concept provokes disagreement and controversy among scholars. The most common criticism is based on a fear of cultural relativism, and emerges from a communitarian and republican point of view. Other critics claim that the idea lacks ontological basis. Still others argue that the idea is redundant, or else they question whether it is practicable given the lack of political and legal institutions.<sup>26</sup> Just as the concept of utopia remains elusive, so the concept of global citizenship seems unfeasible and largely metaphorical.

Nevertheless, contemporary global conditions encourage a more flexible interpretation of citizenship to counter new forms of oppression. For instance, Hans Schattle has argued that practices of global citizenship are complex and tangible, showing that the concept is more than an abstract ideal.<sup>27</sup> And to counter the communitarian claim that global citizenship creates politically “thin” societies, April Carter has suggested that “accepting general duties does not entail denying the pressing claims of particular obligations and ties.”<sup>28</sup> The assumed antithetical relationship between national identity and cosmopolitanism has also been challenged by examples of constructive feedback between national allegiance and uni-

versal human rights. Nigel Dower has thus extended the applicability of global citizenship by arguing that one is a global citizen regardless of one’s particular awareness.<sup>29</sup> The reason is that some issues, such as environmental degradation and gender inequality, transcend national borders. The emergence of multinational NGOs and international political bodies also suggests that, despite the contention surrounding the definition of global citizenship, the concept is far from meaningless.

Whether or not it is compatible with the concept of national citizenship, a more imperative question may be the extent to which global citizenship affects and is affected by the traditional conception of national territory. Many scholars have argued that granting full citizenship rights (such as the right to vote) to migrant workers may not be desirable, since it may create a political backlash.<sup>30</sup> However, the establishment of a graded system of rights may likewise create pools of second-class citizens, hatching conditions for “insurgent citizenship” in the long run.<sup>31</sup> A significant portion of migrant workers — or “metics” to borrow Will Kymlicka’s rearticulation of a Greek term — plan to return home, but eventually change their minds, generating “permanently disenfranchised, alienated, and racially or ethnically defined underclass.”<sup>32</sup>

In such a context, the experimental community encouraged by Borderless Village, which seeks to change the perception of migrant workers “from the providers of cheap labor to social and political human beings with rights,” may provide a model of global citizenship that is applicable within a variety of nation-states with rapidly diversifying populations.<sup>33</sup> Despite skepticism regarding global citizenship, the concept can thus be based on a set of agreements on human rights, which, if applied appropriately, can generate the preconditions for a utopian society. Instead of emphasizing the neo-Kantian certainty of the Enlightenment, the issues involved may be approached with cautious optimism and regard for particulars. Despite the communitarian critique of global citizenship, the case of Borderless Village illustrates that one can be a responsible community member and a global citizen at the same time.

## SPATIAL PRACTICES OF BORDERLESS VILLAGE

Although the organization Borderless Village ultimately emerged in response to the global migration of labor, the initial impetus for its formation involved issues related to the local physical environment. The spatial practices of Borderless Village demonstrate that even overcrowding and failed modernist planning cannot prevent the formation of a vibrant community if new meanings become attached to old sites. In particular, while the presence of most migrant workers on the streets of Borderless Village is directly related to their role in larger systems of economic production, that presence generates the conditions for further involvement, including community volunteer work and political activity.





**FIGURE 10.** The streets of Wongok-dong are lined with stores, as well as garbage bags, which often accumulate due to unfamiliarity with the South Korean garbage system. Photo by author.

For instance, the concentration of migrant workers necessitated the start of a monthly village-wide clean-up day, during which migrants and long-time residents join each other to clean the streets. Following the polluter-pay principle of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), the South Korean government adopted a volume-rate garbage system in 1995. This required residents to dispose of their garbage in designated plastic bags, which had to be purchased in advance. However, conflicts mounted when many migrant workers did not use the standard garbage bags due to their unfamiliarity with the system. Officially employed sanitation workers are charged with collecting the bags, but the continued flow of migrant workers resulted in an accumulation of nonstandard garbage containers, which sanitation workers did not collect (FIG. 10).



In order to alleviate tension and enhance mutual understanding, Reverend Park and several others organized a monthly clean-up day, during which new workers and older residents joined hands to address the problem.<sup>34</sup> Taking advantage of the successful event, Borderless Village was established, aiming to promote multicultural understanding and solutions to other local problems caused by ethnic and cultural diversity. Eventually, organization of the monthly clean-up not only improved sanitation but improved the relationship between migrants and long-time residents. In effect, the act of cleaning the streets, as a form of community involvement, created the image of good neighbors, and thus earned migrants acknowledgement as equal members of the community.

At the same time that the high population density of the area has led to a proliferation of street-level market activities, it has also encouraged politically disenfranchised minorities to engage in performances that give voice to their political views and cultural diversity (FIG. 11). On the one hand, official public programs now include the staging of multicultural festivals such as traditional music performances and dances, organized mainly by South Korean volunteers with the participation of migrant workers. But, on the other, migrant workers themselves have organized unofficial activities that are more controversial. For instance, members of the Falun Gong religious movement use the plaza in front of the Ansan subway station and the meeting square of Wongok-dong to voice dissent against the policies of the Chinese government by popularizing alleged human rights abuses.<sup>35</sup> Regardless of controversies surrounding Falun Gong, the strategy of appealing to universal human rights illustrates how practices of global citizenship can spring up in unexpected ways. Whereas South Korean volunteers and government workers focus their efforts on addressing the relationship between migrant workers and mainstream Korean society, migrant workers have attempted to publicize political issues in their homelands — thereby educating passers-by to cultural and political conditions elsewhere.



**FIGURE 11.** Political campaigns include promotion of multicultural understanding as well as introduction of foreign political issues. Photos by author.



Another possible positive result of the presence of migrant workers may be the development of *goshiwon* as a new low-income housing market. This will ultimately involve addressing the safety of buildings in which they are located and improving their level of comfort. But despite apprehensions and controversy regarding the proliferation of *goshiwon*, the typology does provide affordable housing for people who would otherwise have no options. Although a studio apartment with a separate bathroom and kitchen (which may rent for US\$300 per month, with a security deposit of US\$2,000 to \$3,000), is considered ideal for each individual, such housing may not be practicable given that 33 percent of non-regular factory workers in Ansan earn less than US\$1000 per month.<sup>36</sup> Given the sharp increase in rent from a *goshiwon* to a studio apartment, it may be necessary to seek alternatives, rather than insist on the relatively high living standards of developed countries. Recent implementation of a new housing ordinance, which legalized *goshiwon*, offers a glimmer of hope. While bringing *goshiwon* within legal bounds, it requires a minimum corridor width of five feet and the installation of fire sprinklers.<sup>37</sup> Thus, although the original lack of affordable housing has generated an unconventional new form, that form is gradually being incorporated into the official housing market with appropriate regulatory oversight.

The combined effect of the aforementioned practices — the monthly clean-up, street festivals/political campaigns, and the legalization of *goshiwon* — might not seem to be enough to produce significant change within South Korean society — let alone usher in a state of utopia. However, if one accepts a process-oriented and temporal notion of utopia, such practices are far from meaningless mini-spectacles. Nor should the local/global dichotomy be accepted as normative in a way that assumes local issues have only a minor influence on global practices. The fact that such local events do not directly address the political rights of migrant workers vis-à-vis South Korean society should not be mistaken as a sign of unmitigated subjectivity. As Mark Goodale has pointed out, it is “much easier to appropriate the idea of human rights for specific legal, political, or social purposes than it is to embrace the radically alternative conception of the person.”<sup>38</sup> Thus, depending on local context, the practices of global citizenship can take diverse forms which might not fit into the definition of activism espoused by classical political theories. For example, the ability of migrant Chinese workers in South Korea to address political issues in their homeland illustrates that globalization creates new political domains that can be utilized in unexpectedly multiscale ways.

#### BEYOND SUPERFICIAL MULTICULTURALISM

This article has attempted to show how the unpredictable nature of globalization may cause both the perversion of utopian planning as well as the possible conversion of dystopian land-

scapes into spaces of hope. On the one hand, the case study of Ansan illustrates how optimism associated with efforts to build a model community was shadowed by a corollary plan to relocate pollution-generating industries from Seoul. The resultant perversion of the initial plan for Ansan thus shows how the utopian impulse always contains room for manipulation and distortion. On the other hand, more recent urban development has shown how the ambiguity inherent in the idea of utopia can be utilized in reverse to promote social justice and political participation. While the failure of traditional articulations of utopia may spread cynicism and shade the very impulse with pejorative connotations, I have tried to show that a more flexible definition of the term may help counter such fatalism. Likewise, the concept of global citizenship, which advances the idea of cosmopolitanism in a productive new direction, may be valuable in countering the spread of ethnocentric views and other repugnant forms of essentialism.

Admittedly, there are many unfavorable conditions which prohibit the actualization of borderless citizenship in Ansan. Most migrant workers still suffer from socioeconomic discrimination and unstable immigration status. Notwithstanding the South Korean government's attempt to promote multicultural understanding — as by hosting various cultural events — inconsistent and opportunistic enforcement of immigration law emphasizes how such efforts fail to treat migrants as more than an economic necessity. While multicultural events can add flavor to the experience of street life in Ansan, they may do little more than generate interest in superficial cultural forms, such as traditional clothes and musical instruments. Furthermore, increased crime has led to reports in the popular media that describe the area of Borderless Village as home to uprooted drifters. Despite the absence of the homeless, the abject residential environment of Ansan is far from a safe haven for members of the global community.

However, the presence of negative externalities should not preclude a conceptual reconsideration of the relationship between utopia and social practice. As the case of Ansan illustrates, the failure of a plan or design scheme does not necessarily take away the transformative potential generated by changes in spatial patterns. Conversely, the successful completion of a social project does not guarantee the fulfillment of a utopian dream. If dystopias of globalization can bring increased inequality, environmental degradation, and cultural homogenization, utopias of globalization can bring transnational political mobilization, heightened environmental consciousness, and a demise of cultural essentialisms.

The time when formulaic solutions were presented as viable options is long past. Flexible adaptations according to local context as well as the selective inclusion of controversial spatial practices can build conditions for the formation of a vibrant community. What is needed is the ability to tap into the ambiguity created by volatile forces of globalization. Only then will contemporary versions of the Brave New World start to reverse course.

## REFERENCE NOTES

1. C.-E. Park, *Yijoomin Shinhak gwa Gookgyung Upnun Maul Shilchun* [A Theology of Migrants and Practices of Borderless Village] (Ansan: Borderless Village, 2006).
2. Ministry of Land, Transport, and Maritime Affairs (MLTM), *Banwall Shingongup Doshi Gaebal Gibon Gaehoek* [The Basic Plan for the Development of Banwall New Industrial City] (Seoul: MLTM, 1977).
3. While Thomas Friedman has argued that globalization brings the desirable destruction of impediments to free competition, Joseph Stiglitz has argued that it will aggravate global economic inequalities. See T.L. Friedman, *The World is Flat: A Brief History of the Twenty-First Century* (New York: Audio Renaissance, 2005); and J. Stiglitz, *Globalization and Its Discontents* (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 2002).
4. See F. Furet, *The Passing of an Illusion: The Idea of Communism in the Twentieth Century* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1995); and F. Jameson, *Archaeologies of the Future: The Desire Called Utopia and Other Science Fictions* (London: Verso, 2005).
5. K. Kumar, "Aspects of the Western Utopian Tradition," *History of the Human Sciences*, vol.16, no.1, pp.63–77.
6. P. Hayden, "Globalization, Reflexive Utopianism, and the Cosmopolitan Social Imaginary," in P. Hayden and C. El-Ojeili, eds., *Globalization and Utopia: Critical Essays* (New York: Palgrave, 2009), pp.53.
7. D. Harvey, *Spaces of Hope* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2000), p.196.
8. For instance, *The story of Kildong Hong* (洪吉童傳), written by Huh Gyoony in the late Chosun dynasty, ends in the establishment of a utopian nation called Yool-do, where class hierarchy and other forms of social injustices are abolished. In another novel, *Story of Huh Seng* (許生傳), a utopian nation is established on an island where a group of destitute farmers-turned-thieves are given new opportunities. Both Kildong and Huh Seng are characters with strong desires for social reform.
9. See R. Munck, "Glocalization and the New Local Transnationalisms: Real Utopia in Liminal Spaces," in Hayden and El-Ojeili, eds., *Globalization and Utopia*.
10. In the novel, Kil-nyoh (the female character) moves from a rural village to Seoul only to end up as a prostitute. Sang-hyun (a male character from the same village) comes to Seoul to find her. They return to the village together after realizing that there are no places for them in Seoul. H. Lee, *Seoul Un Manwon Ida* [Seoul Is Full] (Seoul: Moonwoo Publishing Company, 1966).
11. J.-H. Jeong, "Ansan as a Spatial Fix to Congested Seoul and Massive Accumulation of Smaller Enterprises," in G. Jeong, ed., *Kundae Ansan ui Hyungsung kwa Baljun* [The Formation and Development of the Modern City, Ansan] (Paju: Hanwool Academy, 2005), p.70.
12. J.W. Han, "Ansanshi Wongokdong Yijoomin ui Youngyuk hwa Gwajung" ["The Regionalization Process of the Immigrants in Wongok-dong, Ansan-City"], Master's thesis, Korea National University of Education, 2008.
13. According to Gunhwa Jeong, 41,022 cases of construction defects were discovered in the 514-kilometer section of a sewer pipe, which occupies a staggering 46 percent of the whole sewer pipe in Ansan. See Jeong, ed., *Kundae Ansan ui Hyungsung kwa Baljun*, p.30.
14. *Ibid.*, p.42.
15. The National Assembly, *The Report of Government Inspection and Suggested Rectification: Ministry of Environment* (Seoul: National Assembly, 1998), p.19.
16. B.-Y. Seoh, "Ansanshi Wongokdong Whegookin Guhjooji ui Naebuguchowa Munhwa Gyungwan e gwanhan Yeongu" ["A Study on Internal Structure and Cultural Landscape of the Foreign Residential Area in Wongok Dong, Ansan City"], Master's thesis, Kongju National University, 2007.
17. Park, *Yijoomin Shinhak gwa Gookgyung Upnun Maul Shilchun*, p.40.
18. Among many weaknesses of the Industrial Trainees System, the ambiguous status of trainees encouraged workers to desert the designated workplaces in search of better wages. It was substituted later with the Employment Permit System in 2004.
19. *Jeonse* is a kind of lease system unique in South Korea. Instead of monthly rents, a tenant pays a lump sum deposit for a year or two. After the end of the lease, the tenant receives the full deposit back. The deposit amount varies from place to place. It can range from 20 to 30 percent of the market value of the property to up to 80 percent depending on the availability of housing.
20. B.I. Choi, "Goshiwon Gunchuk ui Moonjejum mit Gaesun Banghyang e Guanhan Youngoo" ["A Study on the Institutional Problems of the State Exam Students' Residential Buildings and Their Solutions"], Master's thesis, Graduate School of Engineering, Yonsei University, 2009, p.9.
21. D. Shinyoon, "Yiship Yilsegi Jjok Bang, Goshiwon Korea" ["The Twenty-First-Century One-Room Goshiwon, Korea"], *Hankyoreh* 21, no.733 (October 30, 2008).
22. Martin Albrow argues that the concept of citizenship has more value when it is understood as an accomplishment rather than a status. He differentiates citizenship from nationality by emphasizing the performative aspect of the former. See M. Albrow, *The Global Age: State and Society Beyond Modernity* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1996).
23. Harvey, *Spaces of Hope*.
24. David Miller argues that there are many forms of nationalisms, and moderate versions are beneficial in maintaining nation-states. See D. Miller, *Citizenship and National Identity* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2000).
25. A. Ong, *Flexible Citizenship: The Cultural Logics of Transnationality* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1999).
26. For instance, Stephen Neff has written a critical essay regarding the precarious legal status of cosmopolitan citizenship. S. Neff, "International Law and the Critique of Cosmopolitan Citizenship," in K. Hutchings and R. Dannreuther, eds., *Cosmopolitan Citizenship* (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1999), pp.105–19.
27. H. Schattle, *The Practices of Global Citizenship* (Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield, 2008), p.6.
28. A. Carter, *The Political Theory of Global Citizenship* (London and New York: Routledge, 2001), p.172.
29. N. Dower, *An Introduction to Global Citizenship* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2003), p.131.
30. The argument that democracy and equal rights can actually be harmful to foreign domestic workers is put forward against Western liberal democracy supporting equal rights for workers. See D.A. Bell, "Justice for Migrant Workers? Foreign Domestic Workers in Hong Kong and Singapore," in S. Tan, ed., *Challenging Citizenship: Group Membership and Cultural Identity in a Global Age* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2005), p.51.
31. J. Holston, *Insurgent Citizenship: Disjunctions of Democracy and Modernity in Brazil* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2008).
32. While Kymlicka highlights the importance of cultural identities in the political sphere, he rejects narrowly defined notions of nationalism based on ethnocentric and xenophobic responses. See W. Kymlicka, *Politics in the Vernacular: Nationalism, Multiculturalism, and Citizenship* (Oxford: New York: Oxford University Press, 2001), p.113.
33. Park, *Yijoomin Shinhak gwa Gookgyung Upnun Maul Shilchun*, p.156.
34. The clean-up day is the third Saturday of each month.
35. Falun Gong (FLG), also called Falun Dafa, is a religious movement begun in 1992 by Li Hongzhi. While the movement includes *qigong* exercises to improve health,

it also emphasizes spiritual values such as restoration of morality. After the protests by FLG leaders in 1999, the Chinese government banned the practice of FLG. For more information, see S.-C. Chan, "The Falun Gong in China: A Sociological Perspective," *The China Quarterly*, no.179, pp.665–83; and R.C. Keith and Z. Lin, "The 'Falun Gong Problem': Politics and the Struggle for the Rule of Law in China," *The China Quarterly*, no.175, pp.623–42.

