

## The Slow Architecture of Ruins: The Filmic Evidence

*Donald Kunze*

*I dreamt I went to Manderley again.*

*It seemed to me I stood by the iron gate leading to the drive,  
and for a while I could not enter ...  
for the way was barred to me.*

*Then, like all dreamers,*

*I was possessed of a sudden with supernatural powers ...  
and passed like a spirit through the barrier before me.*

—Daphne du Maurier, *Rebecca*, 1938

The style of inquiry that begins by asking what relation architecture has with some other topic or medium has already left out an important question, a “first question,” whose absence allows, and in a sense is necessary for, the emergence of a second question. One such second question is: “What is the relationship between architecture and film?” The standard procedure would involve showing how architecture is an important part of film history, construction, and reception; and/or how film has influenced architectural design, use, and perception.<sup>1</sup> These are all interesting issues and, as history has shown, proof that the second question’s method promises, for the academic theorist or historian, a near-infinite range of research opportunities. Add geographical and time-period differences to the basic second question and you have a vast, uncluttered research *terra incognita* where no explorer is likely to step on some other explorer’s toes. The cost of travel in this domain is, however, the loss of the original structures by means of which one modality had been *implicitly contained*, in some form, within another (e.g. cinema contained within architecture—Ac); or how the container-contained relationship could be reversed (i.e.

architecture implicit within cinema, CA), even at the cost of apparent historical anachronism.

The omission of the first question, however, strikes a deathblow to the theory's fundamental obligation to truth. In contrast to the multiple small answerable questions that will yield small questionable answers, the Big Questions are those that are—possibly by mutual consent—academically suppressed. In the case of film/architecture, the Big Question involves, if not an anachronism, an absurdity: “Doesn't architecture ‘already-always’ imply film in its very essence?” The payoff promised by getting past the initial blockade of media technology history, which would deny Dædalus, the mythological father-figure of architecture, any access to even the most rudimentary components of “cinema,” is enormous. This requires thinking of film in some originary sense that would have it that the Lumière brothers and other film pioneers put together pieces that had been lying around for centuries. The standard developmental steps from Eadweard Muybridge's photographs and the kinetograph of William Kennedy Dickson to the technologies of digital projection could be said to span a little more than 120 years, in the Question Two way of thinking. Question One, however, sniffs at such literalism and unearths such far-fetched antecedents, such as the Chinese shadow-puppets of the Han Dynasty, *pí yǐng xiè*, where some technological components of the modern product are missing but the idea is there.<sup>2</sup> “Cinema in the expanded field,” to borrow a style of captioning from Rosalind Krauss, is “cinema where there is no cinema,” technically speaking.<sup>3</sup> In the expanded field, it would be hard to imagine architecture without cinema. It is the smile of the Cheshire Cat

without the cat—not just remaining after the cat disappears but arriving early, in anticipation of the actual cat.

It could be claimed that, without such Chesired smiles, there are no “ahah moments” in the history of science, technology, and the arts. As the Russians say, “Without songs there are no birds.” The phenomenon of invention begs the question of what came first, what was lying in some latent, virtual, or pregnant condition, waiting to be brought forth under the right conditions. The casual confirmation of this view is the well-recognized phenomenon of the failed discovery—a brilliant innovation that, lacking practical application or public receptivity, was hatched and presented, but then asphyxiated by indifference. Many if not most of Leonardo da Vinci’s inventions languished as curiosities until the real things came along, as if to confirm the artist’s clairvoyance. An array of toys—the thaumatrope (disks spun on strings), zoopraxiscope (images on a spinning disk), phenakistoscope (disk spun on a stick), zoetrope (images on a spinning drum), and page-flip books—involved the so-called phi-function ( $\phi$ ) of producing the illusion of motion from a rapid succession of images.<sup>4</sup> But, the notion of an audience watching projections has existed since ancient times, as evidenced by Plato’s use of this idea in the Cave episode in *The Republic*. The smile of the Cheshire Cat is the idea of combining animation, illusion, and screen. It is how this combination relates to enjoyment, fantasy, and ideology that allows us to study their use in any media and, *at the level of performativity*, employ a comparative method as a means of corroboration and experimental control.<sup>5</sup>

The Big Question One unites cinema and architecture in unanticipated ways that short-circuit question two's list of possible topics. The first harvest of this union springs from the heart of architecture, revealed by the spark of the short-circuit as active or performative. In Jorge Luis Borges' fictional world, *Tlön*, verbs are given precedence over nouns.<sup>6</sup> *Tlönian* epistemology credits time rather than space as substantial. Spatial objects and effects become secondary qualities of time's dynamic solids. In performative terms, architecture *is* its becoming; its attempt of mastery; its resistance to decay; and finally its failure to resist. In these stages there are smaller sequences of the individual iterations of architects, builders, clients, users, casual observers. Events animate architecture by moving through or around it. In a film, the show flickers past stationary viewers; architecture's viewers move through a stationary show. Applying relativity theory shows that the two cases differ only in point of view; that only the mechanics driving the motion are different—and consequential only in the means by which the various audiences achieve unity among themselves, a “collective subjectivity.” Combining film and architecture is like a parade, where stationary viewers may at some point join in and march along with the show.

[Insert Figure 1.1 here — diagram]

Figure 1.1 Double inscription of architecture and cinema allow “mana-a-mano” comparisons at the level of performativity.

Architecture as performative already has cinema inscribed at its heart (Ac) in a way of speaking that directly compares detail for detail rather than pulling back for each comparison to the macro-view of the separate media. In the use of rooms as frames, there

is no metaphor to compare the relationship; rather a mechanics of framing in architecture compared to a mechanics of framing in film. At this level of *mano-a-mano*, the questions are: To what end? For what effect? By means of what (re)configurations of space and time? The question of which media is literally operative is small change in comparison to critical theory's challenge of describing and explaining the *effects* and the *reception of effects*. The effects—which in both media can be considered, at one end, an accomplishment within the framework of *praxis*, the totality of relationships that hold human cultures together; or, at the other end, an instance of thaumaturgy, miracle—are the basis of an interior research into the self-genesis of art, which is to say, art considered apart from the conscious intentionalities of artists and audiences (and the critics who derive their ideas from these intentionalities).

### **The Organic Cycle**

The organic cycle would seem to be the proper root metaphor for discussing architecture's deflationary stage. The optimism of birth, growth, and flourishing; decline and death at the end; the melancholy of ruins; hints at the possibility of rebirth. Again, the Big Question that has been left out well before architecture has strapped on its organicist supportive gear is: Is architecture actually "alive" in such a way? Organic life should perhaps require a father and mother. Sexual generation of architecture has been used as a metaphor since, according to Marco Frascari, at least the Sixteenth Century.<sup>7</sup> But, in a worse case of projecting the human on to the non-human, the organicist metaphor requires an architecture that wants something, thinks something, feels something on its own. This is the error of misplaced concrete reference, the idea that of asking a brick what it wants to

be. A real architectural unconscious exists, but it has to do with the way architecture serves as a *screen*, in relation to multiple subjective unconsciousnesses in their project of a common mental language, whispered in collective encounters with architectural forms.<sup>8</sup>

To ask a brick what it wants to be can be seen as either naïve or clairvoyant. Presumably it was clairvoyant in the mind of Louis Kahn and naïve in the minds of those who quoted this advice as a slogan. In the desiring brick, Kahn saw materiality in terms of a specific anticipation, and that anticipation in terms of a Hegelian-style negation (the brick arch turns compression into suspension, a kind of vertical tension). To attribute thought to the material substance of architecture literally is idiotic, but to see how architecture and other mute substances can be the media of animations (investments of mind and intentionality) is quite another matter.

