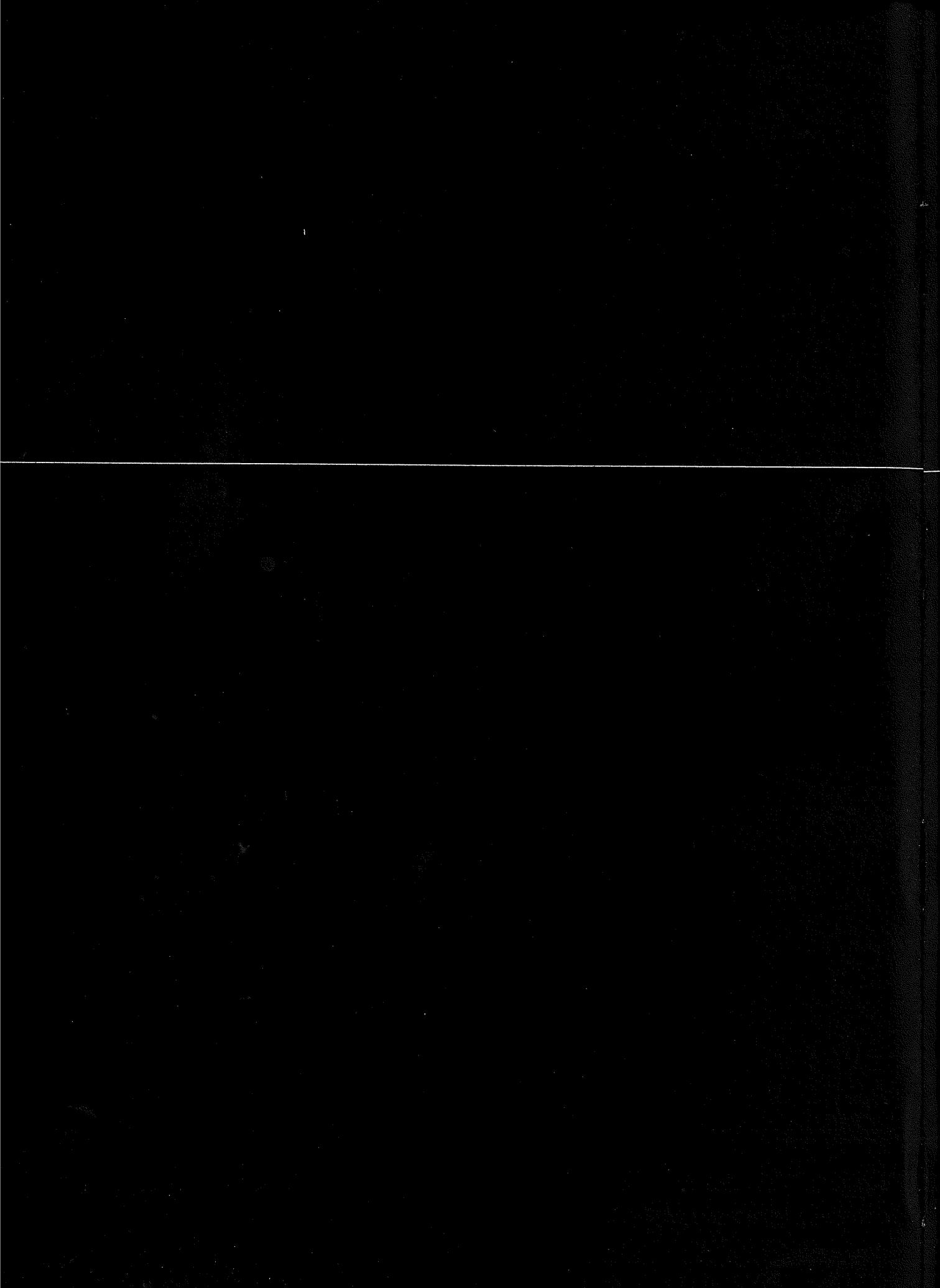


AESTHETICS AND ART
IN THE 20TH CENTURY

SANART



**RETROSPECTIVE:
AESTHETICS AND ART
IN THE 20TH CENTURY**

A SANART Book

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The SANART Association was founded by a group of friends from the art world: art historians, architects, critics, curators who simply wanted to live in an environment with more aesthetic and artistic experiences. They thought the solution was to create the possibilities. The initiative was given by Benoit Junod, a Swiss diplomat who had developed the habit of enlivening where he lived with art. The idea evolved to include the organisation of a symposium around which art events could have more impact. This grew into the concept of unifying art, discourse and text in a single international event. This had been the basis of SANART's international symposia since 1992 bringing together "Identity, Marginality, Space," "Art and Taboos," "Art and Environment," "Art and Science" and "Art and Aesthetics." I believe that the discipline that unites all artistic interests is aesthetics and it is therefore appropriate that SANART, which started as the association for the promotion of visual art in Turkey, grew into an association of Aesthetics and Visual Culture. It is also fitting that the first symposium following this change of identity should be on Aesthetics.

Aesthetics as a philosophical and critical discipline is quite new and its adherents very few in Turkey.* There is a need for a conscious concern for aesthetics, and the problems that are related to it are overwhelmingly pressing and urgent. Notwithstanding the fact that Anatolian soil has been the home of many rich civilisations with their aesthetic sophistication, the rapid changes brought by industrialisation and urbanisation have created a convulsion in aesthetic sensibilities. The symposia that SANART has organised since 1992 on various subjects related to cultural interests that were relevant at that time, could all be considered as discourses and subjects related to aesthetics. However, because of the urgent need for implementation, as well as discourse and discussion, SANART's method of combining art events and philosophical or critical inquiry seem to be very appropriate within this cultural context.

We hope that organising a series of conferences that deal mainly with aesthetics will also bring another dimension to our interests, namely it will create a platform where people interested in aesthetics in Turkey can come together and meet their colleagues from all over the world. The proceedings of the first of these conferences contained in this book proves that aesthetics can cover a wide variety of topics even in such a small gathering. It also proves that when aesthetic discourse is interdisciplinary there can be no limits to its richness.

SANART

As one of the most longstanding and loyal of SANART fans, I would like to thank all those who have made this conference and this publication possible. Many of them contributed directly as speakers or authors, artists and editors, but there are also many who were the audience of students and members without whom our work would not have much significance.

The Middle East Technical University, The Rector's Office and the Faculty of Architecture have cooperated with SANART and supported the organisation of the conference and the publication of this book of proceedings.

* With all due respect to Professor İsmail Tunalı who has done pioneering work on Aesthetics in Turkey.

This book, *Retrospective: Aesthetics and Art in the 20th Century* is a compilation of the papers submitted and discussions held at the SANART symposium, of the same title, that took place in June 2001 at Middle East Technical University.

Why this topic? Why now? SANART is the only association of aesthetics in Turkey. It has the mission of enthusing and building up a public for the raised awareness of issues related with aesthetics and art. For the past ten years now, it has carried this mission to the practical realm in Ankara, where it is based, through the organisation of symposia, exhibitions and publications. To coincide with the closure of the twentieth century, on its tenth year, SANART decided to re-evaluate the century in terms of various approaches to the field of aesthetics and art. Twelve participants, who were invited and whose texts are included in this book, were asked to bring forth specific issues within the general problematic of the twentieth century. The objective was more to do with understanding our concerns with the new century, while reflecting upon the previous one, than providing all encompassing accounts of historiography.

Why the book? Publications are very important for SANART because as an association it seeks to maintain permanence in the cultural sphere of Turkey, and to achieve that permanence, although the continuity of temporal events help, it is essential to accumulate written material. All of the symposia that SANART has organised have been published or are pending publication. Because of the significance and timely relevance of the topic, this book aims to disseminate the ideas discussed in the symposium to a wider public than that of the locality of Ankara, to a world audience, which is why it has been decided to publish it in English.

The programme of the symposium was arranged so that the first half focused on art work and aesthetics followed by the "avant-garde" discussion and the second half concentrated on issues of architecture, politics and aesthetics. In editing the book, the order of the sessions of the symposium was maintained so that the lines of thought that emerged during the Symposium can be followed in the Discussion and Afterwords without much difficulty.

In an overview of the texts, it is possible to discern that one of the major shifts that occurred in art in the twentieth century was that with the advent of new technologies and

the possibility of wider dissemination, artists vocally assumed new roles to themselves while simultaneously critics and theoreticians assigned new tasks to the domain of art.

Rana Nergis Öğüt, arguing that twentieth century aesthetic discourse was widely dominated by the instrumental rationality of positivist modernism, which conceived aesthetics as an unreliable source of knowledge, poses phenomenological thinking and dialogical rationality as vehicles that are to be used in overcoming the alienation of the aesthetic realm from everyday life. Aleš Erhavec explains that the philosophy and aesthetics of Adorno and Heidegger, share the common preoccupation that art offered a privileged entry to truth. Hasan Ünal Nalbantoğlu furthers the discussion on the contemporary understanding of aesthetics as a means of reaching truth, and expresses his concerns with the increasingly technologised world market of art objects/commodities that present a constant danger to the transformative power of the works of art on the individual perceiver.

6 Alongside the question of truth, the autonomy of art and aesthetics have been of a primary concern throughout the century, taking on different routes, in various fields. In aesthetics, Richard Woodfield explores how Max Dessoir's early twentieth century project to create an integrated aesthetics discipline disintegrated by the end of the century. In architecture, Alan Colquhoun explains that the changing conception of aesthetics that have taken place since the beginning of the modern movement in the early twentieth century has evolved around the problem of autonomy versus social engagement. Regarding politics, Lev Kreft argues that art and politics were not separated, autonomous fields of human activity in the twentieth century and that, on the contrary, political criteria for art has developed .

In the practice of art, there have been various attitudes to subvert the conventional role of the artist and numerous reasons underlying the changes in aesthetics in the twentieth century. S. M. Can Bilsel explores an alternative aesthetic that resists the totalising subject-position prescribed by the museum through the specific case of the Pergamon-Hall. Dionysis A. Zivas, through an overview of the historical experience of modern architecture in Greece, suggests that new materials and scales of construction in architecture have resulted in a shift in architectural aesthetics. Nina Danino emphasises the effects of feminist practice and new technology on the specific media of film and video, artists of which sought to challenge established politics of representation. Deborah Semel comments upon the changing role of the artist through changing models of arts education.

In addition to the other texts on the formation of the artist through shifting understandings of perception, infiltration of technology and the effects of education, in her provocatively titled essay "Ready-Made Avant-Garde," identifying and examining ready-made objects of the Third World, Jale Erzen recognises and initiates discussion on the value ascribed to the definition and role of the art object, perhaps, in my opinion, also insinuating the redundancy of the artist, but not art.

Although this book does not cover many of the twentieth century issues and concerns, it does reflect the variety of positions within the field of aesthetics and art. Moreover, to reiterate, this book is born out of an apprehension at the dawn of the twentyfirst century. As a final word, on behalf of SANART, I would like to thank all the participators, the distinguished speakers and the audience, for their whole hearted participation in the symposium and the gathering of the final material. I would also like to acknowledge thanks to Candaş Bilsel, Elvan Altan Ergut, Namık Erkal, Jale Nejdet Erzen, Güven Sargın and Chris Taylor for their much valuable proofreading assistance.

When we speak of a retrospective, we usually refer to exhibitions, which offer an overview of the works of an artist over a long period of time. My reference to Theodor W. Adorno and Martin Heidegger in the sense of a retrospective may, therefore, be somewhat misleading, for it is not my aim to discuss their individual *oeuvres per se* but, instead, to discuss their mutual relation within the historical and cultural framework of the twentieth century. So, in a way, it is the twentieth century as such that is the theme of this sketchy retrospective, but regarded through the prism offered by a brief discussion of some of the aspects of Adorno's and Heidegger's philosophies of art.

The reasons for choosing these two philosophers as somehow paradigmatic for certain aspects of twentieth century discussions within the realm of the philosophy of art are manifold. First, both Adorno and Heidegger represent not only two major but also two central philosophical figures of the previous century. Neither the work of Jean-Paul Sartre or Maurice Merleau-Ponty, nor of Jacques Derrida or Gianni Vattimo, to name but a few, would be possible as we know it without Heidegger's philosophy. This is equally true of the legacy Theodor Adorno exerted on critical thinking in the last half century. Again, without him our views concerning twentieth century culture, modernist art and music would seem insufficient, as would our methodology for it would not be possible to include his negative dialectics. Again a resemblance to Heidegger is obvious, for, especially in his late writings, Heidegger, too, attempted to build into his proper discourse the self-reflexive and anti-reductive mechanisms which would prevent his thinking from being assimilated and instrumentalised. It is for this reason that in spite of existing on two different sides of the twentieth century, these two sides today nonetheless appear to be more like the banks of the same river than simple views devoid of a common denominator. Similar to Heidegger, also Adorno exercised a broad influence, although it was more fragmentary and was not a cause of a "belonging" so typical for many adherents of Heidegger's thought.

Adorno and Heidegger represent two aspects of the culture of the twentieth century: the first is historical, critical and radical, and the second strives to be timeless, contemplative and anti-modern. As is true of much of twentieth century culture, there exists avant-garde and modernist art which is cosmopolitan, urban and disregards all previous norms and values, only to be complemented by that other segment of twentieth century artistic and cultural creations that is traditionalist, classical and neoclassicist, tied to the nation,

tradition, the rural and to the ahistorical mythic and idealised past --which appears today, it must be said, to be equally fictitious as the causes for the zealous excitement over the future and the "now" of its cosmopolitan modernist counterpart.

The hostility of Adorno towards Heidegger is well-known and is witnessed also by his *Jargon of Authenticity* from 1964, which forcefully reveals his denigration of Heidegger and of what the latter stood for. In other aspects too the paths of Adorno and Heidegger did not cross; not so long ago even considering this would have seemed preposterous. Nonetheless, from our own contemporary perspective that I have briefly outlined, it may be possible and even necessary to link these two major figures of the past century, for there appears to exist --or, rather, there appears to have emerged-- a common denominator of these two thinkers¹ that to a large extent hinges on the theme of our common interest as philosophers of art. What I have in mind is the enormous importance both Adorno and Heidegger ascribed to art, which they both viewed as the paramount extant form of creativity, which furthermore avoided the pitfalls of alienation and untruth. According to both of them, art, moreover, offers a privileged entry into truth which, at the same time, does not refer to the good --and in the case of Adorno explicitly not to the beautiful-- hence avoiding some of the more traditionalist explanations and interpretations of art. Moreover, the proximity of the ideas of the two thinkers has already attained also more concrete forms. A close associate of Jürgen Habermas, Albrecht Wellmer, took Heidegger's writings as his main point of reference in a lecture on "Time, Language and Art"² he recently gave in Ljubljana. This should of course not make us forget that even in his last work, *Aesthetic Theory*, Adorno did not fail to mention that "in Heidegger, poetic language is mythologically exalted."³ Wellmer's choice, therefore, perhaps symptomatically says more about those that today pursue the tradition of the Frankfurt School than about Adorno himself.

Seen from this perspective the two thinkers appear uncannily close --which, of course, is only partly true, for enormous differences and antagonisms exist and remain between them and their writings. As already noted, they represent --or belong to-- two main currents in the continental European philosophy of the twentieth century. What appears to unite them is not so much their work but their historical and cultural framework. This framework is that of modernism. I must be precise: the framework of modernism is not meant in the sense which would imply that both Adorno and Heidegger relate to modernist art, at least not in the traditional sense: it has long been argued that the authentic modernism is that of Schoenberg, Kandinsky, Beckett --as Adorno himself claims-- while the poetry of Rilke and the earlier Hölderlin as exalted by Heidegger certainly does not fit into this framework.

There is something enigmatic in this evaluation of modernism and its cultural and artistic context and its voids, for there is a substantial segment of twentieth century art which falls outside of the constraints set by modernism and its theory. This applies not only to surrealism, denigrated both by Adorno and Habermas and only recently resuscitated by, for example, Rosalind Krauss⁴ and Hal Foster,⁵ with the aim of re-evaluating and hence to normatively reconfigure the modernist artistic paradigm as set by Clement Greenberg and Michael Fried,⁶ but also to a series of twentieth century cultural and artistic phenomena ranging from the International Style architecture to the later classical paintings by Giorgio de Chirico. Perhaps the situation with modernism can in this respect be summed up well by quoting a statement from the eighties by Wolfgang Iser concerning the relation between modernity and postmodernity: "Postmodernity is traversed by the knowledge that totality cannot arrive except by placing in the position of an

absolute a certain particularity and that it is thus inevitably tied to an elimination of other particularities. ...Postmodernity begins where totality ends.”⁷

In other words, modernism in this discussion is but a historical framework within which non-modernist tendencies, as exemplified by Rilke, Gaudi, the Slovenian architect Jozef Plecnik, or Ezra Pound exist, which remain on the fringes of modernism or extrinsic to it; of modernism that is, as that particularity which achieved totality by placing itself into the position of an absolute and accomplished this by effectively sidelining other particularities.

Perhaps this statement may appear excessive and not sufficiently supported by historical facts. Some attempts to re-evaluate the history of art of the twentieth century have already been made: two of these I have already mentioned, with another one --but starting from a different philosophical framework-- being that of Paul Crowther, in his book *The Language of Twentieth-Century Art*.⁸

But is a radical re-evaluation of twentieth century modernism really possible? Doesn't such a revision itself become a victim of its own historical and epistemological context or framework? Isn't it questionable whether today a totalising view that would encompass the totality of modern art --as diagnosed and described already in 1863 by Charles Baudelaire--, and hence also of twentieth century art, is really possible? Isn't it closer to the truth to claim that the re-evaluation today is not happening from a radical and totalising modernist perspective but from a postmodern and a fragmentary one? Adorno and Heidegger appear to be unwilling accomplices of this process, the reason being already noted: they stand for the two dominant philosophical options offered in the time of modernism, re-enacting in this way a peculiar and interchangeable “master-slave” relationship as offered by Hegel in his *Phenomenology of Spirit*.

The interpretations of modernism in this epoch after modernism are acquiring different and contradictory forms. One of these is offered by a proclaimed modernist such as Charles Harrison in his anthology *Art in Theory 1900-1990. An Anthology of Changing Ideas* from 1992.⁹ In the anthology, which became one of the standard references on twentieth century art theory, Charles Harrison and co-editor Paul Wood included a piece by Theodor Adorno, while Martin Heidegger appear only because of Frederic Jameson's famous discussion of Van Gogh's painting *Peasant Shoes* in his 1984 essay on post-modernism wherein Heidegger's discussion of this painting is also noted.¹⁰ It is symptomatic that Harrison considers Adorno only in his relation to Walter Benjamin's discussion of mechanical reproduction and altogether disregards Heidegger within the framework of twentieth century modernism, while Jameson, a critical postmodern writer, uses Heidegger's analysis from the 1935 lecture “The Origin of the Work of Art” of this painting by Van Gogh to illustrate the distinction between Andy Warhol's presumably postmodern work and that of the modernist Van Gogh work. Hence, we may assume that for Jameson today Heidegger represents a modernist writer, which certainly could not be said of Harrison's view. In other words, for a modernist like Harrison, Heidegger is a non-modernist, while for a postmodernist like Jameson, Heidegger is obviously an example of a modernist philosopher.

It may, of course, be true that Harrison and Wood were simply not interested in these intricate details and it is certainly true that their aim was not an anthology of twentieth century philosophy and philosophy of art, but of art theory. Yet, this cannot be altogether true, for the anthology also contains pieces by Georg Simmel, Henri Bergson and even

Lenin. In this regard --no matter for what reasons Heidegger is omitted-- the anthology simply follows the twentieth century tradition of considering Heidegger a non-modernist.

Let us now see how Jameson regards Heidegger's philosophy of art. It is well-known that it was the essay "Postmodernism, or, The Cultural Logic of Late Modernism" published in the *New Left Review* in 1984 that catapulted Jameson onto the centre stage of discussions about postmodernism. Contrary to his other Marxist, radical and leftist contemporaries --such as Nicos Calinicos or other thinkers critical of postmodernism (Jürgen Habermas and mainly the majority of German philosophers and social thinkers)--, Jameson embraced postmodernism. Although he regarded it from a critical and almost weary position, he nonetheless took it as a fact. In this respect this was a replay of a similar parting of ways in the late sixties and early seventies between the humanist thought of, say, Adam Schaff or Mikel Dufrenne on one hand, and the Althusserian circle, on the other. In other words, while in early eighties most of the other radical thinkers strove very hard either to minimise postmodernism and postmodernity as an irreverent fashionable trend and notions attempting to compromise the purity of modernism and modernity, Jameson took postmodernism seriously and thus developed what was to be one of the most persuasive and far-reaching theories of postmodern culture. (The fact that we are all a bit tired of the notion of postmodernism doesn't change this view.)

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In the beginning of his essay on postmodernism --I shall be referring to the later version which was published in 1991 in the book with the same title-- Jameson compares two works: that of Van Gogh's *A Pair of Boots* (also translated into English as *Peasant Shoes*) and Andy Warhol's *Diamond Dust Shoes*. In the former, he sees a case of modernist painting, while the latter, in his view, represents a case of postmodern art for, as he writes,

"Andy Warhol's *Diamond Dust Shoes* evidently no longer speaks to us with any of the immediacy of Van Gogh's footwear; indeed, I am tempted to say that it does not really speak to us at all. Nothing in this painting organises even a minimal place for the viewer, who confronts it at the turning of a museum corridor or gallery with all the contingency of some inexplicable natural object. On the level of the content, we have to do with what are now far more clearly fetishes, in both the Freudian and the Marxian sense (Derrida remarks, somewhere, about the Heideggerian *Paar Bauernschuhe*, that the Van Gogh footwear are a heterosexual pair, which allows neither for perversion nor for fetishisation). Here, however, we have a random collection of dead objects hanging together on the canvas like so many turnips, as shorn of their earlier life world as the pile of shoes left over from Auschwitz or the remainders and tokens of some incomprehensible and tragic fire in a packed dance hall. There is therefore in Warhol no way to complete the hermeneutic gesture and restore to these oddments that whole larger lived context of the dance hall or the ball, the world of jetset fashion or glamour magazines."¹¹

Jameson offers Warhol's picture as a clear example of a postmodern work. However, when it comes to the interpretation of an earlier, i.e. a pre-postmodern ("high modernist") work, he not only chooses a work by Van Gogh, but furthermore bases his arguments on Heidegger's interpretation of this painting from his lecture/essay "The Origin of the Work of Art." Jameson finds Heidegger's analysis to be "organised around the idea that the work of art emerges within the gap between Earth and World, or what I would prefer to translate as the meaningless materiality of the body and nature and the meaning endowment of history and of the social."¹² A little further on, Jameson offers another description of Heidegger's reading of Van Gogh's picture: "It is *hermeneutical*, in the sense in which the work in its inert, objectal form is taken as a clue or a symptom for some vaster reality which replaces it as its ultimate truth."¹³

A similar idea is advanced by Adorno in his *Aesthetic Theory*:

“Artworks are understood only when their experience is brought to the level of distinguishing between true and not true or, as a preliminary stage, between correct and incorrect. ...The comprehension of an artwork as a complex of truth brings the work into relation with its untruth, for there is no artwork that does not participate in the untruth external to it, that of the historical moment. Aesthetics that does not move within the perspective of truth fails its task; usually it is culinary.”¹⁴

We could, of course, ask ourselves why Jameson uses Heidegger to support his analysis of a modernist work of art and not that of a well-known advocate of modernism such as Adorno, since he has written a whole book on him.¹⁵ Furthermore, it has to be noted that in the same volume from 1991, Jameson, when referring to Adorno, at least in relation to art, points, critically and condescendingly, to the latter’s erroneous interpretation of the place of Schoenberg and Stravinsky within the history of the music of the previous century.¹⁶ Does this imply that Heidegger is closer to the “authentic” spirit of twentieth century art than Adorno? The difference between the two has perhaps less to do with their affinity to art or theoretical veracity, than with the kind of art they were preoccupied with. In Adorno’s case this was modernist elitist music and elite art in general, the very nature of which is to offer resistance to the simple and pleasurable artistic experience. “The archaic (argued Adorno) is appropriated as the experience of what is not experiential. The boundary of experientiality, however, requires that the starting point of any such appropriation be the modern,”¹⁷ for “the light should be cast on all art from the vantage point of the most recent artworks, rather than the reverse, following the custom of historicism and philology, which, bourgeois at heart, prefers that nothing ever change.”¹⁸ According to Adorno, it is the vantage point of our contemporaneity which determines our relation to the past and its works, not vice versa. Heidegger’s view is exactly the opposite: the past is the truth of our contemporaneity for it authentically offers what has, in our modern times, become forgotten, instrumentalised and become devoid of its authenticity. A revisionist stance has already been taken by critical thinkers. Hence, Peter Bürger in his *Theory of the Avant-Garde* from 1973 already criticizes Adorno for this view, “For Adorno tends to make the historically unique break with tradition that is defined by the historical avant-garde movements the developmental principle of modern art as such.”¹⁹ This authenticity is the truth which Heidegger interprets as “unconcealedness”, *alethea*:

“Truth happens in Van Gogh’s painting. This does not mean that something which is at hand is correctly portrayed, but rather that in the revelation of the equipmental being of the shoes beings as a whole --world and earth in their counterplay-- to unconcealedness. (...) The more simply and essentially the shoes are engrossed in their essence, the more directly and engagingly do all beings attain a greater degree of being along with them. This is how self-concealing Being is illuminated. Light of this kind joins its shining to and into the work. This shining, joined in the work, is the beautiful. *Beauty is one way in which truth essentially occurs as unconcealedness.*”²⁰

Let us now take another look at Adorno’s position on this question. According to Adorno, a modern work offers “artistic experience (which) accordingly demands a comprehending rather than an emotional relation to the works.”²¹ It is for this reason, argues Adorno, that “the truth content of an artwork requires philosophy.”²² An artwork requires comprehension and therefore it is the *interpretation* which is the precondition for the authentic artistic *experience*. The artist’s work requires theory, requires a philosopher, to explain to the artist and to the world the importance of his work, which only through this interpretation acquires the status of an artwork. Nonetheless, this interpretation does not form a “message”: this would be possible only in the case of committed art and not in what Adorno sees as authentic art, that is, autonomous art. Adorno quotes Schoenberg

saying that, "one paints a painting, not what it represents."²³ The kind of art that Adorno exalts is art that offers resistance, that opposes the acquired aesthetic taste and which by its disruptive nature reveals the untruth of the society in which it has been created.

The question of art is the question of truth. It is thus that we could summarize the basic argument of modernist art as developed in the twentieth century. Art not only offers a privileged access to truth, but it is truth in its highest form --whether as an *ex-expression* of the human self, of the subjective truth or as the creative artistic and materialized *impression* of the truth of the world and its depicted fragments, each of which, be it in the form of a novel, a composition, a sculpture or a painting, represents a fragment as that romanticist miniature of the universe as a whole. Art is at least the penultimate form of creativity as opposed to industrial repetitive and serial production. It exists because of its relation to truth, which is inextricably linked to the modern society and its untruth and inauthenticity. This critique of the extant society of the previous century is yet another common feature of Adorno and Heidegger. Nonetheless, art does not criticize this society in a direct way; similar to culture it offers instead an alternative. As a contemporary Russian philosopher said: "Culture is not a product of society, but a challenge and alternative to society."²⁴ If art criticizes society, it submits to the same rules that govern this very society; instead art purportedly offers one of the few gateways to the universe of truth, of *unconcealedness*, which Heidegger later on complemented with a philosophical discourse that emulated the semantic indeterminacy of poetry. (As did Maurice Merleau-Ponty in his late writings.) Again, in this respect, Adorno's theory is different, for his negative dialectics have nothing to do with poetry but with the internal dynamic and dialectics of our thinking. His intent is to retain within his discourse the tension which prevents us from assimilating his thought in a facile and practical way. His aim complements the one he sets for authentic art, for this one, too, is intended to be complex and internally conflicting in that the truth they both reveal are not the "mythical" truths Adorno ascribes to Heidegger but intellectual truths which also cause art to be in constant need of a philosophical interpretation. Within this modernist universe, art appears to be the rare instance of authenticity. But why is this authenticity so important?

I could venture an answer that much of the twentieth century is in fact still the epoch of industrial society. Even where and when it is not, its mental image persists as the dominant one. It is within this framework that the notions of creativity and art carry such weight for they both represent an activity the lack of which is incessantly revealed at every moment of that suffering century of master narratives. It may be that modernism, instead of being viewed as the apogee of art, will instead be interpreted as an aberration within the development of the art and culture of our distant and recent past.

In the renaissance or baroque eras, art was integrated into the fabric of society; in romanticism, it was limited to small aristocratic and bourgeois circles and reached broader segments of society due to its simultaneous national aspirations; it was only in modernism that it was proclaimed to be the highest norm of human existence. This view, the roots of which are usually found both in romanticism and in the bourgeois culture of the nineteenth century, attains its highest point in twentieth century modernism within the framework of which both Adorno and Heidegger exist and which determines both of them. If the former represents the intellectual and elitist radical wing of this modernism, the latter represents its negation but nonetheless within the same broader framework. It is against this background that we can find the answer to the question of why it is that Jameson uses Heidegger and not Adorno as the interpreter of modernist art.

In his recent book *L'oeuvre de l'art. La relation esthétique*, Gérard Genette has noted that, "as concerns the apparently incongruous reconciliation of the names of Heidegger and Adorno, I believe it is justified by a symmetrical relation between these two antithetical forms of overvaluation of art."²⁵

It is this *overvaluation of art* that connects Adorno and Heidegger --in spite of enormous differences and positions concerning the nature of art, of truth and the way one reveals the other. The common modernist framework causes these two thinkers to reveal their common features and the proximity of which appears to increase over time. Within this context, Heidegger's views on art, which in much of the previous century appeared non-modern, are today interpreted as modern and modernist, as Jameson's essay witnesses. Adorno's views and the artists he exalts appear, on the other hand, as drifting into oblivion, as a short episode in the long history of art and views on it that he so fiercely criticized. At least for the time being it seems that Adorno and his kind of aesthetic theory and the art it exalted have been discarded or marginalized, to be replaced by a meeker and surprisingly different image of modernism and the philosophical theory attached to it, that of Heidegger, for example, which not long ago seemed to be the very opposite of modernism and the ideas associated with it.

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FOOTNOTES:

1. One of the few authors linking Adorno and Heidegger has been Gianni Vattimo. Cf. especially Gianni Vattimo, *La fine della modernità* (Milano: Garzanti, 1985).
2. Albrecht Wellmer, "Cas, jezik in umetnost (z ekskurzom o glasbi in casu)," *Filozofski vestnik* (XX), no. 3 (1999), pp. 73-93.
3. Theodor W. Adorno, *Aesthetic Theory*, trans. Robert Hullot-Kentor (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press 1997), p. 352.
4. Cf. for example Rosalind E. Krauss, *The Optical Unconscious* (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 1994).
5. Cf. Hal Foster, *Compulsive Beauty* (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 1993).
6. Cf. Fried's response to Krauss in Michael Fried, *Art and Objecthood* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1998), p. 58.
7. Wolfgang Iser, "Modernité et postmodernité," *Les cahiers de Philosophie*, 6 (Fall 1988), p. 25.
8. Paul Crowther, *The Language of Twentieth-Century Art* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1997).
9. Charles Harrison and Paul Wood, eds., *Art in Theory 1900-1990. An Anthology of Changing Ideas* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1992).
10. Harrison, *Art in Theory 1900-1990*, pp. 1075-76.
11. Fredric Jameson, *Postmodernism or The Cultural Logic of Late Capitalism* (London: Verso, 1991), pp. 8-9.
12. Jameson, *Postmodernism*, p. 7.
13. Jameson, *Postmodernism*, p. 8.
14. Adorno, *Aesthetic Theory*, p. 347.
15. Cf. Fredric Jameson, *Late Marxism. Adorno, or The Persistence of the Dialectic* (London: Verso, 1990).
16. Jameson, *Marxism*, p. 17.

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17. Adorno, *Aesthetic Theory*, p. 349.
18. Adorno, *Aesthetic Theory*, p. 359.
19. Peter Bürger, *Theory of the Avant-Garde* (Minneapolis: The University of Minnesota Press, 1984), p. 60.
20. Martin Heidegger, "The Origin of the Work of Art," *Basic Writings* (San Francisco: Harper, 1977), pp. 177-8.
21. Adorno, *Aesthetic Theory*, p. 355.
22. Adorno, *Aesthetic Theory*, p. 341.
23. Adorno, *Aesthetic Theory*, p. 4.
24. Mikhail N. Epstein, *After the Future. The Paradoxes of Postmodernism and Contemporary Russian Culture* (Amherst: The University of Massachusetts Press, 1995), p. 6.
25. Gérard Genette, *L'oeuvre de l'art. La relation esthétique* (Paris: Seuil, 1997), p. 11.

Although the autonomy of aesthetic realm was a consequence of enlightened *modernity*, twentieth century aesthetic discourse was widely dominated by the subject-centred, instrumental rationality of positivist modernism, which conceived aesthetics as an unreliable source of knowledge, unworthy of rational inquiry. This development not only reinforced the process of aesthetic alienation, but brought about the reification of the aesthetic object.

The paradigm of positivist rationality, which is principally based upon the methodology of empiricist natural science, has for a long time been conceived as the only reliable basis of objective knowledge. From the point of view that scientific knowledge is the only respectable mode of human rational activity and only objective phenomena is worthy of inquiry, "aesthetic experience," which is not based upon objective facts but subjective judgements, appears to be a precarious field. As Susanne Langer remarked,

Every serious epistemology that has regarded mental life as greater than discursive reason, and has made concessions to insight or intuition, has just so far capitulated to unreason, to mysticism and irrationalism. From the point of view of positivist epistemology, the study of aesthetic concepts such as art, artistic truth, insight, intuition, deeper meaning etc., appears to be ...a dangerous-looking sector ...for the advance of a rational spirit.¹

This understanding of art and aesthetic experience is based upon a narrow conception of knowledge which limits the role of human rationality to the generation of a mode of knowledge that is essentially discursive, cognitive and instrumental. Conceiving the relation between the knower and the known basically in terms of subject-object duality, it limits human understanding to an act of cognition and reduces human being's interaction with reality to a set of abstract technical operations. Implicit in this model is an instrumental conception of knowledge that already presupposes the principle of domination. The universe, i.e., the object of scientific knowledge, is construed as an abstract totality of neutral objects that can be manipulated by the human subject through a series of scientific procedures such as observation, classification and experimentation. In Horkheimer and Adorno's terms, instrumental reason, by subsuming all particulars under one, all-embracing formula, liquifies qualitative differences between beings as well as the differing value spheres of human knowledge.² From the point of view of instrumental reason, differing value spheres such as art and architecture, culture and society, and even the human subject itself may all become objects of scientific abstraction in the same way as a natural phenomenon becomes an object of physical science.

Actually positivism's scientific bias that undervalued aesthetic discourse was based upon a misinterpretation of Enlightenment rationality which in fact consisted of three autonomous domains, namely science, morality and aesthetics. Each of these value spheres had their own independent inner logic and criteria for justification so that neither one would impose its standards over the other. The delimitation of aesthetics as a rational field of inquiry was first issued by Kant. In his *Critique of Judgment*, Kant identified aesthetics as an autonomous sphere of knowledge, the creative employment of a rational faculty of the human mind deserving equal respect and value with science and practical knowledge, although its mode of generation and conditions of validity are different. Although aesthetic judgments are singular and rest upon a subjective a priori principle that does not entail a concept of the object and therefore, are "...incapable of becoming a constituent of knowledge," nevertheless the grounds of their possibility must be universally and necessarily valid for all men. Kant maintains that, unlike scientific objectivity, in aesthetic judgments, *objectivity* as such is only implied in a validity claim that demands the consent of everyone. A principle of inter-subjectivity, which already presupposes a condition for the possibility of dialogical rationality, therefore operates in aesthetic judgments.³

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Contrary to Kant's formulation, positivist epistemology, which was based upon a partial interpretation of theoretical rationality, developed as the dominant epistemological model imposing its own standards of scientific validity on all other spheres of human life. The reduction of human rationality to a predominantly discursive mode of reasoning appropriate for science brings about an impoverished view of human understanding within which questions related to art and architecture either have no place, or come to be considered as reliable sources for knowledge only when they adapt themselves to the positivist paradigm thereby becoming instrumental. The instrumentalization of aesthetic phenomena in this way robs them of their actual aesthetic qualities, as these qualities become objects of theoretical abstraction, that can be observed, measured, and expressed in terms of concepts. An obvious example is the instrumentalization of architecture by Functionalism which conceived architectural design in terms of a set of objective parameters measured against a set of performance standards, such as efficiency, in a process quite similar to the designing of a technological object.⁴ Similarly, the aesthetic language of architecture was formulated as a set of objective visual parameters to be used as criteria for the assessment of user perception.⁵

Post-Positivist Criticism

From the second half of the twentieth century, positivist rationality has been under serious attack from a variety of positions, such as phenomenology, structuralism, critical theory, all of which criticise its dualistic conception of reality and power-centred historical bias that dominated modern culture, in Heidegger's words, the technological viewpoint which posited the world as a "standing reserve" for the surveillance and manipulation of a dominating subject.⁶ Conventional hierarchies and oppositions such as that between subject and object, the Cartesian split between mind and body began to be rigorously questioned. Starting from fundamental questions related to human being's concrete existence in the world, phenomenological criticism was particularly directed to the damage positivist reductionism and abstraction had done to human being's life by dissolving its qualitative unity.