36. According to the Ansan Siheung Nonregular Workers' Labor Center, 36 percent of the workers received US\$1000 to US\$1500 per month, while 33 percent received a monthly wage lower than US\$1000. See Ansan Siheung Nonregular Workers' Labor Center, *Ansan Siheung Jiyuk Bijungkyu Nodongja Shiltaejosa Kyulgwa Bogo mit Tolunhui* [A Panel Discussion and Report Regarding Ansan/Siheung Area Nonregular Workers' Conditions], December 13, 2007.

37. *Goshiwon* were legalized in July 2009, defined as either a second-type neighborhood living facility or accommodation facility depending on the lot size.

38. M. Goodale, *Surrendering to Utopia: An Anthropology of Human Rights* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2009).





# Automobile Utopias and Traditional Urban Infrastructure: Visions of the Coming Conflict, 1925–1940

TED SHELTON

Five automobile utopias presaged a conflict of infrastructures that had profound implications for traditional urban form throughout the twentieth and into the twenty-first century: Plan Voisin (Le Corbusier, 1925 and 1929), The Metropolis of Tomorrow (Ferris, 1929), Broadacre City (Wright, 1932), La Ville Radieuse (Le Corbusier, 1935), and Futurama (Bel Geddes, 1939–40). Each of these proposals sought to resolve the conflict between the ever-increasing speed and large-scale geometries of the automobile and the much finer grain and slower speeds of the traditional city street. The article explores each utopia's typology, intentionality and presentation and its attitudes toward and uses of traditional urban infrastructures.

Throughout early 1926, its second year of publication, *The New Yorker* ran a series of nine cartoons by Alfred Frueh.<sup>1</sup> The cartoons depicted a series of fanciful contraptions that, among other things, allowed cars to pass over and under one another or that used streetlamp standards to hoist cars off the ground for storage (FIG. 1). Each ran with one of two extremely simple captions, either “solving the traffic problem” or “solving the parking problem.” That these punchlines were so straightforward implies that for New Yorkers of the time the “traffic problem” and the “parking problem” were ubiquitous enough so as to require no further explanation. In fact, Arthur Perry, in a 1929 monograph on the neighborhood unit for the regional plan for New York, detailed and diagrammed the locations where two hundred children had been killed by street vehicles in Manhattan during 1926 alone.<sup>2</sup> It is shocking that such a terrible toll was being exacted a mere 27 years after, on these very same streets, Henry Bliss had become the first person to be killed in North America by an automobile.<sup>3</sup> That the daily clash between pedestrians and

*Ted Shelton, AIA, is an Assistant Professor in the College of Architecture and Design at the University of Tennessee, Knoxville.*

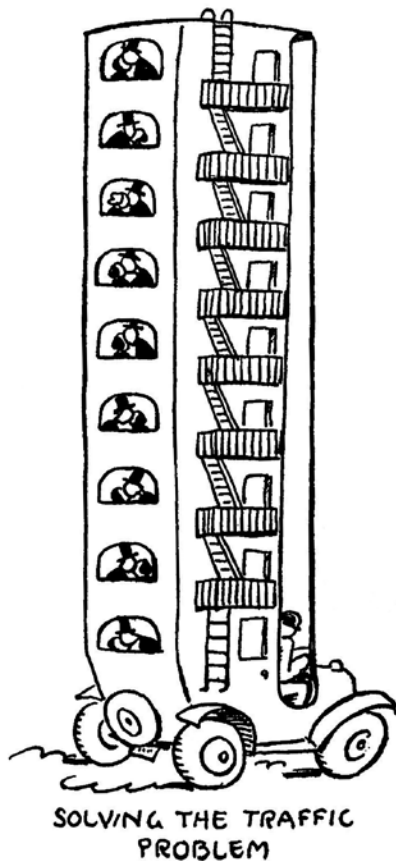


FIGURE 1. Cartoon in the *New Yorker* from 1926. Source: A. Frueh, *The Complete Cartoons of the New Yorker*, R. Mankoff, ed. (New York: Black Dog & Leventhal, 2004).

automobiles in New York had so quickly built to such a deadly pitch points to a fundamental conflict between the expanding ownership and increasing speed of automobiles and the traditional functioning of the city street. Historically, urban streets had absorbed all kinds of uses, yet, clearly, this strategy was no longer working. The infrastructure of the city as conceived and constructed to that point was simply unsuited to absorb the new technology of the automobile.<sup>4</sup>

A new infrastructure, the limited-access highway, was being developed to support the ever-more-popular automobile. Such highways had very few intersections, dedicated or nearly dedicated usage, and straight or gently curving geometries that typically allowed cars to travel at speed with few interruptions. While, by 1925, highway development had been underway for decades in the United States, they had largely been a phenomenon of the American countryside, where their safety record benefited from a relatively sparse population. However, in 1930, the West Side Highway — an elevated, dedicated, high-speed roadway — would push into Manhattan, sparking construction of similar structures across the country and bringing the infrastructure of the

automobile into direct contact, and conflict, with the finer-grained infrastructures of the city. Undoubtedly, this raised highway was at least partly seen as a way to separate automobiles and pedestrians, and so reduce deadly encounters between the two. Yet, while the introduction of the automobile had already caused considerable disruption on the streets of New York, the introduction of the car-dedicated highway would presage a much broader set of difficulties, as architects, planners, urban designers, engineers, and policy-makers sought to reconcile the convenience and independence of the car with the bustle and amenities of the city.

During the interwar period the resolution of this clash of infrastructures would be a subject of much study and speculation. The promise of maintaining the best aspects of the city while leveraging the possibilities of the automobile was a recurring trope in urban planning of the period. One could certainly point to many utopian schemes that either foreshadowed this investigation or dealt with it directly: Garnier's *Une Cité Industrielle* of 1918, Perret and Perret's *Tower Blocks* for Paris of 1922, and Hilberseimer's *Ideal City Plan* of 1927, to name a few. In order to focus the issues, this article examines only five such proposals. The schemes — Plan Voisin/*Ville Contemporaine*, *The Metropolis of Tomorrow*, *Broadacre City*, *La Ville Radieuse*, and *Futurama* — were chosen because they reflect some combination of significant professional and popular interest at the time or because they have had significant influence on urban design thinking since. Each of these proposals casts a long shadow, and each sought to resolve the ever-increasing speed and large-scale geometries of the automobile with the much finer grain and slower speeds of the traditional city street — some by absorbing the highway into the city, others by dissolving the city itself.

#### PLAN VOISIN/VILLE CONTEMPORAINE (1925 AND 1929)

Le Corbusier's Plan Voisin for Paris and his related but more comprehensive *Ville Contemporaine* [Contemporary City for Three Million Inhabitants] were first exhibited in the *Esprit Nouveau* pavilion at the Exhibition of Decorative Art in Paris in 1925, and were later detailed in a book, *Urbanisme (The City of To-morrow and Its Planning)*, in 1929. The publication of *The City of To-morrow* was an event noteworthy enough in the architectural profession that the *Architectural Review* published most of the chapter entitled "The Great City" under the title "Coubusierthology" the month prior to publishing a detailed, though disparaging, review of the book.<sup>5</sup>

The conflict between traditional city structure and the infrastructure of the automobile lay at the very center of the two schemes, and *The City of To-morrow* was a primer on the various aspects of this conflict and how, in Le Corbusier's estimation, they ought to be resolved. In fact, the conflict was both embedded in the name of the project and served as its genesis. In a footnote to the chapter on the Plan Voisin,

Le Corbusier detailed how he had met with the heads of the great French car companies — Peugeot, Citroën and Voisin — and declared to them, “the motor has killed the great city. The motor must save the great city.” He had then asked if they would underwrite the development of

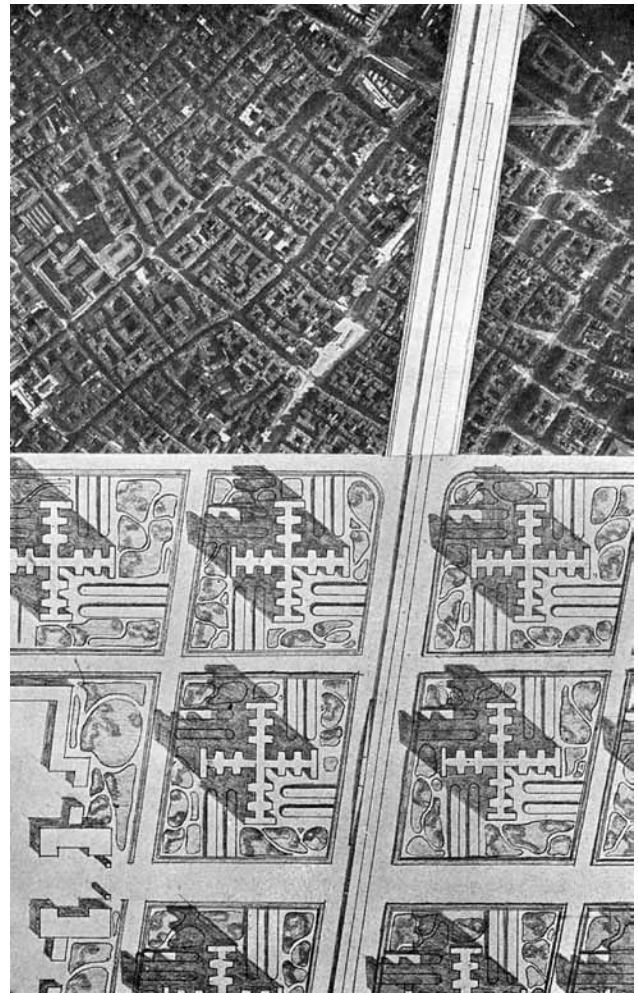
*... a scheme whose sole object would be to concentrate public notice on the true architectural problem of this era, a problem not of decoration but of architecture and town planning; a sane reconstruction of the dwelling unit and the creation of urban organs which would answer to our conditions of living which have been so profoundly affected by machinery [emphasis mine].<sup>6</sup>*

Of the three businessmen, only Monsieur Mongermon of Voisin saw merit in the proposal and agreed to back Le Corbusier’s efforts. Thus, the design became known as the Plan Voisin.

In his introduction to the English translation of *The City of To-morrow*, Frederick Etchells pointed to New York’s West Side Highway as a welcome solution to the traffic congestion in cities, one that lent believability to Le Corbusier’s proposals. He included an illustration of the proposed “motor track,” and declared with some admiration, “The speed for cars will be thirty miles an hour or over. All crossings have been eliminated.”<sup>7</sup> This vertical separation of traffic — both between speeds of wheeled traffic and wheeled traffic and pedestrians — would be a recurring theme in each of the interwar automobile utopias examined in this article. Plan Voisin had three levels of pedestrian-only spaces — “streets of repose,” as Le Corbusier termed them — completely separated from automobile traffic.<sup>8</sup>

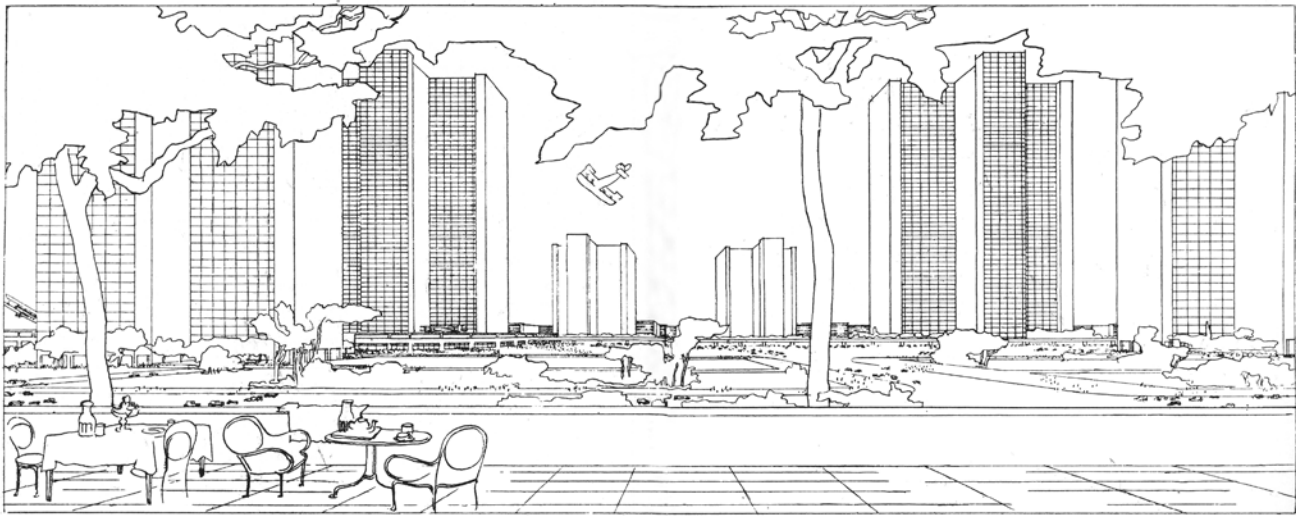
Le Corbusier’s handling of the traditional city fabric in the Plan Voisin was rough, to say the least. A scheme for the center of Paris, the plan essentially proposed scraping the ground clean “from Place de la Republique to Rue du Louvre, and from the Gare de l’Est to the Rue de Rivoli.”<sup>9</sup> This would facilitate the insertion of a new city, based on the needs of the automobile, into the old, which was hostile to the car’s needs. For Le Corbusier there was no need to tinker at the margins when it was clear that the automobile and the structure of the traditional city were incompatible. As he put it,

*This plan makes a frontal attack on the most diseased quarters of the city, and the narrowest streets; it is not “opportunistic” or designed to gain a yard or two at odd points in over-congested roads. Its aim is rather to open up in the strategic heart of Paris a splendid system of communication. As against streets ranging from 20 to 35 feet in width with cross roads every 20, 30 or 50 yards, its aim is to establish a plan on the “gridiron” system with roads 150, 250, to 400 feet in width with cross roads every 350 or 400 yards.<sup>10</sup>*



**FIGURE 2** Plan Voisin — the infrastructure of the automobile overcomes the traditional city. Source: Le Corbusier, *The City of To-morrow and Its Planning* (Dover, 1987). © 2011 Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York / ADAGP, Paris / F.L.C.

Clearly embedded in the most well-known, and most infamous, image of the Plan Voisin is Le Corbusier’s view that the traditional urban street — or “corridor street,” in his parlance — had become a “‘dead organ’ incapable of fulfilling its function” (FIG. 2).<sup>11</sup> Instead, adjacent to the tabula rasa at the center of Plan Voisin is a 400-foot-wide central artery that, while connected to the fabric of the plan, also offers dedicated lanes for through traffic without any grade connections. Just as the central district of the plan is carved from the fabric of the city, this principal artery continues straight through the city, unabated and uninfluenced by any particulars of its context. In Le Corbusier’s view, according to Hughes, the “centre of Paris was too congested, crammed, and old to support the intense motor traffic that the early twentieth century was bringing.”<sup>12</sup> The solution was to eliminate the infrastructure of the Parisian street and replace it with spaces designed



**FIGURE 3** *Deserted terraced plazas.* Source: Le Corbusier, *The City of To-morrow and Its Planning* (Dover, 1987). © 2011 Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York / ADAGP, Paris / F.L.C.

around the car. In the Plan Voisin the traditional city must yield to the infrastructure of the automobile wherever the two were in conflict.