Organicism fails as an idea if it involves naïve belief.<sup>9</sup> It is a brilliant idea if it engages the entire arc of causalities by which the human subject reconfigures, dimensionalizes, animates, and actualizes mute substances in order to perceive them “as if” they were endowed with intentionality and an unconscious. This is the difference between, as Slavoj Žižek puts it, the fictionality of reality and the reality of fiction. Fiction not only has a reality but an effective one, obscured by the fictionalities that promote their metaphors as empirical truths—i.e. that become complicit in the Other of representation. The unconscious of architecture belongs to architecture through a process of obversion. The more accurate term would come from Jacques Lacan: *extimité* (Englished as “extimacy”—a topological short-circuit connecting the periphery to the center).<sup>10</sup>

Lacan was not the first to seize upon the importance of inside-out relations. Two hundred years before Lacan articulated this idea, Giambattista Vico had grasped the genius of mythic thought by adding, to the already well-known recognition that the first humans projected their own natures on to the external world's objective being, the realization that this error contained a productive dimension allowing culture to develop dynamically and dialectically.<sup>11</sup> Vico condensed this discovery into the form of material universality unique to mythic thought, the “imaginative universal” (*universale fantastico*). The degree to which extimacy involves Vico’s *universale fantastico* is the degree to which (1) psychoanalysis constitutes the proper field for comprehending cultural auto-genesis as the development of a *sensus communis* (collective memory and imagination), and (2) architecture can be understood as a form of temporality as well as spatial organization. It is also the means of understanding the architecture of cinema and cinema of architecture.

### **The Necessary Project**

In his essay “Beyond Interpellation,” the Slovenian philosopher Mladen Dolar argues that the Althusserian account of ideology is only half the story of subjectivity.<sup>12</sup> According to Althusser, the process known as interpellation is a key instance of Lacanian extimacy. The subject internalizes what he/she imagines to be the authoritarian demand of the Other. The classic example is that of multiple pedestrians who, crossing the street when a policeman yells “Hey, you,” anticipate that they will be charged of committing an unspecified crime. Althusser claimed that this inscription of the exterior authority into the central void of the subject (both an interior and an exterior) constituted a “clean cut,” but Dolar demonstrates

that there is a small remainder, a remainder which plays a key role in the succession of a “psychoanalytical subject” following the “ideological subject.”

To put it in the simplest way, there is a part of the individual that cannot successfully pass into ideology, an element of “pre-ideological” and “pre-subjective” *materia prima* that comes to haunt subjectivity once it is constituted as such. There is a remainder that cannot be successfully integrated in the interior. Interpellation is based on the idea of a happy transition from a pre-ideological state into ideology. If fully achieved, interpellation wipes out the traces of its origin and results in a subject who believes in his/her autonomy and self-transparency. The subject is experienced as a *causa sui*—in itself an inescapable illusion once the operation is completed.<sup>13</sup> The psychoanalytic point of departure is the remainder produced by the operation. Psychoanalysis does not deny the cut, it only adds a remainder. The clean cut is always unclean; it cannot produce the flawless interiority of an autonomous subject. The psychoanalytic subject is coextensive with that very flaw in the interior.<sup>14</sup>

I would argue that after interpellation comes a process of mapping (“interpolation”), as a project co-extensive with psychoanalysis and the small flaw in the subject’s interior. Furthermore, the left-over space in which this mapping must take place is left-over in two senses: first, its escape from ideology becomes a narrative—a “flight from the oppressor”; second, it is both a remainder *and a reminder* (a “memory site”) for the recovery of the medium in which this survival has taken place. Because these logical actions are turned into fictions—Žižek’s type of fiction that is a form of reality, what Lacan would call fantasy—they themselves become durable operators that afford

construction of human worlds but, as artifacts, they are also the means of comprehending the logic of self-construction that is truly “autogenic.”<sup>15</sup>

Following Dolar’s arguments, the psychoanalytical subject finds its basis in a “topology of love” or, rather *falling* in love, with sometimes extremely literal instances of both “falling” and “love.” Dolar notes that Freud very quickly understood that falling in love had its own ideological component. It was like joining a group, adopting the values of the Other. This aspect of falling in love involves a forced choice, actual or implied. One is expected to love one’s parents, but what choice does one have in such a matter?<sup>16</sup> Similarly, the Christian injunction to love one’s neighbor is made in the face of the contingent “thrownness” of the neighbor, any neighbor. You normally cannot choose your parents or your neighbors. The obligation to love appears as both irrational and absolute.

Forced choice also becomes an element of personal falling-in-love through the subject’s voluntary embrace of the idea that “love is inevitable.” Despite the accidental circumstances of encountering one’s beloved (“Their eyes met across a crowded room”), lovers subsequently construct a fate-enforced causality. They conceive that they were destined to meet and be together despite the myriad obstacles thrown into their path.<sup>17</sup> The structure of the forced choice is key to how falling in love makes use of ideology. There are three stages by which ideology moves from a contrast with rationality to a foreclosure of it. With denial (Hegelian term: *Verneinung*), a seemingly undeniable fact is discredited. In Slavoj Žižek’s example of the broken kettle, the borrower of the kettle responds to the owner’s complaint that the kettle was returned broken, The borrower defends him/herself: “I never borrowed your kettle” (*Verneinung*). In the second step, this denial is itself

negated: “When I returned it (admitting that the kettle was in fact borrowed), it was in perfect condition” (Hegel’s *Verleugnung*, or renunciation). The third step, foreclosure (the “psychotic” level of negation, capable of creating an independent reality), cancels the previous two (*Verwerfung*): “When I borrowed the kettle, it was already broken.” The interpellated ideological subject has *nowhere to go*, i.e. he/she cannot leave the prison defined by ideology, cannot surmount its logical fence, because any resistance is cancelled retroactively.<sup>18</sup> The Other operates as a Master in the form of a self-contained circular logic, the hinge of which is a “master signifier” that satisfies all contingencies by organizing other signifiers within its series of symmetrical negations.

Yet, in terms of falling in love, Dolar notes that “It would seem that there has to be an autonomy of choice—indeed one cannot speak of love if there is no freedom of choice (if the choice is made, for instance, by parents, as was the common practice until quite recently). Yet upon a closer—or even a very superficial—look at the centuries of effusions about love, it is obvious that love and the autonomy of the subject rule each other out.”<sup>19</sup> By this symmetrical cancellation, love combines Aristotelian *automaton* (natural accident) with *tuchē* (human affordance and opportunity). Automaton becomes both chance and a machine that drives the subject toward a preconceived end (that will be realized retroactively), while *tuchē* is the very condition of freedom that allows automaton to act this way—in fact, it is *tuchē* that guarantees automaton’s absolute effectiveness as both chance and necessity.

Automaton’s function as natural accident—which is epitomized by the spatio-temporality of being in the right/wrong place at the right/wrong time—is bracketed and

suppressed. The crowded room across which lovers' eyes meet is not just any room, any party; it was *destined to be the meeting place*, realized afterward, that initiated a presumptive life-long romance. Its accidental quality is not later discounted; its role in pre-determined fate is acknowledged in retrospect as a determinative plan. Automaton's agency as the fatalism of the love affair, structuring it from beginning to end under the guise of an internal infinity, charges the field of affordance, *tuchē*, by which any choice is magicked into "just the right choice" by fate working from a metaphoric above or below, a vertical magnetism.<sup>20</sup> Luck is acknowledged later, after the choice has been freely made. The element of accident is coupled with necessity. As Dolar aptly puts it, "The moment of choice can never be pinpointed; it passes directly and immediately from a 'not yet' to an 'always already' [i.e. the future anterior]. It is past by its very nature. Falling in love means submitting to necessity—there is always a moment when the Real, so to speak, begins to speak, when its opacity turns into transparency; the subject has only to recognize it after the fact."<sup>21</sup> This identifies the subject, up to now the pawn of ideology, with a future moment by the time of which a complex, fatal-istic "nature" will have transformed it.

The necessary project of architecture, like the coupling of chance and necessity in love, is a return to architecture's "natural history." This overlaps with the idea of architecture as an organism; but, where the current autogenic concept of organism blocks even the possibility of extimity (and, hence, any relationship to ideology or its psychoanalytical sequel), natural history specifically means this: for us to understand architecture as something whose diastolic expansion and systolic contraction follow the vicissitudes of history and economic fortune, we must adjust our (anti-autogenic) idea of

organicism to account for the combination of automaton and *tuchē* as a “natural history.”