A significant aspect of the post-positivist paradigm is dialogical rationality. Contrary to the positivist paradigm which presupposes the total detachment of the human subject from the object of knowledge, dialogical rationality conceives them as participants in a dialogue. Instead of the positivist notion of objectivity, dialogical reason operates on the principle of inter-subjectivity. A dialogue that initiates thinking through an act of interrogation, its principle mode of reasoning is dialectical which leaves room for inconsistencies and contradictions.⁷ This kind of knowledge presupposes a model of reality that is not definitive, certain, final and fixed, but open to further interpretations; it is knowledge with meaning that is always in a state of becoming. Potentiality, development and change are its fundamental principles. The paradigm of dialogical rationality corresponds to a phenomenological understanding of reality that is not a mere collection of facts but a rich and dynamic world of qualitative entities, where meaning builds upon the creative and critical acts of those who participate in its continuous reconstruction. As Habermas contends, dialogical rationality rejects any ontological separation “..between language and the things spoken about, between the constitutive understanding of the world and what is constituted in the world,”⁸ and in this way resolves a central problem of phenomenology: the difficulty of bringing together the description of human experience as it is lived and that as it is theorised about under a single conceptual framework.

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Gadamer, a student of Heidegger, extended dialogical rationality to the field of aesthetics, particularly to the question of how works of art communicate meaning, and how this meaning contributes to our self-understanding. Considering aesthetics as a hermeneutical science, Gadamer argues that the experience of art, as well as of architecture, entails knowledge, which is “a mode of knowledge of a unique kind” equally respectable and no less rational than scientific knowledge, albeit essentially different from it.⁹ According to Gadamer, Kant’s notion of subjectivity in aesthetic judgments, and his definition of aesthetic experience as pure and immediate had created an unbridgeable gap between the art work and real life. The concepts of “aesthetic consciousness” and “aesthetic differentiation,” thereby developed, mainly, refer to the mode in which an art work is aesthetically experienced in a context detached from reality, through a process of abstraction distinguishing the purely artistic nature of the work from its “extra-aesthetic elements, such as purpose, function, the meaning of its content. ...By disregarding everything in which a work is rooted (its original context of life, and the religious or secular function which gave it its significance) it becomes visible as the pure work of art.”¹⁰ Gadamer, while giving credit to the autonomy of the aesthetic value in pure abstraction that enables a particular work of art to be “raised to the universal” by transcending mere immediacy, seeks to overcome the consequences of the total detachment that has made the art work a museum object. “To do justice to the truth of aesthetic experience” he maintains, “the experience of art must not be side-tracked into the uncommittedness of the aesthetic awareness.”¹¹

Twentieth century aesthetic discourse should be greatly indebted to the radical critiques of Heidegger and Adorno. Both thinkers made invaluable contributions, restoring aesthetics to its proper place in contemporary thought. For Heidegger, aesthetic experience assumes central importance not only as the primary mode of human being’s engagement in the external world, but also as a meaning generating activity that contributes to his/her self-understanding. For Adorno, on the other hand, autonomous art, by virtue of its freedom from any form of theoretical abstraction and conceptualisation, stands as the only uncontaminated realm that could resist commodification in the capitalistic society.¹²

Alienation and Reified Visuality

An aspect directly related to the impact of positivist rationalism on modern aesthetic culture is the emphasis on a predominantly ocular-centric mode of visuality that privileges the sense of sight. Martin Jay describes this hegemonic visual model as “Cartesian perspectivalism” identifying it “...with Renaissance notions of perspective in the visual arts and Cartesian ideas of subjective rationality in philosophy.”¹³ According to Jay, --in the history of painting-- this development, the perspectival revolution, was directly related to the “abstraction of artistic form from any substantive content” whereby the erosion of the narrative function of the painting in favour of its figural function finally led “to the increasing autonomy of the image.”

Cartesian perspectivalism was thus in league with a scientific world view that no longer hermeneutically read the world as a divine text, but rather saw it as situated in a mathematically regular spatio-temporal order filled with natural objects that could only be observed from without by the dispassionate eye of the neutral researcher.¹⁴

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The aesthetic culture of modernity is widely conditioned by this model of vision. Complicit with the subject's will to mastery, vision becomes a spatial instrument of power providing for control and surveillance from a distance --the context appropriate not only for the colonisation of nature, but of other societies. The instrumentalization of sight, combined with the bourgeois ethic and the capitalistic logic of the modern world, finally brought about the commodification of art. Martin Jay contends, referring to John Berger, that “it was ...no accident that the invention of perspective virtually coincided with the emergence of the oil painting detached from its context and available for buying and selling.”¹⁵

The privileging of the sense of sight, to the detriment of other senses, has robbed the experience of art of its unifying qualitative significance. Thus, in the sterile atmosphere of the museum and the gallery, works of art become display objects in total detachment from real life, to be looked at and contemplated but never touched. The deficiency in the experience of aesthetic qualities, such as material and texture, that can only be revealed through the sense of touch is already part of the habitual process in modern everyday life where people no more retain a sense of direct engagement in physical realities. In this context, architecture, as an art directly embedded in everyday life, constitutes an important case with respect to this fundamental problem. In an article discussing this issue, Richard Sennet argues that the current civilization's efforts to reduce resistance in the daily environment for the sake of practicality, convenience and functionality, brings about a weakened sense of connection to reality, which ultimately serves a political end:

A well-ordered regime of power produces dematerialisation; indifference to one's surroundings is one way in which domination is consummated. Architecture becomes complicit in that domination when designs for clarity and ease of use .. “take over” human conflicts rather than open up physical possibilities for visceral resistance, commitment and expression. The dulled “sense of touch” encodes a regime of power.¹⁶

In a different context, discussing the critical value of the aesthetic in modern society, Adorno argued that only successful art as the realm of “sensuous particularity” could resist the levelling tendencies of instrumental reason, authentically expressing the ambivalences and contradictions, that is, the negative truth about society.¹⁷

The rendering of architecture as an object of mere vision, in a merely visual field, inevitably leads to its reduction to a reified image in total detachment from its experiential significance in its real life context. The architectural image that dominates much of

journalistic media today thus becomes a commodity fetish. In discussing this point, Kim Dovey remarks that much of the current architectural practice and discourse runs along “a new politics of the image,” a kind of “depthless imagery” that has become an end in itself replacing the substantial content of architectural reality:

The qualities of lived experience in the built environment, based in use value, become secondary to the quantities of exchange value. The significance of place in people’s lives is often reduced to the signification of meaning through a collage of formal imagery, a “text” to be decoded or read rather than an integral part of a world in which we dwell and act. . . Through this process lived experience itself becomes subject to commodification and reduced to its image.¹⁸

The whole culture industry, with its predominantly visual media, operates in this fashion, and architecture is no exception. However, architecture, as the setting of everyday life, can play the principle role in resisting the reification of lived experience. Although, as Tafuri remarked, there cannot be a critical practice of architecture but only architectural criticism,¹⁹ I will argue that it is possible that a responsive architecture can definitely help the development of a heightened aesthetic consciousness, which improves people’s connection with reality. According to de Solà-Morales, minimalist architecture, i.e., an architecture of minimal signification which deliberately avoids the clutter of extra-aesthetic elements, has a potential to resist an atrophied sensibility of modern life.²⁰ Such an architecture creates an aesthetic condition that is open to further interpretations and imaginative reconstructions, that demand the active involvement of the person involved in the experience. “Drawing on the elementary data of the external world,” minimalism “proceeds not from the idea but from the experience.” It is, therefore, phenomenological rather than metaphysical.²¹

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Phenomenological Significance of Architecture

Merleau-Ponty, in his analysis of perception, had emphasised the role of the active, involved body in all human knowledge.²² Fredric Jameson, in reference to Merleau-Ponty, discusses the value of the phenomenological approach in architecture as “a response to spatial alienation and an attempt to restore non-alienated experience to the modern industrial city.”

The phenomenological view of architecture is Utopian, in so far as it promises to restore or to resurrect, from within the fallen body of the modern city-dweller, with clogged and diminished senses, therapeutically lowered and adjusted feelers and organs of perception, maimed language and shoddy standardised mass-produced feelings, the glorious Utopian body of an unfallen being, who can once again take the measure of an unfallen nature.²³

As an art of everyday life, architecture has phenomenological significance, setting up the concrete, material context of immediate experience. There is hardly any artistic practice that corresponds with everyday life so directly such as architecture, and it is no mere coincidence that Heidegger used architecture as a principle metaphor for understanding human being’s mode of being in the world. Phenomenology, in the most general sense of the term, refers to the recovery of the unity of human experience by overcoming the alienation resulting from the separation between consciousness and the external world. Rejecting any separation between action and knowledge, mind and body, it proceeds from the idea that everyday existence in the world involves participation and engagement. An architecture of phenomenological significance is one that emerges from circumstance, particularity and singularity of an event, which are qualities that make up the uniqueness of everyday experience independent of any theoretical discourse, traditional or historical reference or grand narrative. The experience of architecture incorporating not only visual, but auditory, tactile, and kinetic qualities, offers a unique possibility for

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restoring to human beings the unity of their perceptual capacities that have atrophied in modern life.

FOOTNOTES:

1. Susanne K. Langer, *Mind; An Essay On Human Feeling* (1967) (Baltimore: John Hopkins Press, 1982), p. 92.
2. Max Horkheimer and Theodor W. Adorno, *Dialectic Of The Enlightenment*, trans. J. Cumming (New York: Continuum, 1989).
3. Immanuel Kant, *Critique of Judgement* (1790), trans. J. C. Meredith (London: Oxford University Press, 1973).
4. Various attempts to develop scientific design methods which became quite popular during the 1960's reflect this attitude which conceived architectural design principally as a problem-solving activity. See, for example, Christopher W. Alexander, *Notes On The Synthesis of Form* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1964) and J. Christopher Jones, *Design Methods* (London, New York: Wiley-Interscience, 1970).
5. See, for example Harold M. Proshansky, eds. William H. Ittelson, and Leanne Rivlin, *Environmental Psychology* (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1976).
6. Martin Heidegger, "The Question Concerning Technology (1953)," in David Farrell Krell, ed., *Basic Writings: From Being and Time (1927 to the Task of Thinking)*, trans. David Farrell Krell (New York: Harper Collins Pub., New York, 1992).
7. See Murray Bookchin, *The Philosophy of Social Ecology: Essays On Dialectical Naturalism* (2nd ed., Black Rose Books, 1996).
8. Jurgen Habermas, *The Philosophical Discourse of Modernity*, trans. Frederick G. Lawrence (Cambridge, Mass.: The MIT Press, 1987), p. 319.
9. I am thankful to Emel Aközer who introduced me Gadamer's work.
10. Hans-Georg Gadamer, *Truth And Method* (1960), trans. William Glen-Doepel (2nd ed., London: Sheed and Ward, 1981), p. 6.
11. Gadamer, *Truth And Method*, p. 87.
12. Theodor W. Adorno, *Aesthetic Theory*, trans. C. Lenhardt (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, Inc., 1986).
13. Martin Jay, "Scopic Regimes of Modernity," in Hal Foster, ed., *Vision and Visuality* (Seattle: Dia Art Foundation, Bay Press, 1988), p. 3.
14. Jay, "Scopic Regimes of Modernity," p. 9.
15. Jay, "Scopic Regimes of Modernity," p. 9.
16. Richard Sennet, "The Sense of Touch," *Architectural Design* Vol 68, No 3/4 (1998), p. 20.
17. Adorno, *Aesthetic Theory*.
18. Kim Dovey, "Place/Power," *Architectural Design* Vol 65, No 3/4 (1995), p. 37.
19. Manfredo Tafuri, *Architecture and Utopia: Design and Capitalist Development* (1990), trans. Barbara L. Lapenta (Cambridge, Mass.:The MIT Press).
20. Ignasi de Solà-Morales i Rubió, ed. Sarah Whiting, *Differences: Topographies of Contemporary Architecture*, trans. Graham Thompson (Cambridge, Mass.:The MIT Press, 1997).
21. In reference to Rosalind Kraus in de Solà-Morales i Rubió, *Differences*, p. 86.
22. Maurice Merleau-Ponty, *Phenomenology of Perception*, trans. Colin Smith (New York: Humanities Press, 1962).
23. Frederic Jameson, "Is Space Political?," in Cynthia C. Davidson, ed., *Anyplace* (Cambridge, Mass.: The MIT Press, 1995), p. 203.

SPACE, n¹: 1. a. Without article: Lapse or extent of time between two definite points, events, etc. Chiefly with adjs., as *little, long, short, small*.

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RELIEF³: 1. a. In the plastic arts, the elevation or projection of a design, or parts of a design, from a plane surface in order to give a natural and solid appearance; also, the degree of such projection; the part which so projects.
(Oxford English Dictionary, Second Edition 1989).

I (Prologue)

The conference “Retrospective: Aesthetics and Art in the 20th Century” seems a particularly good occasion to reconsider theories of space and of pictorial representation, and their conflation into a distinctly modern *idea of architectural space* within the last century. After decades of scrutiny, one claim of architectural modernism remains largely intact today, if not completely unchallenged: the modernist style in architecture is thought to reflect a new “conception of space,” one that is the product of a structural change in human vision. It has been repeatedly argued that architecture of the 20th century had to be different from those of the preceding epochs since a new “man” perceived, experienced and conceived space differently. A number of authors, above all, Siegfried Giedion (1888-1968) diagnosed the revolution in the conception of space around 1910, particularly in Cubist painting.¹

In *Space, Time and Architecture* (1941), Giedion argues that the discovery of perspective in Renaissance epitomised a world-view that remained valid for four centuries, until the first decade of the 20th century. By breaking with Renaissance perspective, and by showing the object from several points of view simultaneously, Cubism inaugurated the modern conception of space. The new conception does not construe space as a three-dimensional static void, but introduces the fourth dimension, which Giedion called “space-time.”² Unlike the central and static interiors of Renaissance, modern architecture should reflect the dynamic nature and interdependence of space and time. Although Giedion finds Albert Einstein’s theory of relativity and the futurist “research into movement” as the pioneers of the new age alongside Cubism, he offers only a vague idea about how exactly the new concept of time is different from the classical models of temporality.³

Hence *Space, Time and Architecture* translates a particular interpretation of analytical Cubism into architecture, one that does not see fragmentation of the picture plane as a negation of the totality of composition. For Giedion, Cubism does not threaten to fracture homogeneous space. Quite on the contrary, it enables a more truthful presentation of the whole with the superimposition of multiple viewpoints. In his space-time we might detect a Neoplatonic bias against appearance --Giedion dismisses perspective since it is an imitation of appearances--, and a quest for the "quiddity of things."⁴

The Cubist discovery of a new space conception, according to Giedion, found its expression across fields and artistic genres. It was soon to take root in architecture, through Le Corbusier in France, De Stijl in the Netherlands, the Bauhaus in Germany, not to forget the achievements of Futurism in Italy and Constructivism in Russia, which were contemporaneous with Cubism in France. This interpretation, which eventually became orthodoxy, locates modern architecture as a consistent and integral part of a general aesthetic modernism. The "modern style" in architecture is presented as identical with the modern "conception of space."

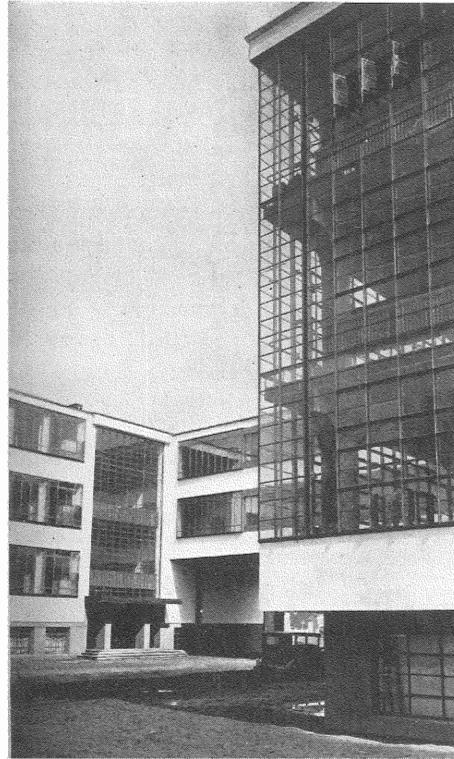
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Not surprisingly, such literal translation of Cubism into architecture is not without consequences. One problem in Giedion's "space-time," for example, is apparent in his equivocal theory of "transparency." In an often-quoted comparison of Walter Gropius's Bauhaus building (1926) to Picasso's painting *L'Arlésienne* (1911-12), Giedion argues that both Cubism and modernist architecture are guided by the principle of transparency. About Gropius's Bauhaus, Giedion wrote: "it is the interior and the exterior of a building that are presented simultaneously. The extensive transparent areas, by dematerializing the corners, permit the hovering relations of planes and the kind of 'overlapping' which appears in contemporary painting."⁵ In *The Projective Cast* (1995), Robin Evans effectively questions Giedion's translation of Cubist "transparency" into architecture. In contrast to Giedion, he notes that architecture offers a case exceptionally different from the visual arts since "substantial yet representational, it is more equivocally of the world, and at the same time *about* the world than any other art form."⁶ Therefore, the question is whether a radical reformulation in the pictorial *representation of space* can be directly translated into a new *idea of space* in the building-art. By equating the transparency of the glass curtain wall of the Bauhaus with the "simultaneity" and "overlap" of viewpoints on Picasso's canvas, Giedion collapses the difference between pictorial and physical space.⁷ Paradoxically, the "transparent" architectural box of the Bauhaus, which Giedion takes as a literal translation of cubist fragmentation of the picture plane, offers not a fragmented, but a homogeneous, unified and isotropic space in architecture. (Figures 1, 2).

On the other hand, if the free-flowing and transparent space of modern architecture is not necessarily a direct translation of Cubism, and if the general revolution in the "space conception" is a fiction of modernist theory, a series of questions will emerge. Can we still determine common aesthetic principles that would explain modernism in art and architecture? What exactly makes the transparent curtain wall and the integration of the inside and the outside in the "plan libre," the true expression of the modern age? Is there a rationale for "transparency" in modern architecture beyond stylistic preference? Did the early twentieth century experiments with space, time and motion transform the architectural box? Questions of that sort can be multiplied.

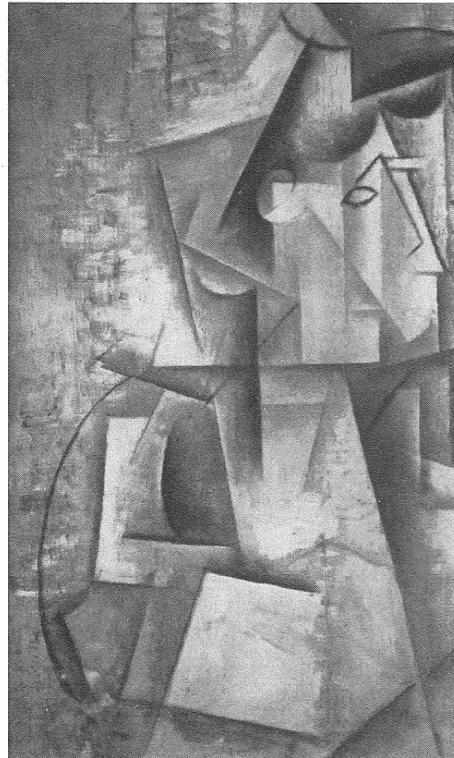
The present essay is a work-in-progress that was originally conceived as a fragment of a longer piece on the question of representation in the twentieth century architecture. It

Figure 1:
Full-page illustration from Siegfried Giedion's *Space, Time and Architecture* (1941). The caption reads:
"Walter Gropius, The Bauhaus, Dessau, 1926. Corner of the Workshop Wing. In this case it is the interior and the exterior of a building which are presented simultaneously. The extensive transparent areas, by dematerializing the corners, permit the hovering relations of planes and the kind of "overlapping" which appears in contemporary painting."



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Figure 2:
Full-page illustration from *Space, Time and Architecture*; Picasso, *L'Arlésienne* 1911-12, oil on canvas. In the caption Giedion explains Cubist "simultaneity" as the technique of showing multiple aspects of a single object at the same time, and emphasizes the "transparency of overlapping planes" in Picasso's painting.



starts with the presupposition that the modernist translation of pictorial to architectural space --Giedion's "space-time" in particular-- can no longer be taken for granted. Instead, I shall inquire into other ways of engaging the representative-content of the architectural box in the twentieth century and negotiate its boundaries with the "virtual space" of the picture plane.

The following pages focus on an architectural gallery, the Pergamon-Hall of the Berlin Museum (1930), an interior that was designed specifically to reproduce the "space conception" of another time and another place. The fact that the Pergamon-Hall was conceived as a part of a "museum of architecture" certainly complicates the relationship between "pictorial" and "real" spaces. Nevertheless, it is my intention to discuss the Pergamon-Hall as a heuristic model of a museum interior where the twentieth century aesthetics of space came to the foreground. During this paper, I shall discuss theories of *appearance, idea, form* and *representation of space* in the German aesthetics, and reconsider a theory of "kinesthetic" perception, from which the modernist "space-time" seems to have departed.

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II

Let me begin by noting the difficulty to describe the object. The truth is that we do not know exactly what the object is, or what it stands for. Some earlier accounts call it the "Zeus Altar of Pergamon," others simply the "Great Altar," referring to a modern presentation of a lost monument. This semantic difficulty, that is, the collapse of the difference between the referent and the reference, did not trouble many who undertook a description before, and their descriptions were often brilliant. Take for example the museum guides, those wonderful annunciations of the object as an original work of art. Most visitors would also agree that there in the museum we stand in the presence of one of the *opera nobile* of the history of architecture. The object was seen by a wide audience, and became a familiar image to people, even to those who had not visited Berlin to see it with their own eyes. A wide range of photographs, reproduced in all possible forms and in most unlikely places allowed the object to be seen by a large number of people. Yet, what sort of cognate is this monument? Is it a thing? Can it be displaced and replaced? And what about the modern space of the gallery, the architecture of display, the optical reality-effects, the discursive and aesthetic parameters that sustain the authenticity of experience?

From a strictly architectural point of view the object of experience is a modern interior. The observer enters the room from a gate located off-centre, facing the main exhibit at a sharp perspective angle. The Pergamon-Hall, or the *Pergamonsaal* as it is called in German, is a rectangular prism, approximately 20 m high, 51 m wide and 32 m deep. On all sides, the hall is surrounded with light-coloured walls with no outside windows with the exception of its translucent ceiling. Filtered through the double layers of the glass roof, daylight gives the room its peculiarly austere character. The exhibits are arranged alongside the inner walls of the room. The space that the giant prism defines is mostly left empty in the form of a large void. (Figures 3, 4).

The moment of entrance was no doubt conceived as one of the most important aspects of the *Pergamonsaal*, leaving a permanent impression on the viewer. The visitor's attention is immediately directed to the facade of an ancient monument from the Hellenistic city of Pergamon, reconstructed on the opposite side of the room. Two wings of this facade extend from the rear wall of the *Pergamonsaal* towards the observer. As sculptural objects in space, these two wings give the impression that the reconstructed altar is

Figure 3:
Reconstruction of the Great Altar of Pergamon (1928-30) in Berlin State Museum (The Pergamon Museum).
Photograph by S.M.Can Bilsel.



Figure 4:
The *Pergamonsaal* (Pergamon-Hall) in Berlin State Museum.
Photograph by S.M.Can Bilsel.

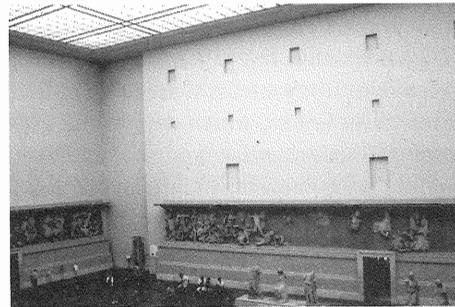


Figure 5:
“Two Groups” from the northern frieze of the Gigantomachy, Berlin State Museum.
Photograph by S.M.Can Bilsel.



Figure 6:
The West facade of the Great Altar of Pergamon in relief, against the background of the museum wall.
Photograph by S.M.Can Bilsel.



a freestanding monument. They also frame the overall composition as seen from the entrance.

The other three walls, on two sides and at the back of the observer at the point of entry, are mostly left unoccupied. They are raised 20 m from the ground and meet the glass ceiling with a simple ornamental moulding, a classicizing cornice. The flat and mostly unarticulated surfaces of these walls give the impression that the altar is exhibited inside a giant Platonic prism.

Somewhere near their lower edge, on these three walls is exhibited a long frieze in sculptural relief. The eye of the observer scans the frieze horizontally, although it is placed significantly higher than eye level. Approximately 130 feet in length, the "Gigantomachy Frieze" once decorated the four sides of a freestanding altar in Pergamon. It represents a scene from the mythic battle of the Olympian gods with the giants. The Frieze, which depicts the extremely expressive forms of bodies in motion, inspired modern artists and writers alike since Carl Humann shipped its fragments to Berlin during the excavations of Bergama in 1878-1886. Given its cultural and art historical importance, we may assume that the display of the Gigantomachy is the primary concern that shaped the *Pergamonsaal* of the Berlin Museum. Here, in the hall we may observe two different strategies of display. Most of the marble panels of the frieze are exhibited on the walls of the room, independently from the reconstructed altar. They are not exactly hung on the wall in the way a picture canvas is displayed in a gallery, rather they are incorporated into the plaster finishing of the modern walls. Only a small portion of the frieze, which actually corresponds to two wings of the altar beside the great stairway, is exhibited with its architectural context, as incorporated into the reconstructed facade. (Figure 5).

As the observer proceeds towards the facade, and reaches the broad flight of the great stairway, the experience takes a different form. The viewer no longer contemplates the altar as a tableau from distance, but rather walks through the scenery. The large steps, somewhere in the middle of the *Pergamonsaal*, define the boundary that demarcates the space of the museum *in front* of the altar, from the space of the altar proper. Judging from its white marble finish, we may conclude that the stairway is a part of the original altar, rather than a modern architectural element. Yet the visitors are not only allowed to step on it, they are encouraged to ascend the stairs. This is in sharp contrast, for example, to the columns, base and entablature of the altar, which are apparently protected against tactile perception. Just like in any other museum, security officers watch the crowd that might feel compelled to actually touch the monument.

The stairs take the observer through the altar, presenting the sculptural frieze on both sides. In particular the sculptural figures that are kneeling on these very steps powerfully integrate the exhibit with its frame. At the end of the stairs, we reach a higher platform, which through a row of Ionic columns leads first to a vestibule overlooking the *Pergamonsaal*, and then, through a gate, to a separate exhibition room of the museum. This room is named after Telephos, and here, there is a separate frieze that narrates the legend of foundation of the city of Pergamon. In this room, we experience a series of complimentary impressions. The gallery, which runs parallel to the reconstructed facade, provides the visitor with a view of the *Pergamonsaal* from above, and through the columns of the peristyle. The impression is that of looking at the *Pergamonsaal* from inside the monument: a view from inside out. The Telephos Room constitutes an architectural interior, which is curiously experienced as distinct from the overall interior of

the *Pergamonsaal*. This architectural boundary between the *Pergamonsaal* and the Telephos Room is perceived as the threshold between the outside and the inside. Even though the observer physically leaves an exhibition hall and enters another, a masterful treatment of enclosures gives the visitor the impression of entering the inside of a Greek temple. Hence, the modern *Pergamonsaal* is translated into an “impression” of the antique Pergamon Altar, as seen both from outside and inside.

A closer look suggests that the *Pergamonsaal* consists of critical points, which unfold the optical construction of its reality-effect. Characteristically, these points are located at the very sites where the reconstructed altar meets the museum’s wall. If we ignore for a moment the two freestanding wings, and focus on the central colonnade of the Zeus Altar, we will see that this central section is a sculptural articulation of the modern partition wall between the *Pergamonsaal* and the Telephos room. From a distant perspective, however, the central colonnade looks like the peristyle of an ancient monument, while the section of the wall immediately above the colonnade is dematerialized. In order to give the Pergamon Altar its discernible “facade,” the eye ignores the modern partition wall in the background, as if it is simply the sky. This effect that brings the Pergamon-Altar to the foreground while effacing the architectural frame, is the result of a simple contrast between highly articulated facade, attributed to antique Pergamon, and the “neutral” surface of the modern museum. Yet, the aesthetic aspect of this contrast is nevertheless remarkable: The Pergamon Altar is read as a work of art against the background of a non-ground. (Figure 6).

27

So far, we have observed that the *Pergamonsaal* consists of carefully chosen visual effects which translates a modern interior into an antique building, and that this translation occurs in two distinct, yet, complementary spheres of perception. The first sphere is analogous to the contemplation of a picture. At the moment of entry, the observer sees the Pergamon Altar as an “ensemble” at a glance. The aesthetic distance between the observer and the object of perception lends the reconstructed altar an effect of completeness, which it physically lacks. The large void in front of the altar magnifies the effect of depth and compels the observer to read the sculptural relief as the image of a building. It is also important to note that this effect is not necessarily a *trompe l'oeil* in the limited definition of the term. It does not construe the third dimension out of a two-dimensional picture. Yet the reconstruction of a *representative part*, which is technically speaking a combination of freestanding sculptural forms and sculptural relief, conveys the *effect* of the whole monument. In analogy to rhetoric, I shall call this communicative strategy an architectural synecdoche, the part that stands for the whole.

Secondly, the architectural promenade through the altar gives the visitor the impression of occupying the original space of a Hellenistic building. More specifically it gives an impression of crossing the boundary between inside and outside. It evokes a sense of enclosure and exposure in the face of an imaginary landscape. The distant perception of the altar as a picture and the subsequent experience of an enclosure do not conflict one another due to, what may be called, a scenario of experience, or rather, a mnemonic sequence. In other words, the observer is overwhelmed by the *vision of an ensemble*, prior to examining the reconstructed altar with close-ups in profile. The vision proceeds from the general to the particular and constitutes a visual field that restores an architectural continuum. Even though the wall of the gallery cuts through the altar as a picture plane, the impressions of a moving eye restores the third dimension beyond this plane. The space of the Pergamon Altar extends in front of the viewer as a virtual space that is perhaps comparable to the nineteenth century stereoscope.

A perspective view of the altar from distance was the initial idea that led the German architect, Alfred Messel to design the room in the form of a large, unoccupied void in 1907. Two perspective drawings by Messel, dating from this period, illustrate the *Pergamonsaal* both from inside and outside. Despite radical changes in its shape and program, the *Pergamonsaal* maintained this basic idea. Yet, this said, we have to acknowledge that the interior designed by Messel in 1907 was not a "prisme pure" to use a modernist term. Indeed it was far from it; a false ceiling, which rounded the corners of the cubical space, was to transform the space into a reinterpretation of the Pantheon-type volume with a distinctively Pergamene decoration.⁸ It was rather in the subsequent revisions from 1911 to 1928 by the architects Ludwig Hoffmann and Wilhelm Wille that the Pergamon Room lost its distinctive character as a style room. Hoffmann and Wille's abstract-Neoclassicism modernised the space into a cube with citations of Greek architecture. It was through this process that the facade of the Pergamon Altar ceased to be read as an integrated part of the interior, an ornament, but is transformed into a self-contained rhetorical part, a synecdoche of antiquity, so to speak, which floats in an unfamiliar, modern space.⁹ (Figure 7).

28

For the modern viewer the prism of the *Pergamonsaal* seems to function solely as the frame of aesthetic experience in the Kantian sense of the word. The modern museum fulfils its function only when the exhibited object is aesthetically differentiated from its frame. The prism, which defines the *Pergamonsaal*, displaces the work from its original context and induces it to acquire the status of art-for-experience (*Erlebniskunst*). Just as this strategy depends on the material presence of a work of art in the interior, it defaces the architectural frame.

Paradoxically, through this very process, the original Altar became subordinate to its frame of display, the giant prism. In striking contrast to the historical altar, a freestanding building, its reconstruction in Berlin is reduced into a sculptural relief inside the museum. The modern reconstruction created the atmosphere of experiencing the temple not by restoring it to its entire form, rather by translating its facades into four picture planes, and pasting them on the interior walls of the museum. To put it polemically, the modern presentation deprived the Great Altar of Pergamon from its *buildinghood*. The status of the altar as a freestanding tectonic corpus is compromised to achieve the visual effect of an artistic whole. Contrary to the common impression, it is not that a historic altar is relocated and contained in a modern interior, but the prism functions as a giant optical apparatus that construe Pergamon as a modern *spectacle*.

In lieu of the Great Altar of Pergamon, we have in Berlin four picture-planes, each of which restore an image of the ancient monument in the form of a sculptural relief. Hence a total image of the altar is constituted only for an observer in motion, and only in the *event* of experience. For an understanding of this experience it may well be useful to survey briefly two theoretical problems that emerged in the aesthetics of the turn of the nineteenth century: that is *space as perceived by an observer in motion*; and space as a representation of bodies in motion.

III

Highly innovative, and already fully "modern," a theory of space came into the foreground at the turn of the nineteenth century alongside the simultaneous rise of psychology, physiology and the Neo-Kantian aesthetics in Germany. Besides its far-fetched manifestations in the visual arts, the new theory of space eventually called the nineteenth century architectural theory of "tectonics" into crisis. The theorists of these years were

Figure 7:
Alfred Messel, perspective drawing of the
Pergamonsaal, 1908.

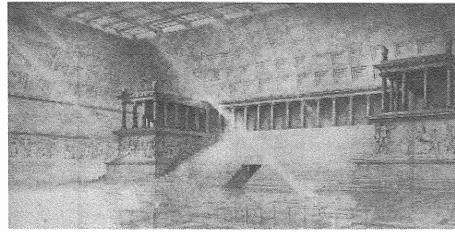


Figure 8:
Étienne-Jules Marey, chronophotography and analysis of the movement of a walking man. Illustrated in J.M. Eder, *La Photographie Instantanée* (1888).