Within each of the massive blocks created by the gridiron of Le Corbusier's plan is a cruciform skyscraper. Thus, he classified it as a "vertical" scheme despite the amount of open, horizontal space it created. Surrounding each skyscraper are gardens and walkways, and on the perimeter of each block is what appears to be a continuous arcade or walkway. Yet, there seem to be no provisions for pedestrians to cross the extra-wide streets, and so the superblocks are like islands in a sea of concrete, each isolated from every other. Furthermore, in Le Corbusier's renderings of the Plan Voisin and the Ville Contemporaine, the cities are so sparsely populated as to have the feel of having been suddenly abandoned by their citizens. In one rendering of the terraced cafes looking out toward the central station of the Ville Contemporaine, for instance, the chairs are empty though the tables are set, despite the caption's assertion that the cafes are "much frequented" (FIG. 3).<sup>13</sup> Quite at odds with reality, the visual sparseness in the presentation of the Plan Voisin and the Ville Contemporaine helps deemphasize the conflict between the car and the pedestrian by making it seem as if one could leisurely walk across their multilane streets.

These limitations were apparent to some contemporaneous critics. Trystan Edwards, in his review of *The City of Tomorrow*, not only pointed out the problems the schemes created for pedestrian and vehicular circulation, but also hinted at another issue that would become important to several of the interwar highway utopias (and eventually in urban planning practice) — namely, that with the rise of the automobile, the center city would no longer be a locus of both living and working. Rather, urban car transportation networks would be

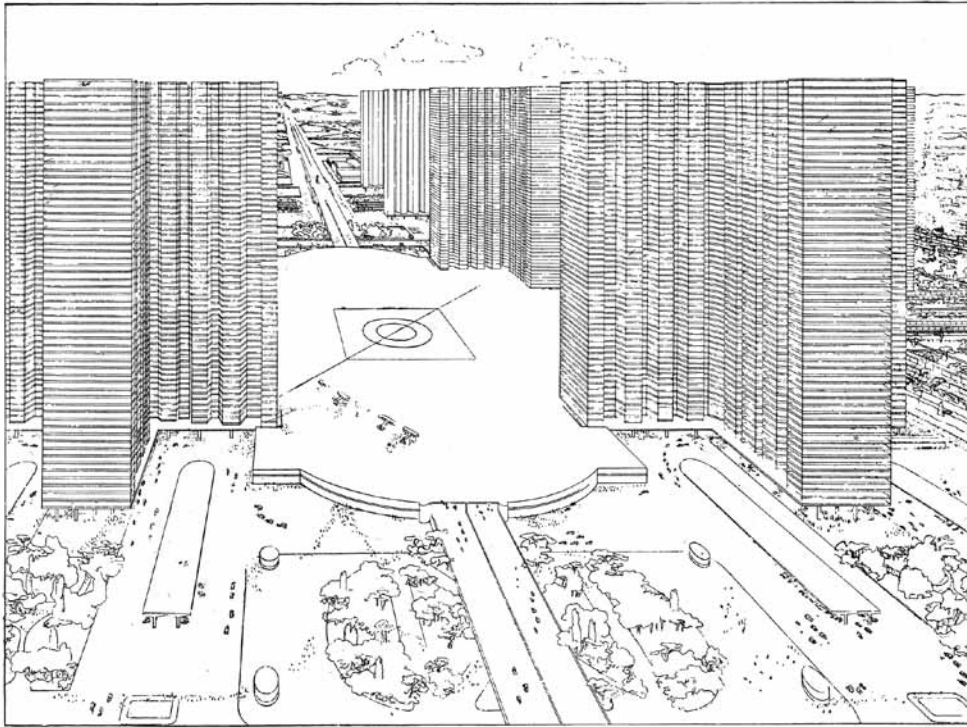
increasingly seen as systems accommodating a daily ingress of workers to the center and a corresponding egress at the end of the work day. Le Corbusier's functionally distinct planning raised but didn't address this issue. As Edwards wrote:

*[T]he trouble arises at the bottle-neck at the base of the skyscraper, and the provision of ample open space around it does not altogether meet the difficulty. In the new city at about 6 p.m. every day 40,000 clerks will be clamouring for exit from each skyscraper, either by railway or by road. How long will it take to get them out? Many of the lifts will not be express, but must have nearly a hundred stopping-places on the way down. And what of intercommunication between the blocks during the day? Would it be possible, for instance, to get from the thirty-fourth floor in skyscraper A to the twenty-seventh floor in skyscraper B as quickly as a man may walk half-a-mile in the City of London?<sup>14</sup>*

In the Plan Voisin and the Ville Contemporaine, as in other interwar utopias to follow, the car and its infrastructure were not seen as playing the role of the traditional urban street, which accommodated transportation as well as social, commercial and civic functions. This stripping of non-transportation-related uses from the street was further facilitated by a growing sense that the center city would no longer be a place of inhabitation. Rather, the street would become a means for maximizing the efficiency and speed of the car, and inhabitants would be separated either horizontally or, increasingly, vertically.

The full development of the vertical separation of transportation functions would be realized in the Ville Contemporaine, in which Le Corbusier applied the ideas of the Plan





**FIGURE 4** Aerial view of the central station of the Ville Contemporaine showing some of the vertical separation of traffic functions. Source: Le Corbusier, *The City of To-morrow and Its Planning* (Dover, 1987). © 2011 Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York / ADAGP, Paris / F.L.C.

Voisin to a greenfield site, proposing a comprehensive city for three million inhabitants. Here Le Corbusier detailed the vertical distribution of the “great central station,” inscribed between four of the cruciform towers. Across six levels of pinwheel trays, he detailed a place for nearly every form of transport imaginable, from airplanes to subways. However, he did not outline a place specifically for pedestrians.

In the well-known image of the Ville Contemporaine taken from a vantage point even with the tops of the skyscrapers, Le Corbusier showed a dedicated motorway stretching to the horizon and parking spots for taxi planes (FIG. 4). The image deemphasizes the negotiation between car and pedestrian. One’s eye is far above the ground; car traffic is thin; and the inhabitants are scattered like ants on the plazas and parks below. Pedestrians still have access to the ground plane, though their realm is ill defined, and they still share it with cars — but now with cars whose routes seem less predictable than in the Plan Voisin. As noted by Robert Fishman, this center “lacks the symbolic value that one might expect. Le Corbusier has placed no cathedral or civic monument there. The center serves people going somewhere else — people in motion.”<sup>15</sup>

#### THE METROPOLIS OF TOMORROW (1929)

Architecture critic Paul Goldberger has positioned Hugh Ferriss in the middle ground of twentieth-century urban visionaries, arguing that “The images he created were not as

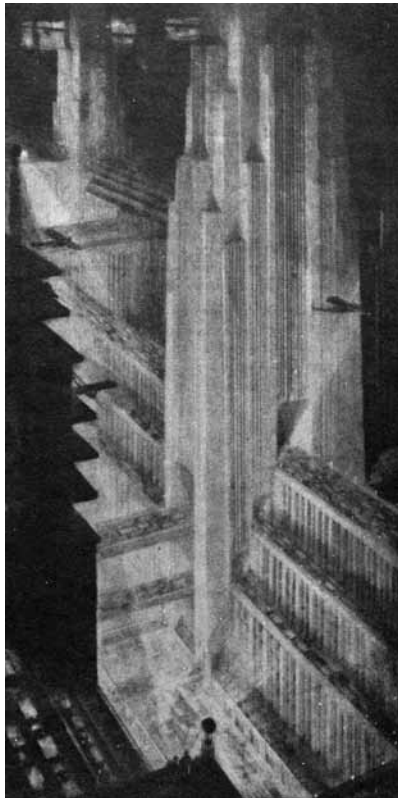
crisply rationalist as those of Le Corbusier nor as romantically suburban as those of Frank Lloyd Wright or Patrick Geddes; neither were they as casual and random as those of Jane Jacobs.”<sup>16</sup> Yet it is interesting to consider how in his 1929 book *The Metropolis of Tomorrow* Ferriss negotiated the distance between existing city fabric and the projection of new infrastructure into that fabric.

Most well-known for its volumetric diagrams of New York City zoning regulations, *The Metropolis of Tomorrow*, despite its forward-looking title, begins rather prosaically with a section comprised of Ferriss’s commercial renderings for various clients as a way of grounding its utopian proposals. The second section is then titled “Projected Trends,” implying that the culminating third section, “An Imaginary Metropolis,” will provide the rational alternative to the changes afoot in the city. Though published in the same year, *The Metropolis of Tomorrow*, in both its title and content, reads as a response to Le Corbusier’s *The City of To-morrow*. This is not altogether impossible, since many of the ideas in Le Corbusier’s book had been public for several years. However, at the time of its publication, *The Metropolis of Tomorrow* seems to have garnered little of the professional and popular attention enjoyed by *The City of To-morrow*. Neither were Ferriss’s ideas about city planning to become as influential as those of Le Corbusier. It is probably only due to the skill of his architectural renderings that Ferriss’s ideas about city planning have passed down to us at all. Yet the vision they provide is a provocative one with respect to the resolution of the infrastructure of the automobile and the traditional city street.

While the structure of *The Metropolis of Tomorrow* helps lend credence to Ferriss's proposals, the sheer weight and energy of his renderings also help make the case. Unlike Le Corbusier's sparsely traveled roadways and sparsely populated parks and terraces, Ferriss's highways and sidewalks teem with activity. It is, in fact, in the second section, "Projected Trends," which also contains the famous zoning diagrams, that Ferriss began to use his consummate skill as a delineator to create a visual argument for the city to come. For Ferriss, the utopian city would not be one of park-like openness; rather, it would be dense (thus the necessity for stepped buildings to allow light and air at ground level), and the accompanying traffic would be intense. He recognized the challenge early on, stating,

*The first tendency, then, with which the following sketches will deal will be the tendency toward concentration. This will lead us at once to the tendency to build higher and higher structures; and we must notice, at the same time, the various proposals to care for the accompanying traffic congestion.<sup>17</sup>*

Two of Ferriss's "Projected Trends" dealt directly with the conflict of automobile and pedestrian on the city streets, and both utilized the vertical dimension as a way to resolve this conflict. He called the first of these "Overhead Traffic-Ways" (FIG. 5).<sup>18</sup> Here Ferriss took the new urban form of



**FIGURE 5** Ferriss's Overhead Traffic-Ways. Source: H. Ferriss, *The Metropolis of Tomorrow* (New York: Washburn, 1929).



**FIGURE 6** Dislocation of the conflicting infrastructures; elevated walkways overlooking a level of wheeled traffic. Source: H. Ferriss, *The Metropolis of Tomorrow* (New York: Washburn, 1929).

the raised motorway to ludicrous new heights. While simultaneously noting the insanity of the accompanying image, he observed that with stepped-back buildings,

*One could drive at will across the facades of buildings, at the fifth, tenth, fifteenth or twentieth story. Automobiles below one, automobiles above one! A paradise, perhaps, for the automobile manufacturer! But for the office worker — less and less escape from the noise, the rush and the atmosphere of traffic.<sup>19</sup>*

The second of Ferriss's trends dealing with the conflict between the emerging automobile and the pedestrian-focused street was "Pedestrians Over Wheel-Traffic" (FIG. 6). Here he used his rendering skills to make an elevated walkway over a bustling multilane highway seem placid and serene, as if the pedestrians were overlooking a stream (an analogy he used in the text as well). In addition to the visible automobile and pedestrian levels, the text described another level of train traffic below. Ferriss presented this abdication of the ground plane as if it were merely a logical step in the evolution of the city. For example, he stated that a future



where stores have a lower entrance for patrons arriving by automobile and an upper entrance for patrons arriving on foot, “however radical, seems in the long run inevitable.”<sup>20</sup> Like Le Corbusier, Ferriss recognized that the speed of the automobile made it incompatible with pedestrian uses. His raised pedestrian ways thus became a proxy street, allowing the city’s traditional functions to continue while the cars enjoyed a new dedicated space within the urban fabric. In the vertical separation of functions the scheme was not unlike Plan Voisin’s terraced cafes. However, the specifics of its outcome were very different due to the insistence on concentration rather than segregated urban functionality.

As Ferriss turned to the final section of *Metropolis*, he laid out his utopian vision of the city of the future. This vision, while not Le Corbusier’s airy parkland, was also not the dark canyons of the “Projected Trends” section. Rather, it described a dense city consisting of a field of six-story buildings punctuated by megalithic stepped towers that straddled several blocks. These buildings are ordered by two street systems. The more prominent of these is a radiating system of large streets, the intersections of which either form civic roundabouts or are covered over by the large towers. The secondary system is a grid of narrower streets that passes through the lower districts (FIG. 7).



FIGURE 7 *The Imaginary Metropolis*. Source: H. Ferriss, *The Metropolis of Tomorrow* (New York: Washburn, 1929).

Ferriss described the larger streets as “a system of broad avenues which must be two hundred feet wide and which are placed about half a mile apart. . . . [H]ere is a system of superhighways which carry the express traffic of the city and . . . the tower buildings are express stations for the traffic.”<sup>21</sup> By contrast, the secondary arteries are “scarcely more than sixty feet wide; obviously . . . to carry only the traffic which is local to the district.”<sup>22</sup> Later, in the description of the first of the large towers (or “centers,” as Ferriss called them), he described an even more complex picture. “Local wheel traffic is on the ground level; express traffic is depressed; pedestrians pass on a separate plane above.”<sup>23</sup> Ferriss’s utopia sought to eliminate the city’s infrastructural conflict by giving each mode of travel its own plane, separated in both plan and section. The resulting structure, devised to free the car from the traditional city street, ordered the very city.

#### BROADACRE CITY (1932)

Frank Lloyd Wright first proposed Broadacre City in a series of lectures in 1930, and expanded on the concept in three books: *The Disappearing City* (1932), *When Democracy Builds* (1945), and *The Living City* (1958). While all of the automobile utopias examined in this article bear some debt to Tony Garnier’s *Une Cité Industrielle* of 1917, perhaps Broadacre City is the most indebted. Images of Garnier’s low-slung, horizontally dispersed, functionally segregated city hugging the surrounding landscape bear a striking resemblance to photographs of the Broadacre City model (FIG. 8).<sup>24</sup> Wright likely saw in Garnier’s proposal the means by which he could achieve his vision of an urbanism suited to contemporary demands. This urbanism would take advantage of the car’s ability to incorporate more of the ground plane into the city. Indeed, in many ways Broadacre City is homage to horizontal distribution.



FIGURE 8 *The Industrial City hugs the land*. Source: T. Garnier, *Une Cité Industrielle* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1989).