This involves the construction of sites of exception. In short, architecture must identify with the function of the organ: not the closed systems of “autogenic monads,” but as that which *obverts exteriority and interiority*. Even the metaphor of selective filtering of substances passing through cell membranes misses the real function of the organ. More radically, the organ of the corrected version of “organic architecture” works through the logic of extimacy. Double inscription, by which we find, in cinema, the idea of architecture already-always present; and, in architecture, more surprisingly, the idea of cinema functioning as an already-always kernel inscribed into architecture’s heart and realized retroactively; is not just a method of studying architecture and film in *mano-a-mano* comparisons at the level of performativity. It is the way architecture *actually has become itself by living out a specific, constructed identity*. The alien element, cinema, is thus both the “tell” of this complex evolution and also its study method. Cinema allows us to focus on the temporality essential to this constructed identity.<sup>22</sup>

### **Slow Architecture**

When architecture is regarded through the lens of temporality, velocity becomes a central issue. The example of a murder scene provides a good analogy. Before a crime is committed, architecture and the activities that happen in and around it are synchronized. Little notice is taken of an older building’s sagging performance, or the slight accelerations of demand that put any architecture to the test. When a crime happens, events are rushed forward. A robber quickly becomes rich. Someone dies prematurely. In forensic investigations of murders, the police, medical examiners, and laboratory personnel arrive

some time after the crime has taken place. Their science, “forensics,” takes its name from the future event in which the evidence they gather will possibly play some role in arguing a case in court. In comparison to the accustomed use of a space, where architecture and life run in parallel when all is functioning correctly, investigation occurs at a slower pace.

Violence, speeding past conventional use, has left traces, not only on the body of the victim, but on the architecture or natural landscape where the crime has taken place. What makes a scene a crime scene are the signs of the crime that will have a future value that will fit within the temporality of the crime—its planning, execution, detection, and punishment. These are not signs in the conventional sense, but puzzles, clues, and codes that must be translated. It is possible to say that the victim “signalizes” to those who later act on his/her behalf. The victim “has something to say,” but a cipher must be cracked. The original acceleration past the synchronized service of the environment with the activities of its users will have stretched out time artificially in a way that, in slowing down the same place through forensic investigation, expansion will be exposed as an enlargement whose connective tissue can be examined slowly. This stretching creates an opening that is correlated directly with the cipher of the clues, which requires the crime scene as a resonating chamber. The crime and investigation occupy a time and space separate from ordinary “synched-up space-time,” an accelerated (stretched-out), then decelerated, “site of exception.”

Crime resembles falling in love in that love also constructs a similar site of exception; love also accelerates past the world where work, acquaintances, family relations, and accidents of the everyday fall within a loose synchrony. One may be late for

work, miss a flight, or arrive too early without destroying this general regime of correspondences. But, falling in love, like a criminal act, pushes past these synchronized activities. Love's exceptionality lies in the way it rushes toward a future, fated moment.

May I suggest an unusual derivation for the acceleration/deceleration of time? In the universal cultural idea of “between the two deaths,” a first, literal death (faster than normal time) is the departure point of the soul imagined to wander (slower than normal time, hence the traditional representation of this by the labyrinth) until it reaches its final rest, a symbolic death. The momentum of life that extends it past its official medical end, even if only a fiction of religious imagination, has potency when it is applied to non-eschatological cases. In the case of crime investigation, it is the law that mandates that the state act as a proxy of the victim. In a sense, it is the group of investigators—police, prosecutors, vengeful friends, etc.—who live out this momentum, slowing it down, as they attempt to intersect the speedy flight of the criminal, who has “made a run for it.” The motion of acceleration carries the pursuers and pursued past the evenly paced, synchronous events of the everyday. In the forensic/criminal space-time of the dead victim, his/her proxies, and the perpetrator, a new forensic dynamic “dimensionalizes” a space and time where the all three—fast, slow, and normal times—will chiastically coincide.

A quick example will illustrate this. In the famous Hitchcock film, *Rear Window* (1954), we see a direct reference to how time is being used in relation to forensic observation and crime time. Jeff Jefferies (Jimmy Stewart) is a temporalized man, an action photographer whose life depends on being in synch with sports, politics, and world events. Photographs displayed in his apartment demonstrate his temporal status, including

a broken Speed Graphlex that shows how being in synch also involves sometimes standing too close. The film's premise is based on his change of speed, explained visually by the cast on his broken leg.<sup>23</sup> We hear him in conversation with his editor about being out of synch with the world events he normally follows. His injury has delayed him, and the result has been to shrink his POV to the point where it is able to penetrate into spaces that would normally exclude him. Thanks to the current heat wave, he has the leisure to observe his neighbors' lives, speculate about their motives and opportunities. The “φ interval between the frames,” invisible during normal life's synchronized movement, has opened up. Through it a new kind of visibility and dimensionality develop. Thanks to this expanded power and opportunity (*tuchē*) of the φ, he is able to intervene in one of his neighbors' criminality, the murder of a wife in the apartment directly opposite Jefferies'.

### **The Trauma of Architectural Ruin and the Fantasy of Delay**

What is the relationship between acceleration/deceleration and architectural ruin? Ruin is assigned to a causal agency, even in such obvious cases where the elements are to blame. War, neglect, financial impoverishment, natural disaster, accidents, and excesses make up the usual list. Every building can be said to embody an implicit claim to permanent synchronicity with the everyday. Tents play at being architecture by their extreme responsiveness to need, their ability to quickly “get up to speed.” But, when a building gets out of synch, the first effect is that of a motion so fast that it has to be slowed down and examined in detail. The fascination that comes with this forensic response to acceleration is quite well known.

The planned demolition of the Pruitt-Igoe project in Chicago, or its more tragic counterpart, the unplanned demolition of the World Trade Towers on 9/11, shows that acceleration and forensic deceleration are intimately related to compulsion and the construction of fantasy—meaning that the Real of destruction must be experienced indirectly, through a fantasy that stages an encounter (or an avoidance) in ways that domesticate the Real to make it minimally tolerable. In both the cases of Pruitt-Igoe and the World Trade Towers, compulsive re-playing of films of collapse can be explained only as an esthetic response—which Karlheinz Stockhausen was the first to note, to his eternal regret.<sup>24</sup> We have what amounts to an experimental “control” in the public’s voluntary desire to watch the painful scenes, and in the case of Pruitt-Igoe we see how, like *Schadenfreud*, fantasy is able to convert pain into pleasure.

[Insert Figure 1.2 here — photo]

Figure 1.2     The planned demolition of the Pruitt-Igoe Housing Project, April, 1972. In the “slowed-down” sequence of photos made widely available, the frozen steps of destruction often resemble contemporary architecture projects, for example Frank Gehry’s Cleveland Clinic Lou Ruvo Center for Brain Health in Las Vegas. Photo: U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development.

[Insert Figure 1.3 here — photo]

Figure 1.3     Homenage à la Barceloneta, by Rebecca Horn, Barcelona, Catalonia.  
Photo: author.

Perhaps the fascination was the result of the comparative acceleration of the event past the everyday temporality that formed a decelerating chrysalis around these familiar

buildings. This might explain why most presentations were in extreme slow motion, as if the trauma of the Real had to be domesticated by padding out the  $\varphi$  interval between the frames. This method of avoiding the obscene horror of the Real, and its relationship to art, is familiar to us through the elaborations of it, as “delay,” in the work of Marcel Duchamp. Ancient sources could be cited, but proximal ones may be more helpful, as in the case of Scottish performance artist Gordon Douglas’s *24-Psycho*, a stretched-out version of Alfred Hitchcock’s famous 109-minute thriller. During the 24 hours of *Psycho*’s new duration, the 1960 film is invaded by spirits that penetrate through the enlarged intervals. With over 13 seconds for each normal second of the original, new narratives emerge. The film—about a crime that had accelerated the sleepy rural motel into a murder scene in time to the audience’s accelerating heart-beats also invited a “domestication” to allow the audience to fantasize about the possible narratives adjacent to the original thriller.