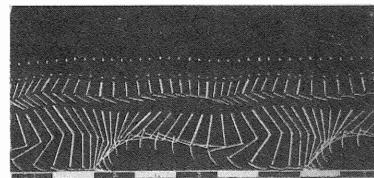
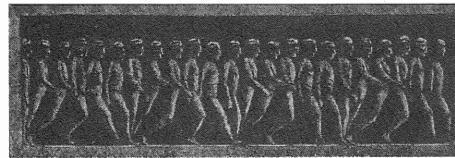
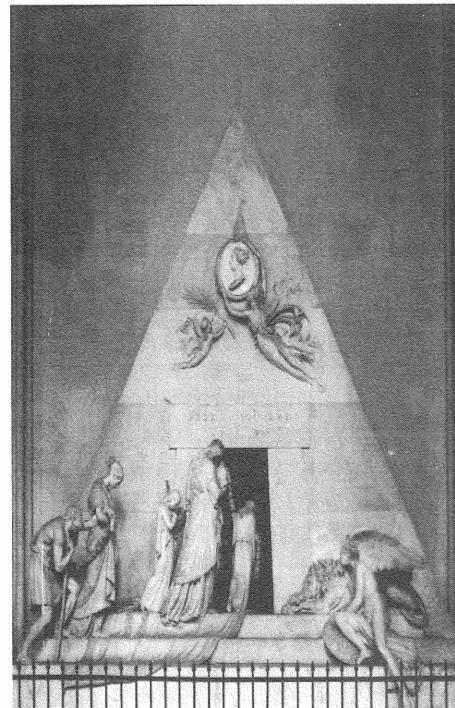


Figure 9:
Antonio Canova, Funerary Monument to
Maria Cristina of Austria, 1798-1805.
Hildebrand criticises Canova's work since
the sculptor collapsed the boundary
between architectural space and pictorial
space and used architecture as the back-
drop of sculptural composition.



no longer interested in the harmonious agreement between the “structural core” and the “artistic dress” of a building, as defined in Karl Bötticher’s analysis of the Greek tectonics in the 1850’s. The problem of architecture was increasingly posed as the sensory effects of architectural form on the human mind and body. Developments in the theory of empathy and psychology inspired a new generation of architectural historians. Heinrich Wölfflin’s dissertation, “Prolegomena to a Psychology of Architecture” (1886) and August Schmarsow’s inaugural lecture in Leipzig, “The Essence of Architectural Creation” (1893) are symptomatic of a landslide in architectural theory.¹⁰

Here, I will start with a question that was of great interest to theoreticians of German aesthetics in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century: How is the appearance (*Erscheinung*) of an object in space translated into artistic representation (*Darstellung*)? And what does this translation teach us about the modern concept of space (*Raumvorstellung*)? Although the twentieth century phenomenology made this question largely obsolete in philosophy by gradually freeing the space from the mental eye of the subject, the late nineteenth century aesthetics made a permanent imprint on the theories of space in modern architecture.¹¹

30

I shall cite only one text among a wide range of Neo-Kantian work: *The Problem of Form in the Visual Arts* by Adolf Hildebrand (1847-1921), written in Germany in 1893. Unlike other figures of the German Aesthetics that held university posts, Hildebrand was a practicing sculptor who made his name by reviving the classical genre of bas-relief. *The Problem of Form* is his unique contribution to theory, and apparently it was written under the supervision of Conrad Fiedler (1841-1895). His treatise has the virtue of clarity: in searching the laws of perception of pictorial and real space, Hildebrand draws his most striking examples from the representation of the third dimension in the genre of bas-relief.¹²

Having posed the question of appearance, form and artistic representation, Hildebrand suggests that nature does not offer forms as such, form is a projection of the human mind, a synthetic idea. There is of course nothing innovative in such statement, for it rehearses a well-known preposition of the idealist aesthetics. Despite his idealism, Hildebrand nevertheless sought to employ the findings of perceptual psychology in order to discover the objective and universal laws of artistic representation in the visual arts.

In *The Problem of Form*, the author starts with the question of how the third dimensional space is perceived from a single viewpoint. His initial assumption is that a single eye sees the object as flat, and two dimensional, which he calls “surface image” (*Flächenbild*) that leads to “visual ideas” (*Gesichtsvorstellungen*). The second type of vision is construed by the impressions of the eye in movement: “the mobility of the eye scans three dimensional object and transforms perception into temporal sequence of images.”¹³ This, Hildebrand calls literally “motion-ideas” (*Bewegungsvorstellungen*), translated into English as “kinesthetic.” The author’s use of “motion” or “kinesthetic ideas,” could in fact be misleading. In his theory Hildebrand does not refer to a continuous flow of movement as, for example, in Henri Bergson’s contemporaneous conception of the “durée.”¹⁴ “Motion-ideas,” for Hildebrand, are nothing else than the impressions of an eye registered from successive, but nevertheless fixed positions. This actually explains why the superimposition of images registered simultaneously by a pair of human eyes is already a “motion-idea,” even though the observer might be stationary. Hildebrand takes the principle of stereoscopic vision --which was well known since English physicist Charles Wheatstone’s discovery of stereography in 1832-- as the basis of his theory of perception: the superimposition of two surface impressions by two eyes,

each of which looking at the same object from a slightly different viewpoint mentally constructs the space as three-dimensional.

Yet, *The Problems of Form* does not only limit itself to an explanation of how space is perceived, but also goes on to systematise the very *idea of space* according to the same optical principle. According to Hildebrand, the human mind perceives objects in space by reducing them into their most-revealing contours, as well as by means of a general idea of depth. In the 5th chapter of his treatise, "The Concept of Relief," he argues that the genre of sculptural relief offers the best example to demonstrate this point. Working on a relief, the sculptor achieves a representation of space by carving surfaces that gradually recesses towards the background. As the figures in the foreground are given form, the sculptor starts to carve the surface on the subsequent stratum. This provides Hildebrand with a metaphor to explain the rules that govern human perception of the third dimension:

One can illustrate this principle by imagining a figure placed between two parallel panes of glass, positioned in such a way that the figure's outermost points touch the glass. The figure then occupies and describes a space of uniform depth, within which its component parts are arranged... The figure lives, so to speak, in a planar stratum of uniform depth, and each form tends to spread out along the surface, that is to make itself recognizable. Its outermost points, touching the panes, continue to lie on a single plane, even if the panes are taken away.¹⁵

31

Hildebrand's generalisation of the metaphor of bas-relief into a theory of space has two interesting implications. First, the author visualises the idea of depth with a series of planes running at right angles to the line of sight.¹⁶ This space, we may conclude, is literally transparent to the extent it is conceptualised as a recession of transparent or imaginary picture planes.

Hildebrand's conception of space sounds, at first, quite mechanistic so much so that it reminds the reader of the technique of photogrammetry, an optical apparatus that maps third dimensional space based on the principle of stereo-photography. As Herta Wolf shows in her recent study, Albrecht Meydenbauer of the Prussian Royal Metric Institute is credited for using photogrammetry for the first time in the 1860's in order to survey of architectural monuments.¹⁷ Architectural photogrammetry --just like Hildebrand's "kinesthetic" images-- depends on the register of a building by two different cameras, and from slightly different angles. If the exposure details of two successive photographs, such as the focal length of each camera, their distance from one another, and their exact location vis-à-vis the monument are known, the third dimension of architectural space can be calculated and registered. The output of photogrammetry is a two dimensional map that represents depth in function of the recession of the building parts from the picture plane. This technique codifies architectural space as superimposition of transparent contours, and reconceptualizes it as a relief.¹⁸ Having started from the principle of stereoscopic vision, and by systematising the third dimension as a series of planar strata, Hildebrand seems to use photogrammetry as a methodological postulate of his theory of space.

Secondly, Hildebrand's theory refutes that *mimesis* is the basis of artistic representation. A picture is not an imitation of the exterior appearance of the object. Instead he redefines the pictorial space, and the real space as two parallel universes that are governed by the same rules of evoking psychological stimuli.

The parallel between nature and the work of art, therefore, is not to be sought in the equality of their actual appearances but rather in the fact that they have the same capacity for evoking an idea of space. It is not because of an illusion that we believe the picture to be a piece of reality --as in a panorama-- but because of the power of the stimulus contained in the image.¹⁹

Hence, Hildebrand aims at a general theory of perception that reconciles the physiological theory of perception with psychology of artistic form. On one hand, he remedies the lacuna of science by bringing the question of representation into the foreground. On the other hand he aims to codify artistic representation by objective principles. When we think of this enterprise in the context of the late nineteenth century experiments with space, time and motion its importance will be clear.

It was French physiologist Étienne-Jules Marey (1830-1904) who carried out the better-known experiments on human and animal motion in the late nineteenth century. Marey was inspired by the work of English-born photographer, Eadweard Muybridge in California. Having combined a battery of twelve to twenty-four distinct cameras, Muybridge recorded the successive stages of the walk, the trot and the gallop of a horse in a series of photographs. As the shutters of the instant-cameras were released successively, Muybridge attained the photographs of the movement, each of which shows a spatial position assumed by the horse at a given segment of time. Instant photography both gave access to a wider scopic field, and froze uniform sections of movement. Such images were previously inaccessible to the human eye due to the speed of the motion.²⁰ When published, Muybridge's photographs of the galloping horse arouse some enthusiasm, but mostly, incredulity. The instant photographs did not resemble any of the previous representation of galloping horse, a major theme in the history of Western art. In order to convince his audience and prove the authenticity of his photographs, Muybridge successively cast the images upon a screen thanks to a lantern slide-projector, which he invented for this purpose. The performance, which took place in the San Francisco Art Association in 1880 is well known in the history of cinema as the first presentation of a motion-picture.²¹

Marey's invention of "chronophotography" further developed Muybridge's idea and applied it to the scientific study of animal-motion. Unlike Muybridge's installation of multiple cameras, Marey developed a single camera of magazine plates that could record several snapshots, which he used to photograph the movements of a flying bird in 1882.²² The indexical register of the photographic apparatus, Marey believed, mapped the human and the animal body in space with a mechanistic precision. The human eye, however, could easily be deceived. This, according to Marey, explained the discrepancy between Muybridge's serial photography and the representation of the galloping horse, for example in the ancient art of bas-relief. He went as far as claiming that artistic representation of movement in the past, particularly that of the galloping horse, was simply erroneous. For, chronophotography demonstrated that a horse does not assume the position depicted on bas-relief at any segment of time. The "error" of the sculptor, according to Marey, was caused by the inability of human eye to register fast movement. (Figure 8).

There is, in fact, a superficial resemblance between the ancient genre of bas-relief that represents figures in movement, and chronophotography that dissects movement at uniform segments of time and registers the appearance of the body in each moment as a linear sequence of images. This allowed Marey to ignore the difference between scientific appearance and artistic representation of movement. It must be, then, in response to the positivism of Marey, that Hildebrand conceived his chapter "Form as an Expression of Function." He wrote:

The example of a running dog demonstrates how exclusively the presentation of movement depends on capturing that which stimulates the imagination and not on the faithful rendering of the perceived

image. We actually see the dog's legs only as rapidly moving streaks or shadows, whose form is vague and indefinite, whereas the head and trunk retain a clear form. If the reproduction were based on capturing one or several composite moments of movement, these legs would always be presented as indistinct streaks. It turns out, however, that we present only the idea and not the perception... Our perceptions of movement are thus first brought into relation with the image of the object that is stored in our imagination, and then we form an idea of rest from the body in motion. This is something very different from the image of one or more composite instants, such as the movement a camera shows us the momentary perceptual image.²³

For Hildebrand, the representation of movement in sculpture does not literally replicate the image of the body in space in a given instant, rather it conveys "a mental image that has to extract from the perception those specific signs that evoke the idea of movement." In other words, when Marey cuts movement into uniform sections and determines the position of the body in space in a given instant, he achieves a series of "chance appearances," but not "form" as such. Artistic "form" is one that evokes movement in a clear --and physically immobile-- image. Hence "form," according to Hildebrand, is a "functional sign."²⁴

We may nevertheless detect a certain contradiction in Hildebrand's theory, especially towards the end of his essay where he shifts from a predominantly physiological explanation of perception to an essentially psychological theory of "form". His analytic theory of perception, in fact, is not very different from Marey's understanding of time and motion. He conceives of perception as a succession of retinal impressions, each of which is associated with one --and only one-- "surface image." The perception is a linear process composed of a succession of "visual-ideas" and "motion-ideas." He differs from Marey by acknowledging that the problem of representation is different from perception, and that it involves a synthetic process.

33

The problem of representation of movement had become a central issue in German aesthetics and art history by 1893 when Hildebrand published his treatise. Some of this discussion was literally formulated in the aftermath of Carl Humann's discovery of the Pergamon Altar, by a group of scholars who were inspired by the Hellenistic figures of the Gigantomachy. In striking contrast to the restrained, static and canonical representation of human body in Classical Greek sculpture, the Pergamon frieze offers an intense, and exaggerated way of expressing movement. Such a style was long familiar in Europe due to the sculptural group Laocoön (1st century AD) in the Vatican Museum, whose history of reception since Renaissance is certainly closely related to the history of Western sculpture. Yet, only after the discovery of the Gigantomachy and other Pergamene sculpture, Laocoön was established as a late example --or copy-- of a distinct style that flourished in Hellenistic Anatolia. Furthermore, the discovery of the Gigantomachy called into question the Neoclassical scholarship that had ignored Hellenistic art as decadent or imitative of the classical age, and cast doubt on Johann Joachim Winckelmann's (1717-1768) famous dictum on the "noble simplicity and quiet grandeur" of Greek sculpture. Gigantomachy presents formal features that are almost altogether missing from classical Greek art. In *Art in the Hellenistic Age*, J.J. Politt identifies some of these characteristics as "undulating surfaces; agonised facial expressions; extreme contrasts of texture created by deep carving of the sculptural surface with resultant areas of highlight and dark shadow; and the use of 'open' forms which deny boundaries and tectonic balance."²⁵

It was not until the first years of the twentieth century that the term "Hellenistic Baroque" came to describe the Pergamene architecture and sculpture. We owe this artis-

tic category largely to the influence of German art historian Heinrich Wölfflin (1864-1945). In his *Renaissance and Baroque* (1889), a history of architecture of the period immediately after Renaissance in Italy, Wölfflin posits “baroque” as the diametrical opposite of the classical idea in architecture. Baroque, then, besides referring to a specific historical style in seventeenth century Italy, is a general tendency that periodically surfaced in Western art, and usually as a reaction against a classical epoch. Therefore, Wölfflin defines baroque in terms of a series of oppositions: Unlike the tectonic forms of classical architecture, baroque architecture imitates the effects of another art-form: painting; differing from the clear contours and “linear” forms of the classical, the baroque is “painterly;” classical architecture depends on a harmonious system of proportions, baroque architecture is only concerned with the psychological effect of form; classical architecture is epitomised by a central plan, baroque space is limitless and illusionistic; and finally, classical architecture is static and motionless, the baroque is essentially an “illusion of movement.” Baroque, for Wölfflin, remains a predominantly architectural category. The art historical “principle” that is embedded in baroque is the concept of “painterly” (“*Das Malerische*”).

34

“Painterly” art for Wölfflin has two major characteristics: If one were the collapse of the boundary between pictorial and architectural space, the other would be the representation of the animated. According to Wölfflin, “The strict tectonic mode --of classical art-- had demanded clear forms which were whole and therefore calm. But overlapping forms result in something intangible and are therefore stimulus to movement.”²⁶ Hence in baroque “all tectonic structural elements fell victim to a wild desire for movement, so that, for example, pediments piled up and were thrust outwards.”²⁷

Not surprisingly, Wölfflin’s generalisation of “baroque” into a circular, world-historical phenomenon owes to the similarity he perceived between the Italian baroque and the Hellenistic art of Pergamon. In *Renaissance and Baroque*, he points at Gigantomachy as an example of “painterly” sculpture, and, contrasts it with the classical Parthenon marbles:

Whereas one could imagine the Pantheon frieze with a gold ground, which might form an effective foil to the beautiful contours of the figures, this would not be possible with a more painterly relief like the Pergamene Gigantomachia, which relies entirely on the effects of moving masses, and for which a gold ground would only create a wild and completely inappropriate confusion of colour.²⁸

Given the actuality of the Gigantomachy by 1893, the conspicuous absence of any mention of the Pergamene frieze in Hildebrand’s text is rather remarkable, especially since this text attempts to explain “the problem of form” in the entire field of visual arts exclusively with the example of sculptural relief. This omission is perhaps due to Hildebrand’s belief in the stylistic superiority of archaic and classical bas-relief upon “baroque,” post-classical examples, and his distaste for the “painterly.”

Having argued that space in nature and the pictorial space are constructed in the human mind through the same objective process, and obey the same universal laws, Hildebrand nevertheless warned against the contemporary practice of “realism” that is, the works that fail to discriminate the space of representation from the space of reality. He cites waxworks, panoramas, and sculptural groups that use architecture as a backdrop, as “realist,” and therefore “low art.” The waxworks are “popular art” because of their make-believe; they cannot be discerned from their model. Similarly the panoramas combine the pictorial *trompe-l’oeil* with the effect of a real interior. Finally Hildebrand criticises a popular type of sculpture that uses architecture as its actual decor, hence collapsing the difference between virtuality and reality of the work.

In other words, *The Problems of Form* both erodes the boundary between “real” and “pictorial space” and in some other way seeks to preserve a clear distinction between them. To the extent both physical and pictorial space are construed synthetically in the human mind, the difference between truth and illusion is only a difference of degree. Yet, when it comes to dismiss some works --like Panoramas-- as “low art,” Hildebrand seeks to restore a strict boundary between the picture plane and architectural space. (Figure 9).

Therefore, just as the presentation of the Gigantomachy in the *Pergamonsaal* would be in agreement with Wölfflin’s principle of “the painterly,” it would fail Hildebrand’s criteria of high art on all three accounts. Just like the nineteenth century panoramas, it does not differentiate between pictorial illusion and spatial experience; the modern walls of the museum provides a décor to the sculptural frieze; and finally, *Pergamonsaal* offers an effigy of the Pergamon-Altar, which, in the final analysis, cannot be discerned from its historic original. The experience of the Pergamon-Hall depends on the transgression of the boundary between the space of reality and the space of pictorial illusion. Walking into the West facade and towards the peristyle feels like walking into the space of mirror.

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Hence, Hildebrand’s theory of “kinesthetic” perception only explains the *Pergamonsaal* to a certain extent. The *Pergamonsaal* literally construes a stereoscopic space out of a sculptural relief, and through the synthesis of multiple viewpoints. Yet the similarity ends there. Unlike Hildebrand’s theory of bas-relief and his assumption of a detached viewer, the observer of the Pergamon Museum is no longer outside the pictorial space. Nor does the object of perception --the Pergamon-Altar-- preserves its corporeal integrity and visual opacity. The modern observer of Pergamon is one that both partakes the space of the object and sees it from outside. The guiding principle of this space is not so much stereoscopic overlap of viewpoints, rather total dissolution of the boundary between the pictorial and architectural space.

FOOTNOTES:

1. Siegfried Giedion, *Space, Time and Architecture* (Cambridge, Mass.: The Harvard University Press, 1941), pp. 355-63.

2. Giedion, *Space*, p. 357.

3. According to Giedion, “previously time had been regarded in one of two ways: either realistically, as something going on and existing without an observer... or subjectively, as something having no existence apart from an observer and present only in sense experience.” He does not specify, however, how the new concept of time will transcend this objective versus subjective dualism except for repeating several times that modern space and modern time are interdependent. His dualism of “realistic” versus “subjective” time seems a very simplified (mis)reading of Henri Bergson’s “*durée*.” Giedion, *Space*, p. 364.

4. See the recent critique of Giedion’s “space-time” by Robin Evans, *The Projective Cast: Architecture and Its Three Geometries* (Cambridge Mass.: The MIT Press, 1995).

5. Giedion, *Space*, p. 403.

6. Evans, *The Projective Cast*, p. 65.

7. Cf. Colin Rowe and Robert Slutzky’s seminal essay “Transparency: Literal and Phenomenal,” in Rowe, *The Mathematics of the Ideal Villa and Other Essays* (Cambridge Mass.: The MIT Press, 1976).

8. Alfred Messel, Project for the Museum Island, Antiken, Deutsches und Vorderasiatisches Museum, Berlin 22 August 1907, the Pergamon Museum, Zentral Archiv, Baudokumentation, I/BV 494.

9. Ludwig Hoffman, Project for the State Museum, New Building (Hoffmann's revisions on Messel's project), 1911 the Pergamon Museum, Zentral Archiv, Baudokumentation, I/BV 496.
10. For a recent anthology of German aesthetics, see Harry Francis Mallgrave and Eleftherios Ikonou, *Empathy, Form, and Space: Problems in German Aesthetics, 1873-1898* (Santa Monica: The Getty Center for the History of Art and the Humanities, 1994).
11. The essential difference between the way this question was posed in the late nineteenth century, and my attempt to revise it, lies in the fact that I see the modern concept of space less as a set of structural rules that explain the essence of artistic creation, and more as a discursive and historical phenomenon.
12. Adolf Hildebrand (1893), *Das Problem der Form in der Bildenden Kunst* (3rd., Strasbourg: Heitz & Mündel, 1901). Citations and page numbers are from the revised English translation published in Mallgrave and Ikonou, *Empathy, Form, and Space*.
13. Hildebrand, *Das Problem der Form*, p. 229.
14. Henri Bergson, *L'Évolution créatrice* (Paris: Félix Alcan, 1907). / Henri Bergson, *Creative Evolution*, trans. Arthur Mitchel (New York: Random House, 1911/1944).
15. Hildebrand, *Das Problem der Form*, p. 251.
16. Michael Podro, *The Manifold in Perception: Theories of Kant from Kant to Hildebrand* (Oxford: The Clarendon Press, 1972), p. 82.
17. For the origins of architectural photogrammetry in Germany see Herta Wolf, "Das Denkmälerarchiv Fotografie / Photography: An Archive of Monuments," *Camera Austria* 51/52, 1995.
18. Photogrammetry is primarily used today for survey of territory and production of cartographic maps out of aerial photographs.
19. Hildebrand, *Das Problem der Form*, p. 242.
20. Joseph Maria Eder, *La Photographie Instantanée, son application aux arts et aux sciences*, French translation of the 2nd revised German edition of 1886 (Paris: Gauthier-Villars et Fils, 1888), 165.
21. "Photography of Movement," in *Encyclopedia Britannica Online*; see also Eadweard Muybridge, *Animal Locomotion: an Electro-photographic Investigation of Consecutive Phases of Animal Movements* (Philadelphia: J.B. Lippincott Co., 1887).
22. Eder, *La Photographie Instantanée*, pp. 174-82; see also Etienne-Jules Marey, *Développement de la méthode graphique par l'emploi de la photographie* (Paris : G. Masson, 1885).
23. Hildebrand, *Das Problem der Form*, p. 263.
24. Hildebrand, *Das Problem der Form*, p. 263.
25. J.J.Pollitt, *Art in the Hellenistic Age* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986), 111.
26. Heinrich Wölfflin, *Renaissance and Baroque*, trans. Kathrin Simon (London, Collins, 1964), 63.
27. Wölfflin, *Renaissance and Baroque*, p. 59.
28. Wölfflin, *Renaissance and Baroque*, p. 36.

In this text, I would like to introduce you to the work I have been producing as an artist for the past ten years and more. While the work represents my own individual artistic development, it is also a product of a typical visual arts education at the end of the twentieth century. The aim of this educational programme has been to produce "professional artists" --a professional artist being defined as an individual who creates works of visual art and who has been trained to do so. This training has invariably focused on developing the aspiring artist's technical competency --an ability to exploit a specific medium or range of media--, visual competency --an understanding of formal aesthetics-- and institutional competency --a familiarity with the "history of art" and the contemporary "art world"--. As part of this training, I was expected to ask questions and make judgements in these three areas of competency, but I was not expected to ask questions or make judgements as to why my scope of operation as a professional artist should be defined and limited to these areas. Here, along with an overview of my work, I would like to offer you some questions and judgements as to the field(s) of operation of the artist in the twenty-first century.

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Back in the 1950s, Ben Shahn wrote an essay about art becoming an academic discipline. He was worried that when art entered the institution, it would become institutional art. In other words, art as "a discipline" would become "disciplined art." I think he meant this both in the sense that art would be under pressure to conform to certain accepted standards of what art was, which would mean that it could no longer push borders aesthetically or artistically, and also, probably more to the point for Shahn, that it would be basically emasculated and unable to perform any kind of social critique.

Taking you twenty years back, I would like to start at Washington University in St. Louis, Missouri --because there was a very definite "aesthetic" to my education. There was a perceived limitation as to what painting should be --preferably oil painting, preferably figurative, preferably post-impressionistic. This limitation was what made me switch to the printmaking department, where things were less limiting: art was art.

So what was permissible? Mixed media was acceptable; subject matter was open. There were only three of us in the department. John was making etchings of teddy bears with leather and studs, Sharon was doing narrative prints that detailed her erotic dreams of sadistic dwarfs, and I was painting on prints that showed bar and party scenes of the "in

crowd" in St. Louis. --If we would come in late to the studio, Sharon would explain that I had been out the night before doing research and she had been helping...-- Still, the emphasis was on the visual and on creating a coherent body of work. Our professor's slogan was "make it big, do it in colour, and have 100 by Friday".

I think my experience was pretty typical of what an art education was in the United States in the seventies and eighties and probably today and in other countries too. This is significant, because it is in the university, or art school, that a young person who wants to be an artist is told what that means --what art means and how it should be judged, and what it means to be an artist and how an artist should be judged.

My conclusion was that art was something to be looked at, and being a professional artist meant making art, making a consistent body of work, making it in an artist's studio, exhibiting in art galleries, getting reviewed in art magazines, getting grants, supporting yourself with an art job, etc. The preferred art job was a teaching position at a university --most definitely not at some public school, because that would mean you were really a teacher, not just an artist who needed to have a job, and you'd just be teaching kids who maybe enjoyed making art but weren't, especially at the age of 11, thinking about it in terms of "Art" with a capital "A".

So you see, there was a value scale to all this: University professor was better than school teacher, canvas was better than paper, figurative was better than abstract, or vice versa depending on what school you were at.

But there was no value scale for meaning --one message was as good as another.

So then I went to graduate school --I had to, if I was going to get that university teaching job. I was using my acquired technical and institutional competence to do these sort of abstract landscape paintings. One of the visiting artists who came to our studio described what I was doing as "making perfect paintings." This was not very satisfying. On the value scale of meaning it was about a zero. But everything I had learned so far was enabling me --or forcing me-- to do this.

So I dumped everything. I stopped using paint so I couldn't rely on colour and composition until I figured out what I wanted to do in terms of content. I ended up working with a lot of different materials --tiles, gold leaf, plaster-- with the idea that there is meaning inherent in materials, not just in images. Also, with the idea still in my mind of making perfect paintings, I began to wonder if I could make a "perfect painting" about a definitely imperfect subject. So I did a series of pieces that had images of homeless people and their surroundings, but with incredible lushly painted Renaissance-like surfaces and borders in gold-leafed tile.

I started doing installation work for two reasons. One, I wanted to do work outside a gallery to make what I was doing more accessible to people who don't go to art galleries, and also to take away the "art-world context" where things are supposed to be looked at aesthetically. Two, I wanted to engage in more socially relevant issues in a social setting.

The process of what I was doing started to become more important than the final work. For example, I did a piece that had a gold-leafed urn placed in the centre of a large circle of dirt. Along the outer edge of the circle, on one side I placed gold-leaf pebbles that spelled out my name, and on the other I placed flowers that I "collected" from people's gardens on the way to the gallery each day. I found myself really enjoying --really being

Figure 1:
Installation work by Deborah Semel.
Untitled, 2001; mixed media: computer-generated prints on paper, string, human beings, tree; 5x3 metres.
Photograph by Deborah Semel.

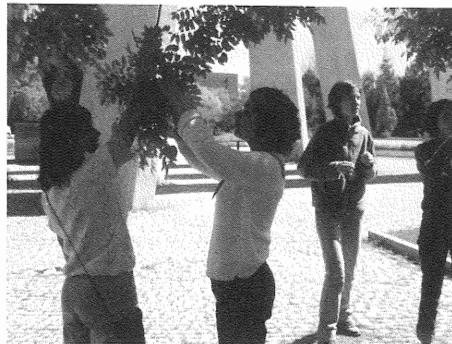


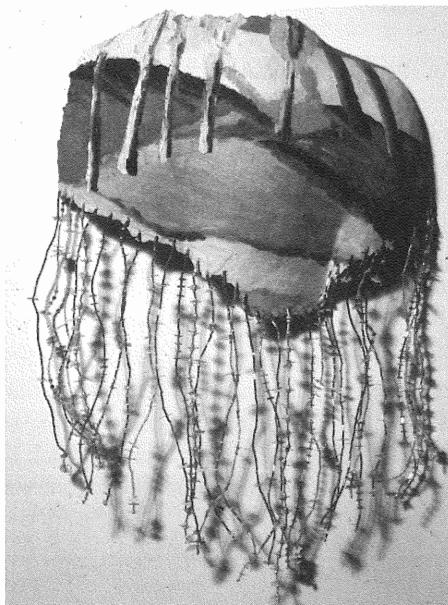
Figure 2:
Installation work by Deborah Semel.
Detail from *Untitled*, 2001; computer-generated print on paper: string, tree fragment; 6.5x6.5 cm.
Photograph by Deborah Semel.



Figure 3:
Installation work by Deborah Semel.
Mneniyopsis Leydi or *The Jellyfish that Ate the Black Sea*, 2000; mixed media: beads, sequins, copper wire, plastic bags.
Photograph by Deborah Semel.



Figure 4:
Art work by Deborah Semel. *Torso Landscape*, 2000; mixed media: oil on cast paper with beads, sequins, copper wire; 45x65 cm.
Photograph by Deborah Semel.



affected by --going out and "collecting" those flowers, and placing them on the piece, but I really didn't care too much for the piece. This fitted in with my theory that making art is always a more significant act than looking at art. The doing is more important than the seeing. The piece also became a good psychological experiment on how people react to art. Because you couldn't see inside the urn from outside the edge of the circle, people had to walk on the dirt to get a look, even though they knew that "you're not supposed to walk on the art." Interestingly, every morning I would find footprints on the side with my name, but none on the side with the flowers. I have no idea why people were willing to walk over my name but not over the flowers, but it was interesting still.

I also did a series of pieces that had images of bombs being dropped on Baghdad during the Gulf War. They were showing pictures on the T.V. news at the time, and I remember being totally mesmerised with the bombs being dropped --they looked so beautiful, just like fireworks-- and thinking how perverse it was that I could be looking at these images aesthetically and forgetting that they actually meant people were being killed.

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Later, I took the shapes that I had used as symbols of dropping bombs to see if I could change their meaning by changing their context. For example, I did four pieces - Earth, Air, Fire and Water - where the same "bomb" shape became bugs (Earth), rain (air), flames (Fire) and fish (Water). It was interesting to me that the meaning could be so easily changed. Also, more interestingly, was the meaning that people put on the symbols themselves. The responses indicated just how much received meaning is both individual and cultural. For example, an African-American artist friend immediately read the "bomb" shape as cowrie shells, which are very prevalent in African art, and a Japanese-American friend immediately read the same shape as grains of rice.

I also did a series of "dead babies" where I used the same lush, varnished surfaces on panels cut in the shapes of starving children in Southeast Asia that I had clipped from newspapers. I think I had a little fascination with death going, because I also started doing pieces with skeletons. At the time I was living in California, and had a Mexican-American boyfriend, so I know the pieces also come from the "calaveras" (skeletons) of Mexican art. I also started doing hands, which keep popping up in my work. When I was doing them in California they were read as "*la mano poderosa*" meaning hand of power, ie, hand of god; in Turkey, they're read as the hand of Fatima, which is pretty much the same thing, I guess. I also think of the hand as "the hand of the artist" - "man (or woman) the maker".

For the piece called Kelp, I went to the beach and collected beach glass and driftwood to use in pieces, along with a lot of beads. I really enjoyed the process of collecting stuff on the beach. Also the physicality; I like to be able to make things that people want to touch, rather than just making things to look at. I'm also very interested in craft, because it places importance on "making things", and like to work with materials that are associated with fine arts and with handicrafts to sort of take away the border between fine arts and craft that has always privileged fine arts.

In Turkey, I got a job working in a carpet shop. My job was just to talk to the tourists in English so that they wouldn't leave the shop. My "excuse" for being there was that I was studying the patterns of the carpets. While I was there, I was making these objects, sort of doll-like things, that I ended up using in an installation called "Disappearing Village Carpet". Also, at the shop were a bunch of women who would sit at looms and weave so the tourists could watch. They were very interested in what I was doing --curious is

probably a better word-- with my box of beads and sticks and scraps of old kilims. I remember one day going out for a few hours to draw a landscape and when I got back to the shop one of the women was in my bead box, making a doll. They were all quite fascinated. They were fascinated when these things were objects made out of things -- once they became part of the installation they had no interest at all. This I think was very interesting, because the objects hadn't changed at all. They were exactly the same. What had changed was that they had become "art", and that was something they had no interest in.

After a little detour into a social critique of tourism, I got to making pieces that juxtaposed different materials to see what would happen when their different "meanings" came into contact with one another. I was using materials associated with Turkish hand-crafts --beads, felt, etc.-- along with drawings and paintings. I had an exhibit in the Women's Library in İstanbul, which was very exciting, getting to exhibit in this great historical building that had this great texture of old stone walls. I did have a little problem, where one of the kids who came to the exhibit managed to pull off the toy soldiers that I had collaged in a piece. I do like the idea of people wanting to touch things, but this can be a problem, especially when they want to take them home with them. I did like the idea that this kid wanted them bad enough to take them, but I don't know how to solve the problem of having a ready supply of replacement parts...

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The context of the Women's Library exhibition got me thinking about installations again, and I decided I wanted to make a tent. I thought of placing it outside somewhere in Cappadocia --as a useful shelter, outside of an art context, a contrast between art/nature; it never happened, but I did do an installation of hanging pieces for SANART as well as an exhibit at the State Painting and Sculpture Museum in Ankara. That was interesting, because apparently, the military had just decided that new recruits needed cultural educating, so a whole group of them had an excursion to my exhibit. Most of them just marched in and marched out, literally, but a few were genuinely interested enough to get into a conversation with about what I was doing, since it didn't look like any kind of painting they had seen before --but they liked it, and seemed to honestly want it explained to them.

I found it easier to get the exhibit at the museum than to do an installation in a public space, which was what I was really interested in. I ended up doing an exhibit at the British Council's art gallery after approaching them about using their entrance space and getting turned down. It seemed the director didn't think it appropriate to the image of the Council to have art cluttering their entrance way, and I wasn't about to turn down an exhibition opportunity, so I agreed to exhibit in the gallery. I did an installation called Nu/Nar (Nude/Pomegranate), based on the myth of Persephone, made up of two-sided pieces that hung from the ceiling and spun at the slightest movement.

After that I did another hanging installation based on the story of myniopsis leydi, a jelly fish that is native to the Chesapeake Bay that accidentally found its way to the Black Sea and has disrupted the ecological balance of the sea. The story appealed to me because the jelly fish and I were both foreigners who came from Baltimore to Turkey. Also, I thought I could use the occasion of the exhibition, put on by Hacettepe University at the Contemporary Arts Centre in Ankara, as a forum for environmental awareness. I had an interesting time explaining to environmental organisations that I was interested in helping raise public awareness about pollution through an art exhibition, but in the end, the "Blue Flag" people, who work on cleaning up beaches, agreed that it would be a good

idea, and they provided me with information about their organisation and general tips on non-polluting behaviour that I made available to people visiting the gallery.

Since then, I've done a bunch of smaller relief pieces that combine either oil paintings or computer-generated drawings and beadwork, and an installation that involved hanging about 500 computer-generated drawings on a tree to look like leaves. That was interesting, because I ended up having a lot of people become involved in hanging up the "leaves". Originally, someone had suggested that I do that as a "performance", but I wasn't interested in it. But I was interested in having people hang up the "leaves" because it got them involved. It was really the same action, just a different attitude. If it were a "performance", it would have been very artificial. Instead, people got involved because they felt like it --not because it was "art". I'd like to work on some pieces that involve more collaboration with "non-artists," but I'm not sure how that will go.

I just finished reading a very interesting book called *Mapping the Terrain*, edited by Suzanne Lacy, which talks about "new genre public art" --art that engages-- not just visually, but in terms of process, with an aim that is not aesthetic, but one of social change. How far new genre public artists are concerned with "aesthetics" varies. Lacy feels there is a need to develop a new kind of critique for this work that is not based on traditional aesthetics. The idea is that artists have created a new paradigm for art, and that critics, in order to address this, need to create a new paradigm for criticism. Lacy, as others, refers to this as a new "aesthetics." Although I think she uses the term less for any actual appropriateness and more out of habit, since aesthetics has been designated the area of operation for art, and out of necessity, since doing away with the term entirely would mean questioning and de-legitimising to an extent the institutional structure that has sprung up around it.

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One aspect of this "new paradigm" is a shifting of value from the finished art work to the process of creating it, with an emphasis on collaboration. Like I said, this is an area I'm particularly interested in, but haven't really gotten very involved in. Because of this, I think a lot of people who find "new genre public art" the "way to go" would say to me, "if you're not part of the solution, you're part of the problem." The problem is that I like making things. I like making things that are pretty. I believe that looking at an "aesthetic" object can have an emotional effect on the viewer. I believe that this can effect that person's outlook on life, and I believe that things can change as a result of this. Also, I like making things. I like touching them, I like taking matter and transforming it, and I believe that I can be transformed as a result of this, and that things can change. Rather than thinking of myself as "part of the problem," I prefer to think that I am "just casting my pebble in the water."