Like his contemporaries, Wright recognized the difficulties of meshing the infrastructure of the automobile with the fabric of the city — at least with the fabric of the city as it had been understood to that point. Much like Le Corbusier, he concluded that this meant the “vertical,” “centralized” city must yield to the progress that the automobile (and electronic communications and flight) represented. However, Wright’s response to this idea was more radical in some ways than even the Plan Voisin. Wright saw in these technologies the possibility of social changes so powerful that the city, as it had been constituted to that point, could no longer stand. Wright solved the conflict between the emerging infrastructure of the automobile and the infrastructure of the traditional city by eliminating the traditional city in favor of a landscape organized by the speed and mobility of the car. As he put it:

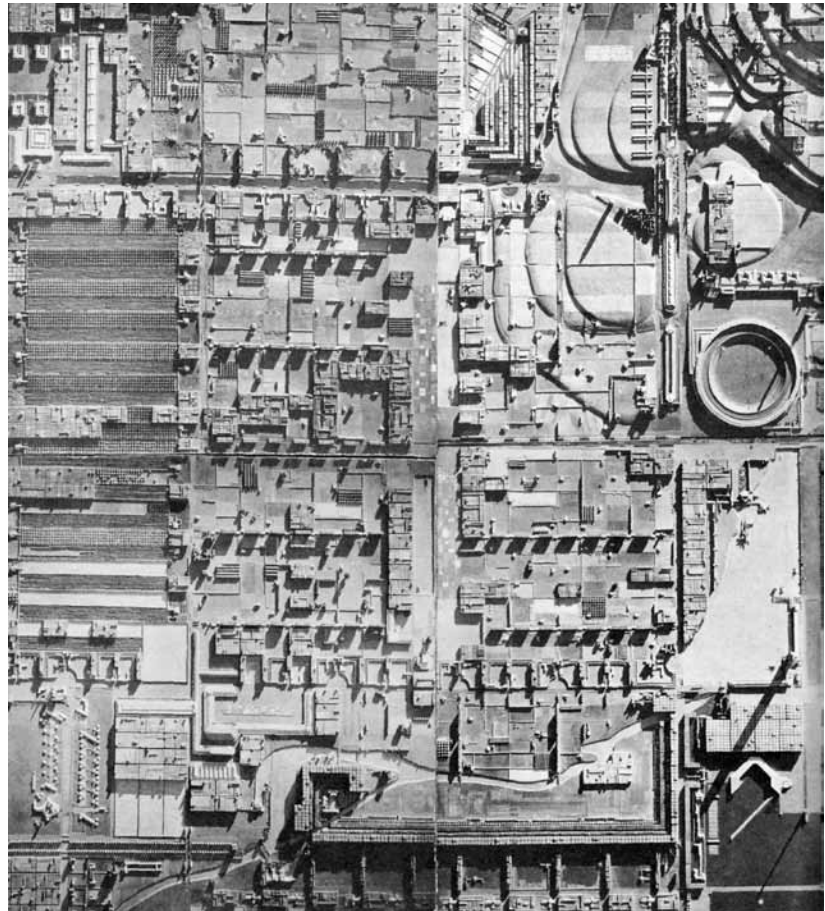
*Let us say that before the advent of universal and standardized mechanization, the city was more human. Its life as well as its proportion was more humane.*

*In planning the city, spacing was based, fairly enough, on the human being on his feet or sitting in some trap behind a horse, or two. Machinery had yet brought no swifter alternative. . . .*

*The fundamental unit of space-measurement has so radically changed that the man now bulks ten to one and in speed a thousand to one as he is seated in his motor car. This circumstance would render the city obsolete [emphasis mine].<sup>25</sup>*

Broadacre City is an inhabitation of the landscape where the scale of the automobile is the dividing metric, allowing its citizens to spread out and claim their acre of land and establish a moral life free from the usury and indentured servitude of the centralized city (FIG. 9). This optimism has led to the justified criticism by Fishman that “Wright was fascinated by the automobile, convinced of its potential to revolutionize modern life and blind to its limitations.”<sup>26</sup> Despite its frequent naiveté, though, Wright’s vision was prescient as to the impacts of technological change in ways that his predecessors were not. According to Peter Rowe, “Broadacre City was seemingly prophetic about modern metropolitan development, especially decentralized outward urban expansion.”<sup>27</sup>

Seeking to reach a broader lay audience with his scheme, Wright also eschewed extensive drawings and turned to models as a primary mode of presentation. He and his apprentices produced an overall model of the scheme along with several



**FIGURE 9** *City dispersed — the Broadacre City model of 1934–35. Source: F.L. Wright, The Living City (New York: Horizon, 1958). © 2011 Frank Lloyd Wright Foundation, Scottsdale, AZ / Artists Rights Society (ARS), NY.*



larger-scale models of individual buildings from Broadacre, which were exhibited at Rockefeller Center and other venues.<sup>28</sup> While attempting to transmit his ideas directly to the public, Wright also authored two sizeable articles on Broadacre in professional journals in April and May of 1935.<sup>29</sup>

The uniqueness of his plan was not lost on Wright. In *The Disappearing City*, he took several jabs at the Le Corbusier, not over aesthetics, but transportation technology, noting the inadequacy of the “gridiron” to deal with modern traffic. Wright saw the other automobile utopias of the time as lacking the intellectual rigor and fortitude to follow technological changes to their ultimate conclusion. This sparring reached its apex when Wright took direct aim at the Plan Voisin, declaring,

*[L]et us approach the traffic problem as a human problem — that is the essential problem the congested city now presents — not as mere tinker or as some garage-mechanic, nor childish [sic], try to tear the out-moded city down to get the green pastures in and set the city up in them again on its old site — feudal towers only a little further apart.<sup>30</sup>*

Rather, Wright saw the challenge of the utopian city as the challenge of leveraging the technology of the automobile (and to a lesser extent the airplane, and even the motorboat) to provide individual citizens with access to light, air, and the earth itself. To emphasize the centrality of the highway and automobile transportation to his scheme, he sought to recast the architect “as the master road-builder,” and he saw “the super-highway and the tributary hard road . . . [as] architectural factors of fundamental if not greater importance.”<sup>31</sup> Much as in the visions of Ferriss and Le Corbusier, the highway would now order the landscape, giving primacy to the infrastructure of the automobile, and the new city would be created upon this armature — only, in Wright’s case, the city would be spread thinly on this framework.

While this strategy did solve many of the conflicts between traditional and emerging infrastructures, it did not alleviate them entirely. In both of his 1935 articles Wright highlighted the design of a grade-separated crossing for levels of traffic: intercity passenger and freight, an arterial street, storage areas, and a monorail. However, he made no mention of pedestrian uses. It was not until the publication of *When Democracy Builds* — its optimistic title implying that Broadacre City would be the blueprint for a postwar building boom — that Wright grappled in more detail with the remaining conflicts. Here he proposed the model of a grade-separated intersection facilitating four directions of automobile traffic and four directions of foot traffic (FIG. 10).<sup>32</sup> This concept was further elaborated upon in *The Living City*, using photographs of the same model augmented with additional text, plans and sections of the intersection.<sup>33</sup> Yet, despite decades of development, and while convincingly solving the complex sectional problems of the separated grade, the intersection’s right

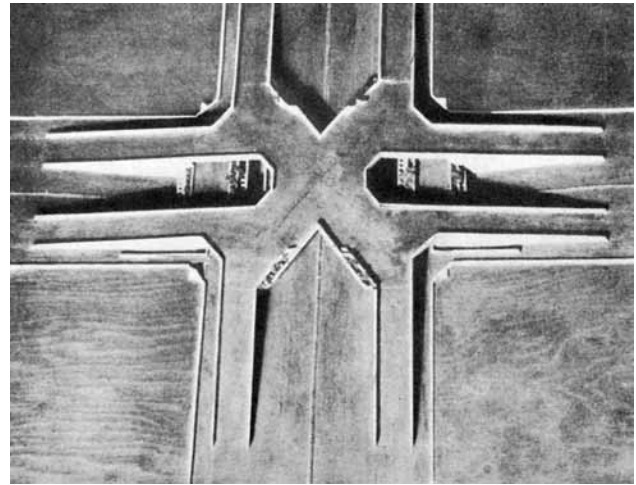


FIGURE 10 Grade-separated intersection for cars and pedestrians. Source: F.L. Wright, *The Living City* (New York: Horizon, 1958). © 2011 Frank Lloyd Wright Foundation, Scottsdale, AZ / Artists Rights Society (ARS), NY.

angles did not provide a credible solution to the problem of a high-speed interchange. Nor in this most humanist of the automobile utopias were the pedestrian passageways through the intersection persuasively humane. Even in its later iteration the intersection remained an abstraction not grounded in the larger Broadacre City model. It was merely an idea for an interchange — recognition that conflicts remained between the automobile and the pedestrian even when the “centralized,” “vertical” city had been successfully dissolved.

#### LA VILLE RADIEUSE (1935)

When Le Corbusier returned to the expansion of his urban planning ideas with the publication of *La Ville Radieuse* [*The Radiant City*], he did so with a renewed interest in vertical separation of traffic types and much more detailed information about how pedestrians would fit into this scheme than in *The City of To-morrow* six years previously. He was unequivocal about what his ideas would mean for the traditional infrastructure of the city. The chapter outlining the detailed relationship of pedestrian and car was entitled “Death of the Street.”<sup>34</sup>

In this chapter Le Corbusier, as he did with all of the other aspects of the Radiant City, put forth a set of standards to guide the work. After declaring that “streets are an obsolete notion,” he proceeded to outline the urban planning principles that would lead to such a conclusion:

*1° Classification of Speeds. Normal biological speeds must never be forced into contact with the high speeds of modern vehicles.*

2° *Creation of one-way traffic. No high-speed vehicle should ever be subjected to the possibility of meeting or crossing the path of other moving objects. "One-way traffic" should become an automatic element of high-speed locomotion put into universal effect (and should not merely imply innumerable quantities of round signs stuck up on posts with white letters against a red background); crossroads (traffic meeting on the same level) should be eliminated.*

3° *High-speed vehicles must all be employed for specifically designated purposes.*

4° *The functions of heavy vehicles.*

5° *The liberation of pedestrians.*

In the Radiant City vertical separation must be used such that not only would pedestrians not come into contact with high-speed vehicles, but the vehicles likewise should not come into contact with each other — a scheme that recalls the grade separation of the early Broadacre model. With regard to Le Corbusier's division of these vertically separated planes of movement, he came to a very different conclusion than did Ferriss as to how they should be allocated. On this point he was forcefully insistent. When discussing the possibility of the ground plane being devoted to the automobile with the pedestrian raised above, he stated with not a little hyperbole:

*I appeal to our human STANDARDS to rescue us from such a suggestion! Is man to spend his life from now on gesticulating up in the air on a series of (inevitably) narrow platforms, climbing up and down stairways — a monkey up in the tree tops! If he possessed he agile feet and the miraculous tail of a monkey it might make sense. But in fact it is madness. Madness, madness, madness. It is the bottom of the pit, a gaping error: the end of everything.<sup>35</sup>*

He went on to insist that in the Radiant City the entire ground plane would be dedicated to the pedestrian. On this point he firmly placed himself in opposition to Ferriss's *Metropolis*, and he strangely aligned himself with Wright's insistence on the citizen's access to land. However, in Wright's horizontal city the ground plane played a distinctively different role than it did in Le Corbusier's vertical one. In Broadacre City access to land was an individual right; one received a privately held acre that was the key to independence. In the Radiant City the ground plane was communal — a giant parkland in which rose object skyscrapers, or over which raised highways hummed.

In the Radiant City, the city was again ordered by the infrastructure of the automobile, rather than requiring the automobile to conform to the traditional city fabric. This is never more evident than when the car interfaces with the skyscrapers. Though the skyscrapers occupy only 5 percent

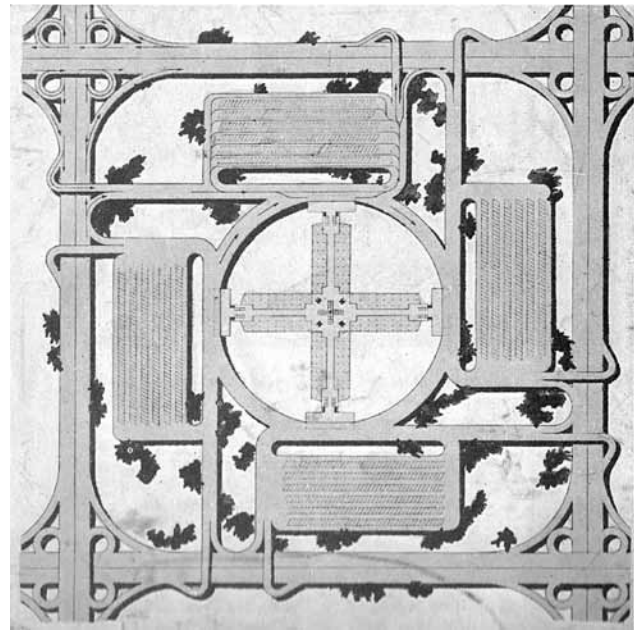


FIGURE 11 *The tangled web — automobile access to the skyscrapers in the Radiant City. Source: Le Corbusier, The Radiant City (New York: Orion, 1967). © 2011 Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York / ADAGP, Paris / F.L.C.*

of the field of the Radiant City, if one adds up all the vehicle space needed to service them, it is hard to imagine how they could possibly take up any more space (FIG. 11). Attached to each skyscraper is an intricate network of overpasses, loops, and parking lots that links it back to the motorways. Seen from this vantage point, the parkland beneath seems a very uninviting prize for the pedestrian to have gained in the Radiant City. In this arrangement the city has again yielded to the automobile: the proposal contains extensive gardens and gleaming, efficient new towers, yet both the gardens and the towers are compromised by their arrangement.

#### FUTURAMA (1939–40)

Designed by Norman Bel Geddes, Futurama was part of General Motors' "Highways and Horizons" exhibit at the 1939–40 New York World's Fair. Visited by more than five million people during the fair's run, its impact on the popular imagination was far reaching. Like Wright, Bel Geddes saw a model as the representational tool best suited for reaching a lay audience. The exhibit also featured a "conveyor-go-round," a belt of continuous seating that carried visitors on a fifteen-minute ride overlooking its incredibly detailed one-acre model, consisting of "more than five hundred thousand individually designed buildings, a million trees of thirteen different species, and approximately fifty thousand motorcars, ten thousand of which careened along a fourteen-lane multi-

speed interstate highway.”<sup>36</sup> The exhibit promised visitors a view of an American landscape of 1960 as seen from the seat of a low-flying airplane.

Accordingly, the exhibit dealt not only with the city, but with the design of an entire region. The model depicted canyons, farmlands, hydroelectric dams, lakes, and a circular airport, and sought to present a wide variety of technological innovations related to automobile transport. As claimed by Alfred P. Sloan, chairman of GM at the time, Futurama was “designed, not as a projection of any particular highway plan or program, but rather to demonstrate in dramatic fashion that the world, far from being finished, is hardly yet begun.”<sup>37</sup> As elucidated in Bel Geddes’s 1940 book *Magic Motorways*, the number of suggested innovations was indeed extensive. They included parallel alternate routes of varying length and configuration for traffic of different speeds, new methods of traffic signaling, redesigned interchanges, advances in illumination, and even suggestions for reducing graft in road contracting.<sup>38</sup>

However, it was the visit to the city of 1960 that was the climax of Futurama, and it was here, of course, that one could see how Bel Geddes dealt with the conflict between automobile infrastructure and the urban street. He began by declaring that the motorway (which he envisioned as sustaining speeds of up to 100 mph) should avoid entering the city altogether — a concept, it has been suggested, that he took

from Benton MacKaye’s 1930 essay “Townless Highway.”<sup>39</sup> As Bel Geddes explained:

*[I]f the purpose of the motorway as now conceived is that of being a high-speed non-stop thoroughfare, the motorway would only bungle that job if it got tangled up with a city. It would lose its integrity. The motorway should serve heavily populated areas, but it does not have to connect population hubs directly. A great motorway has no business cutting a wide swath right through a town or city and destroying the values there; its place is in the country.<sup>40</sup>*

In recognizing the inherent conflict between the speed and individual control of automobility and the traditional uses of the city, it seems Bel Geddes not only understood the fundamental clash of infrastructures, but had banished the highway from his utopian city and eliminated the problem. However, this decree only applied to the largest and fastest network of interstate roads in the Futurama model. The city would be served by feeder boulevards, which would be one-way streets, either 80 or 100 feet in width. Therefore, while the “motorway” was kept at arm’s length from the city, Bel Geddes’s “boulevards” bore a strong resemblance to today’s urban Interstate highways (FIG. 12). As with Le Corbusier’s schemes,

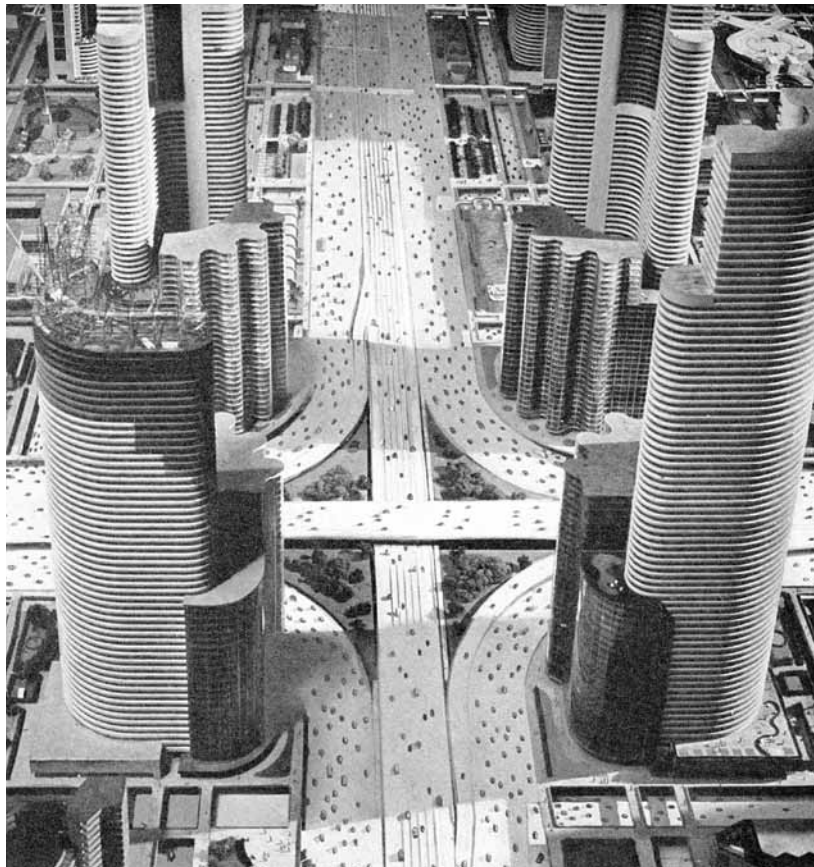


FIGURE 12 The “express boulevards” of the Futurama model. Source: N. Bel Geddes, *Magic Motorways* (New York: Random House, 1940).