By using the  $\varphi$  function in such a direct and practical way, Gordon allows us to articulate a more universal and fundamental connection. The ruin, like crime, accelerates or decelerates time and space, in effect re-dimensionalizing it by introducing new axes of measure, correspondence, and memory. The means of confronting the Real of this change of speed depends on a fantasy that emerges through the imaginary re-assignment and alternative materialization of the  $\varphi$  intervals. Often this takes the form of a wall, river, or other kind of boundary—the first step by which an “impossible passage” will allow for a fantasy that uses extimacy as its principal structuring device. In Orson Welles 1941 drama, *Citizen Kane*, the audience is positioned outside a chain-link fence with a No Trespassing sign. The camera drifts along this fence a bit but then miraculously climbs over, to glide

above the estate's exotic animals, artifacts, and flora, a magnificent castle in the background. Welles' expertise in extimacy is demonstrated in his perfect match of an exterior shot of the villa's bedroom window with an interior shot that, apart from the reversed figure-ground effect when the interior lights go out, to be replaced by a view from inside the bedroom of the coming dawn. The device of extimacy continues as the shot of the window dissolves into a snowstorm inside the paperweight that contains a small cabin, memento of Kane's childhood home. Then, when the paperweight falls from Kane's lifeless hand, the camera uses it as a lens (although it has smashed in the fall) through which we see a nurse enter the room to fold Kane's hands in place on his chest, signifying death. It would be hard to find better filmic example combining the theme of "between the two deaths" with visual and narrative extimacy and the idea that the φ could be, through negation, used as a passageway. Quite literally, the camera advances through its own connective *materia*, performs obversion (twice!—the theme of doubling will be taken up in detail later), and initiates a story that is about a man who made an "impossible passage" and made *two* revolutionary changes in his life. As Kane replied to a reporter waiting on something to happen in Cuba, "You provide the [stories], I'll provide the war." It is, in other words, the medium that determines not only the message but also the reality behind the message—the interpellation of ideology.

### **The Accelerations/Decelerations of *Rebecca*, *Veronika Voss*, *Vertigo***

Other films have used the device of the floating-past-the-gate introduction, but few have carried forward the transition from the interpellation of ideology to the interpolation of the psychoanalytical subject-falling-in-love as Hitchcock's 1940 film for David O. Selznick,

*Rebecca*. An off-camera narrator, at once recognizable as a former witness of the story we are about to hear and see, stops briefly at the closed gate before she flies through the bars and floats down the crumbling drive, her glide unruffled by the fallen branches and chunks of broken pavement. As she approaches the hollowed-out shell of a large mansion, the moonlight momentarily creates the eerie effect of lights being turned on in the abandoned rooms. Just as the moon re-animates the building's corpse, the narrator is going to illuminate the separate rooms of the past to explain how such a great house should meet with such a rough end.

Before we continue with this scene, consider the question of acceleration and deceleration. Manderley, the mansion in *Rebecca*, has been pushed to a premature end by the speedy method of burning. After the solution of the mystery and full disclosure of the nature of Rebecca's suicide, the housekeeper Danvers commits suicide, taking her (now symbolically as well as actually) dead mistress's domain, Manderley, with her. To see how this acceleration to ruin opens up the  $\varphi$  of the building's synchronicity with the everyday, a set of multiple  $\varphi$ 's that can be passed through forensically, in a ghost-like manner that is afforded "all the time in the world," we must resist settling the circumstances of this opening within the contextual particulars of this one film. In a sense, it is this opening-up and forensic penetration—the *Rear Window* effect, so to speak—that constitutes architecture's "unary trait"—its singularity. While singularity compels theory to regard a case as unique, the process of creating singularity is, if anything, a universal mechanism; and to see how it works as an automaton within the architectural imagination we require a comparative method.

Two films relate well to *Rebecca*'s velocity methods: Rainer Werner Fassbinder's 1982 film, *Veronika Voss (Die Sehnsucht der Veronika Voss)*; and Alfred Hitchcock's psychological thriller, *Vertigo* (1958). Veronika Voss is an aging actress living in München after World War II, a fictionalization of the actual Berlin actress, Sybille Schmitz. Like her original, Voss's physician has addicted her to morphine. The film elaborates this as a conspiracy between the clinic and the municipal health director to inherit the actress's villa and artwork once the actress has succumbed to her addiction. This parasitic theft is played out almost entirely on an architectural level, as Fassbinder constructs tracking shots, lighting effects, set colors, and visual frames that emphasize the role of the φ as passageway.

Hitchcock's *Vertigo* also exploits the potential of the φ as the opening to an obscene, deep Real, materialized first as a grave, next as a fall from a tower. Scottie, a detective suffering from vertigo following a roof-top chase in which a uniformed policeman has died trying to save him, is persuaded by an acquaintance, the rich industrialist Gavin Elster, to follow Madelaine, his suicidal wife, in hopes of breaking her suicidal obsession with Carlotta Valdez, an ancestress who died tragically in 1857 due to the abuse of a wealthy man. Scottie gradually uncovers a third plot, another crime of a wealthy man—Elster's plan to kill Madelaine by faking her suicide and having Scottie as the perfect witness—when Scottie meets and falls in love with the actress who had played the fictional Madeleine.

The ruin of *Veronika Voss* is less theatrical than the burned-out hulk of Manderlay, but in post-war Germany the idea of strangers inhabiting one's former home was strong

tea, a way of domesticating the horror of still-visible ruins of Allied bombing.<sup>25</sup> In *Vertigo*, there is no literal architectural ruin. Rather, the city is “hollowed out” by the detective Scottie’s obsession with the beautiful, tragic Madeleine, who in turn is obsessed with the fate/fatality of her tragic ancestor, Carlotta Valdez. Hitchcock plants several “tells” to cue us into this hollowing-out strategy—signs that have, incredibly, never been cited by any scholar who has examined this film. We will take these up in detail later.

“Ruin criticism,” employing the notion of architectural speed and the use of the connective perceptual  $\phi$  as “portal” of the unconscious can claim to have discovered a “film within a film,” a 24-*Psycho* version already-always inside the first *Psycho*, before Douglas Gordon conceived of his artwork.<sup>26</sup> San Francisco and environs become a ghost town<sup>27</sup> for those who have drunk the cool-aide of obsession, and the audience, like Scottie, is compelled to do this once we are given, as Veronika Voss is given, a *magic invocation*.<sup>28</sup> *Vertigo*, literally the fear of falling, is the vector of “between the two deaths,” as shown in animated sequences of Scottie’s nightmares, a head in the center of a swirling spiral. Scottie has “*let down* his colleague,” the policeman who fell to his death during the film’s opening chase scene. The subsequent re-enactment of this failure materializes in the fallings/failings with Madeleine: seeing her obsession with “falling into the grave” with Carlotta, watching her fall into the San Francisco Bay, falling in love, failing to prevent her fall from the mission tower. The apertures through which these various falls occur show how  $\phi$ , stretched into an opening, can have so many behavioral-environmental counterparts: an open grave, a tower stair-case, a section through a tree, a green jewel

signaling a “go-ahead” invitation to *fall* in love that is retroactively realized as the obscene proof of Elster’s/Judy’s crime.

*Vertigo* ends with the fall of the symbolic Madeleine. *Rebecca* begins with the rescue of Maxim from a contemplated suicidal jump. *Veronika Voss*’s falls are horizontal, from fame to obscurity, wealth to poverty, youth to old age. The film takes its start in a rainy park where the actress has lost her way, and Robert gets her back on track literally by escorting her on to a tram. The camera tracks their movement to the back car through tram windows that mimic the frames of a strip of film. We have φ’s everywhere, opening up, “dimensionalizing” the drama of one person trying but failing to save another within an architecture of fast and slow.

### ***Rebecca’s Big Others***

Architecture, like slow food and fast food, indicates a close relationship to what lies near at hand while maintaining an interest in coordinating with the distant. A train station is slow in its accommodation of the needs of the residents of its city, its detailed offerings of travel opportunities, its coordination of trains with taxis, hotel reservations, bike rentals, luggage storage and retrieval. The station must also be fast, otherwise it fails to make the crucial link with external places to which it must rush on a regular basis. However, if it speeds up beyond this balance between slow and fast, a disaster takes place. Imagine that terrorists invade, take hostages, blow up communications equipment, bringing all travel to a halt.

[Insert Figure 1.3 here — diagram]

Figure 1.3     Architecture’s synchronization with fast and slow demands.