The last time I heard that expression was from a British poet, Mario Petrucci, who creates "sited poetry" in varying contexts including Britain's Imperial War Museum, where he is "Poet in Residence". Petrucci has coined the term "poeclectics" to describe his work and other poets who have a similar aim of "engagement." Petrucci explains:

Poeclectics is not a wholesale movement as such; more a discernible trend and willingness among poets to utilise more freely, and in a conspicuous manner, a variety of texts, styles, voices, registers and forms, usually resulting in a recognisable shift in imaginative range, freshness or flamboyance. Poeclectics thus combines a sense of "making" (Greek: "poiesis") with a desire and facility to work inventively with a variety of sources and processes.

"Eclectics" comes from the Greek *eklegein*, to choose out, select. Poeclectics occurs

wherever poets adopt a particular position, style, method or voice --or invent one-- to suit the purpose at hand, rather than being concerned primarily about any unifying principle of "voice", or perhaps even of intention, across the body of work.

So, I'd like to propose an "arteclectics" --where artists can switch back and forth in what they are doing and how they are doing it. They can do a project like Dominique Mazeud's cleaning up the Rio Grande, or they can do a public installation for no purpose other than taking traditional art out of the gallery and into the public space to reach more people or they can make an oil painting and hang it on the wall in a gallery where most likely only privileged people will come and look at it. I have no problem with that. I have no problem with any of it. Because like I said, I think as far as making a change, making art is more important than looking at it. As they say in the Nike advertisement, JUST DO IT!



By the late seventies structural film as the dominant avant-garde film practice --which in Britain, had developed around the London Film-maker's Co-op-- was subjected to different pressures.¹ These pressures led to an explosion of different positions and aesthetics which displaced the signifier for a greater emphasis on the signified. Content --sometimes in excess-- and traces of structural film created a diverse and fragmented range of strategies, representations and aesthetics in experimental film and video in the eighties. New voices were heard and new positions were articulated which challenged the aesthetic and theoretical avant-garde of structural film in Britain which connected to the experiments in film of the avant-garde in Europe such as Man Ray, Bunuel etc., and of the Soviet film-makers in the twenties and thirties. The English structural film-makers of sixties were influenced by these early European artists and by the American structural film makers where the avant-garde shifted in the forties initiated by the films of Maya Deren.

45

This is a brief overview of the challenge to this avant-garde in Britain in the eighties by a new intertextuality of strategies, positions and voices and to the aesthetic energy of the new mix. Some of these tendencies came to clearer fruition in the work produced in the following decade, hence some of the works by artists' film and video referred to were produced in the nineties as descendants of issues which arose in the eighties. Even though the move seemed to be towards a convergence of medium and the creation of a hybrid culture of the moving image, it is important to point out that film and video developed as separate trajectories, histories and languages, until they begin to converge technically --but not necessarily politically-- in the late eighties and nineties and now seem to have merged together in contemporary visual arts, where the moving image seems to be migrating into the gallery. The transition is one of a modernist practice to a post-modern aesthetic sensibility.

This paper cannot fully reflect the sophisticated theoretical resistance of structural film to dominant film practice and it would not be accurate to reduce structural film merely to a preoccupation with technical transparency. It also saw itself as a position of resistance to the dominant modes of communication, necessarily as a visual artisanal practice rather than an industrial film-making practice and therefore as a political avant-garde:

I want to see a cinema that is in clear opposition to dominant film and T.V. culture. This new and radical cinema has been in evidence since the 50s but its roots are in modern art. These films draw more from painting, music and poetry. In all my films I have tried to give the spectator a positive and productive role. (Malcolm Le Grice)

One of its key points of ideological attack and of engagement was concerned with revealing the ideological operation of the illusion of theatrical cinema by drawing attention to the apparatus as signifier, i.e., the role of the camera, celluloid, the frame, the strip of film, the grain and hue of the print stock. It often used superimposition of images and often included the "flaws" that conventional film cut out, e.g., flare, scratches, the slippage of the film in the gate. Against storytelling as practised by dominant cinema, which draws from theatre rather than the visual arts and even against any form of representation, it eschewed humanistic content to perfect and concentrate its --masculine-- control and mastery over the means of production, the implications and possibilities of the material and the perceptual limits of film as a total apparatus. The lens, light, the tripod, the printer, the screen etc. were in the foreground rather than hidden. Sometimes these experiments led to works of transformative and unique aesthetic beauty such as *Berlin Horse* by Malcolm Le Grice, who together with Peter Gidal through their energetic writing became main exponents of structural film in Britain. The main thrust of this writing was theorised as strongly anti-narrative and anti-representational.²

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The aesthetic of Le Grice's *Berlin Horse* (1971) is owed entirely to the creation of the image in the film printer combined with a clear method or procedure. Here, these two combined with the use of colour, sound and rhythm produce a transformed image which leaves behind its base materials and becomes a visual experience of sumptuous opulence but always wedded to its production method. Its motif is the looping of the same piece of b/w footage of a horse --and a fragment of *The Burning Barn* by Hepworth 1900-- which is treated systematically under the printer using different coloured filters to create a colour saturated image. At the London Film-makers' Co-op film-makers had access to all the processes of film-making including printing, developing, editing. This access to the means of production was already a form of politicisation. It meant that experimentation was possible and accessible. The film-maker could control all the processes themselves. This enabled artists not just to reproduce but, as Le Grice points out, to transform images. In *Berlin Horse* this transformation process involves treating a b/w footage through a series of stages of superimpositions using negative and positive b/w, colour filters, negative and positive colour film stock to create a new heightened image. The horse is still the subject but the film-making process has become more important yet never denying the potential for visual pleasure. *Berlin Horse* was created for two screens but works equally well on single screen. Artists were experimenting with forms of expanded cinema. Some expanded works such as Le Grice's *Horror Film* (1970) combined a "live performance" using the film-maker's own projected shadow on the screen and light projection. These expanded works were shown in gallery spaces and multi-screen projection was utilised through both of which the exhibition context and the spectator's encounter with the film was closer to the experience of contemporary installation than cinema form. Emphasising optics over acoustic, music or narrativising sound was banned from structural film yet in *Berlin Horse*, the looping rhythm of the footage is edited to a memorable but striking repetitive soundtrack by the musician Brian Eno.

Lacking any other guiding principle of production, procedure alone at its weakest produced a stylistic formalism which became formulaic and which could not transform the world or filmic perception but only trapped the operation further within the formal restrictions of the very apparatus it was seeking to engage with creatively. The American

Figure 1:
Still from Nina Danino's
Now I am Yours (1993)

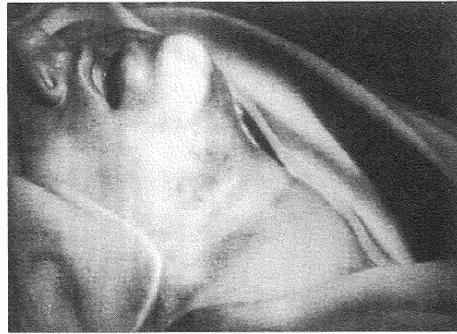
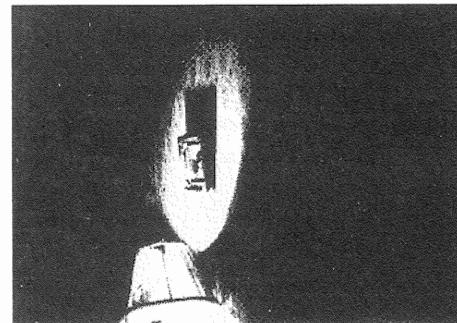


Figure 2:
Still from Malcolm Le Grice's
Berlin Horse (1971)



Figure 3:
Still from Nina Danino's
First Memory (1981)



critic describes the formal characteristics of structural film in the following way:

The structural film insists on its shape, and what content it has is minimal and subsidiary to the outline. Four characteristics of Structural film are its fixed camera position (fixed from the viewer's perspective), the flicker effect, loop printing and re-photography off the screen.³

Still, in its total project, structural film was preoccupied with using these formal strategies to uncover the manipulative ideology normally hidden by conventional cinema, not just the camera and its inscription but also projection and crucially to radicalise the role of the spectator.

The structural film drew the attention of the spectator to their own act of viewing and it showed the process of the film's own making rather than hiding it as in the conventional language of film. Procedure became important as a way to instigate reflexive strategies creating a conscious and not a passive viewer as an uncritical consumer of images. The pleasure gained by identification with content was replaced by the formal aspects of the medium as material, as something that the spectator had to work to "produce" together with the film as an intrinsic part of the dialectic of the film's "production." This placed the viewer in a self-reflexive position in engagement with the film as an act of production, it placed emphasis on their own position of viewing and privileged perception or a politics of perception.

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Peter Gidal, American film-maker based in London in his essay "Theory and Definition of Structural Materialist Film"⁴ added the word "Materialist" to the structural definition adding a theoretical and political dimension to a formalist or aesthetic project. For Gidal this project represented not just an aesthetic or formalist approach but a form of political resistance to all forms of representation and reproduction and the cinema is the one place where audiences are asked to become absorbed by dominant reproductions. Structural/Materialist film in this extreme form becomes a scourge against illusionism and content or representation of any kind.

Against this lack of content or representation, female film-makers working within structural forms reacted against the assumed neutrality but in fact male homogeneity of a theory, which neutralised difference and and visibility to women as subjects.

The film-maker Lis Rhodes writing a statement of difference in the catalogue for Film as Film --an historically important exhibition of structural film held in 1979, from which the few women included withdrew in protest, draws attention to the demand to work from a position which did not negate difference.

Our problem was not to find an alternative thesis from that of "formalism" or "structuralism", or attempt to exclude women's work from this thesis, but to consider our own history. How do women need to look at the work they do, the lives they lead? Can we be satisfied with token representation, a reference here and there in support of a theory of film history, which is not our own?⁵

Lis Rhodes' *Light Reading* (1978) marks a feminist statement and is at the split along gender lines of the avant-garde structural project. Subjectivity becomes the central driving force in the film as spoken by the voice of the film-maker in urgent rapid fire tones and a tentative narrative circulates and repeats with variation around a torn and fragmented image of a bed --possibly the scene of a crime. The female spectator can identify with the speaker of the text spoken in the third person "she." *Light Reading* combines subjective play with formal strategies; made entirely under the rostrum camera, the film-maker has total control over the materials. The rearrangement of still images under the

Figure 4:
Still from Nina Danino's
First Memory (1981)

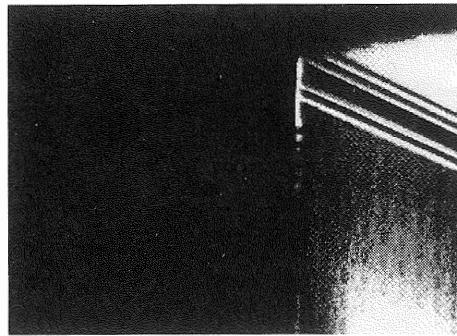


Figure 5:
Still from Malcolm Le Grice's
Horror Film (1970)

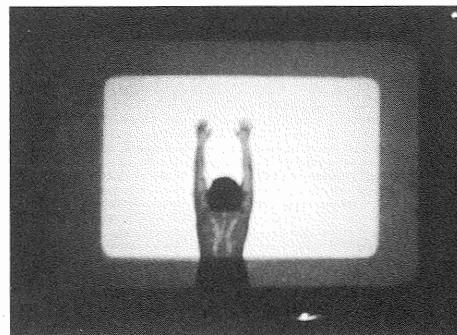
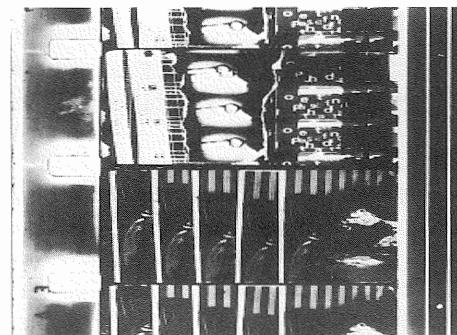


Figure 6:
Still from Lis Rhodes'
Light Reading (1978)



camera gives the impression of having been organised as a "live" response of the film-maker to these images at the time of the shoot. Graphic black and white stills are repeated, the editing is fast, the images refer to the process of film-making --the tools of production are also displayed; the ruler and scissors, the animation rostrum camera, which are also a metaphor of constraint and imposed order. As well as introducing the subject and an elliptical narrative which inscribes the pronoun "she," the film's own procedure of production is referred to on the soundtrack as: "Total length four hundred and forty feet. Print next twenty head to tail" .

Stuart Marshall, video artist and writer, identifies the importance of the women's movement to the shift away from modernism's concerns with self-reflexive practice and women's demand for representation and their own history in visual production;

From the mid-seventies onwards, a series of political cultural and aesthetic debates within video and film practice were to result in the rejection of the keystone of modernism --the refusal of representation-- and the transformation of the modernist concern with reflexivity into post-modernist practice of deconstruction. This involved a shift away from the medium itself to its dominant practices of representation and the construction of oppositional practice. The Women's Movement provided a major political context for such oppositional practice, as feminist theory had tended to concentrate on issues of representation and the ideological effects upon women's consciousness of dominant media representations.⁶

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Peter Gidal's "Theory and Definition of Structural Materialist Film" imposed a taboo on any form of representation but especially the image of the woman, which is the most ideologically tainted image you can use in consumer culture. This had parallels in the debates by women working in film and video.

Two questions arose: Was the image of the woman so over determined by its history that it could not be used at all or could women confront that image directly, re-appropriate it and use it but within a critical context for the spectator ? Could readings of that image be created which subverted its traditional exploitation in the culture? How could one confront the viewer's position and make spectatorship into a critical activity but one which did not deny gender? Perhaps falling into an over emphasis on signification, women video artists developed programmatic feminist strategies such as direct one to one address, the use of the voice, choosing the personal as subject matter and women's archetypal subject matter such as reproduction, the domestic, sexual disempowerment etc., undoing the power relations by looking back at the camera and confronting the spectator with their own look to show how respective positions are constructed, so that the work had to be read from the position of female spectatorship as a radical reversal of the norm.

The concerns of film-maker Nina Danino came at it from the perspective of absence, trying to create the space of the feeling of what is not able to be represented. In her film *First Memory* (1981) there is no direct representation of the woman yet the subject matter is an exploration of the feminine subject, speaking from this experience. In this case the feminine is abstracted and ungraspable as a construction yet also a tangible reality which does not necessarily conform to easy notions of empowerment through direct representation or didactic strategies although it is the filmic strategies which empower both the representation and the spectator. *First Memory* employs an elliptical and descriptive narrative which the spectator has to piece together in order to give shape to an emotional and a physical space. Slowly or at a slow pace, the film creates a sensual rhythm and dramatic tension which builds up a picture of a confined space and echoes the enclosed nature of the space in psychic and physical terms. *First Memory* evades direct figuration:

Figure 7:
Still from Amanda Holiday's
Manao Tupapao (1991)



Figure 8:
Still from John Maybury's
Remembrance of Things Fast (1993)

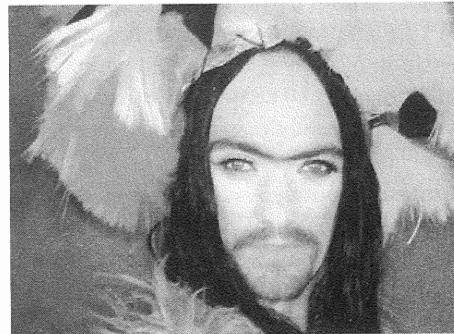
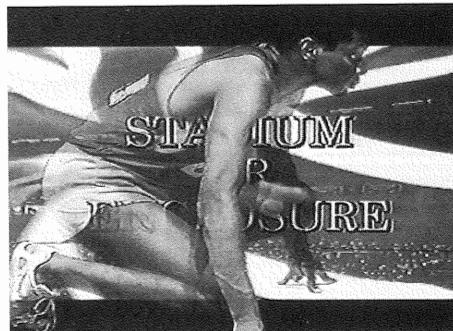


Figure 9:
Still from Keith Piper's
The Nation's Finest (1990)



there are no visible characters, actors or story, and it resists psychological identification, but it still creates a palpable sense of a heterogeneous subject which is as much created by the spectator in the act of viewing as drawn out by the film.

Taking aspects of a structural approach *First Memory* also depends for its tension on the use film as a material which measures out time, "Film is a form of construction in time. ..I found editing was a way of imposing a tension. The material was time made physical." Images of objects and fragments of an interior are intercut with the black spacing which measures out film as duration. An important aspect was the use of the voice to evade objectification. The film-maker speaks in a controlled delivery which keeps out emotion, notions of characterisation and acted speech. The film goes against the ban on the voice from structural film which privileged optical mastery. Of course, with its archaic eroticism, it is out of the control of vision and for this reason in the dark of cinema it can be threatening in its intimacy. It is this evasion of the controlling power of the gaze that *First Memory* is situating. The voice cannot be easily objectified, it is both present but also inaccessible, and it subverts the control of the gaze.

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Through psychoanalysis and film theory "the gaze" had been undone in particular by Laura Mulvey's essay "Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema" first published in 1973.⁸ Women working in film and video wanted to disrupt, question, dislodge the power of this "gaze" within narrative forms and hidden in art. As described earlier feminist practices in film and video created strategies to subvert the hierarchical positions built into the position of man as bearer and woman as subject of the look, i.e, as artist and model in traditional art.⁹ The body of the woman has always been central to these debates, not as a neutral place but as a place where gender and power relations are inscribed.

Amanda Holiday's video *Manao Tuppapao* (1991) is a one minute critique of these power relations in Western painting, centring on the image of one of the Melanesian girls that Gauguin painted for Western audiences as exotic and primitive creatures of desire. In these paintings the look of the women is usually shielded by hands or diverted. Often it is the back of the sitter's head that we look at whilst her body is on display for our consumption. In this piece the model returns the look literally through animation and through the use of her personal experience as recited in an incantatory form on the soundtrack --in the shape of a poem. From the long "real time" takes of early video art video editing become frame accurate. Here the still image is combined in fast edit with a real life model. The piece questions and confronts the supposed neutral position back to us as the colluding voyeur. *Manao Tuppapao* co-joins an aesthetic produced by the alignment of gender and black identity which was being explored by black film-makers in the eighties when diverse voices began to be heard and facilitated by the Workshops funded by the new T.V. channel Channel 4.

The important Cultural Identities Conference¹⁰ brought together for the first time theorists, practitioners, black and white film makers to show work and to debate issues of sexuality, gender, race, power and representation. One of the issues which black film-makers raised is how aesthetics is shaped by politics or how politics and aesthetics are linked. Black film-makers critiqued European master discourse and attempt to undo post-colonial discourse and install the possibility of a plurality of identities in British political and visual culture. Aesthetics is seen as aligned to politics, challenging accepted Euro-centric narratives of history and critiquing the images and social roles allowed to black people in a white culture.

The Nation's Finest (1990) made by black video artist Keith Piper deals with the media depiction of the black athlete, as one of the limited celebratory spaces given to black men in the culture. The work places at its centre the black body placed in the context of nationality and nationhood. It examines and critiques this limitation of the black athlete as a site of prowess and "animal physicality" and at the same time highlights the changes to what being British means. The emblematic use of the British flag appears with other footage of well known black British athletes. The central image is of a black male and black female athlete slowed down and poised at the start of a track event.

The track and stadium become a series of metaphors to suggest an arena of spectatorship and voyeurism in which to view the black body. This space is like the cage of a controlled territory that keeps black people in their place as physical objects of desire. This is expressed textually in the piece through the constant repetition of the phrases, "enclosure", "holding pen" and "the natural order of things."¹¹

This tape made in 1990 came after the mass marketing of the domestic video in 1980s and after when Apple launched its Mac Computer, in 1984, which triggered a multimedia revolution.

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Television also begun to take an interest in film and video artists. *Manao Tupapao* and *The Nation's Finest* were T.V. commissions. The former for a curated T.V. programme slot and the latter was installed as a video wall for the foyer of Granada T.V.. *Remembrance of Things Past* by John Maybury and *Now I am Yours* by Nina Danino were also both commissioned by Channel 4's Experimenta.

Now, the hand crafted, painstakingly slow, artisanal work of *Berlin Horse* made in the printer or *Light Reading* under the rostrum camera could be instantly layered, sampled and manipulated. Graphics could be overlaid, the image could be slowed down easily and material taken off air. Stuart Marshall refers to the signifying practice of post modern video as having a quality of intertextuality, "which allows the work to be read in terms of its cultural and ideological resonances rather than for its capacity to represent the consciousness of its author..." and "...in contrast to the reflexivity and lack of representation or meaning other than that which resulted from the formal play of signifiers in avant-garde film practice."¹²

At the same time, the play of signifiers in *The Nation's Finest* points towards a graphic and more deterministic approach to the message. However, it still plays with these graphic possibilities in an analytical way and places the viewer in a critical position towards the images shown. The reaction against structural film's interdictions and the formalism of video art led to a counter position and an excess of the image. Artists, such as John Maybury, who gathered around the film-maker Derek Jarman, proposed a collective aesthetics which they called The New Romantics as an attack on modernist avant-garde as represented by structural film's formalism, launching an opulent, perhaps grotesque, counter aesthetic or style. They used low technology Super 8 and created a low-budget aesthetic, drawing on theatricality, props, costume, gay lifestyle, a gothic sensibility, the culture of clubs, music and T.V..

The rise of youth and MTV culture, the music industry, intensified commodity culture and the availability of video post-production created a texture which emphasised the flow of images, game shows, short attention spans and the bricolage of images. High technology electronics enabled the mapping of images on each other, creating new kinds of virtual 3D worlds and impossible spaces but its impossible artificiality also signed a

highly self-conscious authorship. The Self is also deliberately created as artificial and theatrically cast as alienated in a T.V. world. "The message was that ephemerality is human experience and that art does not have to be permanent."¹³

Artists worked with an overdose of images --e.g. Scratch video which used fast editing of off-air television material-- and repetition in order to drain meaning and to point up the appropriative and all consuming nature of T.V.. This excess was not necessarily meant to celebrate the consumer culture and mass communication industries but to signal the collapse of the boundaries of self and meaning through over signification, perhaps leading to the collapse of meaning itself. However, does the collision/collusion between the superficial world of advertising and its glamour of images and the world of visual arts come too close, do its comfortable exhibition spaces within the heart of the mass communication industries, i.e., as music promos and in music clubs weaken the potential disruptive power of the work?

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High and low technologies were mixed to create a hybrid aesthetic. Sophisticated --and expensively inaccessible for the most part to low-budget practitioners-- post-production editing suites created images of high production value combined with images produced by basic and low technology e.g., Super 8 refilmed off a wall. Did this give rise to a new form of electronic beauty, a new aesthetic which is free from demand for meaning? How did this aesthetics create new critical positions or did it, with its emphasis on surface, reproduce the factory of images as meaningless wallpaper creating anew a satiated and passive consumer?

John Maybury's *Remembrance of things Fast* (1993) uses a hi-tech blending and layering of images taken from popular culture and the media to create a tableaux of separate scenes which are not woven together, some satirising the three minute attention span proposed by T.V. and satellite. The piece is a self-conscious post-modern fragmented text centred on the images and narcissism of gay culture but at its heart is a series of "talking-heads" which give personal testimonies of homosexual pathos in which resides the memory of painful personal human experience set against the hard surface of appearances and the world of T.V. images, which raises the piece above mere irony.

A different ecstatic delirium of the image and sound which reverberated from the eighties to the nineties can be found in *Now I am Yours* by Nina Danino (1993). Filmed in around the high Baroque sculpture of Bernini's St. Teresa of Jesus in ecstasy, the hybrid surface of *Now I am Yours*, unified by subject matter and sound, is in fact constructed in high technology post-production and uses material from different formats ranging from 16mm, blown up video with colour enhanced to create a shimmering image, slowed down video, Super 8 footage stretched and reworked, the dark glints, gilded opulence and reds of the baroque, cut side by side with the saturated colours of Super 8 of flowers in a bright sun, all combined and transferred back to 16mm film. The film uses a network of images which cross and reference each other to create a network of signs within a driven compelling narrative around the possibility of expressing jouissance or an excess which cannot be contained or expressed within the logos of the word or within the limits of a narrow metropolitan or consumer culture yet is bounded by the limits of the body and subjectivity. The soundtrack combines an insistent speaking voice track with performed pieces of stray words and cries, which resemble a borderline state between speaking and utterance, yet which are always understood as "performance", and which are not illustrating or standing in for the transgressive, but which enact a syntactical rhythm of movement and pressure between these two to create the voice of the film,

which can be disturbing in its struggle to say and reach.

In *Now I am Yours* electronic post-production, the image materials are fed into the edit suite, treated and reworked through the manipulation of the image, creating new visual sensations --techniques of resuscitation (as the film-maker calls them) between "life" and immobility of the central image. These manipulations do not allow the electronic to overcome the cinematic. Turbulence and the elemental force upon the image enters via this fragmented composition and the electronic but all are unified under the common narrative trajectory of the film.

These trajectories initiated in the eighties as an attack on, or reaction against, the formal restrictions of structural film have not necessarily produced a new ideological position but a multiplicity of voices and aesthetics; however, it is possible that a certain notion of what is experimental film also became familiar, stemming from a tired dependence on visual formula, sometimes traceable to structural film, programmatic formalism and language of signification which is overdependent on the limited repertoire of video art production and the centrality of content as personal subjectivity and experience. Duration seems to have been abandoned for shorter expanded pieces more suited to the gallery space and linearity has been replaced if not entirely by expanded work; then, at least expanded work has reentered the gallery space away from the frontal projection of cinema demanding or conceding a different time-relationship with the spectator in which spectacle plays a more controlling role. Narrative cinema and its history of twentieth century images seems to have become a source of appropriation and reference to many artists currently working in time-based art. The quote dominates aspects of time-based production. Meanwhile, the modernist avant-garde as expressed by the structural film movement has resurged fully incorporated and contextualised as being of historical interest as witnessed by programmes of American and British structural film programmed at established venues in London such as the Barbican and NFT. Is the notion of the avant-garde historically determined or can a new politically radical avant-garde emerge again in a post-modernist context ?

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FOOTNOTES:

1. These stemmed from the availability of portable video, an intensified commodity culture where the slow artisanal methods of the structural film-maker gave way to high speed accurate video editing and rapid flow of images, sometimes drawn from the commercial media world of music and youth culture and facilitated by the new post production technologies, feminist demands for the control of the image of woman and representation, the breakup of spectatorship into specific interest groups and constituencies which acknowledged difference, e.g., race, gender, sexuality and rejected the notion of the homogeneous viewer put forward by modernism, a return to the exploration of narrative, the introduction of the personal as valid subject matter for art and the preeminence of the subject and identity.

2. Paradoxically Gidal's style of handheld camera, the obscure spaces in which his films take place --usually rooms--, the abstract nature of the objects, the promise of representation never delivered, the low lighting and light pools which sometimes pick out particular inscrutable details and the grain of the film all create a kind of beautiful surface to the image and a kind of aesthetic.

3. P. Adams Sitney, *Visionary Film* (NY: OUP, 1974).

4. *Structural Film Anthology* (London: BFI, 1976).

5. *Film as Film, Exhibition Catalogue* (London: Hayward Gallery, 1979).

6. Stuart Marshall, "Video Installation in Britain. Early Years," *Diverse Practices*, ed., Julia Knight (Bedfordshire, UK: University of Luton Press, 1996).

7. Nina Danino, *Filmwaves 5*, 1998.

8. Re-printed in *Visual and Other Pleasures* (London: Macmillan Press, 1989).

She used the classical Hollywood cinema to present how in order to take pleasure in the narrative, the female spectator is constructed by the film's editing, action, plot etc., as a homogenised male viewer, in order to identify with the hero regardless of actual class, race, gender --later, she modifies this theory to take account of an oscillating position between male and female sexuality for the female spectator--. This and other theoretical work in psychoanalysis uncovered the operation of the look within conventional narrative film.

9. Griselda Pollock, Rosika Parker, *Old Mistresses* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1981).

10. Commonwealth Institute, London 1987; "Cultural Identities", published in *Undercut 17*, Spring 1988.

11. David. A. Bailey, *A Directory of British Film and Video* (UK:Arts Council of England, 1988).

12. Stuart Marshall, "Video Installation in Britain - Early Years", *Diverse Practices. A Critical Reader on British Video Art*, ed. Julia Knight, (Bedfordshire, UK: University of Luton Press and Arts Council of England, 1996).

13. Sean Cubitt, "Populism and Difficulty. Television and Video Art," in Julia Knight ed., *Diverse Practices*.

One of the developments most peculiar to the art of the twentieth century is the notion of the avant-garde that has made it necessary, throughout the century, to reconsider concepts of aesthetics and of creativity. The avant-garde brings into question a great variety of artistic issues, such as artistic expertise, public taste, form, content, autonomy, individuality. However, the one thing that distinguishes the avant-garde from any other artistic approach of the twentieth century is its being at first sight, and for the public at large, not recognizably like an art object. This characteristic is true not only of the first Impressionists' works which were seen to have forms unfit for works of art but true as well of abstract art such as Malevich's minimalist work *White on White*. Although most twentieth century art, from Cubism to Action Painting, fits the description of avant-garde, some examples, such as the *Bicycle Wheel* of Duchamp (1913) or the *Three Flags* of Jasper Johns (1958), appear much more removed from a conventional understanding of art than a painting by Kandinsky or Dali. In other words, the ready-made object assimilated into the art world, or established images from totally different quotidian contexts used in unexpected ways, can be considered to more readily fit the description of the avant-garde.

In our day, the notion of the avant-garde is both problematic and controversial. It becomes even more so, when used in contexts such as the Third World, or non-Western cultures, where the necessary conditions for the appearance of the avant-garde do not exist and never did. On the other hand, many artistic terms, definitions or names have acquired new uses and applications today. Under hybrid and pluralist cultural conditions and influences, even the most definable contexts have become blurred and have lost their assumed homogeneity. Therefore, I believe that many concepts such as avant-garde, or aesthetic, which are interpreted in varied ways, are, and can be, used for modified situations today.

The problem introduced in this paper has to do with objects, settings or situations that provoke aesthetic responses without being intended as works of art. In fact, they are reacted to as "artistic discoveries" found within the quotidian. These are objects, which I have been stumbling upon for many years, and, which are amongst the things that intrigue me most in Turkey. What are they? For some they may not seem worthy of any attention, and are just there to be of some use. They are intriguing because, besides the fact that they are intended to have some purpose and function, they give one the impres-

sion that there was some aesthetic or strange taste that went into their making. I would like to call them ready-made avant-garde objects.

The general feeling today is that the avant-garde does not, and cannot, exist anymore in the true sense. Yet there can still be objects which disturb us, make us think about social and aesthetic values from new perspectives, objects which insist on attracting one's attention and insist on a metamorphosis of their identity. Their presence in the environment makes one reconsider concepts of creativity and art, and aesthetic value.

The ready-made as an art product, taking the place of the artist's creative work was, at the beginning of the century, one of the most conspicuous novelties in the art world. It introduced something deeply problematic, and incomprehensible into the art world, especially *vis a vis* the romantic notions of art of the nineteenth century. What we have here is different; it also confronts us with qualities that are problematic in terms of definition. Many of the aspects or qualities found in the objects or settings, to which I will refer, create enigmas; they can be unacceptable purely from a design or from a formal point of view, and they are also incomprehensible as to their *raison d'être*.

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With the "traditional" avant-garde the artist's intention assumes priority. It is not what he/she does, his/her action and production that counts, but his/her thought, his/her evaluation and interpretation. Or, his/her ability to transform something ordinary into something precious and meaningful elevates the object to the position of art, as in the works of Duchamp.

With the objects I am talking about there are no artists, although there are people who have created them or created the situation in which they become noteworthy. There are, so to speak, in a way two creators of the object, because often these objects are not like the *Fountain* of Duchamp, which, before the artist touches them are just ordinary things. In the situations I am talking about, a person has already created a strange object, but without an artistic intention. Then comes the beholder who transforms this into something worth experiencing as an artwork, through his or her gaze and appreciation. As mentioned, for this to occur the object has to have certain characteristics. What happens here --only when we accept the artistic value of the thing that is presented-- is that interpretation, evaluating, discriminating and seeing become more important than "doing": the difference between the artist and the beholder is eliminated. This is not new. Throughout history, the technical and work aspect of art has always been seen as inferior to its mental value.

However, there is also a contradiction. The ready-made thing that I call avant-garde, is made by someone, often not without some aesthetic concern. Yet, this concern is not aimed at creating art, or creating something without practical value, but it is aimed at a practical end. It is there to attract attention, because it is meant to have some commercial value. Often it is the result of a bricolage that has some commercial intent.

Many of these examples are either things that take on an artistic aspect when looked at "as if" they were art, or they are things that have been made by putting together objects or things in the absence of appropriate tools. Such things cannot be fabricated in industrialized places or contexts, or in areas where such necessities have been taken care of with appropriate technologies and productions.

In other words, they are the products of the Third World, of the world of limited eco-

Figure 1:
Photograph by Jale Nejdet Erzen.



Figure 2:
Photograph by Jale Nejdet Erzen.

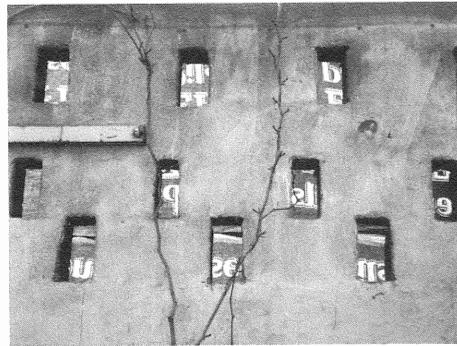


Figure 3:
Photograph by Jale Nejdet Erzen.



conomic and technological means. When they are produced in places where there are the technologies and means, then they would become truly avant-garde, because they would not be intended as merchandise of a sort. On the other hand, they can only become artistic through the evaluation of a gaze that is familiar with the contemporary art world. However, if, as it is claimed, all marginality is eradicated in the First World and if the avant-garde is no longer possible because everything is consumed and commercialized; then, whatever the original conditions of the First World that made the avant-garde happen are no longer necessary. In fact, it may be the impossibility of turning everything into a commodity that creates the primary condition for the avant-garde to emerge in the economically poor Third World.

It is also the displacement of the gaze that partly creates such objects. Besides, even if these objects appeal as "art" or as "some kind of avant-garde" only to some people, this is not a very different situation from how many objects made with the intention of being art, were viewed in the early twentieth century.

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These objects can be classified into three groups: there are those which can be found any place, like a group of chairs in light violet color, placed on a balcony, which are scattered in a way that implies a certain dialogue or meeting. However, it is exactly the reason of their being in a "provincial", "disorderly" or by Western standards non-sterile environment that they attract attention to their strange order. One can make this clearer by pointing to the fact that in the First World, which is the real context of the avant-garde, the sterile, orderly, mechanical environment does not allow any such "misfits" or objects that are out of context. Those kinds of objects are created in most cases as works of art. Even when we find "out of context" objects in the First World, their enigmatic effect is cancelled due to the sterile and orderly atmosphere. An object that disturbs the order is discarded without much delay.

Another group of objects, settings, or implementations that we find fascinating in Third World cultures are ways of doing things which belong to pre-industrialized epochs and which have a ritualistic aura about them for people who have forgotten these kinds of practices. One of the examples I find extraordinary is the picture I took of a group of workmen who have drawn on the ground the plan of a house in white chalk, and who are in the process of digging trenches where the foundations walls will be built. The drawing on the ground, the digging of the trenches and the simple fact of starting to build a house by hand, stone by stone seems so much out of date, so manual that it looks as if there is an art practice going on. Because such examples are becoming rarer, witnessing them becomes similar to witnessing an extraordinary, and for that reason avant-garde art performance.