Futurama envisioned this system as a conduit for filling up and emptying out the city on a diurnal working-day cycle. In a 1937 article, Bel Geddes painted a picture that would become common in American cities in the coming decades:

*It is at sunset that [the] brave new city appears at its most romantic, with the last rays of the afternoon sun creating a vast patchwork of black and white. On the highways and subways the crowds stream out to the vast suburbs. By midnight, save for the hotels, watchmen, and late revelers, the city is deserted.<sup>41</sup>*

Thus, in Bel Geddes' near-future world of 1960 the city was not to avoid the invasion of the car and its infrastructure, the highway. For Bel Geddes, as for the utopians before him, this meant that the city would be transformed and reordered to conform to the speeds and geometries of the automobile. The car would now create the grain at which the city would be built. This meant that the tallest buildings in the urban core could be spaced further apart to allow for light and air at the lower levels. Yet, in Futurama there is none of the homogene-

ity of Le Corbusier and Ferriss, nor is there the anti-centralization of Wright. The city has a distinct core that is consistently built up, though with no apparent center. It has surrounding suburban development with what we might today read as edge cities. Recreational centers, transportation and shipping hubs, and smaller residential areas are spread further afield, all connected by a high-speed road system. Its similarity to contemporary American cities is striking (FIG. 13).

In the urbanized core, organized as it is by multilane one-way traffic, the traditional urban street is eliminated. Again the challenge of safe urban pedestrianism remained; again the answer would be to utilize multiple planes organized vertically. In *Magic Motorways*, the West Side Highway again makes an appearance, now not as the rendering of things to come heralded in *The City of To-Morrow*, but as a photograph of an orderly and logical solution to the problem of urban automobility. As Bel Geddes stated, "It isn't enough that the pedestrian be separated by the mere height of a curbstone from the cars which he impedes and which menace him. He must be put out of harm's reach. The pedestrian must be made into an efficient transportation unit too."<sup>42</sup>



**FIGURE 13** *The city of 1960 from the air.*  
Source: N. Bel Geddes, *Magic Motorways* (New York: Random House, 1940).





**FIGURE 14** Culmination of the Futurama exhibit at the New York Worlds Fair, 1939–40, where visitors experienced a street intersection in the City of Tomorrow. Source: N. Bel Geddes, *Magic Motorways* (New York: Random House, 1940).

The entire urbanized core is therefore overlaid with a network of raised pedestrian walkways that continues block after block. As in Ferriss's city, the entire ground plane is dedicated to roads, parking, and vehicular deliveries. At Futurama, this arrangement was seen not simply as pragmatic, but as the symbol of progress itself. At the culmination of their "flight" around the future landscape, visitors stepped out of their "plane" and into the model — a full-sized intersection of Bel Geddes's city of 1960. Walking on the raised walkways, they peered down onto the uncluttered "boulevards" used to display very still and very quiet General Motors products. Perhaps this arrangement could be as peaceful as overlooking a stream after all, if only the city were turned into a car lot (FIG. 14). This commercial tableau as proxy for urban fabric is an interesting metaphor for the influence various car companies had on the examined urban utopias.

#### UTOPIAS AND THE NATURE OF OPTIMISM

The urban problems created by the automobile were the prime impetus for rethinking the city during the interwar period, a problem so pervasive that it sparked an outpouring of schemes, including many not examined here. Le Corbusier gave voice to the imperative, stating "our city authorities think that everything will work itself out in the end. It won't. Nothing will work itself out. We have to build new cities."<sup>43</sup> It was clear that the car and the highway were going to change the city. Yet, each designer felt assured that, were his ideas followed, this transformation could be positive for both. Perhaps Wright alone had the courage to ask if the city and the highway were simply incompatible — though his as-

sumption that the city must as a result disappear seems rash, at the very least.

The utopias examined here may be seen as a prologue to the history of the difficult relationship between the highway and the city. The highway/urban interface was to become the site of a decades-long struggle for primacy between the infrastructure of the highway, prioritizing speed and individual experience, and the civic infrastructures that support the intricate interactions of people in complex urban environments. As we continue the effort to balance these two powerful but (if not fully incompatible then at least) unfriendly forces of the built landscape, it is important to consider the possibility that our hopes for a détente might be overly optimistic — as, no doubt, were the utopian schemes examined here. We see their shortsightedness in our cities today. When we walk next to an urban Interstate highway it is decidedly not the placid stream of Ferriss's *Metropolis of Tomorrow* but rather a significant source of noise and air pollution. The land use and resource use difficulties inherent in Wright's Broadacre City are manifested throughout contemporary suburbia. The functional separation of Le Corbusier's urban proposals presaged a time when highway systems were designed expressly to empty cities efficiently at the end of the work day — a strategy that is now being slowly reversed in many places. Bel Geddes's Futurama, for all its optimism, gave a glimpse of a landscape opened through the automobile to haphazard development.

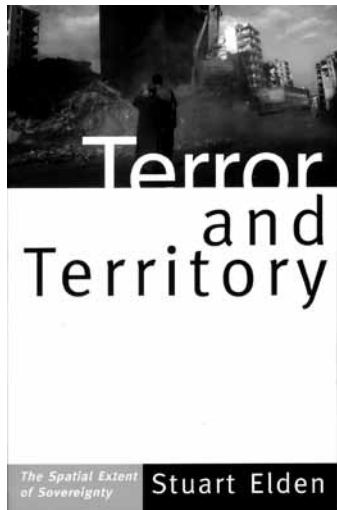
As Duranti has noted, particularly in the interwar period, "[u]topias captured popular imagination in part because they allayed widespread concerns over the dangers of social dislocation, economic crisis and mechanized murder."<sup>44</sup> Seen in retrospect, with the full knowledge of what follows, the five utopian visions provide valuable insights into both societal hopes for the possibilities of new infrastructures and societal blind spots toward the importance of more traditional ones. The investigation of them has contemporary relevance because they represented a first attempt to deal with questions that have still not been adequately answered — questions about the proper relationship between the highway and the city.

Additionally, these utopias provide useful touchstones for the growing contemporary interest in infrastructural urbanism as a mode of (at least speculative) intervention in the American city.<sup>45</sup> Such practices require a rigorous vetting if they are to carry the weight of reasonableness and performance. As with the traditional functioning of the urban street in the examined utopian schemes, an ever-present concern of such proposals must be the justification both for what is lost and what is gained. In other words, do the positive aspects of the proposal outweigh its negatives in both intended and unintended consequences? This questioning requires some mechanism for stepping, at least temporarily, outside of the self-justifying logic of the proposal in order to assess a type of overarching effectiveness that takes into account previously unconsidered variables.

## REFERENCE NOTES

1. The first of these cartoons appeared on January 23, 1926, and the last on May 15, 1926.
2. C.A. Perry, "The Neighborhood Unit," in C.A. Perry et al., *Neighborhood and Community Planning*, Reprint Edition (New York: Arno Press, 1974), p.124.
3. "An American Schooner Wrecked," *New York Times*, September 14, 1899.
4. For a comprehensive account of the difficult transformation of urban streets from public space to transportation network, see C. McShane, *Down the Asphalt Path: The Automobile and the American City* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1994).
5. Le Corbusier, "Corbusierthology," F. Etchells, trans., *Architectural Review*, vol.66 (August 1929), pp.67–70.
6. Le Corbusier, *The City of To-morrow and its Planning*, F. Etchells, trans. (New York: Dover, 1987), pp.277–78.
7. Le Corbusier, *The City of To-morrow*, p.xiii.
8. R. Fishman, *Urban Utopias in the Twentieth Century: Ebenezer Howard, Frank Lloyd Wright, and Le Corbusier* (New York: Basic Books, 1977), p.209.
9. Le Corbusier, *The City of To-morrow*, pp.277–78.
10. *Ibid.*, p.280.
11. Fishman, *Urban Utopias in the Twentieth Century*, p.208
12. R. Hughes, *The Shock of the New* (New York: Knopf, 1981), p.187.
13. Le Corbusier, *The City of To-morrow*, p.246.
14. T. Edwards, "The Dead City," *Architectural Review*, vol.66 (1929), pp.135–38.
15. Hughes, *The Shock of the New*, p.191.
16. P. Goldberger, "Architecture: Renderings of Skyscrapers by Ferriss," *New York Times*, June 24, 1986, p.C13.
17. H. Ferriss, *The Metropolis of Tomorrow* (Princeton: Princeton Architectural Press, 1986), p.59.
18. Such images of multilayered traffic in cities, even several stories high, were not unheard of at the time. In fact, some of Ferriss's renderings bear a striking resemblance to images from Fritz Lang's film *Metropolis*, which was released in 1927.
19. Ferriss, *The Metropolis of Tomorrow*, p.64.
20. *Ibid.*, p.66.
21. *Ibid.*, p.110.
22. *Ibid.*, p.110.
23. *Ibid.*, p.112.
24. T. Garnier, *Une Cité Industrielle: étude pour la construction des villes*, K. Siderakis, ed. (Princeton: Princeton Architectural Press, 1989), plate 2.
25. F.L. Wright, *The Disappearing City* (New York: Payson, 1932), p.20.
26. Fishman, *Urban Utopias in the Twentieth Century*, p.123.
27. P.G. Rowe, "Broadacre City and Contemporary Metropolitan Development," in *The Phoenix Papers, Volume 1*, K.P. Zygas, ed. (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 1995), p.57.
28. Fishman, *Urban Utopias in the Twentieth Century*, p.145.
29. F.L. Wright, "Broadacre City: A New Community Plan," *Architectural Record*, vol.77 (April 1935), pp.243–54; and F.L. Wright "Broadacre City," *American Architect*, vol.146 (May 1935), pp.55–62.
30. F.L. Wright, *The Disappearing City*, p.29.
31. *Ibid.*, p.49.
32. F.L. Wright, *When Democracy Builds* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1945).
33. F.L. Wright, *The Living City* (New York: New American Library, 1970), p.116.
34. Le Corbusier, *The Radiant City*, P. Knight, E. Levieux, and D. Coltman, trans. (New York: Dover, 1967), p.119.
35. *Ibid.*, pp.122–23.
36. A. Morshed, "The Aesthetics of Ascension in Norman Bel Geddes's Futurama," *Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians*, vol.63, no.1 (2004).
37. General Motors Corporation, *Futurama*, undated promotional material.
38. N. Bel Geddes, *Magic Motorways* (New York: Random House, 1940).
39. R. Coombs, "Norman Bel Geddes: Highways and Horizons," *Perspecta*, vol.13/14 (1971), p.18.
40. Bel Geddes, *Magic Motorways*, p.211.
41. N. Bel Geddes, "City 1960," *Architectural Forum*, vol.67 (July 1937), p.62.
42. Bel Geddes, *Magic Motorways*, p.237.
43. Le Corbusier, *The Radiant City*, p.121.
44. M. Duranti, "Utopia, Nostalgia and World War at the 1939–40 New York World's Fair," *Journal of Contemporary History*, vol.4, no.4 (2006).
45. See, for instance, S. Allen, "Infrastructural Urbanism," *Scroope: Cambridge Architectural Journal*, vol.9 (1997–98), pp.71–79; or S. Lloyd and K. Stroll, *Infrastructure as Architecture* (Berlin: Jovis, 2011).

## Book Reviews



*Terror and Territory: The Spatial Extent of Sovereignty.* Stuart Elden. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2009. Xxxii and 257 pp., b&w illus.

Stuart Elden, a political geographer from Durham University, opens his book with a reference to a television broadcast in which an unidentified U.S. president addresses the American people about air strikes taken abroad in response to terrorist attacks. “My fellow Americans, our battles against terrorism did not begin with the bombing . . . nor will it end with today’s strike. It will require strength, courage, and endurance. We will not yield to this threat. We will meet it, no matter how long it may take. This will be a long, ongoing struggle between freedom and fanaticism; between the rule of law and terrorism” (p.xi). As Elden demonstrates, this address could have been given either by George Bush, in the wake of the 9/11 attacks, or Ronald Reagan, perhaps after launching air strikes on Libya in 1986. However, the words were actually spoken by President Bill Clinton in 1998 after the bombing of the U.S. embassies in Kenya and Tanzania. What Elden thus makes clear is that searching for the origins of “the war on terror” is not only complicated but an incredibly misguided task. Where does one begin? Is there a beginning?

In this book, Elden seeks to understand how it is that states define certain acts as terrorism when they themselves employ terror as part of their strategic response to it. In the course of five chapters and a coda, he provides an in-depth analysis of the war on terror through a genealogy of territory as well as its connections to sovereignty, violence and power. As the title might indicate, the term “territory” is much more complicated than it seems; and certainly after reading this book, Elden will convince you of it.

Using September 11, 2001, as a starting point, one of Elden’s purposes is to deconstruct Western conceptions and images of terrorism. These include weak states (particularly those that harbor terrorists), neocolonialist ideas of “democracy promotion” and “freedom,” and neoconservative geopolitical theories that effectively rationalize certain acts as “terrorism.” He also makes the point that while the “war on terror” has been largely defined as a “deterritorialized” threat (on the basis that agents of terrorism, such as Al-Qaeda, operate through multiple geographies and employ a decentralized network), it has been fought, justified and strategized in very specific places. To borrow from Benjamin Barber’s 2004 *Fear’s Empire: War, Terrorism, and Democracy* (New York: W.W. Norton), it is this “tortured logic” that illuminates the ways in which territory informs the contemporary dynamics of sovereignty. It is also this that Barber was referring to when he wrote that the United States prefers the states it can locate and vanquish to the terrorists it cannot find.

The relationship between territory and sovereignty is the real challenge of this book — and what makes Elden’s analysis particularly compelling. He argues that territory provides the “container within which sovereignty is said to operate” (p.177), and that borders define the limits to that sovereignty. These two aspects formulate the doctrine of territorial integrity as defined by international law in Chapter One of the U.N. Charter. “All Members shall refrain in their international relations from the threat or use of force against the territorial integrity or political independence of any state, or in any other matter inconsistent with the purposes of the United Nations” (p.140). How is it, then, that the war on terror serves as the logical explanation of U.S. intervention abroad, undermining

the very territorial integrity that the terrorist acts of 9/11 fundamentally violated?

Elden explains this through the concept of “contingent sovereignty,” which he discusses thoroughly in Chapter 5. This is the view that a state’s sovereign rights depend on a series of obligations and privileges. States are increasingly under pressure to uphold their internal responsibilities, and failure to do so will lead to humanitarian and military intervention by the international community under the “responsibility to protect” (p.152). Elden describes how, historically, intervention has been justified by international law in three situations: the inability of a state to protect its population from genocide or other crimes against humanity; the failure of a state to protect its citizens from terrorist threats, and thus to allow terrorists to operate within its territory; and where there are clear threats to international security (p.172). Effectively, in such exceptional circumstances, the norms of sovereignty do not apply, and the requisite conditions are established for the international community and/or single nations to take action to ensure their self-defense. Hence, sovereignty is made “contingent” on these terms.