Something like this happens in *Rebecca*, where Manderley, presented as a perfectly synchronized headquarters for a large agricultural estate, faces a slow-down with the arrival of the new “Mrs. de Winter” (the POV character is *never named*, other than by this designation, through either the novel by Daphne de Maurier or the film; let us designate here as ——). The new mistress cannot sync up to her domain. Doorknobs are too high, corridors become angular and impassible, sections of the mansion formerly identified with Rebecca are off limits. The dimensions and features of the house infantilize the new Mrs. de Winter, put her on stage to be examined by visitors, staff, and relations. She cannot “get up to speed.” She misses cues that would adjust her to the social interactions of the upper class. The house becomes *unheimlich* (uncanny, un-homey). Even the library window admits unwanted invaders: Rebecca’s former lover sneaks in to get a look at her successor.

This contraction of hospitality leads to the other meaning of the root of the word, *hostes*, “host,” to hostility. This amounts to a transition from the ideological subject, which has failed to interpellate the new Mrs. de Winter, which has left behind a “small remainder” that will become the basis of the second dramatic line of the story. We must look closely at the issue of relative speed, what has zipped past, and what has been left behind, in the dynamic forward flow of time. The wealthy Maxim de Winter had befriended, and then proposed to, a young woman serving as companion to a pompous American heiress staying in Monte Carlo. The friendship flowered into romance in an obviously accelerated way. Maxim proposes to —— although she has only come for breakfast. Even the usual prelude to romantic breakfasts, a night of passion, has been skipped. We go directly to the proposal of marriage, then the hasty civil ceremony at the

mayor's office. Maxim nearly loses the marriage certificate, and all we see of the honeymoon is replayed through a series of short home-movie clips. Sped up into the role of a society matron, the real character now designated as “the new Mrs. de Winter” is, as her defective name suggests, left behind. She is too slow for this fast action. She falls between the cracks of the system, the φ's open up to let her fall. She drops a precious china figurine. She fails to elude Danvers' humiliations. She can't find her way. In Hitchcockian terms, she is lost in “the wrong house.” Though intact to others (like San Francisco in *Vertigo*), it is ruined to her because of her identification with death, her proximity to the deceased wife Rebecca and Rebecca's now-slow enjoyment of the interval between her literal death and a final symbolic terminus. This proximity ties her to both Madeleine and Judy, both defined by their relation to a dead woman; and to Veronika Voss, who is the fictionalized version of the Berlin actress who had met with a similar fate in a Munich clinic. The issue of velocity, of speeding up and falling behind, are critical, especially in their relationship to the special time interval defined by “between the two deaths.”

### **Clinamen**

*Rebecca* opens up with the ghost-like drive toward the ruin of Manderley. Now, with more of an understanding of how the narrative space has opened up through a φ rent in the fabric of reality and how architecture and its inhabitants speed up and slow down in relation to this φ, we can follow the pattern of laminar flows where each difference in velocity creates a turbulence, a Lucretian “clinamen,” a swerve or internal difference that results in converting the previously invisible φ into a material passageway.<sup>29</sup> With a system where everything is moving in the same direction (think of a six-lane super-highway at rush

hour), any differences in velocity are transcribed into a locally defined fast and slow. If every vector is moving at the same speed, the perceived motion is zero. Velocity is relative to this system of parallels, in which all  $\varphi$ 's work seamlessly, invisibly. Any difference of speed opens up a  $\varphi$ , making it possible to pass from one space to another, a “site of exception.”

Such openings often draw from a traditional architectural palette. When —— first arrives at Manderley, through a humiliating rainstorm that drenches her completely before Maxim can get the top of his convertible up, the staff lines up to greet her as she and her new husband stand on a dais. The implication of being on stage are clear: —— is an *ingénue*, not ready for kind of performances that Rebecca, the seasoned actress, had established as her signature role.

Upstairs, a long corridor leads to Rebecca's bedroom on the favored west wing of the house. Rebecca's pet cocker spaniel continues to guard it, but —— gathers up her courage to investigate its mysterious interior. The camera frames the doorway, with its two knobs and key-hole. —— enters an antechamber, her shadow cast directly on to what looks to be a portrait of Rebecca, superimposing the all-too-alive woman's image with a not-yet-alive woman's silhouette. —— opens a window and looks out but we do not see the view of the ocean she can see. Danvers arrives, to set —— straight on the room's magical functions. Its several chambers are for Rebecca's many riches, showered on her by her loving husband. Her underwear is made especially for her by the nuns of the Convent of St. Claire, whose nick-name, the “poor Claires,” contrasts woefully with the riches Rebecca enjoys. ——'s tour confirms that this is indeed a Lacanian “treasury of

signifiers”: the *place* where the enigmatic order of meanings is set up purposefully to contract meaning behind multiple veils of mystery, to conserve their effectiveness despite an intended obscurity. This is Rebecca’s status as D<sub>A</sub>, the dead woman who “does not yet know she is dead,” one of the two primary categories of the uncanny defined by Ernst Jentsch in his pioneering work, “*Zur Psychologie des Unheimlichen*.<sup>30</sup> The opposite but equal category, A<sub>D</sub>, is ——’s. Together, she and Rebecca rotate, held apart by this uncanny diameter that keeps them on opposite sides of a circumferential track, like Castor and Pollux, the twins separated as a part of deal to allow each a period of life followed by a spell in Hades. In fact, Hades’ reputation for riches is what we encounter in Rebecca’s bedroom. We are reminded of the mythological connection between infinite riches, wandering souls, and impossible puzzles/tasks: the *katabasis*, or descent motif. What is a palace below ground is a ruin for those who cannot find their way. The treasure is within reach but radically forbidden. It is the essence of enigma and for this reason Lacan placed the master signifier, S<sub>1</sub>, locked within the treasury whose dimensionality protects riches through the anamorphosis ( $\omega$ ) that combines palace and ruin, ghost and guest. We have seen how the  $\phi$  of the bedroom works in *Rebecca*. Though —— has believed it to be locked, it has always-already been unlocked. Yet, when she is inside the forbidden chamber, it remains forbidden, unknowable. It is a species of the space of the Lady of the troubadours, a space where impossible demands require in ingenious art. If we were required to provide a shorthand for this architectural sequence, it would be  $\phi > \omega > \phi$ , “the opening opens up to itself,” or “the room contains itself; it is both container and contained”—one of the several meanings of Lacan’s symbol for the relationships of

indeterminable scale and pied motion, the *poinçon*,  $\diamond$ , also written  $\lhd \rhd$ , both less than and greater than. Because the *poinçon* defines the relation of the subject to the permanently inaccessible *object petit a*, the “object-cause of desire” designating the function of fantasy (by which the subject is able to avoid, disguise, or encounter the Real), it works in *Rebecca* to demonstrate the radical architectural recursion of the  $\varphi$  function: both inside and outside, periphery and center, high and low, heaven and hell.

Because the *clinamen* (internal differences in velocity of processes running in parallel) opens up the normally invisible  $\varphi$  that “glues together” the various points-of-view of the Real, allowing us a tolerable means of addressing it as an Imaginary reality, the openings are simultaneously the entry-way and the object-goal of entering. The treasury is a treasury precisely because a Möbius-band logic forces us to be in two places at once, two times at once. We can neither have the cake nor eat it, we can only imagine that we should be able to do one or the other. This is the forced choice of ideology, but its interpellation is not perfect. There is a small remainder. Between the not-entirely-dead *Rebecca* and the not-entirely-alive ——, the mansion and the labyrinth-ruin, there is the rotating diameter, the anamorphic dimension,  $\omega$ . The lack-of-being that sucks out the center of Manderley for ——, the *manque d'être*, echoes through the seemingly intact mansion. It is the ruin-inside-the-mansion, the remainder that cannot speak/signifier, but only *signalize*. Such is the idea of haunting. In French, the dummy, the device of ventriloquism, is *le mort*, the dead man. We should note that when the dummy really starts to speak the truth through the half-speech (*mi-dire*) of this echo from beneath, “he” becomes not only a “she” but a

“She”—the Lady whose impossible/Real commands inflect the space and time of the other signifiers beneath Her rule, making them say one thing but require another.