The third are situations, practices and objects created in the lack of better mechanical equipment or technological facilities. These are intended as mercantile objects or settings designed to attract attention of possible clients. Often they prove to be novel ways of earning some money, such as lotteries or exhibits for better sales. Sometimes there are also situations, habits, or expressions which are peculiar to a culture and which, although they may be understood within their specific environments, seem strange and perplexing to someone from a different context. One can cite a strange lottery device that is made as an assemblage of strange dolls, small bull figures carved of wood, metallic shiny trimming, mirrors, etc. It is hauled through the streets of squatter settlements on a handcart. Another attractive situation I witnessed was a rope tied from a house to a tree across the road, on which bed linen of similar floral designs were hung. Underneath,

Figure 5:
Photograph by Jale Nejdert Erzen.

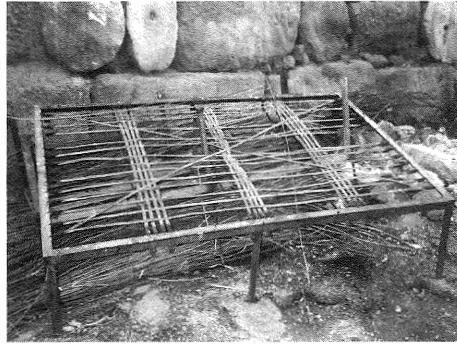


Figure 6:
Photograph by Jale Nejdert Erzen.

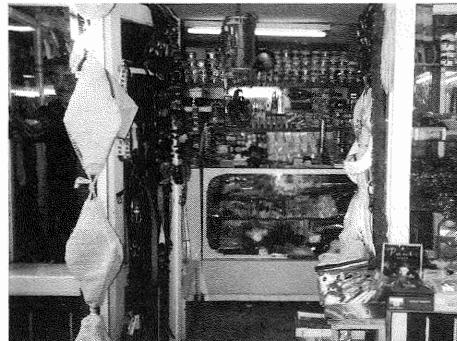


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Figure 7:
Photograph by Jale Nejdert Erzen.



Figure 8:
Photograph by Jale Nejdert Erzen.



children were playing and cars were passing. The trees had just been pruned and looked like strange sculpture and the linen with the pinkish and orange floral motifs made the whole environment look like an art installation. Another example is a roadside sale setup of water melon or oranges, according to the season. Next to it are sold cheap paintings extravagantly framed showing views of mountains, riverbeds and quaint houses. Next to these one can sometimes even see exaggeratedly made-up women sitting and smoking, presumably there also for some kind of traffic. Another wonderful example I witnessed was a brand new red truck, parked on a small neighborhood street, in front of a modest house. It contained a cargo or huge bales made of scraps of colored textiles that looked beautiful. A year ago the Istanbul Biennial had exhibited a similar red truck loaded with colorful balloons. The association made this truck which looked out of context where it was, look even more artistic. Another example was a metal bed that had been discarded, again in a squatter settlement neighborhood. It was standing on a heap of hay. It was bizarre and beautiful. An example that is often seen in provincial settings are the decorated windows of simple grocery shops. Since the packaging is often of simple and colorful printed cardboard or paper, a window profuse with such articles can look like a special artistic display. Some environmental or settlement solutions in these poor environments can also look like "primitivist" art which was in the vogue during the heyday of "arte-povera." Scrap materials attached together to cover a leaking roof, or to create a balcony or a storage place, sometimes by chance can have the appeal of raw color contrasts, etc. such as in the work of Tapes or Alberto Burri.

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What tempts us to call them avant-garde?

First of all because we can take any one of these and place it in a biennale or a gallery without any difficulty; it would be viewed as unexpected, new, interesting, provoking, etc. Within heterogeneous cultures, such as those that exist in the Third World, there are several *status quo*. Therefore, these objects easily change identity. This is also what creates their fascination. They are unlike all other things around them. They do not relate to the environment; they stand out. They are alien, unfamiliar and unexpected. They have two faces: a face that the public in that particular Third World environment accepts as practical and another face that they present to someone who comes with aesthetic intentions. Thus, they have constantly alternating identities; they have a hidden meaning, an ambiguity. They create discomfort. Often, like Jasper Johns' *Flashlight*, they have become integrated with a different material that has transformed them for us into something to be viewed rather than something practical. One can sense that there was also an aesthetic concern in their making, even if they were made for practical purposes.

These are truly "uncanny" objects, even if they are produced for practical reasons. It is impossible to call them only "art" or "aesthetic" objects. Although the concept of the "avant-garde" is problematic for the Third World, and even problematic for the present, unless we can find a new category of "misfit" aesthetics for the Third World, the label "'ready-made' avant-garde" seems to be the most suited.

Alan Colquhoun:

I will put forward a few ideas deriving from Erzen's talk (ed. note: Jale Nejdert Erzen, "The 'Ready-Made' Avant-Garde," pp. 57-62.) to see if it will generate a discussion. I liked her talk very much because it really seems to me to get to one of the points of the whole idea of the avant-garde, which I take it as intentionally attacking the institution of art. And it seems to me that Marcel Duchamp's famous piece, *The Urinal* is not just a ready-made but a specific kind of ready-made, which involves irony. In other words, it is both anti-aesthetic and anti-art as an institution, and I think, perhaps, that is a rather important distinction perhaps Erzen did not bring out. This is what I feel; maybe I am wrong.

It seems to me that in the case of Dada and Duchamp, there is a form of ready-made object which is used ideologically as a critique of certain current politics, whether this is political politics or art politics, and this seems to me as an important aspect of both Dada, especially Berlin Dada, and Duchamp.

Erzen spoke about the specific site of the Third World where you get pre-industrial objects, which, especially to people from the First World, look very strange indeed. Without trying to establish any kind of superiority, although Turkey is a relatively developed country, there are strange things that happen. There are strange things that happen and very little things that are quite different from what happens elsewhere in Europe. There is a certain element of unfamiliarity, and I think that unfamiliarity is an important aspect of what Erzen was talking about. One of the things that seem to me to be valued in these strange and, in a sense, incomprehensible objects is that they seem to resist commodification, which is very interesting, if you consider this an essential aspect of the avant-garde. It is also very much against functionalism because functionalism is essentially how to make things that work. It is a kind of positivism which absorbs the effort into the object which is then used where is these objects, which are clearly unworkable, at least according to the mentality of the First World, derive their value from precisely the effect that they are incomprehensible, that there is something curious about them. And therefore, they defy all the claims to the superiority of the First World and discover a new world, which exists independently of the First World.

To be very brief, I felt that I loved Erzen's examples, which, of course, were marvelous.

They were a little bit of a ragbag. I mean there were different kinds of objects. For instance, in the examples provided by Erzen, there were exemplary objects, which were largely based on chance, and this chance is not an element of the avant-garde, as we know it; it has nothing really to do with the vernacular. Whereas, the other examples Erzen gave were essentially vernacular examples and in this sense I think, also, that the vernacular is a weapon against the system of the arts, which Semel talks about (ed. note: Deborah Semel, "A Sentimental Education: The Professional Artist at the Turn of the Century," pp. 37-43.) precisely because there is no author and there is no aesthetic intention. And that is exactly what appeals to the avant-garde because what the avant-garde is criticizing is precisely an artistic intention, which is separate from the rest of life. So, that is the reason why objects, which appear mysterious, have an inestimable value in the face of the objects made by the modern industrial world.

I would like to mention, however, that the reception of these objects depends on a certain degree of alienation; we are alienated from these objects and that is why we like them and that is why they have meaning for us. Erzen said I think that we see these things, I can't remember the exact words but, we see these things as it were out of context: we are not aware of the context and that is why they look so strange. And that, of course, is also related to what the Russian formalists talked about. They talked about making art strange. Shklovski also says that the value of art is to make people see things as if for the first time. And this of course involves, essentially, the mechanism of alienation. That mechanism is absolutely necessary for that effect to take place.

I would just like to finish on one point, which is a paradox. There is a tendency in these objects to become aestheticised by us and, therefore, to be transformed into more precise things that we are trying to do away with. So, is there a kind a kind of dialectic going on here? I don't understand it, really, but certainly, to the extent that these objects are aestheticised, they are, therefore, against the current of the avant-garde, So there are all sorts of complications and paradoxes in this very interesting talk by Jale Erzen, and I now open it to discussion.

Can Bilsel:

Actually, I think alienation is a very good point, but when I think of it, it is not a requirement for us to like the object necessarily. I, actually, loved your examples but also I wanted to suggest a completely different example, again, from Turkey, which has been troubling me for quite a while, and, which doesn't fit in with your examples at all but nevertheless is an object of alienation.

I'm talking about these new sculptural or furniture-like things that are put in urban centres by the new municipalities. For people coming from outside of Turkey, I might clarify that more than five years ago, municipalities of the larger Turkish cities like Ankara and Istanbul shifted to a right wing party that I'm not going to name here but which we usually think of as Fundamentalists, although they never acknowledge to be but nevertheless show strong symbols or symptoms of it. They basically started by attacking the established symbols of the city, like the symbol of the Municipality of Ankara which was the Hittite Sun, and they seemed to attack it not on any aesthetic argument but by reading them literally, that the Hittite Sun was a pagan god and then some other things like the Baroque Rococo fountain pieces, like the one in Tandoğan for example was taken away just because it was figurative and contained naked figures. And then they, erected a huge teapot, which I guess is enlarged fifty times, if not more; nobody's holding it

obviously because it would require a huge hand, but it is tilted and water is flowing from it. I have never seen anything like that anywhere, even in pictures. My definitions of kitsch were also unable to explain it even though I have a strong feeling that it is indeed kitsch, but that it has also some Duchamp-esque character obviously because even though it is not a pissoire, it is nevertheless a fountain; it is a teapot and it is also a form of alienation that I guess Colquhoun was talking about. It has been intriguing me; I asked friends of mine working on Indian popular culture, which is probably the most amazing in the world, they also told me that they had never seen anything like that. So, what would you (Erzen) say that about kind of example?

Jale Erzen:

Well, if that is a question I would say, that is altogether in a different category. Although our reactions to that may also be quite uncomfortable and we don't know where to place it but it is made with the intention to create. It is a monument, of some sort, a city monument that is symbolic of an identity. You can find similar objects in the Arab Emirates. When I went to Sherjah in Arab Emirates a few years ago, I said this is where it all comes from or this is a common mentality that creates the symbolic, vernacular symbolic objects of a kind of Turkish identity these people are trying to promote and to make us remember that we are tea drinkers and we have ceramics as our art and we should not go beyond these traditional arts which are so beautiful and so on. I think the objects I have shown you have a different kind of intention. For example, the bed that was thrown out happened to become an aesthetic object because of its placement in front of a wall with the reeds and the same with the example of the violet chairs. They were not intended in any way to promote anything, to address or to attract attention, they just happened. And that is something else I totally agree that it has a chance element and that it can happen anywhere in the world. It is not particular to Turkey, but some of them are, like the vernacular, the storefronts or the truck, even, the truck that is just in any street anywhere with any kind of load.

What Bilsel is saying is another category and I think we can add still another category of these horrible monuments of the sacred figures, of Atatürk, of flags, of some symbols of the Turkish Army and so on. And these happen also only in certain countries. They are also made with some kind of aesthetic intent, which is very misguided, which is very perverse if I may say so, or, which is very wrongly directed.

Alan Colquhoun:

But would you (Erzen) say that in the example that Can Bilsel gave, that the mistake is intentional or unintentional. Would that make a big difference to how we receive it?

Jale Erzen:

No, I think it is not intentional of course.

Alan Colquhoun:

Right, so it is a judgment of taste that has been made, which has missed its object. It is not exactly a kitsch object. But it is something that is found quite frequently in the Third World actually. But that is understandable. Perhaps one should not be too unkind to it because, if your interpretation of that object is correct, which is to me a very surprising

interpretation, I would have never have thought of it; it is an allegory of Turkey in some way. It has content, it has proscribed meaning to somebody, I mean, obviously to you.

Jale Erzen:

Definitely, we cannot miss the meaning, as well with the other objects. And the objects, the sacred ones that are aesthetised in some sort, but for us, for our case, they are absolutely ugly. They are not even kitsch; this can be called kitsch but in some cases not really, but the others are very strange objects. But that also happened in the Soviet regime. They had objects; they had monuments. They had those huge sculptures of Lenin and Mao, which were horrible in terms of art, but they were put up and they had some aesthetic intentions. People were sculpting them and they were searching for expression; for example, I saw one with Mao with his skirt flying. There were intentional aesthetic aspects that were added to these works.

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Alan Colquhoun:

That is a very interesting point because it is the opposite of, if you think of Formalism, being form without content. What the Russian Neo-realists were doing was producing content without form. But we are using form to suggest content. So, I'm not sure whether you can call them aesthetic objects, I mean, because if you think about aesthetic objects in the past, before formalism was ever thought of, what we call aesthetic can never be separated entirely from the content and that is a terribly important thing. Somehow, the inseparability between form and content has been lost by us, I think and we can't get it back. So, to me, the whole of modern art somehow is predicated on that loss of contact between the two and the attempt to, somehow, retrieve something from that.

Aleš Erjavec:

I think this issue of public monuments would necessitate a whole conference so I don't want to go into that. I like very much what Colquhoun said before about Shklovski and his whole notion of "*ostranienie*." I think it is something something that is very relevant in your case, that is the examples you showed. Because in a way this is also I think similar to what Heidegger meant with *aletheia*, of unconcealedness. It reveals something that is before our eyes but we never bother to look at it and to view it from this non-utilitarian, non-instrumental prospective. I think this could also be perhaps described with the notion of the "aesthetic" and not "aesthetised". I think that today the notion of aesthetisation has gained a kind of a negative connotation; we speak about aesthetisation of our environment and so on and of un-aesthetisation at the same time, but I think that is a different aspect. I think that what we are actually talking about here is some kind of intentionality. That is; we can look at an old bed as something to be thrown away or we can look at it as an esthetic object, as an object, which gives us some pleasurable reaction. So, I think this is what this is mostly about. And again to come Heidegger, he gives the following examples: one way to look at books is if you are a book seller or if you deal in old paper, and another thing is if you look at the book as a poet or as a reader, and it is the same book. The book is not different. Or the River Rhine: it can be an object of the hydroelectric plant or it can be something that you write poetry about if you are Hölderlein for example and so on.

So, I would say this is the question of intentionality, but now there is something that I wanted to ask Erzen. First, I think that when we speak about avant-garde, we have to

speak about the avant-garde either in the historical or the technical sense. When we speak about avant-garde in the historical sense, of course it goes back to San Simone when the term was coined and it was related to politicised avant-garde, and the political role, the artistic avant-garde can play, which is something that never happened before. And, I think that today we can no longer speak about the avant-garde in this historical sense. Why? Because, one of the basic features of traditional avant-garde was its orientation towards the future. It was a part of this broad social philosophical program of moving towards some perfect society, whether we call it Communism or something else. It doesn't matter. This is no longer here. In this sense, I think the historical content of the term avant-garde has become a thing of the past. But of course avant-garde still exists in a technical sense. And, I guess this is the way that you have also used it. But, when it comes to that I have a problem, and that is, I think, that when you speak about avant-garde art, why not simply call it art? Why do we call it avant-garde? I think, and now I come back to this un-concealedness, why speak about avant-garde? I think this is art; I think this is what art has been doing all alone. Art is showing us a very common place of things but in a different light, in a different setting. We view things differently with the help of art.

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Alan Colquhoun:

I think there is more than one definition of the avant-garde and one of them would be, for instance Burger's definition of the avant-garde, which tries to demolish the institution of art. I'm not sure whether you can, I mean whether it is quite possible to, argue that it is not possible today. Because that somehow also is predicated on some kind of utopian view of the future. But for instance, you wouldn't argue would you, that when you look at a Dada photomontage, that you are just looking at art? I mean you are looking at anti-art, but it is also art. And it is the same with the left-wing Constructivists.

Aleš Erjavec:

I would argue that. And my argument would be that of course it was avant-garde, but from today's context it no longer appears to be such. It has become a part of tradition. And I would say that some of the examples that Erzen gave us, I don't see why call them avant-garde. Because I think one of the basic features of avant-garde art was and also of course in the case of Duchamp, and Malevich and so on, is that there was some kind of an intellectual, theoretical backing to these works; for the works that you have shown, there is no such backing.

Jale Erzen:

But, I bring the backing.

Alan Colquhoun:

The reception is the backing, not the work itself. I mean, it is the question of how the work is received surely.

Aleš Erjavec:

Yes, but if we look at, for example, the image of the gentlemen who is writing petitions, I'm sorry to say, but I think we need more theory to see that as avant-garde art.

Alan Colquhoun:

I don't regard that as art. I think it is outside the realm of art anyhow, in any kind of definition. I think it is just funny, you know.

Aleš Erjavec:

Why call it then avant-garde?

Alan Colquhoun:

I didn't know that Jale Erzen was calling it as such. I mean it was a little bit strange that Jale Erzen used avant-garde in her title, but actually she didn't talk about the avant-garde, did she? She talked about the ready-made.

Jale Erzen:

I talked about the ready-made avant-garde. No, because within its context from my point of view, from the viewer's point of view, it challenges everything that is around it.

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Aleš Erjavec:

But everything challenges; I can look at this room in an aesthetic way.

Jale Erzen:

What difference is there then between that and Duchamp?

Aleš Erjavec:

It is a different context.

Jale Erzen:

I don't have to bring it into the museum. I mean, if I did...

Aleš Erjavec:

You have bring it into the museum, that is the whole point of Duchamp which is that he wanted to subvert the art establishment, which he did not. Why not? Because actually what he did with his gesture is that he simply created another one, so in a way he failed, but at the same time he succeeded.

Jale Erzen:

O.K. But what I'm doing could fail in the same manner. And create some challenges. You see, I'm posing a theoretical challenge. Because these objects really resist co-modification.

Aleš Erjavec:

But they just exist. They don't resist, but only in your eyes. For the company it does not resist.

Jale Erzen:

But all the ready-made is like that.

Lev Kreft:

I would like to enter this discussion and I think that we have to consider this Third World perspective from the very beginning even when we speak about the problem of whether this is avant-garde or not? Because of course we know that avant-garde is main stream now; that is what you have been saying. But avant-garde is main stream in the First World. There was no avant-garde in the Third World. So, in the Third World alienation is main stream. I mean you are alienated and you watch yourself being alienated. You know everyday that you are alienated; you don't need Brecht or Shklovski or anybody else to show you works of art which would tell you that you are alienated. So, of course, you discover alienation not through artworks; that's one point I would like to make. And another point is connected with this. I think it was Oscar Wilde who said that nature imitates art. And in these cases I would say that things, many things imitate ready-mades. I think that that is possible only in the Third World atmosphere, to turn this Duchamp around again. And that, I would say is not avant-garde but it certainly might be an avant-garde effect.

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Can Bilsel:

Actually, I would like to pick up on something that you started talking about which is the Heideggerian way of defining art. I can't help having a distaste for the Heideggerian way of basically conceiving art and, as a matter of fact, the entire phenomenological hermeneutics that followed after that. And of course the problem that he has is that he is, of course, too strong to attack, in the sense that, he is frequently too strong to resist, powerfully, to the critique of ideology, as such, and many people of course tried that. But my question here is that, since I guess we are already in the discussion of avant-garde, is avant-garde possible at all for Heidegger? Or is avant-garde possible for phenomenological hermeneutics at all? And, actually, for many people here who are teaching architecture, for example, in this university, they would rather like to see themselves as teaching an avant-garde perspective and not producing people for a certain instrumental operation outside. But then, I do not think that the question is often posed of how we reconcile the two meanings, how we can give the students a phenomenological education and at the same time not negate the possibility of avant-garde. And as a matter of fact, in relation to Ögüt's talk also (ed. note: Rana Nergis Ögüt, "A Phenomenological Critique: 20th Century Aesthetics," pp. 15-20.), I think of course Gadamer has the virtue of clarity in the sense that his *Truth and Method* is a lot more understandable than Heidegger. When he talks about architecture, he never really considers architecture as anything more than ornament, and I'm raising this point knowing that it is very polemical, but then, as a matter of fact, probably for Heidegger also, I would say, that they never really bother to think about architecture as an avant-garde practice. And maybe, they never really wanted to just because they always wanted to see it a counter example against aesthetic differentiation. And they always wanted to promote a very neo-romantic concept of return to ornament in their idea. And then is the question: How much can we really use them in our professional teaching, professional practice?

Aleš Erjavec:

I am taking the liberty of responding since you have asked me. Of course, my point

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was that certainly there is no notion of the avant-garde in Heidegger. It would be a contradiction in terms. And what I was getting at was that actually concerning what Erzen was talking, I don't think we need the notion of avant-garde at all. Well, I would also like to thank Kreft for his comment because I think that is very important. It is a different context. So one would probably have to re-configure or in some way transform this notion of the avant-garde as it occurs in the Third World, also the issue of aesthetisation and of the aesthetisation of the environment. Of course, it is one thing to look at this in India or perhaps even in Turkey, and another thing to look at it in San Francisco or Los Angeles.

Alan Colquhoun:

Thank you all very much.

The dramatic changes in architecture and town planning that took place during the course of the twentieth century are the result of complex processes in both the technical and the political and socioeconomic sectors. It is, therefore, very difficult and probably beyond the capacity of any single individual, to analyse these separate factors and to determine the role played by each one in working towards the final result. On the other hand, we must not forget that much of what happened in the twentieth century had its roots in the nineteenth century, or maybe even earlier, and that the effects of some of the events of this past century will certainly continue to make themselves felt in the new one. So, what can we do?

We can try to describe, as succinctly as possible, the major changes of the past hundred years and to assess their impact on the environment and on our lives. Perhaps the first thing we see as characteristic of the architecture of the century just ended is the total predominance of two new building materials, steel and concrete, and of a third --reinforced concrete--, which is a combination of those two. While these materials were developed in the nineteenth century and began even then to be applied to new constructions, they did not dominate building construction until the twentieth century, as they will in all likelihood continue to do in the twenty-first.

The three principal building materials that had been used by man for thousands of years --stone, brick and wood-- were thus shunted aside, and with them went a number of very specific things. First of all, the scale of buildings changed, and their aspect as well, not only because of the new dimensions but also because of the very structure and texture of the new materials: Buildings with dozens of storeys, rooms hundreds of meters long, bridges with spans of thousands of meters. This implies, apart from anything else, new relationships between man and his natural environment, new and unimagined capabilities for intervention in that environment and, in many cases, an arrogance with respect to it (Figure 1).

These tremendous changes inevitably led to the creation in architecture of new forms that came, dynamically, to replace the familiar historical ones and, in the end, to reject them, since they were not able come to terms with the new materials, either in their technical capacities or in their logic. Thus, neither the architecture of the classical period (and its revivals in the Renaissance and the Neo-Classical) nor the architecture of the

Middle Ages and more recent periods has any connection with the architecture that was emerging from the new circumstances. The cut was deep, decisive and irreversible. These changes, of course, required considerable time to win acceptance, to become complete and to create a new aesthetic perception, to be seen as expressing the twentieth century and even, in some cases, to acquire the nature of a symbol (Figure 2).

Many decades would have to pass before, in the years following World War II, it could be accepted that reinforced concrete, a poured building material, could yield new and unimagined architectural forms whose beauty would lie in form itself rather than in any embellishment that might be sought by overlaying it with other materials, as was the case with its very first applications, something like the constructions of the Romans, who hid the concrete of their buildings behind painted plaster and marble facings. How, indeed, would it have been possible to conceal these new, marvellous and dynamic structures, the vaults and shells and folds that sheltered these new, changing spaces; these structures that appeared to have thrust themselves up out of the soil to spread their wings, or to be poised on tiptoe, or to be floating above the earth? (Figure 3, 4, 5)

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How could anyone have envisaged the boldness and the elegance of these structures, or their strength and vigour, or that it could be achieved without the slightest additional decoration to justify their existence and to root them in our awareness, shaping a new perception of aesthetics? (Figure 6, 7)

Here, we must certainly reflect upon the fact that in earlier ages architectural form was expressed in naked and perfectly worked material as well. Marble in the classical period and granite in the Gothic. Except that marble and granite are two precious and noble (so to speak) materials, which can hardly be said of poured concrete. It is, I think, obvious that these constructions were not simply the fruit of developments in the building materials industry. They were also the answer to the new circumstances engendered by the explosive growth of cities, itself in part at least a result of the mass urbanisation of the equally explosively growing world population, to the major changes in the production process and the development of the economy: The result, in other words, of the emergence of entirely new socio-economic conditions that, inevitably, would lead to the revolution that proclaimed the modernist movement.

The modernist movement, was not simply an artistic and architectural phenomenon. In reality it was a movement with an ideological content that sought to respond to social demands. The result was new cities, differently organised, more functional, with better sanitary conditions and spacious open areas and houses with proper lighting and ventilation, with modern comforts, simple comfortable dwellings for the generations to come.

How far and to what degree all this was, in fact, realised, and what constitute today's impasses, are other important questions that would merit discussion at some other time. But what I think we can ascertain here is that this new and original architectural morphology grew out of the synthesis and the interaction of all the parameters we have noted so far, rather than out of the arbitrary ideas of individual architects.

One final question remains: are these structures, as well as being bold, dynamic and functional, also beautiful? Or, to put it another way, to what do they owe what beauty they may have? In fact, I am not sure whether it is possible to speak of beauty, in the classic sense of the term. However this may be possible, one cannot deny that these structures have successfully managed to incorporate and express a new spirituality and

Figure 1:
Oscar Niemeyer, Proposal for a hotel in
Petropolis, Brazil, 1950.
Source: Stamo Papadaki, *Oscar Niemeyer,
Works In Progress*, Reinhold, 1976.
Photograph by R. Landau.

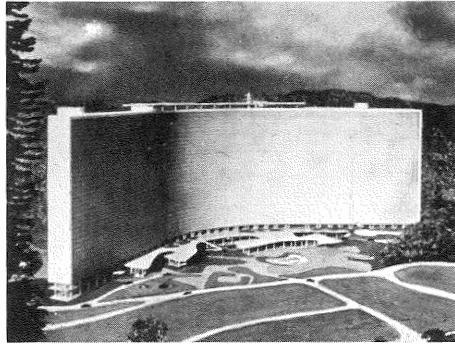
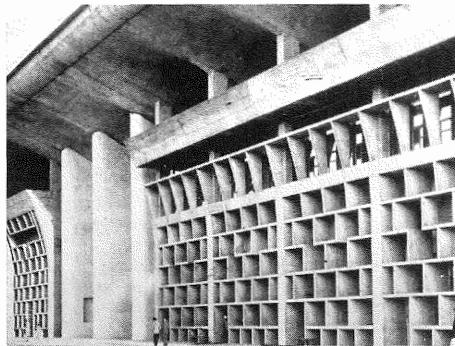


Figure 2:
Le Corbusier, Supreme Court, Chandigarh,
India.
Source P. A. Michelis, *Esthétique de l'ar-
chitecture du béton-armé*, Dunod, Paris,
1963. Photograph by Lucien Hervé.



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Figure 3:
F. Candela, Commercial sign of the Great
Southwest Corporation, 1958. Architects
Swank, O' Neil Ford, Colley and Zisman.
Source: Colin Faber, Verlag D. W.
Callwey, *Candela und seine Schalen*,
Munich, 1965. Name of photographer not
provided.

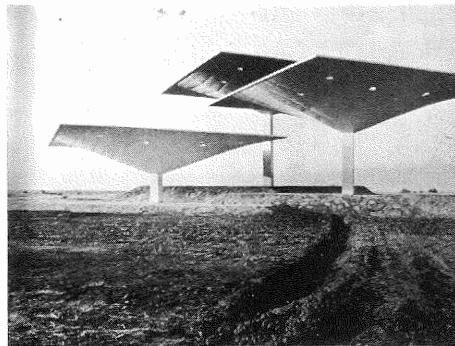
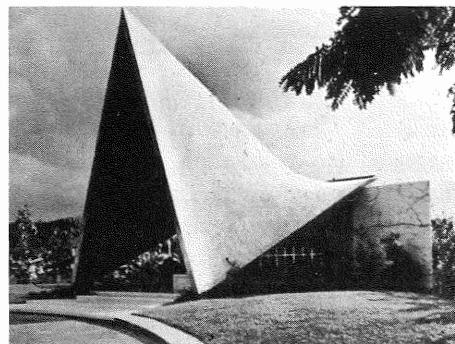


Figure 4:
F. Candela, Church in Havana, Cuba,
1958, with Max Borges jr.
Source: same as in Fig. 3. Name of pho-
tographer not provided.



to create a new "world", a new "cosmos," if I may use this Greek word, a world which creates a new sense of beauty, a world which is the product of the human intellect if not of human hands, as we were accustomed to using them before the invention of machine. --except that the machine is itself a creation of human hands.

While all this was happening, in Europe a movement began to develop to protect monuments and historic cities, a development that also has its roots in the nineteenth century. Camillo Sitte wrote in 1889 about the need to draw inspiration from old cities in order to create new ones that are beautiful as well as functional. The Athens Charter, which is a categorical codification and powerful declaration of the principles of the modernist movement, states the need to protect historic neighbourhoods, as long as they are fit for habitation.

This movement took on a new lease of life in the aftermath of World War II, when Europe looked in horror at the ruins of its historic cities --Munich, Dresden, Warsaw, to name only a few-- and saw the danger threatening the rest from uncontrolled use, excessive economic development and tourism.

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The texts and international declarations that have been adopted by the various organisations are very well known, the most important being The Venice Charter (1964), The European Charter of Architectural Heritage (Amsterdam 1975) and The Granada Convention (1985). The latter, indeed, has passed into the legislation of the signatory countries, of which Greece is one.

This means that the development of modern architecture and the acceptance of new standards for everything, from the scale of the city to the scale of household furniture and appliances are now accompanied by a re-assessment of the forms of the distant and the recent past, and therefore of the values contained in and projected by these forms, and thus of their inherent aesthetic.

It is clear that the term "architectural heritage", as a sub-division of the more general "cultural heritage," is difficult to define and, moreover, raises the thorny problem of the role that this architectural heritage is called upon to play in the modern age and in modern society. As we all know, this term no longer embraces just the familiar monuments of the great ages of civilisation, so indelibly imprinted on our awareness, but much more besides, including works that are monumental neither in character nor in intent. These may be buildings or residential complexes created in previous centuries and still surviving, many of them abandoned by their inhabitants, structures with an original and unchallengeable beauty that creates a certain nostalgia for a past that is daily more remote but that does not cease to be dear to us and to have something to teach us. Or they may be buildings or installations from the relatively recent industrial age, built for manufacturing or other associated purposes, or again they may be structures from an older, pre-industrial, era, such as windmills or oil presses. We regard all of them as precious witnesses to our history, and therefore feel that they must be preserved. The obvious sequel is that there are a large number of buildings that can only be preserved if they are integrated into modern life, and used: if, in other words, we implement the principles of integrated conservation. This means converting these structures to serve modern needs, which are frequently quite different from those for which they were built. Despite the obvious contradictions created by this paradox, the rehabilitation of older buildings to serve present needs is now current practice. It is, moreover, the only practice that is capable of furnishing solutions to the demand that all these buildings be preserved. The result

Figure 5:
F. Candela, Restaurant in Xochimilco,
Mexico, 1958. Architects, Joachim and
Fernando Alvarez Ordonez.
Source: same as in Fig. 3. Name of pho-
tographer not provided.

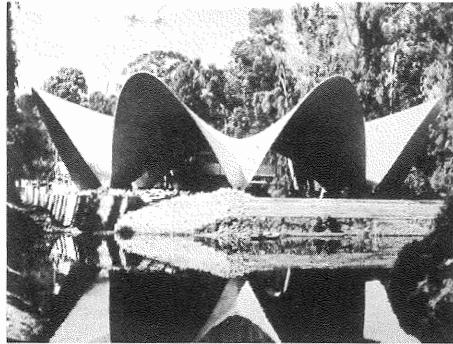
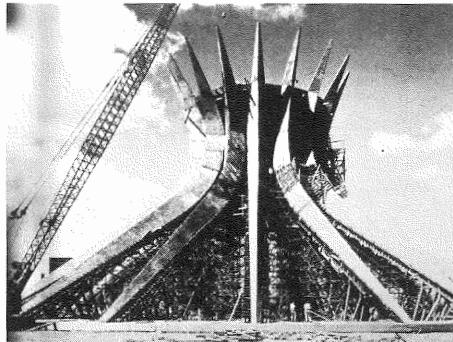


Figure 6:
Oscar Niemeyer, the Cathedral of Brasilia.
Source: P. A. Michelis, *Esthétique de
l'architecture du béton-armé*, Dunod,
Paris, 1963. Photograph by Marcel
Gautheret.



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Figure 7:
F. L. Wright, Administration building of
S. C. Johnson and Son Inc. USA. Source:
same as in Fig. 6. Name of photographer
not provided.

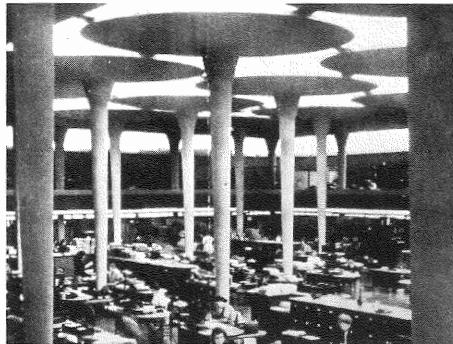


Figure 8:
The old Municipal Hospital of Athens, as
converted into a Cultural Centre.
Photograph by Dionysis A. Zivas.



is that, alongside the works of modern architecture, however expressed, the works of past ages are returning to life and claiming an equality of place in the urban environment (Figure 8, 9).

This means accepting the simultaneous presence of a variety of styles of expression -- contemporary and historic-- that creates a unique aesthetic pluralism. Whether (and to what degree) this is an expression of our contemporary developed societies, whether it means a new return to the values of the past or a conscious confrontation with the values of contemporary architecture, is another interesting subject for discussion.

I would like to describe what took place in Greece during the century that has just ended. Greece, a small country on the fringe of Europe, continued right up to the beginning of the twentieth century to live under the influence of the neo-classicism that prevailed when the modern Greek state came into being in the early part of the nineteenth century. An agricultural country for the most part, and up to the eve of World War II a slow-growing one, Greece inherited from the nineteenth century a wealth of handsome neo-classical buildings, many of which still ornament Athens and other Greek cities (Figure 10). At the same time, by the 1920s the first talk of change, of new directions, of the quest for a certain "Greekness" and a "return to the roots" was beginning to be heard.

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This period witnessed the growth of a fairly strong middle class, the efforts to develop the country's economy, an influx of capital by expatriate Greeks --mainly from Alexandria-- and the appearance of a whole new generation of intellectuals and artists --the so-called "thirties generation"--, all of which were powerful and very positive factors. 1921, it is interesting to note, was the year when the School of Architecture in Athens, founded in 1917, turned out its first graduating class. The modernist movement was thus enthusiastically welcomed by Greece's architects --The 4th C.I.A.M., where the Athens Charter was formulated, was held in Athens in 1932.-- and was the basis for the development of a new architecture, particularly in Athens and, to a lesser extent, in the provincial cities.

The modernist movement was seen as striking the shackles from the country's architects, liberating them from the theories of neo-classicism and giving them an opportunity to move towards a neo-Hellenic architectural renaissance. The new building materials were used throughout Greece, and the manufacture of cement rapidly became a major national industry. During the 1930s Athens experienced remarkable development, which found expression in a considerable number of apartment buildings --and a smaller number of office blocks and public buildings-- that were clearly influenced by the Bauhaus movement. (Figure 11) This was also an era when a --by the standards of the day-- vast programme of school building was being implemented throughout the country. These "thirties schools" are still in use today. (Figure 12)

A new architecture was thus born in Greece, and it grew and developed hand in hand with a more general spiritual and artistic movement, leading to the adoption of new standards and a new aesthetic perception. All this was to be rudely broken off by the outbreak of war, with all its tragic --particularly in Greece-- consequences. It was not until 1950 that the country entered its post-war period, and its reconstruction, both material and spiritual, could begin. It is worth pointing out here that in 1960, at the initiative of the late Professor Panayotis Michelis, Athens hosted the 4th International Congress on Aesthetics, which assembled some of the greatest figures of the age. That same year also saw the founding of the Hellenic Society for Aesthetics, again by Professor Michelis,

Figure 9:
The R. R. Station of Orsay, Paris, housing
now a museum. Architect Gae Aulenti.
Source: *Architectures capitales, Paris
1979-1989*, Paris: Editions du Moniteur,
1992. Photograph by Jim Purcell.