These conditions are clearly evident in places like Afghanistan and Iraq, where the war on terror served to justify U.S. interventions — or what was advertised as “humanitarian” and military action to maintain territorial integrity. In the case of Afghanistan, intervention was justified because the state broke international law by allowing “terrorist” activities within its borders. The Afghan government at the time did not exercise adequate sovereignty over its own territory, and therefore failed to uphold its obligations. In the case of Iraq, discussed at length in Chapter 4, conflicting claims were used to justify intervention. These included Saddam Hussein’s treatment of the Iraqi people; the harboring of terrorists; threats to neighboring states; and, of course, the most potent of all, the possession of weapons of mass destruction. Elden describes how this list was both a “confused, and intentionally confusing, rationale” (p.112).

In short, Elden illustrates how the war on terror has arguably posed the most comprehensive challenge to contemporary forms of sovereignty. The notion of contingent sovereignty, in which states are required to act responsibly, fundamentally compromises territorial integrity as an absolute in international law. The argument to support intervention in Afghanistan, and later Iraq, through the extension of the “responsibility to protect,” was hinged on this notion. But the interventions in Afghanistan and Iraq have been anything but humane, and thus they call into question the basis of the “responsibility to protect.” Protect whom? And from what? It’s been almost eleven years since 9/11, and yet all effort to find Osama bin Laden in Afghanistan or weapons of mass destruction in Iraq have failed — incredibly! Meanwhile, territorial integrity has been severely compromised on all levels.

Overall, Elden’s book deserves wide and careful reading. It will appeal to geographers, historians, and political theorists

interested in the polemics of terror and territory. Readers of *TDSR* will find it valuable because of linkages it draws between tradition, terrorism (as a fundamental ideology rooted in traditional orthodox values and beliefs), and the ways in which space is appropriated as the ultimate arena and medium of struggle. Elden employs theoretical literature throughout the book in varying ways, including references to Agamben, Heidegger, Foucault and Lefebvre. While the maps and images lend little support to the rich analysis, Elden has written an important and timely book, making a strong case for the presence of territory as a continuing theme in global politics. ■

*Mejgan Massoumi*

*University of California at Berkeley*



*Travel, Space, Architecture*. Edited by Jilly Traganou and Mirodrag Mitrašinić. Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2009. 352 pp., b&w illus.



Our understandings of the world as a solid place are constantly under assault. Surface vocabularies illustrate this, and terms which used to convey fixity and security such as “nation,” “tradition” and “location” are giving way to more semantically slippery expressions such as “mobility,” “globalization” and “dislocation.” The new terminologies convey un-

certainties, indeterminacy, disruption and insecurity.

The edited text *Travel, Space, Architecture* falls within a small but growing and important category of books premised on the new uncertainties and openness inherent in the concepts of multiple mobilities. Jilly Traganou, one of the editors, conveys her own angst in two thoughtful and thought-provoking opening chapters of theoretical reflection. In them she maps out the extensive landscape of shifting metathemes where the relationships between architecture and travel are entangled. She does an excellent job of elaborating the complex tensions relating to self and other, home and away, rootedness and displacement, and the real and the imagined, which are deeply inscribed in architecture as practice, in “architectural thinking,” and in architecture as culturally understood.

This volume seeks to examine the “conceptualization, representation, and production of space in its various scales and modes — architectural, urban, geographic, social, cultural and political” in relation to travel as both an action and idea. The idea of travel is conceived of widely to include notions of leisure travel, displacement, immigration and colonization. As such, the editors intend to shift away from the idea of architecture as solid, in theory and practice, into “an understanding of more open-ended networks of relationships (of subjects and sites), as well as bring architecture scholarship to a more productive and engaging dialogue with academic and professional fields.” This is a challenging but welcome aim, which the book partially meets.

In addition to the introductory chapters, the book consists of a further sixteen chapters organized in three sections that move the reader from the early modern period to the present and the idea of globalization (as if this were a contemporary phenomenon). The first section, “New Vision and a New World Order,” deals with the ways in which the opening up of the world through travel, technologies, and circulated narratives throughout the eighteenth century and

into the twentieth provided a new impetus and an expanded source of ideas and influences for architects, urban planners, and designers. The discoveries of the world — whether the spectacular 360-degree landscape panoramas of English and French cities in the late eighteenth and nineteenth century (Luescher), or the urban gardens of the newly colonized and emergent cities of the southern hemisphere (Brand), or the experiences of Robert Venturi and Tod Williams in Rome (Milovanoic-Bertram) — are attended to as archaeologies of influence, made possible through travel and through the discourses and narratives of travel.

The second section of the book, “Questioning Origins, Searching for Alternatives,” maintains the theme of travel as influence (at times a reverse inspiration), but with the context of displacement, colonization and postcolonialism. A number of chapters deal with both the presence and absence of an intersection between architecture, urban planning, and local identities. Traganou, for instance, looks at the ways the Spanish architect Santiago Calatrava, commissioned to design the Sports Complex for the 2004 Athens Olympic Games, seemed to bypass national and local identities. And Shannon looks at the way the development of the Vietnamese city of Hue (a World Heritage Site) has been heavily driven by international tourism, missing opportunities for an urbanism that might serve local communities and break with imposed postcolonial imaginaries and influences.

In the final section of the book, “Global Mobilities,” the contributors look at the idea of the mobile architect and mobile architecture, and also at the various ways in which people themselves — as the often forced agents of mobility (what Zigmunt Bauman refers to as the “vagabonds” of globalization) — are interacting with architecture and urban forms. The last three chapters which deal with the Asian/Indian diaspora of the San Francisco Bay Area (Metha), refugees in Athens (Tzirtzilaki), and immigrants in downtown Athens (Vyzoviti), are powerful contributions, and demonstrate the ways in which urban forms are being adapted and are having to adapt in the face of the sadder realities of globalization.

Overall, this is very good volume and worthy of closer reading. My criticisms do not run deep, and to an extent reach beyond the text itself to how the wider academy engages with the triad of travel, space and architecture. First, and notwithstanding the importance of the historical context and the identification of influence through travel, I would have liked the contributors to have engaged more with the contemporary field of travel and the ways in which architects and planners are engaged with the pace of mobility and the constituent challenges it raises for local, regional and national identities (and the ruptures this can cause in the use/abuse of space). A second criticism relates to a broader need to engage more nonarchitects over these issues. Every discipline becomes locked within its own frame of reference, and it is often difficult to adopt wider perspectives. But, as the editors themselves point out at the start, we need engagement and

genuine cross-fertilization between architects, anthropologists, geographers, sociologists, and the like. Fortunately, architecture is a broad church. But some of the cases raised here could have benefited from the insight of other disciplinary perspectives.

My third criticism is one of the text, and relates to the lack of a final synthetic chapter which could have drawn out some of the continuities and the themes shared by the contributors in order to move our understandings forward. This is a common issue with regard to what is essentially a collection of essays, and easier to recommend than to write. None of these criticisms should detract from what is a valuable book, and one which I hope will spur others to deepen the interrogation of this complex and challenging set of relationships. ■

**Mike Robinson**

*Leeds Metropolitan University*

***Modern Architecture and the Mediterranean: Vernacular Dialogues and Contested Identities.*** Edited by Jean-François Lejeune and Michelangelo Sabatino. New York: Routledge, 2010. Xix + 268 pp., color and b&w illus.



This quietly ambitious collection of essays, edited by Jean-François Lejeune and Michelangelo Sabatino, dismantles the mythology surrounding modern architecture's "machine-age" origins and its geographic location in northern Europe. Heavily illustrated and carefully written, the essays move through the biographies of some of modernism's most famous organiza-

tions and individuals, including Team X, Le Corbusier, and Bernard Rudofsky, to reveal contradictions that corrupt historians' understanding of inter- and postwar European architectural production. Going beyond regionalism, the authors work to undermine the foundation of scholarship on International Style modernism, unearthing from the archives documents revealing a spiritual and humanist strain that emerged from the imagined vernacular landscape of the Mediterranean. The authors steer clear of strongly political readings, and focus primarily on the architectural object and the documentation surrounding its production.

The editors define Mediterranean modernism as "modern architecture that responds to program with cues derived from vernacular buildings so as to infuse spatial and material concerns with context and culture" (p.6). Although northern architects dominated the intellectual development of modernist architecture, anonymous Mediterranean dwellings, the authors claim, transcended academic debates to ground the forms and imaginations of a generation of designers. Thus, Andrea Bocco Guarneri writes of Bernard Rudofsky's promotion of "architecture without architects," an idea that permeates the entire collection. While Rudofsky's dismissal of modern design played into the dualistic definitions touted by promoters of the International Style like Philip Johnson, the collection as a whole demonstrates how architects watching northern European cities urbanize and industrialize came to view southern vernacular forms as symbols of an idealized premodern world and the basis of a utopian future.

*Modern Architecture and the Mediterranean*, which resulted from a seminar held in Capri in 1998, is broken into two sections. "Part I: South" encompasses six essays on the work of early modern architects working and living in Mediterranean countries. These include essays on a "rational" vernacular in Italy (Gravegnoulo), the Algeria/Marseilles

connection first articulated by Le Corbusier (Crane), and national versus regional identity formation in Spain (Lejeune). Typical of Part I, Ioanna Theocharopoulou's chapter depicts interwar Greece in a vivid and theoretically challenging way, using mythological metaphor and literary reference to weave together debates on language, national identity, and the poetics of place.

"Part II: North" is comprised of six essays on architects who worked primarily north of the Alps, but who were nonetheless effected by the Mediterranean ideal. If in Part I the authors establish the Mediterranean as a category of thought and practice essential to modern architecture's development, in Part II they unsettle dualistic readings by introducing hybrids of modernity and tradition that arose in both north and south to meet local climactic and cultural conditions. In the first chapter of Part II, Kai K. Gutschow discusses the German architect and critic Paul Schultze-Naumburg, an avowed racist and "anti-Mediterraneanist," who, despite himself, shared many of the goals of southern regionalists. By promoting local craftsmanship over universal forms, advocating for both timeless designs and for technology in the service of tradition, Schultze-Naumburg was part of a trend throughout Europe that actively rejected CIAM modernism at the very moment of its inception.

While the collection is well crafted, at times the essays become pedantic in a way that raises questions about the nature of architectural scholarship today. The editors use the concept of the Mediterranean to critique the academicism and historicism of modernism, yet they often take an expert tone that might alienate nonacademic readers. In some cases authors successfully break through the north-south/east-west dichotomy. In other chapters academic manipulation obscures the political and ethical consequences of the local/universal being examined. This is the case with Francis E. Lyn's chapter on the "Mediterranean Resonances" of Erik Gunnar Asplund. Here description and clumsy cross-referencing of the specifics of Asplund's buildings with the work of Gottfried Semper and Henri Labrouste leave the reader feeling both overwhelmed and unclear about the intended message.

What, then, does the concept Mediterranean modernism add to the current study and practice of architecture? While an interest in the Mediterranean reflects the European Union's efforts to unite a geographic region based on shared interest and heritage, more importantly, the book's focus on local specificity, climactic appropriateness, and a visceral connection between architecture and place parallels current trends against globalization and the perceived homogenization of native cultures. Contemporary architects and scholars can take cues from Ezra Akcan's chapter on Bruno Taut's work in Japan and Turkey. Akcan distinguishes between the inherent hybridity of the modern condition and an intentional "cosmopolitan ethics." He notes that "being a hybrid in itself does not prevent the ideological separation between 'West' and 'non-West,' nor is it an antidote to chauvinistic na-

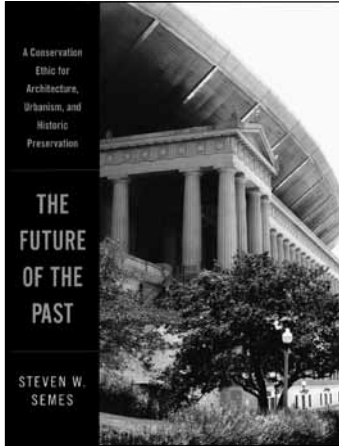
tionism or ethnocentrism" (p.210). Instead, cosmopolitan ethics must be used to negotiate universality and locality by translating shared norms without sacrificing local aspirations.

Today architects still struggle with place-making, technology, and invention using typological studies, abstract ideas of landscape, and claims of authenticity. This collection goes far in crafting a gradated picture of the social and environmental influences that structure how architects interpret, appropriate and advocate for both tradition and progress. By seeing existing regional environments as fresh, functional and relevant, early modern designers produced some of the most evocative and inventive architectural solutions of the twentieth century. Those who fear the homogenization of the globalizing world and those who follow technological determinism to its extreme limits can perhaps use works like this to construct a different way of seeing the world: not as one of stark contrasts, but as a complex, layered landscape where innovation and continuity can coexist. ■

*Anna Goodman*

*University of California, Berkeley*

*The Future of the Past: A Conservation Ethic for Architecture, Urbanism, and Historic Preservation.* Steven W. Semes. New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 2009. 272 pp., color and b&w illus.



With *The Future of the Past*, architect Steven W. Semes has planted his foot hard in the tense area between architectural innovation and historic preservation. Semes advocates for a traditional language in design for urban historic contexts. His case is strong, and the book offers well-chosen illustrations and examples that demonstrate his grasp of the evolution of historic

preservation as an influential movement, both worldwide and in the United States.

Semes does not so much stake out a middle ground between contemporary architects and historic preservationists as articulate a third position that is nearly irreconcilable with either. Although he thus seems to cast a pox on both houses, many outside the preservation and design communities may see his position as common sense. Semes argues that new architecture built in historic urban contexts — in particular, additions to historic buildings and the construction of new buildings in historic districts — should be informed by a “conservation ethic” that regards the existing fabric as a “man-made ecosystem” that can change (indeed *must* change) to remain viable. Departing from mainstream preservation philosophy, which holds that nonhistoric contributions to these landscapes should be visually distinct in order to separate the wheatey historic from the chaffy nonhistoric, Semes advocates design that uses traditional language to fit into historic contexts — even though it may create confusion with existing historic buildings. Calling for a much stronger design continuity than most architects attempt (or that most preservation boards allow), he states, “. . . the criterion that matters most is the appropriateness to its setting of a proposed intervention rather than conformance with currently fashionable ideas” (p.29).

Semes carves out a strong argument in favor of freshly designed architecture that relies on traditional language. Ideally, it will look historic and feel historic, but it will serve current needs and sensibilities. Noting that the twentieth-century Modern Movement turned its back sharply on traditional forms and associations, Semes lays the blame for visually jarring architecture that intrudes into older historic contexts at the feet of contemporary modernists. But by narrowing his focus to established historic districts and historic urban buildings, he also narrows the usefulness of his argument.

In particular, his focus allows him to presume that all settings are valued both by architects, whose job it is to design change, and preservationists, who value inherent historic importance. With recognized districts and buildings, this may be the case, but for many historic areas without designation, this is much stickier. Historic landscapes without designation may not benefit from such an ethic, although its application could go a long way toward saving their eligibility. For example, postwar residential landscapes are frequent targets of “redevelopers,” who scrape the ground clean and rebuild “traditional” designs that are wildly out of character for their settings. To advocate traditional design over modern in these contexts flips the issue on its head. If the dissonance caused by the intrusion of current architecture on historic contexts is a problem — and Semes makes a strong case that it is, calling into play numerous examples — then the conservation ethic should also address the intrusion of these “traditional” designs into landscapes that, although less easy to love, are just as historically significant.

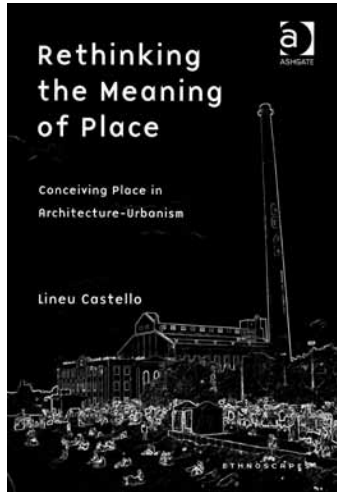
Although this book is most likely to be valued by preservation architects, it raises questions that everyone involved in historic preservation needs to think about. Semes thus deserves enormous credit for tackling a complex issue that is playing out in myriad ways all over the world. He is right in understanding the problematic norm to be the intrusion of modern designs into historic contexts. However, he seems to over-dichotomize. Thus, he advocates sequestering new modern designs in preestablished modernist contexts. But by doing so, he diminishes the historic value of the architecture of the Modern Movement. It is just as possible to overpower a Gio Ponti design with an inappropriate addition as it is to overpower a McKim, Mead & White. Increasingly, preservationists are coming to understand that their mission should be to include the former as well as the latter. ■

**Kathleen Corbett**

*Architectural historian, Denver, CO*



*Rethinking the Meaning of Place: Conceiving Place in Architecture-Urbanism.* Lineu Castello. Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2010. 276 pp., b&w illus.