### **Between Shadow and Light**

The opening φ of *Veronika Voss* is a triumph of filmic self-reference. The sports reporter Robert, who has met the famous actress Veronika Voss wandering through a rain-soaked park in suburban Munich, helps her on to a tram. As they move to the back car, the camera tracks their motion through the tram’s widows, creating a parody of the separate frames on a strip of film. At their next formal meeting, Veronika has invited Robert to buy her lunch at an upscale restaurant, where she asks the waiter to adjust the lighting to favor her face. As she explains, an actress exists between shadow and light. The film, too, finds negotiates its way between the brightly lit, white interior of the devious Dr. Katz, who is in the business of addicting rich clients in order to entail their estates after their accelerated death, and the dark of Voss’s hollowed-out villa, flashbacks of which restore its original blaze. Lens flare, interior windows, and white décor (even a plant in Dr. Katz’s office is white) suggest that, while everything seems above board, the *poché* hides secrets. At the back of the psychiatrist’s clinic is a small room in which addicts are isolated to sweat out their worst spells. The ambient radio broadcasts (an American Army radio station) plays clairvoyant accompaniment: “Run, Johnny, Run,” “The Battle of New Orleans,” and “High on a Hilltop.” The first of these 50s American hits betoken the irony of military occupation, but “High on a Hilltop,” by Tommy Collins, is a death-dream of a lover who, from a high vantage point (Calvary? —the singer paraphrases Christ’s words, “Lord,

forgive her, she knows not the way”), gazes down on his alcoholic lover in a distant bar-room, their love replaced by a series of one-night stands.

High on a hilltop over-looking the city  
 I watch the bright lights as they gleam  
 For somewhere you're dancing in some dingy barroom  
 And the lure of the gayness takes the place of our dreams.<sup>31</sup>

Such a clear  $\phi$ , which implies a combination of infinite distance coupled with super-human visual powers (cf. Raymond Roussel's optical deployment of his *procédé*, the ability to combine, anamorphically, two opposite sense/views), is also a temporal disjunction.<sup>32</sup> From the vantage of Veronika's death-in-life addiction, Robert's journalistic temporality fails to get him where he needs to go on time. He cannot synch up with Veronika's downward digression. After their tryst he knocks over an expensive vase; he is one phone call away from his girl-friend's murder, just after she “gets the goods” on Dr. Katz's game of addicting wealthy, mostly elder clients; he must be “brought up to speed” by Voss's ex-husband, who explains her tragedy in a bar **where, in the background, . . .**

Addiction accelerates Veronika, and her estate, to a premature ruin. Robert cannot keep up with the betrayal's fast pace or frequent changes of direction. The bright sparkles that appear to be camera effects accomplish the short-circuit that links the opening tracking shot, where the  $\phi$  function is frozen as tram-car windows, to the magisterial tracking shot through the windows of Voss's villa near the end of the film. Shortly after Veronika's party, where she sings a song self-referentially dedicated to such matches, “Memories Are Made of This,” she is persuaded to spend Easter alone in Dr. Katz's de-tox room; but it

turns out that the doctor has locked her in, with sufficient sedatives to commit suicide. The American country-western music gives way to the Vatican's sunrise Easter service; the door closes off. The door is locked from the outside.

The straight story of the fictional Veronika Voss intersected in various ways with the real life of Sybille Schmitz. After considerable success as an actress before the war, Schmitz failed to synch up to life on two notable occasions. Rumored to have been forced by Joseph Goebels, the Reich's minister of propaganda, into an unwanted affair, she was despised after the war as a collaborator. Addicted to morphine by her doctor, Ursula Moritz, she died in 1955 at the age of 45. When Veronika meets Robert for lunch, she asks him to loan her money to buy a broach in the hotel gift-shop. There, the two shopkeepers, older women, recognize her and ask for her autograph, thinly concealing their nostalgia for the "good old days" of the German Reich. Fassbinder's mother plays one of the shopkeepers, a kind of indirect cameo appearance. Fassbinder himself appears in the film, seated behind Veronika as she watches one of her earlier films, ironically about an actress addicted to morphine by her doctor. The film shows the dead, actress's/actress's face, a striking double of the death mask of the real Sybille Schmitz. This intersection of multiple doubles confirms that Fassbinder was aware of the necessity of constructing his film not as a "diagetic" documentary, where the camera occupied a line strictly segregating the story and the story-teller, but as an accordion-fold of narratives that, like a labyrinth, prevented any simple A=A form of identity. A drug addict himself, Fassbinder was fascinated by the story of the UFA star, and of pre- and post-war German film history in general.<sup>33</sup>

So, apart from being a complexly constructed movie, what is extraordinary about *Veronika Voss*, and what is it that connects to *Rebecca*, as a film that makes exceptional use of the materialization of the connective  $\phi$  function? Let's return to Mladen Dolar's idea of falling in love. Love constitutes a logic by which the subject can get beyond the interpellation of ideology. Although love can, in some forms, involve an ideology, principally the ideology that uses free choice to engage a locked-in fate, the "automaton" of this fate, which is at first the element of accident but subsequently the opposite idea of predetermination, love is about the "haunting" aspect of this predetermination—its materialization as a "voice from below," a kind of half-speech, a password, a defective message. When "the Real begins to speak," we cannot understand it. There is no point in trying to translate, clarify, or explain in scholarly terms. Ideology turns into love. In *Veronika Voss*, this is the difference between Fassbinder's attempted documentary on Sybille Schmitz and his realization that "the reality of fiction" would be greater and more achievable than the "fiction of reality"—i.e. that love, the lyrical symmetry of Veronika's imagined story would overcome the ideology necessitated by the documentary format of Sybille's "actual" life. This is the choice to be made by all artists, in all media.

If the artist must see how to "fall in love," so must theory. Theory must resist the documentary. But, it cannot fall in love in the ideological way, intoxicated by *eros*. As Friedländer notes of Plato's treatment of *eros/daimon*, the key is to see how *eros* works as restraint. In this, the nature of automaton—the realization of its double structure and function—and automaton's relation to human affordance/opportunity, *tuchē*, take us back to the fundamental performative level of action where film and architecture relate *mano-a-*

*mano.* Animation, illusion, and the screen constitute the economy managed by the *eros* of the Real. Fassbinder's choice of moving from ideology to *eros* is the artist's only choice, one that forces the artwork to take on the materiality of fast and slow, by which the  $\varphi$  of ideological experience is "opened up" by love. And, just as *Rebecca*'s narrator floats through the iron gate to visit the ruin that has not yet returned to its raw elements, this replacement of  $\varphi$  by the anamorphic  $\omega$  of differential velocity gives us direct access to the dead. This is not just the fact that the artwork is, necessarily, a voice from the past, but the temporal relationship of the present to the Real, a temporality that *will have been fulfilled* in the future anterior: a moment "just before the just after," i.e. the *déjà vu* of prophecy. *Rebecca* and *Veronika Voss* provide what amounts to a User's Guide to constructing such futurity (this is the means by which all art constitutes a "utopia"). But, Hitchcock's 1958 masterpiece, *Vertigo*, constitutes a virtual encyclopedia, if not Sūtra, of the artwork as site of exception. To understand the role of the ruin in architecture, we must submit to this logic of velocity, its  $\varphi > \omega > \varphi$  extimacy, its songs of love.