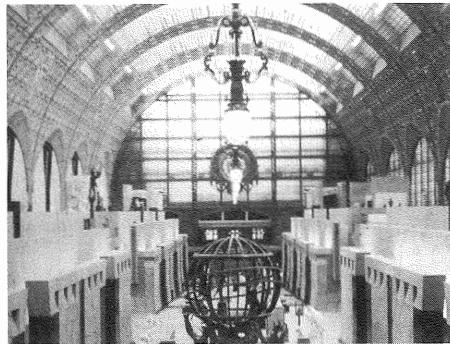


Figure 10:
The Neo-classical buildings of the
National Library, the University and the
Academy of Athens.
Source: *Neoclassical Architecture in
Greece*, Athens: Commercial Bank of
Greece, 1967, in Greek. Name of photog-
rapher not provided.



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Figure 11:
Apartment building in Athens, 1934.
Architects, Th. Valentis and P.
Michaelides.
Source: Em. Marmaras, *Apartment
Buildings in Athens*, Athens, 1985, in
Greek. Name of photographer not provid-
ed.



who was also responsible for publishing, in 1962, the first volume of the *Annales d'Esthétique*. These events, of course, are mainly related to the development of aesthetics studies in Greece in the second half of the twentieth century.

In architecture, things were somewhat different. The problems that had to be dealt with included coping with urgent housing requirements for whole population groups and with the unexpected growth of Athens and other urban centres, as well as finding new means of expression. Greece's architects, both those with some experience from the pre-war period and those who graduated after 1945, tried to address the architectural project within a functionalist framework, while at the same time endeavouring to make the best use of the lessons of tradition, chiefly of course the values contained in this tradition rather than actual forms, although this is not unknown.

Architects strove to exploit the properties of various materials, principally reinforced concrete but also brick and stone, which were local and familiar materials and could, they felt, be used in successful combinations. In this period, in the sixties, seventies and eighties, Greece acquired a considerable number of excellent architects and, correspondingly, a considerable number of fine architectural works. (Figure 13, 14, 15) Since then, however, things have taken a different direction. The abandonment of the principles of the modernist movement, the criticism meted out to these principles everywhere, the desire for something new and striking, the return to the architectural vocabulary of older periods have, I fear, brought about confusion rather than a new vitality. And this is something that is not confined to Greece alone. The century just ended was, as we have seen, one of dramatic changes, changes that had an inevitable impact on art and architecture, on the way we organise our lives and our thinking, on our behaviour, our perception of aesthetics, of the beautiful and the ugly, the useful and the superfluous. And any attempt to predict the future is fraught with difficulty.

Figure 12:
A secondary school building in Athens,
1930-35. Architect C. Panagiotacos.
Source: *The New School-Buildings*,
Athens: Technical Chamber of Greece,
1938, in Greek. Name of photographer
not provided.

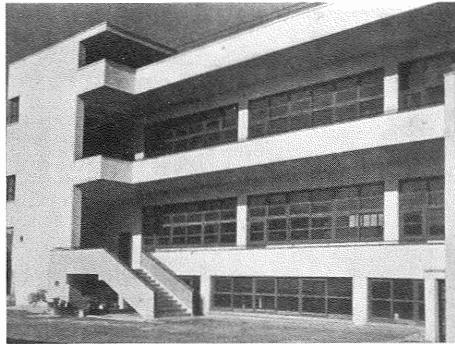


Figure 13:
Passengers' Terminal, Piraeus, 1969.
Architects J. Liapis and H. Scroubelos.
Source: *Architecture in Greece*, annual
review, 5/1971, in Greek/English. Name
of photographer not provided.

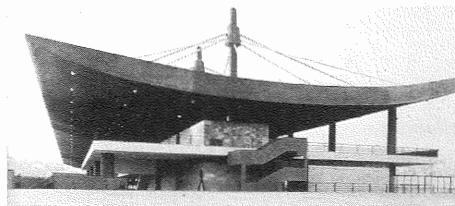


Figure 14:
Xenia Hotel, Kalambaka, near Meteora,
Greece. Architect Aris Konstantinidis
Source: Aris Konstantinidis, *Projects and
Buildings*, Athens: Agra Editions, 1981,
in Greek. Photograph by the architect.

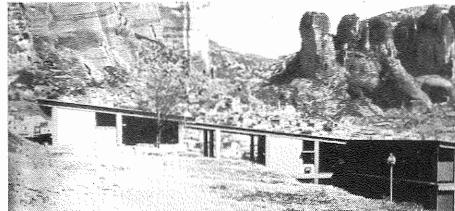
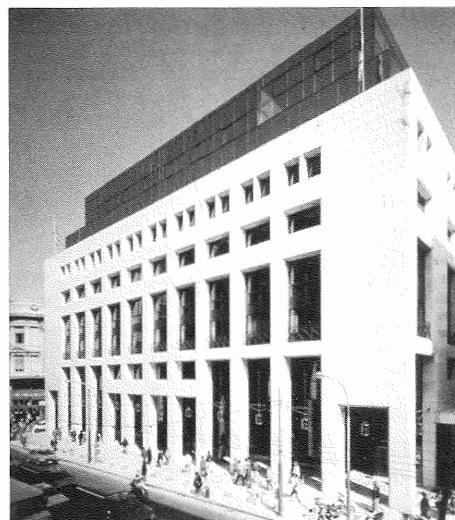


Figure 15:
Alpha Bank Head Office, Athens.
Architect N. Valsamakis.
Photograph by the architect.





Historians seem to agree that Kant's *Critique of Judgment* launched a tidal wave of books on the subject, mostly written in German. By the end of the nineteenth century the subject was in a state of crisis; philosophers had got lost in the giddy heights of abstraction, pursuing system building for the sake of it. Herbert Read, the first President of the British Society of Aesthetics, wrote in his book *Art Now*:

After Kant the world, as Jean Paul Richter said, swarmed with aestheticians. I have never been able to believe the idealistic conception of art, developed on the basis of Kant's aesthetic by writers like Fichte and Schelling, and given a more popular romantic expression by poets like Richter and Novalis, is worth the time that would be involved in mastering its mysteries. It consists mainly of a discussion of abstract categories like imagination and fancy, form and idea, and these are rarely, if ever, related to objective works of art.¹

And he went on to observe that "science is prior to philosophy, and a science of art must establish its facts before a philosophy of art can make use of them." In response to this situation, psychologists, who had recently broken away from philosophy, launched an alternative approach to the subject "from below." In their *History of Aesthetics*, Gilbert and Kuhn observed:

The old philosophical method, claimed Gustave Fechner, the pioneer of experimental aesthetics, moves "from above," from the universals down to the particulars. This was Schelling's, Hegel's, and even Kant's approach. Since however we do not believe any longer that we possess a reliable system, it is wise for us to choose the opposite way and build aesthetics "from below." We have to start with facts and then rise, cautiously and gradually, to generalisations.²

The philosopher was dislodged from his chair as a teacher of aesthetics. But who was to replace him? The psychologist, the sociologist, or the historian of art? There are a great number of equally competent applicants. The new scientific tendency created many sciences of beauty instead of one, psychological, ethnological aesthetics, and the like. The disintegration of the study was in rapid progress. It was arrested only at the end of the period under consideration, when the growing wealth of findings and tendencies was newly hedged in by the elastic and liberal conception of "Aesthetics and the general Science of Art" proposed by Max Dessoir.³

Dessoir wrote a book *Aesthetics and the General Theory of Art*, published a journal of the same name from 1906 to 1943 and convened the first international congress on aesthetics in Berlin, in 1913. Reading through the journal, one encounters a number of Germany's most important scholars in the humanities and social sciences. Although he drew a distinction between aesthetics and, what he called, the general science of the arts he emphasised the importance of maintaining a link between the two areas. This is a link

that can still be found in the aims of the American and British Societies of Aesthetics and the practices of the national societies around the world. According to the American constitution:

The purpose of the Society is to promote study, research, discussion and publication in aesthetics. The term "aesthetics", in this connection, is understood to include all studies of the arts and related types of experience from a philosophical, scientific, or other theoretical standpoint, including those of psychology, sociology, anthropology, cultural history, art criticism, and education. "The arts" include the visual arts, literature, music and theatre arts.

There has, however, been a drift away from Dessoir's conception of his project. That drift has a lot to do with increased specialisation in the academic world and changes in the nature of art practice.

When Dessoir launched his project, the social sciences were just separating themselves out from philosophy; art history was only just emerging as an academic discipline and Kandinsky hadn't yet invented the art of pure abstraction. Aestheticians concerned themselves with perception and Dessoir's project concerned itself with the double project of perception and art. Art historians were encouraged to philosophise; for example, two important theoretical essays by Panofsky were published in Dessoir's journal. Philosophers were encouraged to reflect on culture. Ernst Cassirer organised an aesthetics conference in Hamburg in 1930, to which Panofsky made a contribution. And sociologists could reflect on sensory experience: Georg Simmel wrote widely on the subject and regarded himself as a major influence on Berlin philosophical culture. His essay "The Metropolis and Mental Life" is precisely on the sensory experience of the city. In this climate, it made sense to ask whether there was such a thing as the history of sight, and one could expect scholars from a wide variety of different disciplines to get involved in the debate. I mention this particular topic because it was discussed both then, in the early years of the twentieth century, and now, in the current issue of the American Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism. The difference is that, in the contemporary debate, in the American journal, there isn't a single psychologist, sociologist, ethnologist or art historian in sight. The subject is dominated by philosophers clucking around the subject, like medieval theologians debating the number of angels that can sit on the head of a pin.

In the spirit of Dessoir's project, I would like to argue that there is a solution to the problem of whether there is such a thing as the history of vision and that to solve the problem one needs a combined interdisciplinary team of scholars intensely self-conscious about the way they reflect on art. At the beginning of the century, thought about art was unconsciously dominated by the mimetic principle. By the end of the century, thought is self-consciously antimimetic and conventionalist. I will unpack this as I proceed.

By the end of the nineteenth century and under the combined influence of academic art practice, the development of varieties of realism and naturalism in painting and the invention of photography, conventional wisdom declared that the artist was naturally inclined to paint what he saw. Departure from natural appearance was a matter of choice: two representative examples were Egyptian art and Japanese art. Tribal and "primitive" art were regarded as curiosities rather than as things on intrinsic visual merit. In the first two decades of the twentieth century attitudes began to change. As a consequence of bumping into Georg Simmel in the Trocadéro Museum, Wilhelm Worringer was led to write *Abstraction and Empathy*, which was an application of "*Volkpsychologie*" to so-called abstract and naturalistic styles of art. Shortly before then, in 1901, Alois Riegl had

published his *Late Roman Art Industry*, which analysed the development of antique art through from haptic to optic modes of perception. For Riegl, style was a product of an "art drive," which was itself a product of a world view.

Ethnologists began to take a new interest in "primitive" and tribal art, and two attitudes emerged. The first was that phylogeny repeated ontogeny: there was a positive correlation between the development of "primitive" art and the art of the child. The second was that different art forms reflected different world-views and that tribal art was the artist's self-representation of his experience. Complicating evidence came from anthropologists experimenting with photography. On the one hand, subjects could not recognise themselves in their photographs, and on the other, film audiences were scared out of their wits and hid from the looming realities of the screen.⁴

The overall effect was to identify the style of an artwork as the product of a particular mentality reflecting a specific vision of the world. In his book *The Principles of Art*, published in 1915, Heinrich Wölfflin had declared that "Every artist finds certain visual possibilities before him, to which he is bound. Not everything is possible at all times. Vision itself has a history, and the revelation of these visual strata must be regarded as the primary task of art history." Later, in 1936, Walter Benjamin wrote: "During long periods of history, the perception by the historical collective changes with the changes in their historical mode of being. The way in which human perception organises itself --the medium in which it takes place-- is conditioned not only naturally, but also historically." Following Riegl, he went on to say, "The period of migration in which the late Roman art industry and the Vienna Genesis came into being, had not only a different art, but also a different perception from classical times."

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The trouble with the idea of the history of vision is that Wölfflin himself knew that it was suspect. He was aware that both Alberti and Leonardo had observed that cast shadows take on their local colour although the practice of representing shadows in that way was not taken on until the nineteenth century. He got out of the problem by suggesting that "it is always decorative principles, convictions of taste, to which the last decision is assigned."

The main breakthrough came, however, with an observation made by the German Egyptologist Heinrich Schäfer. He assembled literary descriptions of perspectival effects in pre-Greek literature ranging from the Akkadian myth describing Etana's flight to heaven, to the Bible and across to Confucius.⁵ He argued that there was an essential difference between perception and representation and that Egyptian art was notational rather than depictive. I have yet to discover whether there was any reaction to Schäfer's book amongst Dessoir's community of scholars. Across in Vienna, Julius von Schlosser didn't think much of Dessoir's project. A person who might have picked up on the significance of the idea was Karl Bühler, who worked on the boundaries between linguistics, semiotics and the psychology of perception, but I have no evidence of that. The person who did realise the full impact of Schäfer's discovery was, of course, Ernst Gombrich, who unraveled its implications in *Art and Illusion*, which is not about aesthetics but about the psychology of pictorial representation.

Gombrich argued that the history of art is based upon the development of skills to enable the artist to satisfy the demands placed on imagery in his epoch. The functions of visual imagery are different through and across cultures. The Renaissance construction of naturalistic imagery emerged out of a symbolic base, and while the discovery of linear

perspective was important to the construction of naturalistic imagery, that was just one ingredient. Renaissance painting was Christian at the same time as being naturalistic. Masaccio's *Holy Trinity*, for example, straddles both naturalistic and symbolic conventions in its representations of Christ, the Holy Ghost and God. Although the depiction of the architecture is realistic, the representation of the Trinity is symbolic. Although the depiction of Christ invites empathetic response, the Dove doesn't and nor does God. This painting, by a follower of Botticelli, is a sign for the Archangel Raphael; it is not a picture of Tobias on a stroll with an Angel. A close look at the way in which the angel is joined to Tobias reveals that it's an artifact of painting and not a naturalistic depiction of a possible reality. The painting *Virgin, St. Anne, Child and Lamb*, by Leonardo, again straddles the domains of both symbolism and naturalism. It's another sign, but its composition is more complex, much more complex than the joined up hands of Raphael sign. The Virgin is the attribute of St. Anne, the child is the attribute of the Virgin, and the lamb is the attribute of Christ. The Virgin's uncomfortable presence on the lap of St. Anne is a compositional device to underwrite their symbolic relation: why else would one grown woman sit on the lap of another?

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From the Renaissance onwards, artists constructed increasingly sophisticated relational models to purvey naturalistic effects, but it is in the nature of such models that a gain in one direction is at the expense of a loss in another. An illusory depicted field creates problems for a balanced pictorial surface. The highly legible quality of a purely symbolic image will be undermined by the qualitatively different demands of a naturalistic one. Add to that the demands of artistic virtuosity and priorities will shift and change. Against Panofsky's view that perspective was a symbolic form, an idea drawn from Ernst Cassirer, Gombrich argued that it was a technical optical device used by artists who wanted to match the natural phenomenon of occlusion. It was a major discovery because it depended upon the recognition that the proportions between objects in a simulation would have to be different from the way in which they are judged in natural vision.

As Gombrich recognised, this was not the end of the story. There is a difference between images with an existential import and images without, a difference between images that have been created to be taken for real things and images of purely imagined realities. To make this clearer we could turn to contemporary visual imagery. In discussing "the sign and the portrait," Jean-Paul Sartre remarked:

I can very well posit a centaur as existing (but absent). But when I look at the photographs in a magazine they "mean nothing to me," that is, I may look at them without any thought that their subjects exist. In that case the persons whose photographs I see are reached through these photographs, but without existential position, exactly like Death and the Knight, who are reached through Dürer's engraving, but without my placing them.⁶

There is a kind of blindness to existence that occurs through the use of what Baudrillard has called "simulacra" --images that are used simply for the sake of their existence as images. Contrary to Baudrillard, images can occasionally break through their surface boundaries. If the Gulf War took on the appearance of a phantasy construct, the publication in the Guardian newspaper of a dead and very burnt Iraqi soldier did have a very substantial impact on public opinion. Our experience of visual imagery is frequently mediated by the phenomenon of theatricality: the dominant imagery of the Gulf War was theatrical. But there are moments when our sense of the real intervenes and we search for the contingencies of that reality.

Roland Barthes has suggested that in fiction “the reality effect” is generated by the descriptive element that has no contribution to make to the novel’s plot. Norman Bryson has suggested that pictorial naturalism is generated by the accumulation of visual detail: the more the detail the greater the realism. However, I believe that the reality is much more complex than that. In the literary case, the reader searches through the story for the unexpected contingency that underwrites the plot.⁷ There is a kind of inevitability to something going wrong for the boy Charles in Flaubert’s *Madame Bovary* who wears the stupid hat. Isn’t a man who wears a hat like that doomed?! And although nineteenth century academic painters could produce exemplary nudes, their unreality is born out by contrast with Rembrandt and Manet’s. With Bouguereau one is in a kind of Disney fantasy land; with Rembrandt one feels oneself in the presence of a real woman. And the spectators to Manet’s *Olympia* most certainly felt in the presence of a real woman: a recognisable prostitute who not only walked the streets but visited the Salon itself.⁸ Contingency features in the structure of the work to the degree that even when we’ve seen Hitchcock’s *Psycho* a hundred times, we still grip the edges of our seats in the infamous shower scene: we notice the shadow against the shower curtain and we re-notice it every time we watch the film. The re-noticing involves an act of re-cognition and as one repeats the re-viewing of the film one’s sense of the inherent structure of narrative details increases.

Walter Benjamin argued that it was only the photographs of the past that had an auratic presence and that contemporary photographs just reproduced experience. That auratic presence depended on a notion of “what would have become”:

One comes upon the picture of Dauthendey - the photographer and father of the poet - from around the time of his wedding, seen with the wife whom one day shortly after the birth of their sixth child he found in the bedroom of his Moscow house with arteries slashed. She is seen beside him here, he holds her; her glance, however, goes past him, directed into an unhealthy distance. If one concentrated long enough on this picture one would recognise how sharply the opposites touch here. The most exact technique can give the presentation a magical value that a painted picture can never again possess for us. All the artistic preparations of the photographer and all the design of the positioning of his model to the contrary, the viewer feels an irresistible compulsion to seek the tiny spark of accident, the here and now.⁹

Paradoxically, it is that sense of the implicit logic of “hereness and nowness” that Manet and the artists of Impressionism, in the mimetic tradition, wanted to capture: the aesthesis of the moment. Photographers using impressionist conventions were determined to elevate their images to the status of art: the very falsity of their imagery undermined their project. By contrast, the unmanipulated image retains an authenticity in relation to the situation in which it was made.

This example takes me back to Kant and Dessoir’s project. It is essential to Kant’s aesthetics, and later aesthetics for that matter, that the work of art enables the spectator to distance herself from the object of perception, that belief in the existence of the depicted object plays no role in its perception. But I think that the matter is far more complicated than that. The art historian, ethnographer, anthropologist and, indeed, Egyptologist need to work together to fathom out the mysteries of how images have worked. Contemporary artists and critics need to work together to understand the ways in which artworks function today. It is only after they have done their work that the aesthetician is in a position to comment on what they have done. My main criticism of contemporary aesthetics is the same as Herbert Read’s: It dwells in the giddy heights of abstraction without addressing itself to the issues that have confronted artists in the past and today. Let us hope that SANART will continue to maintain the connection between practising artists and other scholars in the field besides philosophically trained aestheticians.

FOOTNOTES:

1. Herbert Edward Read, *Art Now: an introduction to the theory of modern painting and sculpture* (London: Faber and Faber, 1948/1968), pp. 26-7.

2. Katharine Everett Gilbert and Helmut Kuhn, *A History of Aesthetics* (New York: Mosher, 1939), p. 525.

3. Gilbert and Kuhn, *A History of Aesthetics*, p. 527.

4. I have addressed this issue in "Form, Expression and the Photograph," *Interface: Bradford Studies in Language, Culture and Society*, 2 (1996), pp. 263-284.

5. Heinrich Schäfer, *Von ägyptischer Kunst* (Leipzig: 1919).

6. Jean-Paul Sartre, *The Psychology of Imagination* (London: Methuen, 1940/1972), p. 26. (Original French, Gallimard, 1940; trans. B. Frechtman first published as *The Psychology of Imagination*, New York: Philosophical Library, 1948.)

7. I have presented this argument at length in my article "L'effet du réel: an alternative account," in Harold Osborne edited, special issue of Polish philosophy journal *Dialectics and Humanism* (1989).

8. On this subject, see the discussion in Timothy J. Clark, *The Painting of Modern Life: Paris in the Art of Manet and his Followers* (London: Thames & Hudson, 1985), p. 79-146. I can't understand why Clark failed to make reference to Zola's *L'Oeuvre*, which described such an encounter.

9. Walter Benjamin, "A Small History of Photography," *One-Way Street and Other Writings*, trans. Edmund Jephcott and Kingsley Shorter (London: New Left Books, 1979), p. 243.

In this paper, I want to outline the problem of the relation of modern architecture to society. I will argue that since the inception of modernism, there have been fundamental, but often unacknowledged, changes in the cultural and political conditions determining the relationship of modern architecture to society. These changes have invalidated many of the assumptions that lay behind the ideology of the modern movement.

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In the early years of the twentieth century, many avant-gardists believed that a change in architectural "style" was inextricably bound up with a change in society. Capitalism and industrialism had brought unprecedented progress in material conditions but at the same time it had destabilised traditional social relations. Modernist artists and architects believed a change in art itself would trigger a change in society as a whole, the effect of which would be to reintegrate art with social life. The value belief that a reformed architecture would be the agency by which a social utopia could be achieved was the main driving force behind the early modern movement.

This set of beliefs was based on contradictory reactions on the part of the architectural avant-gardes to the rapid process of industrialisation that had taken place in the second half of the nineteenth century. On the one hand, they fervently embraced modernity, believing that architecture had to adapt itself to a technological change and in the process completely revolutionise its aesthetic principles. On the other hand, they feared the process of social and cultural destabilisation that had resulted from industrial capitalism. Their program was simultaneously innovative and conservative.

The movement toward autonomy is, I believe, implied by the whole history of the arts and sciences since the break up of feudalism in the late middle ages. Under feudalism, the organisation of what the French call "*les arts et métiers*" had been entirely subordinated to the church. With the rise of capitalism and the urban bourgeois in the late middle ages, art and technology became progressively more independent of religious authority and there was a slow, uneven but continuous movement towards the autonomy in both art and technology. Although the arts remained under court patronage until the eighteenth century, the artwork itself was increasingly seen as the product of individual genius at the end of the nineteenth century --after a century of industrial development-- the concept of autonomy --of *Art pour l'Art*-- was promoted by the aesthetic movements in the belief that it was only by establishing the complete autonomy of art that artistic

values could be maintained in a social context dominated by the pursuit of commercial profit. The arts were perceived as the only field of modern culture in which division of labour had not yet destroyed the craftsman's control over his product. In this evolution, there was a progressive separation of the arts from the control of socially enforced codes.

But, at the same time --in complete opposition to the progressive liberation of the artist from social control-- there was a movement within the avant-gardes that sought a return to pre-capitalist forms of social organisation. One of the main causes of the decline in cultural values since the industrial revolution was seen to have been the introduction of the division of labour. We have seen that this perception not only triggered the aesthetic movement and the idea of the autonomy of art, but it also created the opposite desire to return to pre-capitalist forms of cohesion and "community" in which the arts had, supposedly, been integrated into the social fabric.

The various progressive movements, in architecture and the industrial arts, from the 1890s until the Second World War were deeply embroiled in the contradiction between the inevitability of technological advance on the one hand and the recovery of the organic unity of pre-capitalist societies on the other. Let me give a few examples:

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The arts and crafts movement and the closely affiliated Art Nouveau and Jugendstil movements, following the theories of William Morris, had attempted to revive the crafts on the model of the medieval guilds. Around the turn of the century, a counter-movement emerged which rejected the medievalising spirit of these movements, and which became the dominant ideology of the Deutsche Werkbund under the leadership of the architects Herman Muthesius and Peter Behrens. These architects realised that the industrial arts and architecture had to become mechanised. Far from returning to handwork and ornament, the useful objects of the future would need to be *Sachlich* and simple. From now on, aesthetic would be found, not in the hand forming of materials, but in "form" itself --or *Gestalt*-- as conceptualised by the artist-intellectual rather than the artist-craftsman. At the same time, the fantasy of the individual artist would have to be curbed in the interest of normative and repeatable standards.

But this abandonment of handcrafts in favour of machine production did not alter the belief of the reformers in the need to re-establish the lost unity of the pre-capitalist world. For Muthesius, the uncontrolled market place of capitalism was responsible for the catastrophic decline in the artistic quality of modern consumer products during the nineteenth century. In order to redeem the industrial arts it would be necessary to eliminate the uncertainties of the market as well as the middle man who controlled it. He proposed that the production of consumer objects should be placed in the hands of a few large corporations. These firms would be obliged to employ artists, who would thus regain the control of the design process which they had lost with the advent of machine production and division of labour. The corporations would act rather like the medieval craftsmen's guilds, monopolising the market and controlling public taste. We see here an attempt by Muthesius to uncouple technology from capitalism.

Muthesius based his idea of Modern architecture on the "type" or standard. This was a complicated idea. He not only associated the "type" with modern production methods, but he saw it as a perennial classical tradition. Only with typification --to quote Muthesius-- "...can architecture recover the universal significance which was characteristic of it in times of harmonious culture." But there was a problem with Muthesius' conflation of these two ideas. When it appears in tradition, the type or standard aims at a cer-

tain aesthetic result. When applied to modern mass production, however, standardisation serves merely to facilitate repetition and to coordinate the different phases of production that have been separated by the division of labour. No telos or specific end is envisaged other than that of increased efficiency of production. We can also illustrate the distinction between these two senses of the "type" by looking at the work of a later modernist, Le Corbusier. In the 1940s, Le Corbusier tried to reconcile artistic quality and industrial efficiency by introducing the "*Modulor*." This is usually seen as a proportional system, but in fact it was addressed specifically to the problem of mass-production and modular coordination. It was an attempt to gain aesthetic control over mass production and to harness the industrial process to a concept of Platonic beauty much as Muthesius had attempted to do when he put the artist in control of the factory floor. Without any such conscious intervention on the part of the artist, modular coordination is simply a way of using mass production to satisfy a large and variable market. Its purpose is to operate in the market as efficiently as possible.

A similar attempt to control the market was proposed by Bruno Taut, following the short-lived communist revolution of 1918 Germany. In an open letter to the Socialist Government, he wrote that art and life must form a unity. The aim of art must be the fusion of the arts under the wing of a great architecture. As a result of this, the artist will be "...the moulder of the sensibilities of the *Volk*, responsible for the visible structure of the new state. He must control the form-giving process from the statue right down to the coin and the postage stamp." Taut's totalitarian visions, like those of Muthesius, implied an authoritarian alternative to the existing liberal politics associated with modern industrial development and a totalising vision of pre-capitalist society. Taut was not so explicit about the need for technology as Muthesius. But he never condemned it and he clearly believed that it was compatible with the administrative measures necessary to retrieve the lost unity of artistic culture.

The same was true of Le Corbusier in the 1930s, when he became involved with the French neo-syndicalist movement. This socialist movement strongly permeated at the time with fascist ideology, attacked the inefficient parliamentary system of modern liberal democracies, and proposed its replacement by a government of technocrats who would be able to implement a national economic plan. The plan would take into account the needs of the regions and cater for the emotional needs of ordinary people. "Abstract man" would be replaced by "*l'homme réel*" --a man belonging to the community and to the soil. Though this movement was different from both the classical model of Muthesius and the Volkish model of Taut, it was nonetheless equally based on a rejection of current democratic notions of society in favour of a return to the organically unified society that had supposedly existed before the rise of capitalism. It wanted simultaneously to regress to an earlier phase of social organisation and at the same time to maintain the greatest possible development of technology.

To recapitulate: Architectural aspirations towards a unified modern culture were characterised by a critique of capitalism on the one hand and on the other hand by a desire for the continuation of technical development. The idea of continuous technical and artistic innovation, which the artistic avant-gardes shared with the capitalist system out of which they have emerged, and which presupposed the autonomy of art and technology, was incongruously combined with a desire to return to the state of normativity that had been characteristic of pre-capitalist societies, and which alone --it was thought-- would satisfy the deep and unchanging needs of people.

This idea was based on a simple analogy. Because each historical period seemed, in retrospect, to constitute a cultural totality, it was assumed that the modern age must exhibit a unity in every way analogous to this. This assumption was false on two grounds. Firstly, the fact that each past period seems to us to constitute a unified whole does not mean that this unity was apparent to people living at the time. Conversely, although the events of our time may seem heterogeneous to us, they may well appear unified to a future observer. Secondly, history does not provide any proof whatever that our own period cannot, in fact, differ from previous periods in what appear to be crucial ways. It may well be that the conditions of modernity preclude the further repetition of certain aspects of the past that we would like to continue. The fact that we can, in the present, still enjoy the cultural products of the past does not in itself guarantee their survival as practices.

From today's perspective, it seems impossible to believe, as was often believed by progressives in the first half of the twentieth century, that the modern age can replicate the sort of unity that appears to us to have characterised pre-industrial societies. For twenty years after the Second World War, it was still just possible to believe that democratic governments, in the form of welfare states, could achieve a unified egalitarian society. But it quickly became clear that even if these social ambitions could be achieved, they had very little to do with the idea of unified, normative culture --architectural or otherwise. We can longer presuppose a common system of codes that bind cultural and social institutions, as seems to have been the case in the past. It is precisely the absence of common codes that characterises modern society, which is dis-united, fragmentary and subject to continuous change. The arts and architecture are more than ever characterised by the concepts of the individual genius and artistic autonomy. At the same time, there is no sign that the "general public" is nearer than it was ever in arriving at a consensus in the matter of architectural style, or accepting a single notion of what is "modern" or even in the need to be "modern" at all. In suggesting that such a "pluralism" is an inevitable consequence of late capitalism, I am not of course saying that capitalism is a totalising, closed system which resists any attempt to modify it consciously by political means. What I am suggesting is that no political modification is likely to effect a wholesale and uniform transformation of cultural forms of the kind that was hoped by modernists.

To conclude --and in order to dispel the impression that in my rejection of modernist totalism, I am replacing one form of determinism by another, --and even worse-- an optimistic one by a pessimistic one. I will risk a kind of hypothesis about future possibilities, not only in architecture but in society in general.

Modernism, as I have suggested attacked capitalism and its attendant political structures because it had destroyed the harmonious unity of culture and ushered in a period of disorder and anarchy. But it wanted at the same time to maintain technological development. I have suggested that these two desires were incompatible.

The desire to return to a harmonious culture was based on the need to be surrounded by the visible signs of unity and order. But our conception of modern technological society should, I believe, abandon any aspiration to that kind of totality and postulate one that is no longer bound to the image of an organic body with a centralised, hierarchical control system. This would seem to imply some kind of a "system theory" in which the structure of society and its cultural forms would resemble a multi-centres network or web rather than a central control system. Contemporary biophysical science seems to suggest

that organic bodies are made up of quasi-independent sub-systems. This returns us to something that looks a bit like seventeenth century rationalist logic, according to which a body is a machine consisting of discrete, detachable parts with the proviso that the entire structure can be seen as adapting itself to the separate evolution of its parts. In a sense, the whole is dependent on the parts and not the other way round.

If we apply this concept to society, we seem to be suggesting that, although capitalism, art and technology evolved together, and, in that sense, constitute a system --for example, certain undesirable aspects of capitalism, or of technology-- without destroying the system itself. Working with the "system" does not mean that we are incapable of changing it in accordance with our reason.

The currently renewed discussions around the questions of values and ethics in modern professions and business practices compel one to reconsider age old maxims about the role of the realm of art and aesthetics, and particularly that of individual artworks in the ethical realm. In this paper I will take issue with this question, in the hope of turning this problematical relation once again into a matter of thinking.

When a thorny question as the present one suggests itself, it is inevitable that one has to turn one's attention to a handful of towering intellectual figures of modernity. Yet it is absolutely essential to remind oneself that this attempt should not be guided by the utilitarian motive of carrying out just another comparative study of these intellectual figureheads, pointing out the similarities as well as apparent differences between them. This, I reckon, would be all too familiar and therefore boring. Rather, it is the presencing of an issue, especially in our techno-scientific modern age, before the "eye of the soul" (Aristotle), compelling thinking/reflection to adopt it as its "matter" [*das Sache*]; in this case, the troubled relationship between the sphere of art/aesthetics on one hand and the cloudy realm of ethics, on the other. The contribution that such figureheads as Heidegger, Gadamer, Lukács, and Adorno make would be of relevance only if a problem makes its presence felt before thinking sufficiently sensitized to the issue so that it can be turned into a 'matter' for reflection. As will be clear in the following, I hope, such is the case for all these thinkers who are, remarkably, guided by the same concern in spite of the otherwise huge gulf separating and sometimes forcefully pitching some of them against each other. In the subsequent discussion, therefore, my intention is to enter into a dialogue --and hopefully a fruitful one-- with their discourses, especially with that of Gadamer when "it is our ethical situation that is in question." Here, too, it is advisable to remind oneself of one's own prejudices and the possibility of seeing them in positive light for any genuine communication to take place, and especially with genuine works of art.¹

One example would probably clarify my point: The hidden complicity between positivism, on one hand, and existing structures of both the political power and the "culture industry," on the other, is well-known on the basis of Adorno and Horkheimer's seminal work, and especially Adorno's posthumously published *Ästhetische Theorie*.² Gadamer's strong reservations about Adorno's overemphasis of the role of aesthetic consciousness *à la* Kant --one important rift between the two--³ notwithstanding, it would

not be difficult to observe an accord between their views with respect to today's mass media and the tendency of the curtailment of art under the conditions of "administered society."

Nevertheless, such swaying power should not lead one to overlook the essential emphasis placed by all these thinkers on the primacy of particular "works of art" in creating their "own principle" of objectivity, their "immanent law of the work" [*immanente Gesetz des Gebildes*]⁴ via their truth-content displayed in right measure,⁵ rather than resorting either to some abstract theory of art. In other words, artworks are supposed to be *index veri et falsii* in their very thinghood.⁶ This finds its parallel in questions of ethical nature which cannot be subsumed under the legislative power of a "practical philosophy" which is, by nature, a theoretical endeavour, prescribing abstract maxims for ethical conduct. I will return to this point a little later.