During one of my most recent visits to my parents' place in the countryside, they proudly showed me the fruit trees they had planted; and when we walked by a specific tree, they told me that a graft had not been successful. This personal story provides the context for a review of Lineu Castello's recent book, *Rethinking the Meaning of Place*.

Castello is a professor at the Universidade Federal do Rio Grande do Sul in Brazil, and this book displays his dedication to reinterpreting the roles of place, placemaking, placemarketing, and urbanity in cities at the turn of the twenty-first century. Many other scholars have researched, theorized and written about the importance of places. However, it is commendable that Castello set out to question many of their assumptions. Central to his book is the hypothesis that cities benefit from places of cloning (e.g., theme parks, shopping malls, regenerated historic areas), and that these new places are eventually assimilated into cities, resulting in enhanced memories, auras and pluralities.

Castello argues that the qualities found in one place may be copied and re-created elsewhere, almost in a copy-paste approach. Critics of such approaches often categorize those places as unauthentic and artificial. Castello's quest, however, is to show that "the intentional construction of places can bring favorable effects to the quality of contemporary cities" (p.xiii) — either through copyright or creative-commons types of approaches. This leads him to further hypothesize that the places of cloning may become endowed with the desirable quality of urbanity.

The book is structured into five chapters and a conclusion. Chapter One provides an introduction to places, their perceptions, genesis and typology. In chapter Two, the concept of place is approached from the perspective of different disciplines, including applied social sciences, the humanities, environmental psychology, philosophy, and architecture-urbanism.

Chapter Three begins a discussion of how places can be examined from a theoretical-practical approach. Following a brief review of the author's own research in the central area of Porto Alegre since 1984, it is divided into two parts. The first offers a discussion of stimulated perception of places in Barcelona, Tokyo, Beijing, Berlin, Sidney, Brisbane, Dubai, Shanghai, Buenos Aires, New York, and New Orleans, among

other cities. Places are categorized under the following terms: heterotopic plurality, privatopic plurality, natural aura, cultural aura, traditional memory, and historical memory.

The second part of Chapter Three is probably the most important section of the book. It takes up the design of place and the role of placemaking and placemarketing in the generation of cloned places. The combined use of these two approaches is laudable, but claiming that the place of cloning results equally from contextual and noncontextual situations seems reductive. Conservation or rehabilitation projects implemented to enhance an already-existing urbanity, such as some of those in the cities mentioned above, may be very different from noncontextualized cloned places, such as Disney's Main Street.

Chapter Four then reviews variations in perception of place. It argues that "the play between placemaking and placemarketing leads both to spatial and behavioral variations," which can stimulate plurality, aura and memory differently (p.167). Chapter Five reviews several places in Rio Grande do Sul: the Gasometer Power Station in Porto Alegre, the Serra Gaúcha, the Town of Serafina Correa, and the DC-Navegantes commercial district.

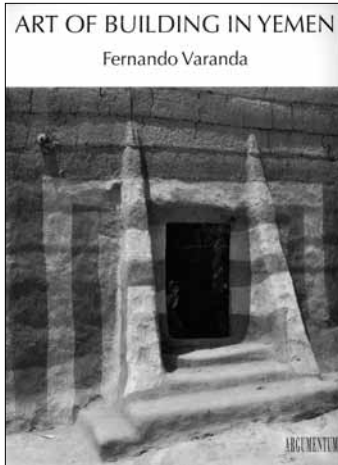
While Castello's book represents an impressive research effort, I question three of its main conclusions, which seem to justify the inevitability of a "clonedestine" future for our cities and towns. My first question pertains to the irrelevance of authenticity. The author writes that "people are more concerned with benefiting from what a place has to offer than with its authenticity or lack of it, whether it is genuine or imitation — real or hyper-real" (p.226). My second regards the effect of time in cities. In the author's words, "it doesn't matter if the place was created dozens of years ago or yesterday" (pp.229–30). My third question concerns the overall validity of places of cloning with regard to assessments of urban livability. Castello concludes that "each place can aim to become a specific utopia," because "there is sufficiently accurate evidence that the results attained have been good" (p.231).

The book does not discuss to any great extent the socioeconomic implications that homogenized urban landscapes resulting from too many cloned places (and places of cloning) may have for the character, distinctiveness and identity of our cities. Loss of genetic diversity caused by the erasing of authentic places can threaten the survival of fragile urban places, and even contribute to the collapse of the unique environments that make cities enjoyable for all. In the U.K., for instance, placemaking and urban design techniques, complemented by placemarketing efforts, are being used to accentuate the DNA of successful places and reverse the spread of "clone towns."

In spite of these concerns of mine, the book is very likely to generate fruitful debate among those interested in planning and designing better cities. ■

**Carlos Balsas**  
Arizona State University

*Art of Building in Yemen.* Fernando Varanda. Introduction by Martha Mundy. Second edition. Lisbon: Argumentum in association with Front Publications, 2009. 336 pp., color and b&w illus.



*Art of Building in Yemen*, a revised edition of a landmark publication of the early 1980s, is a carefully documented and comprehensive survey of traditional buildings in Yemen. Using photographs and drawings, it depicts and discusses typologies of vernacular buildings from all over that country, examining their use of materials, techniques of construction, and variations in style, decoration and detail.

The author, Fernando Varanda, a longtime member of IASTE, is an architect who spent several years during the 1970s in Yemen working for the United Nations. Later, under the auspices of the Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation in Lisbon, he undertook the study that resulted in this book. In the foreword to this second edition, he writes that it “reproduces [the work] brought to the public by AARP (Art and Archeology Research Papers, London), in 1981 and MIT Press in 1982.” As he explains, “both text and images appear here as they were,” although “corrections deemed essential have been introduced.” Additionally, the new edition contains “examples collected from the south during a survey undertaken in 2006.” At the time of the original publication fieldwork there “was limited due to political circumstances.” However, the “1990 Reunification of the north and south opened perspectives to the reading of the country’s space as a whole.”

*Art of Building in Yemen* identifies, documents and compares regional variations in architectural styles and elements resulting from external cultural influences. Among these are the “conquering flows from Northern Arabia and Turkey”; “a long contact with the East — from India to Indonesia — based on trade and craft rather than forceful occupation”; and “the vehicular role of the British Empire” in India and southern Arabia. Additionally, this edition develops the original small chapter on “urban synthesis,” so as to provide examples of what Varanda calls a “stereotype of national architecture.” Since the early 1980s this has involved the use of new materials and construction techniques, a transfusion of craftsmen, the impact of external architectural designers, the effects of new wealth, and awareness of and concern for “historic conservation.”

The strength of the book remains the wide range of examples and information presented in numerous photographs and beautifully rendered scaled architectural drawings. The

details in the drawings (plans and sections) reflect the rigor of the research and the depth of the surveys undertaken by the author. This book is a valuable resource and catalogue of building types, architectural forms, building techniques, and stylistic variations. It is a testament to the ingenuity, creativity, skill and artistry of the people of this region, who for more than two millennia have created spectacular buildings and settlements under difficult geographic conditions and in a harsh climate. Varanda’s work illustrates their craftsmanship and mastery of local materials such as mud, stone, brick, and limited quantities of wood.

Part One, “Space and Form,” addresses control of the physical environment and terrain through dams, terraces, wells and fortifications. It provides examples of various local vernacular forms of shelter, from cave dwellings, tents, reed buildings, and thatched-roofed mud huts to spectacular mud and stone “tower houses” rising to six or seven stories. It also surveys other vernacular structures such as bathhouses, fountains, stepped reservoirs, places for worship, and places for trade. The section documents local mastery of building techniques and the skillful, pragmatic and artistic use of materials, including raw earth, mud, lime plaster, stone, baked brick and reeds for architectural elements such as foundations, roofs, ceilings, walls, doors, windows and fanlights — together with decorative woodwork and wall painting. Examples of typical settlement types and space components in dwellings provide a comprehensive survey of the traditional architectural use of space and form, including approaches to household sanitation and waste disposal.

Part Two, “Regional Surveys,” breaks the country into geographical zones — namely, the coastal lowlands, the midlands and highlands, and the east and southeast (eastern slopes and lowlands). It then documents regional variations in typologies of buildings and settlements as well as materials, architectural style, and decoration.

Part Three, “Architectural Synthesis,” which did not exist in the original edition, addresses the architecture of towns and large, rapidly growing urban areas such as Sanaa. It illustrates and discusses changes and transformations, including “contamination” of the local architectural traditions as a result of external forces, among which are modernity, increasing wealth, new materials, industrialization, globalization, new building types and needs, new building sites, and the sense of national identity. Part three ends with an expression of hope that new concerns and sensitivities toward conservation and continuity of architectural traditions will influence the direction of building in Yemen. These conditions have resulted in part from publicity derived from the naming of Sanaa and Shibam to the UNESCO architectural heritage list and the fact that both cities have received Aga Khan Awards for architecture

Interestingly, the book contains only a limited amount of text. This reflects the author’s intent that the photographs and drawings “speak for themselves.” The publication suc-

ceeds in this approach by providing hundreds of excellent photographs, combined with numerous carefully hand-drawn and hand-rendered plans, sections and details. Maps with the names of places and iconic elevation diagrams of buildings at the beginning of each chapter are also very useful and add a personal touch. Included is a glossary of terms, but there is no index or bibliography. This new edition is a valuable and comprehensive resource for scholars, architects, and all who appreciate the complex, rich and beautiful building traditions of the Arabian Peninsula in general, and Yemen in particular.

**Joseph Aranha**

*Texas Tech University*

---

# Conferences and Events

## UPCOMING CONFERENCES

**“Functions, Uses, and Representations of Space in the Monumental Graves of Neolithic Europe,” Aix-En-Provence, France:** June 8–10, 2011. The annual conference of the Laboratoire Méditerranéen de Préhistoire Europe Afrique will explore the relation between space and the elaborate gravesites of prehistoric Europe. For more information: <http://conference2011.canalblog.com/>.

**“New Light on Vernacular Architecture: Studies in Britain, Ireland, and the Isle of Man,” Douglas, Isle of Man, U.K.:** June 22–25, 2011. The University of Liverpool’s Centre for Manx Studies and Manx National Heritage, will be holding a vernacular architecture conference, with focus on the British Isles. For more information: <http://www.liv.ac.uk/manxstudies/VernacularArchitecture.htm>.

**“Economy: An Architectural Conference,” Cardiff, Wales, U.K.:** July 6–8, 2011. This conference, organized by the Welsh School of Architecture, addresses four broad themes: Dwelling and Economy, Economy and/of Means, Politics of Economy, and Architecture and Capital. For more information: <http://www.cardiff.ac.uk/archi/economy/>.

**“Gossip, Gospel, and Governance,” Newcastle upon Tyne, U.K.:** July 14–16, 2011. Organized by Northumbria University, this conference will explore the oral tradition in Europe from 1400 to 1700. The conference will pay particular attention to space and the street. For more information: <http://www.northumbria.ac.uk/sd/academic/sass/about/humanities/history/histevents/gossip>.

**“Imagining Spaces/Places,” Helsinki, Finland:** August 24–26, 2011. The University of Helsinki is sponsoring this conference, which seeks to explore new meanings of different kinds of “scapes.” It will bring together scholars from literature, gender studies, and art history. For more information: <http://blogs.helsinki.fi/imagining-spaces-places/>.

**Universities Art Association of Canada Annual Conference, Ottawa, Canada:** October 27–29, 2011. This conference will explore many issues related to art, architecture, space, and the city. For more information: <http://www.uaac-auc.com/en/uaac-conference>.

**“The African Metropolis,” Casablanca, Morocco:** November 3–5, 2011. The fifth annual conference of African Perspectives will focus on cities and space, around the themes of African Urbanity: Formal and Informal; From Landscape of Industrial Production to Productive Cultural Cityscape?; and The Periphery of the African Metropolis. For more information: <http://www.african-perspectives.com/>.

---



## RECENT CONFERENCES

**“Concrete Utopias: 1960s Architecture and Urbanism,” Houston, Texas:** February 17–18, 2011. During the 1960s a number of architects and planners began to rethink the utopian legacy of modernity by looking at the city as a new space and place of intense social interaction. The symposium, held at the Gerald D. Hines College of Architecture at the University of Houston, examined the continuing relevance of these projects today. For more information, email Michelangelo Sabatino at [msabatino@uh.edu](mailto:msabatino@uh.edu) and/or go to NEWS at [www.michelangelosabatino.com](http://www.michelangelosabatino.com).

## CALL FOR PAPERS

**“Asian Civil Space: New Media, Urban Public Space, Social Movements,” Singapore:** September 29–30, 2011. Deadline: June 1, 2011. Organized by the National University of Singapore, this workshop aims to revisit the ever-shifting spatialities and connections between political participation and social change in urban Asia and to explore re-imaginings of what political action, public space, place-making, and social movements mean in globally networked societies. The workshop brings together young scholars and leading experts working on empirical urban realities, in different cultural and national contexts, to discuss how political transformation is initiated, negotiated and resisted. The goal is to advance understanding of the challenges that precede and follow highly visible insurgencies and the ways in which new media are deployed by various actors to either strengthen or stifle these processes. The organizers invite submission of papers pertaining to cutting-edge research at the nexus of new media, social activism and movements, and public space. For more information: [http://www.ari.nus.edu.sg/events\\_categorydetails.asp?categoryid=6&eventid=1160](http://www.ari.nus.edu.sg/events_categorydetails.asp?categoryid=6&eventid=1160).

---

## CALL FOR PAPERS

# The Myth of Tradition

IASTE 2012 • PORTLAND, OREGON, U.S.A.

Recent IASTE conferences have explored traditions as they relate to the formation of boundaries, the politics of consumption, and utopian futures. Building upon these earlier inquiries, this conference will examine the role of myths in the creation and endurance of particular traditions of space and practice. In many cultures, narratives based on little more than a story retold ever so eloquently are used to establish and perpetuate traditions that guide behaviors, customs and actions. Through constant repetition, myths become regimes of truth, as well as structures of shared meanings in the making of tradition.

The roots of the term “myth” stretch back to the Greek word “mythos,” and it remains a term with different meanings in different cultures. A myth is often a story whose origin is beyond anyone’s memory or any group’s history. For some, it is used to suggest “fiction” or “illusion.” Among certain scholars of culture, it refers to stories coded among primitive societies over time, which constitute “living myths.” Many of the myths we hear as children have been passed down to numerous generations, becoming deeply embedded in the landscapes of our imagination. Myths, however, are not merely stories to read aloud — they are regulating narratives with a rhetorical function. They impart a particular ethos, map out morality, and define the parameters of accepted behavior, making legible the boundaries of religion, culture and practice. Traditions, then, constitute the ways in which myths maintain their hold, and space becomes key in their manifestation and perpetuation. Indeed, spatial traditions may continue to operate even when the myth upon which they were founded has disappeared.

While myths and the traditions they engender often emerge as devices that dictate certain codes and norms, they have tangible effects on space and place, and the analysis and use of myth in urban planning and the design professions has a long history. For the most part this has focused on the design of urban utopias or religious places such as the mosque, the synagogue, and the cathedral. However, traditions based on myths have also shaped the profane spaces of the everyday. For instance, in the twentieth century, many architects and

planners operated under the belief that particular spatial fixes could provoke the modern condition. Striving to configure spaces for development and progress, their work ranged from the high modernism of Brasilia to Soviet collective housing. But these projects demonstrated that environmental determinism was little more than a myth — a fictitious story masquerading as a theory, which influenced a generation of practitioners and theorists who sought to shape society through space. The New Urbanism movement, responding to the perceived failures of modernism, has itself reinvented the myth of the perfect small town. Discourses on sustainability are also often based on myths regarding efficiency and productivity. Meanwhile, in the global South, what is arguably the myth of the entrepreneurial slum-dweller, perpetuated by both academia and popular media, has led to a new transnational tradition of slum upgrading and microfinance. The myths that have justified these traditions all have their inherent problems, which, when exposed, raise new questions regarding spatial productions. Moreover, they often have tangible political and spatial implications. For example, the tradition of urban renewal, carried out at different times and on sites as diverse as Boston’s downtown, London’s docklands, Abu Dhabi’s central market, and Mumbai’s Dharavi district, perpetuates in its name a myth: that renewal can reinvigorate inner cities — when it sometimes simply furthers the logic of accumulation that privileges certain groups, sustaining the myth of the free market.