### **Vertigo's Hasty Falls**

Text

text

### **Bibliography**

### **Notes**

- 1 Steven Jacobs, *The Wrong House: The Architecture of Alfred Hitchcock* (Rotterdam, ND: 010 Publishers, 2007).
- 2 Marcel Proust, *Remembrance of Things Past*, trans. C.K. Scott Moncrieff and Terence Kilmartin (New York: Vintage Books, 1982, c1981).
- 3 The reference is to Rosalind Krauss, “Sculpture in the Expanded Field,” *October* 8 (Spring, 1979): 30–44.
- 4 Psychologists will rightly hasten to distinguish the  $\varphi$ -function from the  $\beta$ -function, and both  $\varphi$  and  $\beta$  from the (discredited) concept of the latent image, in consideration of the way the illusion of cinema is produced. The  $\beta$ -function is the illusion that makes fixed images seem to move, even though the image location does not change. The  $\varphi$ -function allows the viewer to imagine constant movement instead of a series of static images. Cinema theorists often employ, mistakenly, the idea of the “persistence of vision.” See Joseph and Barbara Anderson, “The Myth of Persistence of Vision Revisited,” *Journal of Film and Video* 45 (1): 3–12. See also Lloyd Kaufman, *Sight and Mind: An Introduction to Visual Perception* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1974), 368.
- 5 One could argue that, in fact, there is no other means for conducting truly scientific research of the human realm. At the level of intentionality, i.e. the position from which one must accept authorial/artistic intentionality as an unquestionable factor, there can no longer be a question of an unconscious belonging to an audience, but rather an “un-intentionality” of the author/artist and “influences” consciously or unconsciously assimilated. At such a point the development of the work can only

be a matter of speculation. This combinatorial approach ignores the issue of reception, which is itself not the authorial model seen from the audience's side but an understanding of the construction of time from within the performance/reception of the work. Lacan's concept of extimacy applies to this approach, if only to assert the primacy of possession. It is truly more accurate to say, in contrast to the proprietary models that alternate between the producer's authority and the audience's conditional judgment, that the work possesses both the producers and receivers, that it acts as an enigmatic Other. For an explanation of the idea of extimacy, see Miller, Jacques-Alain, "Extimacy," in *Lacanian Theory of Discourse: Subject, Structure, and Society*, Mark Bracher, Marshall W. Alcorn, Jr., Ronald J. Corthell, and Françoise Massardier-Kenney (New York and London: New York University Press, 1994), 74–87.

- 6 Jorge Luis Borges, "Tlön, Uqbar, Orbis Tertius," *Collected Fictions*, trans. Andrew Hurley (New York: Penguin Books, 1999), 68–81.
- 7 Marco Frascari, "Sortes Architectii in the Eighteenth-Century Veneto" (Ph.D. diss., University of Pennsylvania, January, 1981).
- 8 To see a clarification of this mistaken placement of the unconscious, see Nadir Lahiji, ed., *The Political Unconscious of Architecture: Reopening Jameson's Narrative* (Farnham, Surrey, UK and Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2011).
- 9 Though not literally stated, organicism is the basis of the concept of autogenesis, adopted by, among others, Patrik Schumacher, *The Autopoiesis of Architecture* (London: John Wiley & Sons Ltd., 2010). The idea of autogenesis is borrowed

from Niklas Luhmann's theory of communications, by which an interior of "reduced complexity" is distinguished from a chaotic exterior. Whether or not this is true in the ecology of living organisms (the very idea of ecology contrasts with this view), such an absolute boundary is inconceivable in the world of the psyche. From Luhmann's vantage-point, the organ does not mediate exterior and interior. It is an absolute frame. Thus, the case for "organic" architecture is lost in two senses, first as an analogy of biological life, second as a possible model for human conception, perception, and use. Luhmann's borrowings from Francisco Varela and Humberto Maturana's idea of "autopoiesis" (self-generation and self-regulation), and its deployment of George Spencer-Brown's *Laws of Form*, ignores Spencer-Brown's primary corollary of occultation, by which the exterior is incorporated into the interior and can be seen to be implicitly present. The value of an equation in Spencer-Brown's non-numeric calculus is always ambiguous, depending on the nature of the surface on which it is inscribed. Louis Kauffman's commentary on Spencer-Brown's work emphasizes this role of recursion and comes close to being a mathematical account of Lacan's idea of extimacy. See George Spencer-Brown, *The Laws of Form* (New York: Dutton, 1979); Humberto Maturana and Francisco J. Varela, *The Tree of Knowledge: The Biological Roots of Human Understanding* (Boston: Shambhala Publications, 1987); and Louis Kauffman, "Laws of Form—An Exploration in Mathematics and Foundations," Rought Draft, accessed June 17, 2012, <http://homepages.math.uic.edu/~kauffman/Laws.pdf>. Luhmann's insistence

- on “autopoietic closure” is a disguised positivism that ignores the phenomenon of the intransitive boundary, without which there can be no account of culture.
- 10 Jacques-Alain Miller, “Extimacy,” *The Symptom* 9 (Fall 2008), accessed January 20, 2011, <http://www.lacan.com/symptom>.
- 11 Giambattista Vico was the first Western philosopher to acknowledge this challenge to the imagination as such, and as a basis for an entire philosophy of culture. Vico, in attempting to understand how human thought began, was forced to acknowledge mythic thought’s seemingly fantastic attribution of thoughts and feeling to natural objects and events. In order to see how this was not simply an error of naïve consciousness but—in precisely the way it was *not* a true, conceptual judgment—nonetheless an act of genius that led to the subsequent articulation of a fully human world. This discovery of the so-called “imaginative universal” (*universale fantastico*) reportedly cost Vico a good twenty years of persistent study of history, etymology, rhetoric, poetry, and philosophy. See Giambattista Vico, *The Autobiography of Giambattista Vico* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1944); *The New Science of Giambattista Vico*, trans. Thomas Goddard Bergin and Max Harold Fisch (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1948).
- 12 Mladen Dolar, “Beyond Interpellation,” *Qui Parle* 6, 2 (Spring/Summer 1993): 75–96.
- 13 This is the subject-expected-to-be-happy, a much-discussed issue in the recent press. See Deirdre N. McCloskey “Happyism,” *The New Republic* (June 28, 2012).
- 14 Mladen Dolar, “Beyond Interpellation,” 77.

- 15 These two components of the psychoanalytical subject coincide with Vico's famous dipole, the true and the made (*verum* and *factum*). The puzzle surrounding his dictum of the convertibility of the true and the made ("*verum ipsum factum*") needs to be written in terms of imagination and memory, which Vico also considered as convertible. Lacan's emphasis on the grammatical function of the future anterior tense, a point in the future that is simultaneously a completion of a past, shows that the two thinkers were close on the matter of a category of exception that would allow for a utopian state of awareness. The relation of Lacan's future anterior to Freud's famous *Wo Es war, sol ich werden* (in some translations, "where the Id was, there the ego shall have found itself") is tied to the materiality of the medium that records memory as a trace or scar. It is the joke about the factory worker, a known smuggler, who left each day with an empty wheelbarrow, who succeeded in smuggling wheelbarrows because the guards only conceived that he would be smuggling something *contained* by the wheelbarrow. This is extimacy in miniature. The *factum*, originally invisible, obverts within the collective memory as the exception (the object dropped out from view) that returns to disclose the true nature of its materiality and, by so doing, complete the *verum*. Both Lacan and Vico are in accord in emphasizing the *temporal moment* of this completion.
- 16 Thus, Žižek's recounting of the joke about the little girl who wondered, if one parent was from Bristol, the other from Manchester, and she was born in London, how the three of them managed to get together demonstrates the role played by

- retroaction. Forced choice involves a time-reversal, where logic seems to, unaccountably, switch over to the dark side. Slavoj Žižek, *Enjoy Your Symptom: Jacques Lacan in Hollywood and Out* (London and New York: Routledge, 2001), 10.
- 17 This account of love, based on falling in love, differs from the famous account of love in its relation to architecture developed by Alberto Pérez-Gómez, *Built Upon Love: Architectural Longing after Ethics and Aesthetics* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2006). While Pérez-Gómez's account of *eros*, drawn from the Socratic tradition by which it is the vehicle of philosophical wisdom, coincides with many points of Dolar's psychoanalytical account, he does not make full use of the relationship between demon and *eros* emphasized by Paul Friedländer, *Plato*, trans. Hans Meyerhoff (New York: Pantheon Books, 1958-1969). Friedländer develops the uncanny idea of that which appears in the middle, which has come from an enigmatic-complex divine exterior, just as the subject is interpellated by a “vertical” fate, in the case of falling in love, and must struggle against this interpellation through a process I qualify as a “horizontal” mapping, interpolation. See a further comparison of love’s double nature to horizontal and vertical vectors in Roger Duncan, “Plato’s *Symposium*: The Cloven Eros,” *Southern Journal of Philosophy* 15, 3 (Fall 1977): 277–291. Demon is that which connects the subject’s central void to a distant divine identifier, vertically (ideologically) interpellating it. Interpolation in Plato’s terms is also the more general use of the dialectic of argument, where all of the evident explanations offered by the participants of the

dialogs are dissolved in a *dénouement*. Both interpellation and interpolation figure as primary constituents in the German writer Franz Rosenzweig's notion of a "site of exception," a true *locus solus* in Aldo Rossi's civic and Raymond Roussel's esthetic sense. See Eric L. Santner, *On the Psychotheology of Everyday Life* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2001); Aldo Rossi, *The Architecture of the City* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1982); Raymond Roussel, *Locus Solus*, trans. Rupert Copeland Cunningham (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1970).