94 Yet the observation concerning a work of art creating its own principle without recourse to a theory does not mean that it is readily and directly experienced without the "mediation" of a sufficiently differentiated "subjectivity" on the receiving side. Adorno emphasises repeatedly that, in an age dominated by the tremendous leveling by both the powers of capital and the ideology of culture industry, to expect a liberating effect to unfold from the particular works of art would be quite naïve and seriously incomplete, given the fact that at a time when *Kitsch* increasingly holds sway in the face of a nullified bourgeois religion of art [*bürgerliche Kunstreligion*] and a "culture offering its wares [*seine Sparten*] in a selection for *highbrows, middlebrows, and lowbrows*." In the end, art capitulates to the *Kitsch* as "simulation of nonexistent feelings" and thus proving "what once was art can later become *kitsch* [*Was Kunst war, kann Kitsch werden.*]"⁷

In this sense, the truth-content of the works of art standing there, in and of themselves, does not automatically produce a transforming effect on the perceiver, suspending his familiar everydayness and hurling him out of *der Ganze Mensch* into being at one with the reflective stance of *Menschen ganz*, as is powerfully suggested by Rilke's well-known and often-quoted poem.⁸ Nor can the categories of "beauty" [*das Schöne*] and "sublime" [*das Erhabene*], both of which are, in turn, quickly turned into the cultural wares of a desperately clever art market, be taken at their face value. In any case, Adorno would hasten to add that, without the necessary *Bildung*, hardly anything in our contemporary world of semblances addresses us directly.⁹

Leaving aside the discussion of the "sublime" which, to certain eyes, is no more than "bourgeois mysticism,"¹⁰ a clever move of submission to a higher power in the bourgeois age in order to hold the *ego* [*Ich*] in check so that it will not slide into some kind of "loosening of one's inner cord," "flagrant self-assertion"¹¹ and "wanton violence" [*hubris; (ὕβρις)*] in boundless pursuit after the "beautiful," Adorno, in fact, suggests that it might be better to stop discussing the sublime [*das Erhabene*] since the concept, being completely corrupted by the idle talk of culture religion [*Kulturreligion*], has almost become ridiculous [*lächerlich*] now.¹²

As for "beauty," it does little good to reiterate Adorno's maxim that "beauty is an exodus from the kingdom of means" to which he, in fact, brought important qualifications in response to possible misinterpretations.¹³ For one thing, there exists nothing that is simply beautiful or ugly and, in spite of the immediateness [*die Unmittelbarkeit*] which characterizes the two, it would simply not do either to hypostatize or relativize them. Moreover, art cannot be reduced to mere identification with beauty, often overlooked by

modern aesthetics which tends to ignore the fact that the absorption of ugly [*die Häßlichkeit*] by beauty [*die Schönheit*] as its opposite enhances the power of beauty.¹⁴

Such a critical view of the one-time Western concept of beauty also finds its counterpart in Adorno's discussion of "tonality" in music and, more particularly, in his claim that the "very notion that tonality is natural is itself an illusion. Tonality did not exist from the outset... The semblance of naturalness which serves to disguise historical relationships inescapably attaches itself to the mind that the rule of reason is unimpaired while surrounded by a world full of persistent irrationality. Tonality is probably as ephemeral as the order of reality to which it belongs."¹⁵

Yet there are works of art even under these conditions of contemporary civilization. How are they still possible, if we slightly bend Lukács' rhetorical question put to his teacher, Max Weber, "Es gibt Kunstwerke, wie sind sie Möglich?", or similarly, Gadamer's deployment of the poetic message in Rilke's "thing-poems" [*Dinggedichte*] to the same effect.¹⁶

Given all these, for the expected emancipatory impact to take effect under the *Diktat* of a "quality" work of art, the existing needs of the people can not be taken as a measure where they are manufactured and enforced. For this, one needs the mediating role of "a theory of society as a whole [*eine Theorie der Gesamtgesellschaft*]."¹⁷

Something similar can and should be said concerning "values," "ethical behavior," and the like. Since the truth-content of artworks cannot be dissociated from ethical concerns of humanity of which we are members, any serious probing into the sphere of art becomes entangled with such concerns about what should in fact be complemented by one regarding the ethical conduct in a historically determinate social formation. I have already pointed out that any recourse to a "practical philosophy" is of no help because it is already a theoretical enterprise and precisely for the reason that the "right thing to do" [*das Tunliche; tò déon (τὸ δέον)*] cannot be prescribed by abstract maxims, least of all in the sphere of art. Aristotle, especially in his work on ethics and politics, was not after an overall practical philosophy but the hidden, tacitly understood and agreed principle [*to hóti (τὸ ὅτι); das "Daß"*] of social existence. That is why, he remarkably pointed to a sufficiently general conclusion about ethical and thereby political questions via his immense spectrum of observations concerning humans and other animals.

As for the quite dubious usefulness of setting up agendas and having round tables of experts for ethical conduct in many walks of today's organised life, modern professions above all, we may cite an illuminating example from the personal experience of Gadamer on the philosophy-politics connection, namely, the blurred sense of time which disturbed the habitual pattern of migration of a pair of swallows who nested on his balcony and gave urgency to their hasty departure, leaving their poor offspring behind whose bones were later found in the nest. This is a perfect example of *ethos* of living beings [*Lebewesen*] other than the human species being dominated by the forces and cycles of nature.¹⁸

In fact, it is not as simple as that. It will be clear in the following that *ethos* as an "abode" is not the sole and exclusive property of our species and other attributes, which a superficial reading of Aristotle might lead us to consider to belong solely to humans, can be found in other animals as well; the examples are: an instinctual and yet very developed "sense of time" [*Sinn für Zeit*], the capacity of understanding [*sinesis (σύνεσις)*], the so-

called “practical wisdom” or “prudence” [*phronésis* (φρονήσις)].¹⁹

Nevertheless, the question of “habituation,” *ethos* for *homo sapiens* cannot be treated as such simple, clear-cut behavior as in other species; it demands a rather complicated reasoning for this “living being dwelling in language” [*zōion lōgon êchon* (ζῶον λόγον ἔχον)], especially concerning “values” beyond the mere “value” of selecting the best stone for simple utilitarian ends such as hunting and grinding, as in the case of cave-dwellers. Such a seemingly simplistic originary-ontological question posed by Lukács,²⁰ if pursued rigorously, has important and, at the same time, complicated repercussions regarding “values,” posing a major challenge for the thinking of such modern thinkers as, for example, Max Weber who felt necessary to make a distinction in his well-known lecture, “Politics as a Vocation” [*Politik als Beruf*] (1918), between an “ethic of conviction” [*Gesinnungsethik*] and an “ethic of responsibility” [*Verantwortungsethik*].²¹ More specifically, any agenda of questions concerning ethics where it became an issue for some major reason, takes for granted that there are systems of values, if not a single one, which flourish through processes of learning and socialization in a historically-determinate human society. So, the question for us, the moderns, who dwell on societal-cultural fault lines is: can one still talk about relatively stable, shared systems of human values, and where is today’s art in all this?

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Gadamer who has written so much on the ethical dimension of art where certain younger counterparts in other cultures of Europe half-heartedly dwell on it, relentlessly pursues the possibilities within reach of anyone who takes this question seriously. Gadamer does not resort either to the empty ethical precepts or to such equally empty illusory-ecstatic postmodern paraphernalia as “the aesthetics of existence.” He lets the problem present itself starkly as in the example given:

The conflict lies within man himself, in his questions and musings, not between specialized and expert knowledge and its bearing on the social realities of practical life. As human beings, we have turned away so far from the natural order of things that we follow no natural *ethos* [ἔθος]. The word *ethos*, in Greek, signifies the manner of life that nature bestows on both humans and animals. Among animals, the power of habituation and instinctive direction is so dominant that it overwhelmingly determines their behavior.²²

Before going into a brief discussion about the lack of continuity in today’s world between ‘ethos’ [ἔθος] and *ethos* [ἦθος] which the Ancients, and Aristotle in particular, naturally took for granted, it is necessary to look into where Gadamer’s argument points following this example:

We humans have no such unambiguous instincts to direct us. We have ‘freedom of choice,’ or at least we seem to ourselves to have it, and we call it by that name. The Greeks used the expression *proh[?]airesis* [*proairesis* (προαίρεσις)] for it. The freedom to behave in a self-chosen way presupposes the ability to ask questions, to see possibilities even when they may not be able to be realized. Of course, anyone who does not have the imagination to see possibilities will not easily fall into error. So I would say, not only of Heidegger and so-called philosophers but of human beings in general, that every one of them is subject to error and falls prey (above all) to his or her secret wishes for happiness and the shimmering dreams of fulfillment. These depend on the assessment of one’s own circumstances and relations with other human beings. We are all in danger of misjudging ourselves and of clinging to illusions... It is true of all knowledge that its practical application requires a special gift that does not rely on merely technically acquired information.²³

Among the concepts to be discussed at some length in this extremely important and potent passage, two things in particular stand out if one is to take issue with the possibility of silent moral *Diktat* of any work of art today: namely the illusions producers and

specialists both entertain as well as the limitations of technical cleverness and expertise when ethical issues are our main concern.

Neither Adorno nor Gadamer have entertained illusions about it. Often appealing to Kant's incomparable *Grundlegung zur Metaphysik der Sitten*, and particularly to a passage where Kant is clearly far from any such illusion concerning the power, a "moral (i.e. practical) philosophy" --which, importantly, he takes to be a "theoretical" enterprise-- in prescribing universal rules of right (moral) conduct for everyone so that they can lead a "good/right life" [*das richtige Leben*].²⁴ It appears that Gadamer, relying on Kant's authority, goes even further by ascribing the "right thing to do" [*das Tunliche; τὸ δέον* (τὸ δέον)] to the tacit dimension of practical life and everyday existence, once again through a detour via Aristotle in whose time there was not yet a clear-cut term for the concept of "duty" [*officium; die Pflicht*], a term which has gained currency even much later than the Stoics who still regarded it as a 'have' a person might or might not possess. In fact, the word 'duty' which has now become a house word in Kant's time is expressly used by him in the passage already mentioned.²⁵

All this comes down to one thing: as already emphasized on a par with artworks' being *index veri et falsii*, basic moral precepts cannot be supplied by a moral (i.e. "practical") philosophy which is already a theoretical enterprise. The principle of good conduct, "the right thing to do" [*das Tunliche; τὸ δέον* (τὸ δέον)] is 'that which is for the general good of and therefore binding for everyone' [*>gut und bindend<; ἀγαθὸν καὶ δέον*]. This is so because, as the mediating and non-essentializing expression, *to hōti* [τὸ ὅτι; *das >>Daß<<*; 'this something'] implies,²⁶ there is still an *arkhé* [ἀρχή], viz. a hidden and tacitly agreed "principle," a ground of living together which is supposed to guide ethical-moral conduct each and everyone and, therefore, immediately relevant to the discussion of matter at hand, no matter how diffuse and historically determinate it could be and how often it is violated by those who are "uncanny," "clever," and eventually "harmful" [*deinótes; δεινότης*]²⁷ for both the personal and common good of others. Now the question is whether modern works of art are still capable of issuing appeals to such effect. The matter, and especially the question concerning *deinótes* [δεινότης], becomes further complicated,²⁸ not easily resolved by customary binary reasoning as soon as one is reminded of the distant common origin [*tékhnē* (τέχνη)] of both the realm of modern art (*die Kunst*) and the now-amorphous sphere of modern technology (*die Technik*).

Considering this distant common origin, namely, *tékhnē* [τέχνη], the question concerning the power and moral *Diktat* and the moral spell cast by works of art on modern individuals in their everydayness [*der ganze Mensch*] and compelling them to leave their individual shells and be with humanity [*Menschen ganz*] --albeit briefly-- turns out to be a problematical one. The fearful quality of man's *Dasein* to which both Gadamer and Heidegger have drawn our attention, i.e. *deinótes* [δεινότης] emerges, in fact, as the dark side of *tékhnē* [τέχνη] and, by the same token, of both modern technology and modern art, the distant roots of which can be traced back to this common origin.

Once again, as Gadamer noted, Heidegger, who is fully aware of the danger residing in moral lessons and ethical blueprints,²⁹ had already addressed this "essentially unanswerable" question (Gadamer) in the second half of the 1930s, further drawing attention to the role played by *tékhnē* [τέχνη] in complicating the matter: one salient example, is his reworked lecture of the 1935 summer semester, *>>Einführung in die Metaphysik<<*, he

makes the following chilling remark in the second phase of his radical interpretation of chorus lines 332-75 in *Antigone* of Sophocles, highlighting the essential ground of both the “fearful” and “uncanny” [*Unheimlich; τὸ deinón (δαινόν)*] in man’s *Dasein* as well as why man is taken to be the “most fearful” and “violent” [*Unheimlichste; τὸ deinótaton (τὸ δεινότατον)*]:

The power, the powerful, in which the action of the violent one moves, is the entire scope of the machination <Machenschaft,> machanoen [τὸ μαανόεν], entrusted to him. We do not take the word ‘machination’ in a disparaging sense. We have in mind something essential that is disclosed to us in the Greek word *techne*. *Techne* means neither art [*die Kunst*] nor skill [*die Fertigkeit*], to say nothing of technique [*die Technik*] in the modern sense. We translate *techne* by ‘knowledge.’ [*Wir übersetzen τέχνη durch >>Wissen.<<*] But this requires explanation. Knowledge [*das Wissen*] means here not the result of mere observations concerning previously unknown data. [*über das vordem unbekannte Vorhandene*] Such information [*solche Kenntnisse*], though indispensable for knowledge [*für das Wissen*], is never more than accessory. [*das Beiwerk*].³⁰ (Hereafter bracketed originals and emphasis by the present author.)

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Note that Heidegger, while distinguishing between *das Wissen* (“knowledge”) and *die Kenntnis* (“information”) in the passage above, resists reducing *tékhne* [τῆσνῆ] without qualification to even such exalted meaning as “Art” [*die Kunst*]. This is made clearer below in the same passage:

Knowledge is the ability to put into work the being of any particular essent [*Seiende*]. The Greeks called art [*die Kunst*] in the true sense and the work of art [*das Kunstwerk*] *techne*, because art is what most immediately brings being (i.e. the appearing that stands there in itself) to stand, stabilizes it in something present (the work) [*weil die Kunst das Sein, d. h. das in sich dastehende Erscheinen, am unmittelbarsten in einem Anwesenden (im Werk) zum stehen bringt*]. The work of art [*Das Werk der Kunst*] is a work not primarily because it is wrought <gewirkt,> made [*gemacht ist*], but because it brings about <er-wirkt> being in an essent [*das Sein in einem Seienden*]; it brings about the phenomenon in which the emerging power, *physis*, comes to shine [*Er-wirken heiß hier ins Werk bringen, worin als dem Erscheinenden das waltende Aufgehen, die φύσις, zum Scheinen kommt*].³¹

Here, again, die *Erscheinung* (appearing *eídos* [εἶδος] in Greek) and *der Schein* should be carefully considered, not only in the variations of meaning of, especially, the latter term as discussed by Heidegger, but also in terms of the latter’s swaying power today, despite its low status of being a shadowy semblance and dissimulation --especially in the eyes of those judging from the vantage-point of supposedly “high-brow art”³²--, as a stand-in for the former, producing “illusions.”³³

This danger radiating from *tékhne* is again underlined in a seminar of the 1937/38 winter semester:

Τέχνη [*tékhne*] does not mean ‘technology’ [>>*Technik*<<] in the sense of the mechanical ordering of beings [*maschinenhaften Einrichtung des Seienden*], nor does it mean art [*Kunst (!!)*] in the sense of mere skill and proficiency [*bloße Fertigkeit und Geschicklichkeit*] in procedures and operations. Τέχνη [*tékhne*] means knowledge [*ein Erkennen* (a way of ‘knowing’?!!)]: know-how in processes [*das Sichauskennen im Vorgehen*] against beings (and in the encounter with beings [*Begegnung mit dem Seienden*]), i.e. against φύσις [*phúsis*].³⁴

In this text which, incidentally, parallels the text of his *Beiträge* which was written at the time, however, Heidegger curiously substitutes the verb, *Erkennen* (“knowing”) in the place of *Wissen* (“knowledge”) for his broad characterization of *tékhne* [τέχνη]. Why does he do that? An enigma. Moreover, and to add to our surprise, we are later faced with a serious warning concerning the nature of τῆσνῆ [τῶκηνε], which may be more than “the sur-plus of *physis*, through which *physis* ‘deciphers’ and presents itself.”³⁵

This basic attitude [*Grundhaltung*] toward φύσις [*phúsis*], τέχνη [*tékhnē*], as the carrying out of the necessity and need of wonder [*Vollzug der Notwendigkeit der Not des Erstaunens*], is at the same time, however, the ground upon which arises ἁμείωσις [*hómoiosis*], the transformation of ἀλ'θεία [*álétheia*] as concealedness into correctness. In other words, in carrying out the basic disposition [*Grundstimmung*] itself there resides the danger of its disturbance and destruction [die Gefahr ihrer Verstörung und Zerstörung]. For in the essence of τέχνη [*tékhnē*], as required by φύσις [*phúsis*] itself, as the occurrence and establishment of the unconcealment of being [*als des vorgehenden und einrichtenden Waltenlassens der Unverborgenheit des Seienden*], there lies the possibility of arbitrariness [*Eigenmächtigen*], of an unbridled positing of goals [*losgebundenen Zwecksetzung*] and thereby the possibility of escape out of the necessity of the primordial need [*der anfänglichen Not*].³⁶

In this basic and yet highly general assessment of the distant origin (i.e. τέχνη [*tékhnē*]) of both modern technology and modern art, and on one hand, the fearful reality of the displacement of art by today's technological progress,³⁷ however, on the other, one cannot but help thinking of the possibility that the works of art may not have been hermetically sealed from the effect of τὸ deinón which today lies at the heart of modern technology [*Technik*], and furthermore, this may have been the case in art at all times and not solely under the conditions of today's *Kulturindustrie*. Here, a key-concept Heidegger deploys to characterize the essence of modern technology --which is nothing technological-- acquires special importance, namely the concept of *Ge-stell* (enframing) which, in a note to the translation of Petzet's work "designates the sum total of posing-positing-establishing of the calculative thinking of "technics." In *Ge-stell* "things are pre-established (posited in advance), without letting them appear or unfold in all their disclosing possibilities."³⁸

It should by now be perfectly clear what is at stake here. Having already emphasized the autonomy of the work of art having its own principle of objectivity without any recourse to any science of art [*Kunstwissenschaft*], the question now becomes, if this, too, is a thing of the past, viz. the only domain where things are claimed to refuse to yield to objectification as demanded by *Ge-stell* and hence preserve in the autonomy of art "their disclosing possibilities." We may shortly dwell on an already traversed domain: i.e. the position of the artist/producer with respect to the work of art once it is out "there" with its own inner tensions and motions facing the recipient. Here we are not going to dwell on the contemporary myth of "Genius" and "Creativity,"³⁹ yet it is highly significant to underline again the work-character of the work of art in its free presencing, viz. in its autonomy from both its creator and the receiving end (observer). Once again, it suffices to give brilliant summary by Gadamer himself concerning the artist's end:

'Work' [*Werk*] does not mean anything different from the Greek word 'ergon'. It is characterized --just like 'ergon'-- by the fact that it is detached both from the producer and the activity of production. This points to an ancient Platonic problem: The design of a particular thing does not depend on who makes it but on who is to use it. This applies to all work, particularly to works of art. Of course, a work of art, unlike an object of handicraft, is not made for a designated use but rather is suspended from use and consequently from misuse. It stands, so to speak, only for itself and in itself. Now this is decisive for dealing with the question at hand concerning the intention of the author. When it comes to a work of art, it could be said that the intention has, so to speak, 'gone into' the work, and can no longer be sought behind it or before it. This sharply limits the value of all biographical insights related to a work of art, as well as those associated with the history of its origins. Works of art are detached from their origins and just because of this, begin to speak-- perhaps surprising even their creators.⁴⁰

If that is still really the case, namely the works of art are in fact "there" [*>>Da<<*] and refusing to submit to the wills of both their creators and recipients alike, and, further, making their silent claim, their "command" [*das Diktat*]⁴¹ on the receiving side, does it still have the power of an ethical call, no matter how indirect it may be? After all these

necessary detours and digressions under historical-societal conditions where old myths take on new appearances while the proliferation of ethical babbling is no more than “idle talk” [*das Gerede*], can today’s art contribute anything through its works “ethical” beyond and above today’s “Christian-moralistic-psychological” [*christlich-moralisch-psychologisch*] way of submissiveness that has its roots in a “medieval...Arabic-Jewish-Christian way [*mittelalterlich, arabisch-jüdisch-christlich verstanden*].”⁴² In short, can one sense the possibility of a new beginning on the horizon through the medium art today?

A difficult question to which no ready-made answer exists. In an age where the heavy fog of ‘boredom’ as well as “intoxication,” both of which characterized the bourgeois life as an antinomy since at least Schopenhauer,⁴³ can only be dispelled by the “work,”⁴⁴ particularly through the so-called “works of art” in the limited space of “freedom” left to us, the moderns, Heidegger’s half-answer may very well ring true:

Only if we know that we do not yet know who we are do we ground the one and only ground which may release the *future* of a simple, essential existence [*Dasein*] of historical man from itself.

This ground is the essence of truth. This essence must be prepared in thought in the transition to another beginning. For the future, the situation of the powers which ground the truth in the first place, namely poetry (and consequently art in general) and thinking, will be quite different than it was in the first [i.e. Greek, H.Ü.N.] beginning. Poetry will not be first, but in the transition the *forerunner* will have to be *thinking*. Art, however, will be for the future the putting into work of truth (or it will be nothing), i.e., it will be one essential grounding of the essence of truth. According to this highest standard, anything that would present itself as art must be measured as a way of letting truth come *into being* in these beings, which, as *works*, enchantingly transport man into the intimacy of Being while imposing on him the luminosity of the unconcealed and disposing him and determining him to be the custodian of the truth of Being.⁴⁵

Distant sound of a piper at the gates of dawn? Perhaps. Or just some modern oracle, simply giving signs? Likely.

FOOTNOTES:

1. “It is not so much our judgements as it is our prejudices that constitute our being. This is a provocative formulation, for I am using it to restore to its rightful place a positive concept of prejudice that was driven out of our linguistic usage by the French and the English Enlightenment. It can be shown that the concept of prejudice did not originally have the meaning we have attached to it. Prejudices are not necessarily unjustified or erroneous, so that they inevitably distort the truth... Prejudices are biases of our openness to the world. They are simply conditions whereby we experience something --whereby what we encounter says something to us [...*daß nicht so sehr unsere Urteile als unsere Vorurteile unser Sein ausmachen. Das ist eine provokatorische Formulierung, sofern ich damit einen Begriff des Vorurteils, der durch die französische und englische Aufklärung aus dem Sprachgebrauch verdrängt worden ist, wieder in sein Recht einsetze. Es läßt sich nämlich zeigen, daß der Begriff des Vorurteils ursprünglich durchaus nicht den Sinn allein hat, den wir damit verbinden. Vorurteile sind nicht notwendig unberechtigt und irrig, so daß sie die Wahrheit verstellen. In Wahrheit liegt es in der geschichtlichkeit unseres Existenz, daß die Vorurteile im wörtlichen Sinne des Wortes die vorgängige Gerichtetheit all unseres Erfahren-Könnens ausmachen. Sie sind voreingenommenheiten unserer Weltoffenheit, die gerade zu Bedingungen dafür sind, daß wir etwas erfahren, daß uns das, was uns begegnet, etwas sagt.*].” “The Universality of the Hermeneutical Problem,” *Philosophical Hermeneutics*, trans. David E. Linge (Berkeley: Univ. of California Press, 1977), p. 9. / >>Die Universalität des hermeneutischen Problems [1966]<<, *Kleine Schriften, I: Philosophie, Hermeneutik* (Tübingen: J. C. B. Mohr, 1967), p. 106.

2. Max Horkheimer und Theodor W. Adorno, *Dialectic of Enlightenment*, trans. John Cumming (New York: The Seabury Press, 1972). Esp. “The Culture Industry: Enlightenment as Mass Deception,” pp. 120-167. / *Dialektik der Aufklärung: Philosophische Fragmente* (Frankfurt am Main: Fischer Taschenbuch Verlag, 1971 [1944]). >>Kulturindustrie. Aufklärung als Massenbetrug,<< pp. 108-150; again Theodor W. Adorno, “Culture Industry Reconsidered,” *New German Critique*, 6 (Fall 1975), p. 12-19. / Theodor W. Adorno, >>Résumé über Kulturindustrie,<< *Gesammelte Schriften*, Band X/1 [Kulturkritik und Gesellschaft I: Prismen/Ohne Leitbild] (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 1997), p. 337-345. Finally, Theodor W. Adorno,

Aesthetic Theory, trans. Robert Hullot-Kantor (London: The Athlone Press 1997). *passim*, particularly 314-15. / Theodor W. Adorno, *Ästhetische Theorie* (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp Verlag, 1973), p. 466-67.

3. The adverse effect of “the universal leveling process in which we cease to notice anything --a process encouraged by a civilization that dispenses increasingly powerful stimuli [*sich aus dem alles einebnenden Überhören und Übersehen zu erheben, das eine immer reizmächtigere Zivilisation zu vertreiben am Werk ist*]” has been a major issue for Gadamer as well; for example, “The Relevance of the Beautiful: Art as play, symbol, and festival,” *The Relevance of the Beautiful and Other Essays*, trans. Nicholas Walker, ed. & intro. Robert Bernasconi (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986), p. 36. / >>Die Aktualität des Schönen. Kunst als Spiel, Symbol und Fest [1974], << *Gesammelte Werke*, Band 8 [*Ästhetik und Poetik, I: Kunst als Aussage*] (Tübingen J. C. B. Mohr, 1993), p. 127. As to the perceived difference on Gadamer's part, he says: “The point of divergence between Adorno and myself, on the question of abstract art, is the aesthetic consciousness. Adorno follows Kant's definition of taste, and uses this definition for art. This is a deep mistake. One of my central concerns has been to demonstrate that the aesthetic consciousness, as such, does not exist. Art is always more than merely the fulfillment of aesthetic expectations. Where I do agree with Adorno is with regard to the crucial part played by the mass media. The multiplication of imagery by the mass media has an enormously leveling effect, so that art must make very special efforts to be seen and heard about. This is the reason why modern art is so hard to make sense of. It is a good reason. The difficulty of modern art is a necessary difficulty. We are so flooded by information that only very provocative forms of composition can attract the concentration of an audience. This is how I understand modern art.” Roy Boyne, “Interview with Hans-Georg Gadamer,” *Theory, Culture and Society*, V/1 (Feb. 1988), p. 32.

4. Adorno says: “Most important, the artistic process, ... is by no means exhausted in the subjective intention... Intention is one moment in it; intention is transformed into a work only in exhaustive interaction with other moments; the subject matter, the immanent law of the work, and --especially in Hölderlin-- the objective linguistic form. Part of what estranges refined taste from art is that it credits the artist with everything, while artists' experience teaches them how little what is most their own belongs to them, how much they are under the compulsion of the work itself. The more completely the artist's intention is taken up into what he makes and disappears in it without a trace, the more successful the work is. [*Vor allem aber erschöpft der künstlerische Prozeß, ... keineswegs derart sich in der subjektiven Intention, ... Die Intention ist darin ein Moment: sie verwandelt sich zum Gebilde nur, indem sie an anderen Momenten sich abarbeitet, dem Sachgehalt, dem immanenten Gestez des Gebildes und -zumal bei Hölderlin- der objektiven Sprachgestalt. Zur Kunstfremdheit des Feinsinns rechnet es, den Künstler alles zuzutrauen; die Künstler selbst indessen werden durch ihre erfahrung darüber belhrt, wie wenig ihr Eigenes ihnen gehört, in welchem Maß sie dem Zwang des Gebildes gehorchen.*],” “Parataxis: On Hölderlin's Late Poetry,” *Notes to Literature*, Vol. III, trans. Shierry Weber Nicholsen (New York: Columbia University Press, 1992), p. 110. / >>Parataxis: Zur späten Lyrik Hölderlins, << *Noten zur Literatur*, Vol. III (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 1981 [1974]), p. 448.

5. In this respect, cf., Hans-Georg Gadamer, “The Speechless Image,” *The Relevance of the Beautiful and Other Essays*, pp. 83-91. Esp. 91. / >>Vom Verstummen des Bildes, << *Kleine Schriften II: Interpretationen* (Tübingen: J. C. B. Mohr, 1967), pp. 227-234. Esp. 234.

6. This extremely important qualification brought to the artworks, namely “index veri et falsii,” there being their own criterion of truth, finds in the realm of morality its counterpart in what is tacitly conveyed by the two Greek expressions, especially in Aristotle, namely, “τὸ δέον (τὸ δέον)” [*das Tunliche*; the right thing to do] and “τὸ ἥτι (τὸ ἥτι)” [*das >Daß<*; “this something”]; but more about it below, notes 23 and 24.

7. Adorno, *Aesthetic Theory*, pp. 314, 315. / *Ästhetische Theorie*, pp. 466, 467.

8. “...for here there is no place/that does not see you. You must change your life [“*Du mußt dein Leben ändern*”].” Having in mind this well-known exemplar from Rilke's poem, “Archaische Torso Apollos,” Gadamer endorses thereby the ethical élan of “timelessness of the rainbow of art which spans all historical distances [*die Zeitlosigkeit des überalle geschichtlichen Abstände sich wölbenden Regenbogens der Kunst*]” conveyed by its particular works/creations [*Werke/Gebilde*] with great enthusiasm: “In comparison with all other linguistic and nonlinguistic tradition, the work of art is the absolute present for each present [*daß es für jeweilige Gegenwart absolute Gegenwart ist*], and at the same time holds its word in readiness for every future [*uns zugleich für alle Zukunft sein Wort bereithält*]. The intimacy with which the work of art touches us is at the same time, in enigmatic fashion, a shattering and a demolition of the familiar [*auf rätselhafte Weise Erschütterung und Einsturz des Gewohnten*]. It is not only the ‘This art thou [“*Das bist du!*”]’ disclosed in a joyous and frightening shock [*das es in einem freudigen und furchtbaren Schreck aufdeckt*]; it also says to us; “Thou must alter thy life [“*Du mußt dein Leben ändern.*”].” “Aesthetics and Hermeneutics,” *Philosophical Hermeneutics*, p. 216 and 104, respectively. / >>Ästhetik und Hermeneutik [1964], << *Gadamer Lesebuch*, herausgegeben von Jean Grondin (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1997), p. 119. The almost identical views expressed by both Gadamer and Lukács cannot be easily dismissed and, given necessary qualifications under

changed conditions, still provides a powerful pointer to our historically determinate human condition (*nostra causa agitur*: "it is our case that is in question"). Lukács, too, refers to Rilke's poem, underlining the significance of its appeal to the beholder, something incomparable to any other human experience. The same appeal, Lukács argues a little later, was an axiom in Brecht's art as well. G. Lukács, *Die Eigenart des Ästhetischen*, (Darmstadt und Neuwied: Luchterhand, 1963); I. Halbband, Zehntes Kapitel: >>Probleme der Mimesis VI/II: Die Katharsis als allgemeine Kategorie der Ästhetik,<< pp. 802-8. For further elaboration of the concepts >der Ganze Mensch< and >Menschen ganz< as well as the emancipatory message, "*nostra causa agitur*," see Ágnes Heller, "Lukács's Aesthetics," *The New Hungarian Quarterly*, VII [# 24] (Winter 1966), pp. 84-94 and G. H. R. Parkinson, "Lukács on the Central Category of Aesthetics" in *Georg Lukács: The Man, his work and his ideas*, ed. H. R. Parkinson (New York Random House, 1970), pp. 109-146. For a treatment of the aesthetic theories of both Lukács and Adorno, see Nicolae Tertulian, "Lukács' Aesthetics and Its Critics," *Telos*, # 52 (Summer 1982), pp. 159-67.

9. I tend to think what Adorno has in mind with respect to *Bildung* in this context is totally different from the current and often cleverly tendentious "cultured society" [*Bildungsgesellschaft*] which Gadamer, too, does not appear to hold in high regard for its promotion of "later bourgeois religion of culture [*die spätbürgerliche Bildungsreligion*];" cf. Hans-Georg Gadamer, "The Relevance of the Beautiful: Art as play, Symbol, and festival," *The Relevance of the Beautiful and Other Essays*, p. 32. / >>Die Aktualität des Schönen. Kunst als Spiel, Symbol und Fest [1974],<< *Gesammelte Werke*, Band 8, p. 123. Gadamer once wrote: "A genuine artistic creation stands within a particular community, and such a community is always distinguishable from the cultured society that is informed and terrorized by art criticism [*Jedem echten künstlerischen Schaffen ist seine Gemeinde zugeordnet, und eine solche ist immer etwas anderes als die Bildungsgesellschaft, die von der Kunstkritik informiert und terrorisiert wird*]." "The Universality of the Hermeneutical Problem," *Philosophical Hermeneutics*, p. 5. / >>Die Universalität des hermeneutischen Problems [1966],<< *Kleine Schriften, I: Philosophie, Hermeneutik* (Tübingen: J. C. B. Mohr, 1967), p. 103.

10. An appropriate coinage by John Beverly in particular reference to music where he says: "Just before Monteverdi, the Italian Mannerists had proclaimed the formal autonomy of the art work from religious dogma. But if the increasing secularization of music in the European late Baroque and eighteenth century led on the one hand to the Jacobin utopianism of the Ninth Symphony, it produced on the other something like Kant's aesthetics of the sublime, that is a mysticism of the bourgeois ego. As Adorno was aware, we are still in modern music in a domain where, as in the relation of music and feudalism, aesthetic experience, repression and sublimation, and class privilege and self-legitimation converge." "The Ideology of Postmodern Music and Left Politics," *Critical Quarterly*, 31.1 (Spring 1989), p. 42, note 7, 55. Adorno, being fully aware that "...Kant faithfully presented the power of the subject [*die Kraft des Subjekts*] as the precondition of the sublime," provides one with further confirmation in the relevant passage quoted by Beverly: "Beethoven's symphonic language, which in its most secret chemistry is the bourgeois process of production as well as the expression of capitalism's perennial disaster, at the same time becomes a fait social by its gesture of tragic affirmation: Things are as they must and should be and are therefore good. At the same time, this music belongs to the revolutionary process of bourgeois emancipation, just as it anticipates its apologetics. The more deeply artworks are deciphered, the less their antithesis to praxis remains absolute;" *Aesthetic Theory*, pp. 245, 241. / *Ästhetische Theorie*, pp. 364, 358. For an extended discussion of the concept of "sublime," see Terry Eagleton, *The Ideology of the Aesthetic* (Oxford: Blackwell Publishers, Ltd., 1990). *passim*.

11. Philip Wheelwright, *Heraclitus* (New York: Atheneum, 1964), p. 85.

12. Adorno, *Aesthetic Theory*, p.198. / *Ästhetische Theorie*, p. 295.

13. "Beauty is the exodus of what has objectivated itself in the realm of means and ends from this realm. [>>*Schönheit ist der Exodus dessen, was im Reich der Zwecke sich objektivierte, aus diesem.<<*]" Adorno, *Aesthetic Theory*, p. 288. / *Ästhetische Theorie*, p. 428. Adorno also brought qualifications to some of his other sayings which are often quoted out of context. One salient example concerns his saying about poetry after Auschwitz. Where the original is: "Cultural criticism finds itself faced with the final stage of the dialectic of culture and barbarism. To write poetry after Auschwitz is barbaric. And this corrodes even the knowledge of why it has become impossible to write poetry today [>>*Kulturrkritik findet sich der letzten Stufe der Dialektik von Kultur und Barbarei gegenüber: nach Auschwitz ein Gedicht zu schreiben, ist barbarisch, und das frisst auch die Erkenntnis an, die ausspricht, warum es unmöglich ward, heute Gedichte zu schreiben.<<*]" in Theodor W. Adorno, "Cultural Criticism and Society," *Prisms*, trans. Samuel and Shierry Weber (Cambridge, Massachusetts: The MIT Press, 1981), p. 34. / "Kulturrkritik und Gesellschaft" *Gesammelte Schriften X/1 [Kulturrkritik und Gesellschaft I: Prismen/Ohne Leitbild]* (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 1997), p. 30. Adorno qualifies this, however, in his introduction of June 1969 to the second part of his *Kritische Modelle*: "It must be strongly emphasized that education after Auschwitz can succeed only in a global situation that no longer produces the conditions and the people that bear the responsibility for Auschwitz. This global situation has not yet changed, and it is unfortunate that those who desire the transformation obstinately refuse this idea."

in Theodor W. Adorno, *Critical Models: Interventions and Catchwords*, trans. Henry W. Pickford (New York: Columbia Univ. Press, 1998), p. 126 / Theodor W. Adorno, *Stichworte: Kritische Modelle 2* (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp Verlag, 1969), p. 9-10. [My emphasis].

14. Adorno, *Aesthetic Theory*, p. 273. / *Ästhetische Theorie*, p. 406, 407.

15. Theodor W. Adorno, "Music and New Music," *Quasi una Fantasia*, trans. Rodney Livingstone (London: Verso, 1963/1992), p. 263. Even though the realm of aesthetics and art cover not only the classical "schöne Kunst" and the literary production but additionally music which is considered to be the "most sublime of arts" (Gadamer) and being neither conceptual nor linguistic yet having a syntax and logical structure (Adorno), I don't think the limited space opened up by the present article does justice to music and its ethical potential which deserves a lengthier treatment. It would be of value, however, to be reminded at the moment that music is by its very nature the vehicle by which we escape the realm of means and ends and enter that of freedom. "It was Schopenhauer," writes Slavoj Žižek, not far from Adorno, "who claimed that music brings us in contact with the Ding-an-sich: it renders directly the drive of the life substance the words can only signify. For that reason, music 'seizes' the subject in the real of his/her being, bypassing the detour of meaning: in music, we hear what we cannot see, the vibrating life-force beneath the flow of Vorstellungen." "'I Hear You with My Eyes'; or, The Invisible Master," *Gaze and Voice as Love Objects*, ed. by Renata Salecl and Slavoj Žižek (Durham and London: Duke Univ. Press, 1996), p. 94.