IASTE scholars have weighed in on many aspects of tradition, but the focus in this conference turns to a critical examination of one of tradition’s important foundations. This IASTE conference will attract an interdisciplinary group of scholars and practitioners from around the world, working in the disciplines of architecture, landscape architecture, city and regional planning, art and architectural history, sociology, transportation planning, geography, urban studies, cultural studies, anthropology, religious studies, archaeology, and environmental studies. They will present papers related to the following three tracks.

## TRACK 1. THE POLITICS OF MYTHS IN THE CONSTRUCTION OF TRADITIONS AND THE PLACEMAKING PROCESS

The selective pursuit of certain myths necessarily privileges one story over another and injects political motives in the making of place. The founding of nation states by colonial powers continues to shape political actions today, where democratic desires are meeting resistance from leaders of states based on artificial boundary lines, foundational myths, and colonial dreams. Ongoing revolutions in different parts of the world have questioned the meaning of citizenship, the myth of the

nation-state, and the end of history. Understanding the political landscape within which myths operate is fundamental to understanding the places that these myths produce. Papers in this track will probe the complex relationships between tradition, politics and myth, and investigate the role of state and nonstate actors in the deployment of myths to advance socio-political agendas that shape the built environment.

## TRACK 2. FOUNDATIONAL MYTHS AND INVOCATIONS OF TRADITION IN SOCIO-SPATIAL PRACTICES

A key objective of this conference is to uncover ways in which myths have shaped traditions, which in turn have been used to structure space and place. Inquiries into ways this has occurred in religious, civic and urban spaces, buildings and complexes are encouraged. Many ancient civilizations have cultivated myths and legends to shape their built practices. But what role do myths play in the contemporary world? From

ideas about the stabilizing role of subsidized homeownership to the sustainability benefits of urban growth boundaries, myths influence today’s economic systems, environmental policies, and spatial practices. Papers in this track will distinguish between tradition, myth and habitual current practice, explore foundational myths, and analyze ways in which these myths have been used in the placemaking process.

## TRACK 3. THE MYTHS AND TRADITIONS OF THE NEW DIGITAL AGE

New social practices are being shaped today by both new technologies and entrenched systems of belief. Digital social networks have become increasingly important in daily life in a manner that is connecting virtual space to physical space. The recent uprisings in the Middle East are a reminder that revolutions do not happen in cyberspace,

even if they start there. New media, which can be analyzed as the mix between traditional cultural conventions and digital technology, is now used to shape more flexible spaces that serve multiple purposes. Papers in this track will investigate the connections between virtual and physical space and its impacts on tradition.

## SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS

Please refer to our website <http://iaste.berkeley.edu> for detailed instructions on abstract submissions. A one-page abstract of 500 words and a one-page CV are required. For further inquiries, please email IASTE Coordinator Sophie Gonick at [iaste@berkeley.edu](mailto:iaste@berkeley.edu).

Proposals for complete panels of four to five papers are welcome. Please indicate the track the panel supports. Panel submissions will include an overall abstract as well as abstracts and CVs from all proposed speakers. IASTE may accept the panel as a whole, or only accept individual papers and place them in appropriate tracks.

All papers must be written and presented in English. Following a blind peer-review process, papers may be accepted for presentation in the conference and/or publication in the Working Paper Series. IASTE awards a cash prize (the Jeffrey Cook award) to the best paper submitted prior to the conference deadline by a scholar and by a student.

Contributors whose abstracts are accepted must pre-register for the conference, pay registration fees of \$400 (which includes a special discounted \$25 IASTE membership fee), and prepare a full-length paper of 20–25 double-spaced pages. Registered students may qualify for a reduced registration fee of \$200 (which includes a special discounted \$25 IASTE membership fee). All participants must be IASTE members. Please note that expenses associated with hotel accommodations, travel, and additional excursions are not covered by the registration fees and have to be paid directly to the hotel or designated travel agent. Registration fees cover the conference program, conference abstracts, and access to all conference activities, including continental breakfasts at the conference hotel, receptions, keynote panels, and walking tours.

## CONFERENCE SCHEDULE

Deadline for abstract submission  
NOVEMBER 1, 2011

Acceptance letter for abstracts/conference poster  
JANUARY 15, 2012

Deadline for paper submission  
MAY 1, 2012

Notification of acceptance in Working Paper Series  
AUGUST 1, 2012

Conference program  
OCTOBER 4–7, 2012

Post-Conference Tour — Historic Oregon:  
From the Cascades to the Coast  
OCTOBER 8–9, 2012

## CONFERENCE ORGANIZING COMMITTEE

**Nezar AlSayyad**, IASTE President, University of California, Berkeley

**Mark Gillem**, IASTE Director and Conference Chair, University of Oregon

**Sophie Gonick**, IASTE Coordinator, University of California, Berkeley

**Emelia Day**, IASTE Conference Coordinator, University of Oregon

**Vicky Garcia**, CEDR Conference Administrator, University of California, Berkeley

## CONFERENCE ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Hesham Khairy Abdelfattah, Heba Farouk Ahmed, Howayda Al-Harithy, Duanfang Lu, Sylvia Nam, Mina Rajagopalan, Romola Sanyal, Ipek Tureli, Montira Horayangura Unakul

## LOCAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Howard Davis, Kingston Heath, Deni Ruggeri, Alison Snyder, Yizhao Yang, Jenny Young

## CONFERENCE SPONSORS

School of Architecture and Allied Arts, University of Oregon

Department of Architecture, University of Oregon

Urban Design Lab, University of Oregon

## CONFERENCE CO-SPONSORS

Center for Environmental Design Research, University of California, Berkeley

Center for Middle Eastern Studies, University of California, Berkeley

## CONFERENCE SITE AND ACCOMMODATIONS

The Nines

<http://www.thenines.com/>

## POST-CONFERENCE TRIPS

Following the conference, two optional one-day trips will be offered for an additional fee. These trips will be by luxury coach and will take participants to historic sites in Oregon from the Cascade mountains to the Pacific coast. Participants can sign up for one or both trips.

**Monday, October 8:** Participants will begin with a drive up the scenic Columbia River Gorge with stops at key historic sites. Dinner will be at the Timberline Lodge, a National Historic Landmark at Mount Hood built during the Great Depression. The day will end in Portland with accommodations at the conference hotel.

**Tuesday, October 9:** Participants will travel to the Oregon Wine Country and visit historic sites along the Oregon coast. The day will end back in Portland with a dinner and drinking tour of Portland microbreweries. Accommodations will be at the conference hotel.

## INQUIRIES

Please use the following information when making inquiries regarding the conference.

## MAILING ADDRESS

### IASTE 2012

Center for Environmental Design Research

390 Wurster Hall, #1839

University of California

Berkeley, CA 94720-1839

**Phone:** 510.642.6801

**Fax:** 510.643.5571

**E-mail:** [iaste@berkeley.edu](mailto:iaste@berkeley.edu)

**Website:** [www.arch.ced.berkeley.edu/research/iaste](http://www.arch.ced.berkeley.edu/research/iaste)

# Guide for Preparation of Manuscripts

## 1. GENERAL

The editors invite readers to submit manuscripts. Please send three copies of each manuscript, with one copy to include all original illustrations. Place the title of the manuscript, the author's name and a 50-word biographical sketch on a separate cover page. The title only should appear again on the first page of text. Manuscripts are circulated for review without identifying the author. Manuscripts are evaluated by a blind peer-review process.

## 2. LENGTH AND FORMAT

Manuscripts should not exceed 25 standard 8.5" x 11" [a4] double-spaced typewritten pages (about 7500 words). Leave generous margins.

## 3. APPROACH TO READER

Because of the interdisciplinary nature of the journal, papers should be written for an academic audience that may have either a general or a specific interest in your topic. Papers should present a clear narrative structure. They should not be compendiums of field notes. Please define specialized or technical terminology where appropriate.

## 4. ABSTRACT AND INTRODUCTION

Provide a one-paragraph abstract of no more than 100 words. This abstract should explain the content and structure of the paper and summarize its major findings. The abstract should be followed by a short introduction. The introduction will appear without a subheading at the beginning of the paper.

## 5. SUBHEADINGS

Please divide the main body of the paper with a single progression of subheadings. There need be no more than four or five of these, but they should describe the paper's main sections and reinforce the reader's sense of progress through the text.

*Sample Progression:* The Role of the Longhouse in Iban Culture. The Longhouse as a Building Form. Transformation of the Longhouse at the New Year. The Impact of Modern Technology. Conclusion: Endangered Form or Form in Transition?

Do not use any numbering system in subheadings. Use secondary subheadings only when absolutely essential for format or clarity.

## 6. REFERENCES

Do not use a general bibliography format. Use a system of numbered reference notes as indicated below.

*A condensed section of text might read as follows:*

In his study of vernacular dwellings in Egypt, Edgar Regis asserted that climate was a major factor in the shaping of roof forms. Henri Lacompte, on the other hand, has argued that in the case of Upper Egypt this deterministic view is irrelevant.<sup>1</sup>

An eminent architectural historian once wrote, "The roof form in general is the most indicative feature of the housing styles of North Africa."<sup>2</sup> Clearly, however, the matter of how these forms have evolved is a complex subject. A thorough analysis is beyond the scope of this paper.<sup>3</sup>

In my research I discovered that local people have differing notions about the origins of the roof forms on the dwellings they inhabit.<sup>4</sup>

*The reference notes, collected at the end of the text (not at the bottom of each page), would read as follows:*

1. E. Regis, *Egyptian Dwellings* (Cairo: University Press, 1979), p.179; and H. Lacompte, "New Study Stirs Old Debate," *Smithsonian*, Vol.II No.2 (December 1983), pp.24-34.
2. B. Smithson, "Characteristic Roof Forms," in H. Jones, ed., *Architecture of North Africa* (New York: Harper and Row, 1980), p.123.
3. For a detailed discussion of this issue, see J. Idris, *Roofs and Man* (Cambridge, ma: mit Press, 1984).
4. In my interviews I found that the local people understood the full meaning of my question only when I used a more formal Egyptian word for "roof" than that in common usage.

## 7. DIAGRAMS, DRAWINGS AND PHOTOGRAPHS

Illustrations will be essential for most papers in the journal, however, each paper can only be accompanied by a maximum of 20 illustrations. For purposes of reproduction, please provide images as line drawings (velox, actual size), b&w photos (5" x 7" or 8" x 10" glossies), or digitized computer files. Color prints and drawings, slides, and photocopies are not acceptable.

Digitized (scanned) artwork should be between 4.5 and 6.75 inches wide (let the length fall), and may be in any of the following file formats. Photos (in order of preference): 1) b&w grayscale (not rgb) TIFF files, 300 DPI; 2) b&w grayscale Photoshop files, 300 DPI; 3) b&w EPS files, 300 DPI. Line art, including charts and graphs (in order of preference): 1) b&w bitmap TIFF files, 1200 DPI; 2) b&w grayscale TIFF files, 600 DPI; 3) b&w bitmap EPS, 1200 DPI. CDs are the preferred media for digitized artwork.



8. ELECTRONIC IMAGE RESOLUTION AND FILE TYPE  
All images should be submitted as separate grayscale TIFF or JPEG files of at least 300 dpi at the actual size they will appear on the printed page. Images taken directly from the Web are unacceptable unless they have been sourced at 300 DPI.
9. CAPTIONS AND FIGURE PREFERENCES  
Please include all graphic material on separate pages at the end of the text. Caption text and credits should not exceed 50 words per image. Use identical numbering for images and captions. The first time a point is made in the main body of text that directly relates to a piece of graphic material, please indicate so at the end of the appropriate sentence with a simple reference in the form of "(FIG. 1)." Use the designation "(FIG.)" and a single numeric progression for all graphic material. Clearly indicate the appropriate FIG number on each illustration page.
10. SOURCES OF GRAPHIC MATERIAL  
Most authors use their own graphic material, but if you have taken your material from another source, please secure the necessary permission to reuse it. Note the source of the material at the end of the caption.  
*Sample attribution:* If the caption reads, "The layout of a traditional Islamic settlement," add a recognition similar to: "Source: E. Hassan, *Islamic Architecture* (London: Penguin, 1982). Reprinted by permission." Or if you have altered the original version, add: "Based on: E. Hassan, *Islamic Architecture* (London: Penguin, 1982)."
11. OTHER ISSUES OF STYLE  
In special circumstances, or in circumstances not described above, follow conventions outlined in *A Manual for Writers* by Kate Turabian. In particular, note conventions for complex or unusual reference notes. For spelling, refer to *Webster's Dictionary*.
12. WORKS FOR HIRE  
If you have done your work as the result of direct employment or as the result of a grant, it is essential that you acknowledge this support at the end of your paper.  
*Sample acknowledgement:* The initial research for this paper was made possible by a grant from the National Endowment for the Arts [NEA]. The author acknowledges NEA support and the support of the sabbatical research program of the University of Waterloo.
13. SIMULTANEOUS SUBMISSION AND PREVIOUS PUBLICATION  
Submission of a manuscript implies a commitment to publish in this journal. Simultaneous submission to other journals is unacceptable. Previously published work, or work which is substantially similar to previously published work, is ordinarily not acceptable. If in doubt about these requirements, contact the editors.
14. ELECTRONIC SUBMISSION  
Please include an electronic file of your entire paper on a CD or other commonly used media at the time of submission. Please indicate the software used. We prefer *Microsoft Word* for PC or Macintosh. PDF files are also acceptable. Initial submission by email is not allowed.
15. NOTIFICATION  
Contributors are usually notified within 15 weeks whether their manuscripts have been accepted. If changes are required, authors are furnished with comments from the editors and the peer-review board. The editors are responsible for all final decisions on editorial changes. The publisher reserves the right to copy-edit and proof all articles accepted for publication without prior consultation with contributing authors.
16. ELECTRONIC PUBLICATION  
Published articles will be archived for free download on the IASTE website after eight months or following publication of the next issue of the journal.
17. SUBMISSION AND CORRESPONDENCE  
Nezar AlSayyad, Editor  
*Traditional Dwellings and Settlements Review*  
IASTE, Center For Environmental Design Research  
390 Wurster Hall  
University of California  
Berkeley, CA 94720-1839  
Tel: 510.642.6801 Fax: 510.643.5571  
E-mail: iaste.@ced.berkeley.edu  
<http://iaste.berkeley.edu>
-

# TRADITIONAL DWELLINGS AND SETTLEMENTS REVIEW

is the official publication of IASTE. As a semi-annual refereed journal, *TDSR* acts as a forum for the exchange of ideas and as a means to disseminate information and to report on research activities. All articles submitted to the journal are evaluated through a blind peer-review process.

Advance payment in U.S. dollars is required on all orders. Make checks payable to U.C. Regents. Orders should be addressed to:

IASTE  
Center for Environmental Design Research  
390 Wurster Hall  
University of California  
Berkeley, ca 94720-1839  
510.642.6801  
iaste.@ced.berkeley.edu; <http://iaste.berkeley.edu>

#### DOMESTIC ORDERS:

\_\_\_\_\_ \$60 INDIVIDUAL      \_\_\_\_\_ \$120 INSTITUTIONAL [LIBRARIES AND SCHOOLS]

#### INTERNATIONAL ORDERS:

\_\_\_\_\_ \$75 INDIVIDUAL      \_\_\_\_\_ \$135 INSTITUTIONAL [LIBRARIES AND SCHOOLS]

ALL MEMBERSHIPS INCLUDE DOMESTIC FIRST CLASS OR INTERNATIONAL AIRMAIL.

---

NAME

---

TITLE / AFFILIATION

---

ADDRESS

---

CITY

STATE / ZIP

COUNTRY

---

PHONE

---



---

*International Association for the Study of  
Traditional Environments*  
Center for Environmental Design Research  
390 Wurster Hall  
Berkeley, CA 94720-1839