- 18 Slavoj Žižek, *Iraq: The Borrowed Kettle* (London: Verso, 2004). The obvious application of the borrowed kettle argument is the case for invading Iraq. (1) We have evidence of WMDs; (2) OK, the evidence was not great, but finding WMDs is inevitable, after we invade; (3) OK, there were no WMDs but getting rid of Saddam Hussein was a good thing. Note that the stage of foreclosure (*Verwerfung*) reveals the *initial intent*, which may have been unconscious at the time of the first denial. It was the *wish*—connected to the desire to control Iraq's mineral wealth—that animated the negative strategy of the forced choice presented as justification for war. Readers of Franz Kafka's *The Trial* (law based on exception) and Vladimir Nabokov's *Invitation to a Beheading* (the prison without locks) will recognize that this trope has long been a cornerstone of literature's recognition of the precision of modern ideology.
- 19 Dolar, "Beyond Interpellation," 83.
- 20 It would be useful to compare this interaction of vectors with Edgar Allan Poe's detailed account of "the Turk," a 19c. scam involving a dwarf hidden in a lower

compartment of a display mechanizing the chess-playing genius of the dummy, dressed as an oriental *magus*. Poe does not take the easy way out of this by simply affirming the general belief that the machine is a hoax, but goes into the issues of visibility and their relation to a quite original model of genius. See W. K. Wimsatt, Jr., “Poe and the Chess Automaton,” *American Literature* 11, 2 (May 1939): 138–151. Wimsatt misses Poe’s main point, which derives from Poe’s own employment of the game of Morra, where one wins by deciding whether one’s opponent is stupid or clever. Poe had used his skill with ciphers to develop this as a method of chiasmus within many of his works. See: Richard Kopley, “Formal Considerations of the Dupin Mysteries,” *Edgar Allan Poe and the Dupin Mysteries* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2008), 7–26.

21 Dolar, “Beyond Interpellation,” 83.

22 The process of double inscription is that by which the uncanny’s two polar conditions, life fatalistic drawn toward an appointment with death and the momentum that carries the soul past the technical moment of death in anticipation of a successful symbolic end. The empirical overlap of ruins, anxiety, and the uncanny is not an accident of theme association but a matter of structure of architecture’s future anterior natural history, its “site of exception.” See Ernst Jentsch, “Zur Psychologie des Unheimlichen,” *Psychiatrisch–Neurologische Wochenschrift* 8, 22 (August 26, 1906): 195–98 and 8, 23 (September 1, 1906): 203–05.

- 23 The cast is inscribed, as is the common custom, with playful comments from visiting friends. “Here lie the broken bones of L. B. Jefferies” mimics a tomb-stone epitaph, further connecting Jefferies’ convalescence to the interval “between the two deaths.”
- 24 [Karlheinz Stockhausen source]
- 25 For an account of Germany’s status as a post-war collective ruin, see W. G. Sebald, *On the Natural History of Destruction*, trans. Anthea Bell (New York: Modern Library, 2004). This important work on the meaning of ruins in architecture connects directly to the idea of the “site of exception,” the acceleration of meaning and subsequent deceleration of life. Sebald notes the general lack of German literary and journalistic response to the devastation. In effect, the landscape was itself reduced to a state of resisting placement within any network of signifiers. This resistance “signalized” the status of the Real, as traumatic, and Sebald addresses this resistance as a reduction from *bios*, public life, to *zoē*—pure life. Where narrative history (motives, actions, cultural development, etc.) applies to the former, the latter can be attached only to the idea of a “natural history.”
- 26 We see a portent of this in the opening credits of *Vertigo*. A spiral is superimposed on an extreme close-up of a woman’s eye. The double meaning of the eye, as an optical organ and as a spatial passageway are clear. *Vertigo* will use Scottie’s role as a spy to draw him into the sham set-up of Madeleine’s suicide, for which *he becomes the perfect witness*. This final result is like the “first question” omitted in order that the “second questions” may be asked. The inquest for Madeleine’s

suicide is the final forensic moment that has been the aim, all along, of Elster's request. Who better than a retired policeman to give honest, reliable testimony, especially at the expense of his own reputation? Just as he "let down" his colleague early in the film (rooftop chase), he has let down Madeleine by allowing her to jump from the mission tower. This second failure initiates Scottie's own fall into clinical depression, his own personal period of mourning that initiates the sequence of "between the two deaths," where Madeleine is symbolically reconstructed using the tawdry shopgirl, Judy, as a proxy. Judy's actual identity as the Madeleine Scottie had loved is the film's short-circuit, its recursion, its "site of exception," its "moment of φ."

- 27 San Francisco and environs are emptied out by a sound track that quiets down the normal buzz of city activities. Bernard Herrmann's score oscillates between diatonic minor whole tones, notes "spread apart." The radically "steep" perspective of the Golden Gate Bridge, the geodesic reference Coit Tower, visible from Scottie's apartment, and drives down deserted highways to parks with no other visitors suggest an uncanny "land of the dead" in the midst of the living city.
- 28 The ultimate aim of visiting ruins, claims the expert Rose Macauley, is to communicate with the past, i.e. the dead. This literal necromancy requires/constitutes a spell begun and ended with an invocation. In all three films, we encounter invocation as a technique of opening and closing the "spell" of the film as story. In *Rebecca*, we are guided through a material barrier into a land of the past, to inhabit for ourselves a dead architecture. This spell ends when, in the story,

the mansion meets its match-point (no joke intended). Veronika Voss begins to tell her tale when she meets the reporter, Robert, in a rainstorm. For an invocation, he quotes a well-known German hymn, offering the image of a safe harbor. The film ends at Easter, with a service from the Vatican playing on the radio. *Vertigo*'s little known invocation is a phrase enunciated early in the film, when the bookseller "Pop" Leibl (the store, Argosy Books, is derived from the name of a periodical published by Ambrose Bierce during his time in San Francisco) describes masculine tyranny over women as "the power and the freedom." The phrase is spoken again at the end of the film, closing its nightmare of double identity. (Credit for the discovery of this important key goes to Kyle Smith, an architecture student at Penn State University.) Because stories constitute a type of dream or hypnosis, the use of suggestive phrases to open and close the experience are not out of place, but in film structure they can serve both a practical and poetic aim in relation to the unconscious of the audience. The φ as portal is correlated to, and in every sense identical with, the high-low vector that connects the living and the dead—the open grave in *Vertigo* that becomes the tower in the final scene.

29 Lucretius, 2, 216–224: "When atoms move straight down through the void by their own weight, they deflect a bit in space at a quite uncertain time and in uncertain places, just enough that you could say that their motion has changed. But if they were not in the habit of swerving, they would all fall straight down through the depths of the void, like drops of rain, and no collision would occur, nor would any

blow be produced among the atoms. In that case, nature would never have produced anything.”

- 30 Ernst Jentsch, “Zur Psychologie des Unheimlichen.”
- 31 Tommy Collins, “High on a Hilltop,” recorded by The Berlin Ramblers, with Lonnie (Klaus Heilbronner) [sound recording], 1967. Collins recorded the song first in the album *This Is Tommy Collins* (Capital Records, 1959).
- 32 Mark Ford, *Raymond Roussel and the Republic of Dreams* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2000). In addition to the well-recognized ploy of separating the meanings implied by a single sentence, Ford identifies visual forms of Roussel’s *procédé*: for example, a label on a bottle of Vichy water showing a lake would give way to the sighting of a boat on the lake, the captain on the boat, and a feature of the captain’s beard, etc.
- 33 Universum Film AG (UFA or Ufa) was the home of the German film industry during the Weimar Republic and through World War II, and a major force in world cinema from 1917 to 1945. *Wikipedia*, “Universum Film AG,” [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Universum\\_Film\\_AG](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Universum_Film_AG),