16. Éva Fekete and Éva Karádi, *György Lukács: His Life in Pictures and Documents* (Budapest: Corvina Kiadó, 1981), p. 61. In posing the same question, Gadamer too relies on Rilke's powerful insight: "As Rilke says; 'Such a thing stood among men.' This fact that it exists, its facticity, represents an insurmountable resistance against any superior presumption that we can make sense of it at all. The work of art compels us to recognize this fact. 'There is no place which fails to see you. You must change your life.' [um mit Rilke zu sprechen: >>So etwas stand unter den Menschen<< Dieses, daß es das gibt, die Faktizität, ist zugleich ein unüberwindlicher Widerstand gegen alle sich überlegen glaubende Sinnerwartung. Das anzuerkennen, zwingt uns das Kunstwerk. >>Da ist keine Stelle, die dich nicht sieht. Du mußt dein Leben ändern.<<]." "The Relevance of the Beautiful: Art as play, symbol, and festival," *The Relevance of the Beautiful and Other Essays*, p. 36. / >>Die Aktualität des Schönen. Kunst als Spiel, Symbol und Fest [1974],<< *Gesammelte Werke*, Band 8, p. 123. [Emphasis added.]

17. Adorno, *Aesthetic Theory*, pp. 265, 315. / *Ästhetische Theorie*, pp. 395, 466.

18. Hans-Georg Gadamer, "The Political Incompetence of Philosophy," *The Heidegger Case: On Philosophy and Politics*, ed. Tom Rockmore and Joseph Margolis (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1992), p. 366.

19. "Thus, for example, Aristotle claimed that certain animals also clearly possess phronesis. He was thinking primarily about bees and ants, about animals which gather food for the winter and so, from a human point of view, reveal foresight, something which must include an awareness of time. An awareness of time --this is something momentous. For it does not signify merely an increase in knowledge, in the power of anticipation, but involves what is in fact a fundamentally different status altogether. It means the ability to forgo the gratification of the most immediate goal in favour of a long-term fixed purpose. [So sagt z. B. Aristoteles, gewisse Tiere hätten offenkundig auch >phronesis< - er denkt vor allem an die Bienen, an die Ameisen, an die Tiere, die für den Winter sammeln und auf diese Weise, menschlich gesehen, Voraussicht uns das schließt ein: Sinn für Zeit - das ist etwas Ungeheures. Es bedeutet nicht bloß eine Erkenntnissteigerung, Vorausschau, sondern einen grundsätzlich anderen Status: Anhalten im Verfolgen des allernächsten Zwecks zugunsten eines auf längere Sicht angestrebten, festgehaltenen Zieles.]" Hans-Georg Gadamer, "The Problem of Intelligence," *The Enigma of Health: The Art of Healing in a Scientific Age*, trans. Jason Geiger and Nicholas Walker (London: Polity Press, 1996), p. 47. / >>Zum Problem der Intelligenz,<< *Über die Verborgenheit der Gesundheit* (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp Verlag, 1993), pp. 67-68.

20. "I believe that here again something very simple is involved. Primitive man, whom I introduced earlier, selected some kind of stone. One stone is suitable to cut a branch, the other not, and this fact - suitable or unsuitable-- poses a completely new question, which could not arise in organic nature... From the standpoint of inorganic nature this is completely immaterial, whilst in the simplest form of labour, the problem of the useful and the non-useful, the suitable and the unsuitable, already involves a concept of value... Here, in my opinion, is the ontological origin of what we call value, and from this antithesis of the valuable and the not valuable a completely new category now arises, which is basically what it is in social life that is meaningful or meaningless. Here you are faced with a great historic process. Meaningful life was originally simply identical with social conformity. Consider for example the famous epitaph of the Spartans who fell at Thermopylae: a meaningful life for them was to obey their laws and die for Sparta. Even in the most heterogenous complexes of social life, a man must act in a unified way, for he must also reproduce his own life." *Conversations with Lukács*, ed. Theo Pinkus [with Wolfgang Abendroth, H. Heinz Holz, Leo Kofler] (Cambridge, Mass.: The MIT

Press, 1974 [1967]). Conversation with Hans Heinz Holz: "Being and Consciousness," p. 30. [Emphases added.] The epitaph in question says: "Foreigner, go tell the Spartans / that we lie here obedient to their commands. [Ἦ ξείν', ἀγγέλλειν Λακεδαιμονίους ὅτι τῆδε κείμεθα, τοῖς κείνων ῥήμασι πειθόμενοι.]" Herodotus, *Histories, Seventh Book* (Polymnia), p. 228.2 [based on, *Herodotus*, trans. A. D. Godley (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1920)].

21. Gadamer, referring to Weber's distinction between *Gesinnungsethik* and *Verantwortungsethik*, says: "The extraordinary depoliticization of Germany in this period prompted Max Weber to coin the term 'ethics of responsibility' --as if responsibility did not lie at the heart of all ethics! In any case, ethics is not a question merely of attitude: it also means correct behavior and, therefore, the acceptance of responsibility for the consequences of one's deeds and omissions. The 'ethics of principle' that people saw in Kant (erroneously, by the way) was in reality the expression of the German political weakness and lack of political solidarity. This weakness became a malady of the authority-oriented bourgeois society of nineteenth-century Germany... I would say basically that we each discover eventually within ourselves the responsibility that we all must bear." "The Political Incompetence of Philosophy," *The Heidegger Case: On Philosophy and Politics*, p.369. [Emphasis added.] It is significant that the lecture Weber delivered at Munich University took place after the World War I (published in revised form in 1919 and after his death, in 1921) is the culmination of Weber's intensive study of power politics, especially in the Germany of his time. Runciman rightly suggests to read it both "as a discussion of the changing role of the professional politician in modern society and [as] a personal political testament." See: *Weber: Selections in translation*, ed. by W. G. Runciman (Cambridge: Cambridge Univ. Press, 1978), p. 210. For the full text of "Politics as a Vocation," see, *From Max Weber: Essays in Sociology*, ed. & trans. Hans H. Gerth and C. Wright Mills (New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1946/1967), pp. 77-128; esp. 115 where Weber says: "To be sure, mere passion, however genuinely felt, is not enough. It does not make a politician, unless passion as devotion to a 'cause' also makes responsibility to this cause the guiding star of action. And for this, a sense of proportion is needed." Additionally see, Theodor W. Adorno, *Problems of Moral Philosophy*, ed. Thomas Schröder and trans. Rodney Livingstone (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2000), Lecture 1, p. 7 and note 16, p. 184.

22. Gadamer, "The Political Incompetence of Philosophy," *The Heidegger Case*, p. 366

23. Gadamer, "The Political Incompetence of Philosophy," *The Heidegger Case*, p. 369. [Emphasis added.]

24. Kant's passage in translation: "Thus within the moral knowledge of common human reason we have attained its principle. To be sure, common human reason does not think of it abstractly in such a universal form, but it always has it in view and uses it as the standard of its judgements. It would be easy to show how common human reason, with this compass, knows well how to distinguish what is good, what is bad, and what is consistent or inconsistent with duty. Without in the least teaching common reason anything new, we need only to draw its attention to its own principle, in the manner of Socrates, thus showing that neither science nor philosophy is needed in order to know what one has to do in order to be honest and good, and even wise and virtuous. [So sind wir denn in der moralischen Erkenntnis der gemeinen Menschenvernunft bis zu ihrem Prinzip gelangt, welches sie sich zwar freilich nicht so in einer allgemeinen Form abgesondert demkt, aber doch jederzeit wirklich vor Augen hat und zum Richtmaße ihrer Beurteilung braucht. Es ware hier leicht zu zeigen, wie sie, mit diesem Kompass in der Hand, in allen vorkommenden Fällen sehr gut Bescheid wisse, zu unterscheiden, was gut, was böse; pflichtmäßig oder pflichtwidrig sei, wenn man, ohne sie im mindesten etwas Neues zu lehren, sie nur, wie SOKRATES tat, auf ihr eigenes Prinzip aufmerksam macht, und daß es also keiner Wissenschaft und Philosophie bedürfe, um zu wissen, was man zu tun habe, um ehrlich und gut, ja sogar, um weise und tugendhaft zu sein.]" *Foundations of the Metaphysics of Morals*, trans. Lewis White Beck (Indianapolis and New York: The Bobbs-Merrill Company, Inc., 1959), p. 20. / *Grundlegung zur Metaphysik der Sitten, facsimile of Immanuel Kants Werke*, Band IV, herausgegeben von Arthur Buchenau und Ernst Cassirer, Berlin 1922, with a translation into Turkish by Ioanna Kuçuradi (Ankara: Hacettepe University Pub. B 24, 1982), p. 19. This is clearly what Adorno refers to at the beginning of his 1963 lectures on moral philosophy: see Adorno, *Problems of Moral Philosophy*, pp. 1-2; Note 5, 82.

25. The following articles by Gadamer in both in the original and translation lay, in part, the basis for my discussion concerning ethical dimension: >>Das Ontologische Problem des Wertes [1971], << *Kleine Schriften, IV: Variationen* (Tübingen: J. C. B. Mohr, 1977), pp. 205-217; >>Probleme der praktischen Vernunft [1980], << *Gesammelte Werke*, Band 2: [Hermeneutik II] (Tübingen: J. C. B. Mohr, 1993), pp. 319-329; >>Die Idee der praktischen Philosophie [1983], << *Gesammelte Werke*, Band 10: [Hermeneutik im Rückblick] (Tübingen: J. C. B. Mohr, 1995), pp. 238-246; >>Ethos und Ethik (MacIntyre u.a.) [1985], << *Gesammelte Werke*, Band 3: [Neuere Philosophie I] (Tübingen: J. C. B. Mohr, 1987), pp. 350-374; and especially, "Aristotle and the Ethic of Imperatives," *Action and Contemplation: Studies in the Moral and Political Thought of Aristotle*, ed. Robert C. Bartlett and Susan D. Collins (Albany: SUNY Press, 1999), pp.53-67 [orig. as >>Aristoteles und die imperativische Ethik [1989], << *Gesammelte Werke*, Band 7: [Griechische Philosophie III] (Tübingen: J. C. B. Mohr, 1991), pp. 381-395] and "The Problem of Intelligence," *The Enigma of Health: The Art of Healing in*

a *Scientific Age*, trans. Jason Geiger ve Nicholas Walker (London: Polity Press, 1996), pp. 45-60 [orig. as >>Zum Problem der Intelligenz,<< *Über die Verborgenheit der Gesundheit* (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp Verlag, 1993), pp. 65-83].

26. One is curiously reminded here of Adorno's deployment of the Greek saying *tóde ti* [tÓde ti], meaning "this something" with respect to the relation between the universal and the particular in art, as in the example of Dadaists' subscribing to universality behind such childish motto: "Art must contract to the geometrical point of the absolute *τὸδε τι* and go beyond it. [*Sie muß über den Punkt des absoluten τὸδε τι hinaus, zu dem sie sich zusammenziehen muß.*]" from the section, 'Universal and Particular' [*Allgemeines und Besonderes*] in the "Draft Introduction" [*Frühe Einleitung*] to his posthumously published *Aesthetic Theory*, p. 351. / *Ästhetische Theorie*, p. 522.

27. Gadamer does not hesitate to apply this 'fear provoking' Greek word to the all too familiar, and therefore uncanny conditions of the modern life: "In politics, for example, this is the unprincipled exponent of immediacy, in economic life the financial opportunist who is not to be trusted, and in the social realm it is the confidence trickster [*in der Politik der gesinnungslose Opportunist, im Wirtschaftsleben der Konjunkturritter, dem nicht zu trauen ist, im gesellschaftlichen Bereich der Hochstapler usw.*]", "The Problem of Intelligenz," p. 48. / >>Zum Problem der Intelligenz,<< p. 69.

28. My reservation with respect to the positive light Gadamer sheds on such Greek words of moral import as *phronésis* [φρονήσις], *sophrosuné* [σοφροσύνη], and *proairesis* [προαίρεσις] is that these words in the Ancient Greeks' usage often pointed at a calculating thinking and cleverness dictated by the exigencies of various situations in different contexts and at different times. Cf. Peter Green, "War and Morality in Fifth-Century Athens: The Case of Euripides' Trojan Women," *The Ancient History Bulletin*, XIII/33 (1999), pp. 97-110 and John R. Wilson, "Sophrosyne in Thucydides," *The Ancient History Bulletin*, IV/3 (1990), pp. 51-57. Even a word of philosophical value, *sophía* [σοφία], was no exception, as the word and its cognates were deployed as "cunning" and "craftiness" e.g. in Homer, *Iliad, Book 15*, lines 410-415 as well as in nearly twenty places throughout Herodotus' *Histories*.

29. The most typical example is his well-known >>Brief über den >Humanismus<< in Martin Heidegger, *Wegmarken* (Frankfurt am Main: Vittorio Klostermann, 1996), pp. 313-364. / "Letter on Humanism," *Basic Writings*, ed. D. Farrell Krell (New York: HarperCollins, Pubs., 1993), pp. 217-265. For example: "Because we are speaking against 'values' people are horrified at a philosophy that ostensibly dares to despise humanity's best qualities. For what is more 'logical' than that a thinking that denies values must necessarily pronounce everything valueless? (pp. 346/249)... People hear talk about 'humanism,' 'logic,' 'values,' 'world,' and 'God.' They hear something about opposition to these. They recognize and accept these things as positive. But with hearsay --in a way that is not strictly deliberate-- they immediately assume that what speaks against something is automatically its negation and that this is 'negative' in the sense of destructive. (pp. 347/249-250) ...To think against 'values' is not to maintain that everything interpreted as 'a value' --'culture,' 'art,' 'science,' 'human dignity,' 'world,' 'God'--is valueless... Every valuing, even where it values positively, is a subjectivizing. It does not let beings: be [*Alles Werten ist, auch wo es positiv wertet, eine Subjektivierung. Es läßt das Seiende nicht: sein, ...*]...To think against values therefore does not mean to beat the drum for the valuelessness and the nullity of beings." (pp. 349/251). In fact, Fred Dallmayr has recently emphasized the hidden dimension of ethics in Heidegger's way of thinking which is too often overlooked by his critics; cf. *The Other Heidegger* (Ithaca: Cornell Univ. Press, 1993) Chap. 4: "Heidegger on Ethics and Justice," pp. 106-131; 109 and 130 in particular. If the so-called non-western ways of thinking is considered in relation to "overcoming [*Überwindung/Verwindung*] Western metaphysics" Heidegger sets as his task of thinking "Being" which, in turn, is neither a God nor a cosmic plan (>>Das >Sein< --das ist nicht Gott und nicht ein Weltgrund<< in *Wegmarken*, p.331), it is inevitable that ethics will be part of this endeavour. The question of immediate relevance is, however, "art" as commonly understood today is a potent force to that end. Regarding ethos, which is immediately relevant to our discussion, Heidegger deploys here the Herakleitean fragment (Diels-Kranz, No. 119: *ἦθος ἀνθρώπων δαίμων*) usually translated as "a man's character is his daimon", however warning us that such translation thinks in a modern way and does not do justice to the original Greek one and adding: "Éthos means abode, dwelling place. The word names the open region in which man dwells [*ἦθος βεδευτετ Αὐφεντηαλτ, Ort des Wohnens. Das Wort nennt den offenen Bezirk, worin der Mensch wohnt.*]" "Letter on Humanism," *Basic Writings*, p. 256. / >>Brief über den >Humanismus<<, *Wegmarken*, p. 354.

30. *An Introduction to Metaphysics*, trans. Ralph Manheim (Garden City, N.Y.: Anchor Books, 1961), pp. 133-34. / *Einführung in die Metaphysik* (Tübingen: Max Niemeyer, 1953), p. 121-22.

31. Manheim, tr. , *An Introduction to Metaphysics*, p. 134 / 122.

32. For Adorno, it is this high art itself as "bourgeois religion of art [*bürgerlichen Kunstreligion, as a moment*

of what Gadamer would call *spätbürgerliche Bildungsreligion*]” or “serious art [*seriösen Kunst*]” which carried the seeds of Kitsch and eventually yielded to latter’s (ir?)resistible rise. “What once was art can later become kitsch,” says Adorno, *Aesthetic Theory*, p. 314-15. / *Ästhetische Theorie*, p. 466-67.

33. “*Der Schein*” is discussed in Heidegger’s *Einführung in die Metaphysik* in its three fundamental meanings; see, *An Introduction to Metaphysics*, pp. 84-5. / *Einführung in die Metaphysik*, p. 76). In this respect, Heidegger also provides telling contrasts, for example, with today’s cult of “celebrity” and subjectivized appreciation of “beauty” [*An Introduction*, pp. 87, 111. / *Einführung*, pp. 78, 100-101]. As V. Gordon Childe perceptively notes, “Illusions are experiences common to all men and in that sense public. Delusions, however, are private.” Yet this is no ground for pessimism; in spite of all the collective illusions as well as delusions of individuals’ private lives experiencing privation, “Every reproduction of the external world, constructed and used as a guide to action by an historical society, must in some degree correspond to that reality. Otherwise the society could not have maintained itself; its members, if acting in accordance with totally untrue propositions, would not have succeeded in making even the simplest tools and in securing therewith food and shelter from the external world.” V. Gordon Childe, *Society and Knowledge* (London: George Allen & Unwin Ltd., 1956), pp. 114, 108-9. Last but not the least, for Adorno, it is this very high art itself which carried the seeds of Kitsch (which, interestingly, did not crop up in the French language, as Adorno notes) and eventually yielded to latter’s (ir?)resistible rise; as we already emphasized, with respect to the holding-sway of *der Schein* in our day, Adorno underlines how spirit a.k.a culture is “neutralized,” offering “its wares in a selection for highbrows, middlebrows, and lowbrows” today. Adorno, *Aesthetic Theory*, pp. 314. / *Ästhetische Theorie*, p. 466.

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34. Martin Heidegger, *Basic Questions of Philosophy: Selected “Problems” of “Logic,”* trans. R. Rojcewicz and A. Schuwer (Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 1992), p. 154. / *Grundfragen der Philosophie: Ausgewählte >Probleme< der >Logik,<* (Frankfurt am Main: Vittorio Klostermann, 1984), p.179. [Heidegger’s emphasis.]

35. Philippe Lacoue-Labarthe, *Heidegger, Art and Politics: The Fiction of the Political*, trans. Chris Turner (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1990), p. 69.

36. Heidegger, *Basic Questions of Philosophy*, p. 155. / *Grundfragen der Philosophie*, p. 180.

37. Consider the following passage from a letter by Heidegger sent to Petzet referring to a universal tendency via the particular work of the artist Heinrich Vogeler: “This artist and the attempt he made with his work follow the essential destiny [*Geschick*] in which great art is no longer the necessary form for the presentation of the absolute --as Hegel saw it-- and is therefore without a place. Its refuge today is the babbling turmoil in the dilapidated shack called ‘society.’ In a superficial sense, the artist is driven to communism by ‘love for humans.’ But in truth it is terror, hidden even from himself, in the face of the end of art that was to found a world, in the era in which metaphysics is dissolved in a universal technology. Heinrich Vogeler’s love for humans wanders around worldlessly in an age of a will to power that breaks out to extremes. [*Dieser Künstler, der Versuch seines Werkes, folgen dem Geschick, daß die große Kunst, was Hegel gesehen hat, keine notwendige Form mehr ist der Darstellung des Absoluten - und darum ortlos. Ihr Unterkommen heute ist das geschwätzige Hausen in einer abbruchreifen Baracke, genannt ‚Gesellschaft‘. Vordergründig gesehen treibt diesen Künstler die ‚Menschenliebe‘ zum Kommunismus. In Wahrheit ist es das ihm selbst verborgene Erschrecken vor dem Ende der weltstiftenden Kunst im Zeitalter der Auflösung der Metaphysik in eine universale Technologie. Die Menschenliebe Heinrich Vogeler irrt weltlos umher in einem Weltalter des ins Äußerste aufbrechenden Willens zur Macht.*]” quoted in Heinrich Wiegand Petzet, *Encounters and Dialogues with Martin Heidegger, 1929-1976*, trans. Parvis Emad and Kenneth Maly (Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press, 1993), p. 140; cf. especially 145-46. / *Auf einen Stern zugehen: Begegnungen und Gespräche mit Martin Heidegger, 1929-1976* (Frankfurt am Main: Societäts Verlag, 1983), pp. 148; 153-54;

38. Petzet, *Encounters*, note 3 to Chp. 3, 232. Even more importantly, cf. also Martin Heidegger, “Technik und Kunst-Ge-stell,” *Kunst und Technik: Gedächtnisschrift zum 100. Geburtstag von Martin Heidegger*, Herausgegeben von Walter Biemel und Friedrich-Wilhelm v. Herrmann (Frankfurt am Main: Vittorio Klostermann, 1989), p. XIII-XIV.

39. “Creation is not making something out of nothing, but refashioning what already is. Any creative process, whether the painting of a picture, the composition of a symphony or the elaboration of a logical argument, illustrates precisely this combination of continuity and determinacy with flexibility and freedom.” *Society and Knowledge*, pp. 124; 126. Childe’s statement rings very true once *tékhnē* [tēchnē] is taken as a *Wissen* (or as *Erkennen*) as Heidegger claims (see above). Max Horkheimer, too, has pointed out such quality with respect to the works of art, saying: “Human beings are free to recognize themselves in works of art in so far as they have not succumbed to the general leveling. The individual’s experience embodied in a work of art has no less validity than the organized experience society brings to bear for the control of nature. Although its criterion lies in itself alone, art is knowledge no less than science is.” “Art and Mass Culture,” *Zeitschrift für*

Sozialforschung, Jahrgang 9 (1941), p. 290. [Emphasis added]. Moreover, we can note in passing that Marcel Proust's remark (letter to a certain Rosny Aine, June 14, 1921) may be of some relevance: "I believe that, if we could talk together, we would find that our theories do not greatly differ. You say that a work of art reflects its author; and that is absolutely true. But that author is not altogether identical with the 'man' displayed to his contemporaries." [quoted from *Correspondance de Marcel Proust*, Tome XX (1921), in *The Times Literary Supplement*, No. 4731 (Dec. 3, 1993), p. 4.] Here there is certainly a gap between the producer and producer as man. But we haven't even come to the recipient's end of the matter, which, in itself, presents one with formidable problems. Yet the "genius is diligence [*Genie ist fleiß.*]" as the saying quoted by Adorno goes, in order to underline the necessary patience that goes with every serious work toward its subject matter [*an der Geduld zur Sache*]. Adorno, "Notes on Philosophical Thinking," *Critical Models*, trans. Henry W. Pickford, p. 130. / >>Anmerkungen zum philosophischen Denken,<< *Stichworte: Kritische Modelle 2*, pp. 151-168).

40. Hans-Georg Gadamer, "Hermeneutics and Logocentrism," *Dialogue and Deconstruction: The Gadamer-Derrida Encounter*, ed. Diane P. Michelfelder and Richard E. Palmer (Albany: SUNY Press, 1989), p. 123.

41. Gadamer states elsewhere that he prefers the word "Gebilde" (creation) to "Werk" (work) in order to avoid possible utilitarian misunderstandings that are associated with the latter term; cf. Gadamer, "The Relevance of the Beautiful: Art as play, Symbol, and festival," *The Relevance of the Beautiful and Other Essays*, p. 33. / >>Die Aktualität des Schönen. Kunst als Spiel, Symbol und Fest (1974),<< *Gesammelte Werke*, Band 8, p. 124. In fact, "Gebilde" still points to a "Werk" in terms of a "gathering" (*Sammlung*), as is indicated in note 45, p. 174 of the English translation. I think this view is strengthened by a note in G. H. R. Parkinson, "Lukács on the Central Category of Aesthetics" where Parkinson, referring to Lukács' criteria of distinguishing artworks, correctly claims that the "term translated as 'images' [*Gebilde*] is not defined by Lukács, but clearly does not refer to mental images. It seems to be equivalent to 'works of art,' and is perhaps used to bring out their picture --[*Bild*] like character." See *Georg Lukács: The Man, his work and his ideas*, Note 1 to p. 121. This is further supported by Gadamer's statement à la Paul Klee, that the "modern artist is less a creator than a discoverer of the as yet unseen, the inventor of the previously unimagined that only emerges into reality through him. [*Der moderne Künstler ist weit weniger Schöpfer als Entdecker von Ungesehenem, ja Erfinder von noch nie Dagewesenem, das wie durch ihn hindurch einrückt in die Wirklichkeit des Seins*]" "The Speechless Image," p. 91. / >>Vom Verstummen des Bildes,<< p. 234. Remarkable, on the other hand, is the "fact that the Greek word for picture [*Bild*] (*zoon*) originally meant a living being [*Lebewesen*] shows how little mere things [*bloße Dinge*] and nature without man were thought worthy of pictorial representation [*bildwürdig*] at all." *Ibid.*, p. 84. / 228. For >Gebilde< essentially meaning >Werk< see also notes 4 and 8 above. The silent "command" (*Diktat*) emanating from the works of art is in need of qualification, however, and particularly in the sense of the work that speaks and those who listen need to be equals. If the work of art is the "absolute present for each present" [*>>daß es für die jeweilige Gegenwart absolute Gegenwart ist...<<*] and simultaneously pointing at possible futures. See further, "Aesthetics and Hermeneutics," *Philosophical Hermeneutics*, p. 104. / >>Ästhetik und Hermeneutik [1964],<< *Gadamer Lesebuch*, p. 119. For further elaboration of the "Diktat" see, John Pizer, "Diktat or Dialogue? On Gadamer's Concept of the Artwork's Claim," *Philosophy and Literature*, XII/2 (October 1988), pp. 272-79.

42. Heidegger, *Basic Questions of Philosophy*, pp. 151; also 185 [From the first draft] / *Grundfragen der Philosophie*, pp. 175; also 221 [*Aus dem ersten Entwurf*]; On a passing note on the "particular interpretation of Arabic philosophy" [*eine bestimmte Interpretation der arabischen Philosophie*] in the chain of historical transformation leading to our techno-scientific age, cf. also his *The Fundamental Concepts of Metaphysics: World-Finitude-Solitude*, trans. W. McNeill and N. Walker (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1929-30, 1995), p. 43. / *Die Grundbegriffe der Metaphysik: Welt-Endlichkeit-Einsamkeit* (Frankfurt am Main: V. Klostermann, 1983), p.65.

43. Lukács, most probably also having in mind the recent cultural-political events of the sixties, writes in a late preface (March 1965; rev. April 1970) to a collection of his literary essays: "What is important in both cases ['boredom' and 'intoxication'. H.Ü.N.] is that the apparently unbridgeable antithesis disguises a deep inner association and reciprocal extension and support. One overcomes *ennui* as little through intoxication (one is even impelled back into its sphere) as one is liberated by shock from manipulated alienation, for shock merely groups, concentrates and conserves the characteristic moral features of this alienation. In both cases it is a question therefore of constantly repeated emotional revolts concealing, for all practical purposes, the desire *quieta non movere*, to leave inviolate the bases of this pair of opposites. The Italian writer Italo Svevo, whose fame rests on his association with Joyce, expressly declared that protest is the shortest road to resignation." *Georg Lukács, Writer & Critic and Other Essays*, ed.&trans.Arthur D. Kahn (New York: Grosset & Dunlap, 1971), Lukács' Preface, p. 13.

44. We learn from a letter written by Charles Baudelaire (May 1864, Brussels) to Michel Lévy, the publisher of his translations from Edgar Allen Poe, that "work" is strictly understood in this fashion and, no doubt, taking place in precious freedom: "Ah, my dear Michel, how bored I am here! How bored I am! I truly believe

that no matter which country one finds himself in, only work can prevent boredom." Quoted in Roger Pearson's review article, "Artificial paradises," *The Times Literary Supplement*, No. 5117 (April 27, 2001), p. 8. On the question of "boredom," see my "Time-Consumption and Boredom in the Modern Times" (forthcoming in "S" *European Journal for Semiotic Studies*).

45. Heidegger's other emphases are additionally supplied for the English translation of the passage above in *Basic Questions of Philosophy*, pp. 163-64. For comparison, therefore, I am again providing the original passage in German: >>Erst wenn wir wissen, daß wir noch nicht wissen, wer wir sind, gründen wir den einzigen Grund, der die Zukunft eines einfachen, wesentlichen Daseins des geschichtlichen Menschen aus sich zu entlassen vermag. / Dieser Grund ist das Wesen der Wahrheit. Dieses Wesen muß im Übergang zum anderen Anfang denkerisch vorbereitet werden. Anders als im ersten Anfang ist künftig das Verhältnis der Mächte, die zuerst die Wahrheit gründen, der Dichtung - und somit der Kunst überhaupt - und das Denkens. Nicht die Dichtung ist das erste, sondern Wegbereiter muß im Übergang das Denken sein. Die Kunst ist aber künftig - oder sie ist gar nicht mehr - das Ins-Werk-setzen der Wahrheit - eine wesentliche Gründung des Wesens der Wahrheit. Nach diesem höchsten Maß ist Jegliches zu messen, was als Kunst auftreten möchte - als der Weg, die Wahrheit seined werden zu lassen in jenem Seienden, das als Werk den Menschen in die Innigkeit des Seyns entzückt, indem es ihn aus der Leuchte des Unverhüllten berückt und so zum Wächter der Wahrheit des Seyns stimmt und bestimmt,<< *Grundfragen der Philosophie*, p. 190.

Plato expelled Homer and tragedy from his ideal *politeia*. Not because Homer or tragedy would be bad art: even with his low opinion of the illusory function of poetic craftsmanship he had to admit that Homer and tragic poets were the best of the best, and apologised for his harsh treatment of great art. But it had to be done, because art, even at its best, is bad politics. The old fight between poets and philosophers mentioned by Plato was a political fight for the position of the best advisor in political decisions.

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In the twentieth century Plato was not only accused for his attack on arts only, but for totalitarianism as well. While such accusations are ridiculous anyway, because totalitarianism belongs to the twentieth century, it is true that in the Greek "polis" all aspects of public life were politics. No part of life in community was so special and separated from the others that it would not be involved with the common, the whole, and the universal of the community. Politics was not a special sphere among special and differentiated parts of the community, a sphere which would be exclusively responsible for the functioning, law and order in the community. Politics was an aspect of all activities of the members of the community, as a space of freedom, i.e. a space of decision-making, while the space of *oikos* --family, private space-- was a space of necessity.¹ For Plato, art was bad politics because of its illusive and delusive character which could not support freedom of decision as philosophy can.

The relations between art and politics in modernity are quite different. Clement Greenberg begins his famous essay "Modernist Painting"² in 1965 claiming that intensified self-criticism, starting with Immanuel Kant, is the most important and typical characteristics of modernism. This criticism's aim is not to deconstruct different fields and disciplines. Through constant self-criticism, they become stronger in the field of their competence, while the demarcation lines between different fields and disciplines become more defined and certain. "Differentiation," the concept used by Scott Lash in his *Sociology of Postmodernism*,³ could be another expression of this feature of the Western way of constructing safe havens of human truth and certainty. As modernist techniques used for building foundations of modernist progress, criticism and differentiation produce borders between different abilities and disciplines of human endeavour as spheres divided from one another, and thus autonomous. Any human ability or field of production which can not ascertain its own limitations, which can not introduce concepts of self-criticism as certain criteria for evaluation of its progress, and which can not institu-

tionalise its special and autonomous function in the progress of humanity towards its perfection, is imperfect. In each special and autonomous field there has to be some common denominator which gives such a field enough power to build its own criteria for differentiation from all the other fields, and which dominates all relations inside this demarcation line. So, this denominator is not just what all things and events of this field have in common. It is the representative of its, and their, sovereignty and autonomy.

Art is one of such sovereign fields fenced in and mastered by the aesthetic as representative of its sovereignty, and politics is another. It might be that art is not just about the aesthetic, and that quite a number of elements foreign to its nature enter into its domain, but only with and because of its aesthetic function art is a special and autonomous human activity differentiated from all the other activities and abilities. This sovereign domination of pure aesthetics over art is one of the dominant characteristics of philosophy of art, but still just one component and current of the philosophical aesthetics.⁴ Immanuel Kant is usually quoted as a source of such aesthetics, but the differentiated image of art as autonomous domain, and of an artwork as sovereign body politic prevailed only later. In art, Théophile Gautier's preface to his *Mademoiselle du Maupin* marks the rupture between art and the public world, politics included, while in the aesthetics the most autonomous and sovereign metaphor was provided by Theodor Lipps.

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Théophile Gautier attacked two possible common denominators of art proposed in the nineteenth century: morality and utility. Art and morality are two different fields, and for the judgement of the work of art the criteria of morality are totally unsuitable. A work of art is not a vehicle for progress and civilisation. Utilitarian claims are also wrong because what is good for producing a work of art might be, and usually is completely useless for any other purpose. This uselessness is even the most important feature essential for the work of art: really beautiful is something which is not morally or in any other way usable, profitable or desirable. "The most useful place of a house are its latrines."⁵

Art should be free of any external demands, and of any extrinsic criteria for its evaluation. What, then, governs in this free and autonomous realm of the work of art, and does its creator have any obligation at all? Theodor Lipps believed that he had discovered the eternal natural principles of aesthetic apperception while he merely described modernist fascination with the aesthetic. For a psychologist philosopher, his ideas are pretty metaphysical: in aesthetic apperception he found a total subordination to the aesthetic, and this aesthetic is obviously not something sensual. In aesthetic apperception we deal with a kind of absolute monarchy, because all substantial parts of the apperception are totally subordinated to the aesthetic. Aesthetic apperception, as much as the work of art itself, functions as close circuits through which the energy of the aesthetic overwhelms upon anything else present in the aesthetic experience.⁶ So, we do not just find out that art is a sovereign territory. We know what its constitutional structure is like: there is no democracy and equal rights between its different parts, they are composed into a unity ruled by a single monarch --the aesthetic Leviathan.

"Art" and "politics" is a relation seen in modernism as a dangerous contact between two autonomous realms with different regimes and different denominators. They might have something in common, but they still are two different power structures founded on two different principles, with two different legislations, and with certain borders which cannot be trespassed without violent breaking of modernist rules. So, after this process of autonomisation of art, which happened in the nineteenth century,⁷ it seems that when we put art and politics together, we have two different, separated, and autonomous fields of

human activity. Even more, it seems that politics is somehow practical and mundane, while art represents the transcendent and invisible worlds in our other, more terrestrial activities: it does not belong to this world, or not only. It should not surprise us that in the second part of the nineteenth century there was a rumour about art as a substitute for religion and a cult of the secularised culture of modernism. But such views, not at all the only views expressed and sometimes even not dominant,⁸ might be true of the nineteenth century when the autonomy of art was established, and when aesthetics became a philosophy of such an autonomy in both its appearances as speculative metaphysical school or as positivist, empiricist, or psychologist school. But even then art was politically engaged and important, both in spite of its autonomy and with the help of it, especially in nation building movements.

The conflict between art and politics, or the conflict between art and politicised demands that art should serve moral and utilitarian political purposes, and at the same time the conflict between art and market economy with similar utilitarian demands, stimulated the artistic nourishment of autonomy. From this point of view, there were just two possibilities: retreat from politics into artistic isolation, or engagement in politics --from above, as neutral and objective moral arbiter, as Zola in the Dreyfuss case with his "J'accuse!"⁹ There were other artistic attitudes to politics, of course, and in a number of countries official patriotic realism flourished as much as unofficial national romanticism with those who still fought for their recognition and national sovereignty. But the concept and institution of artistic autonomy was the prevailing artistic ideology, if not the practice. The case of artistic patriotism-nationalism, an artistic position confirmed and cherished by artistic autonomists as well as by national politicians, is important because it proves that nationalist political positions were accepted as politically non-partisan and artistically autonomous, even natural. The nationalist politics of autonomous "Institution Art" is too often neglected and overlooked in aesthetical and sociological analysis of modern art.

That the twentieth century brought, among other novelties, a mutiny of art and artists against the nineteenth century autonomy of art, and against Art as Institution, is well known. It is also well known that basically, the Institution of Art won over rebels and their art or anti-art. That is why Peter Bürger claimed that avant-garde is historical, and that is how Clement Greenberg discovered that avant-garde has become a mainstream activity: "a body of people and an area of activity that society at large accepted in an almost institutional way."¹⁰ So, what else is new? Well, what is really new is the destruction and deconstruction of the idea of artistic autonomy. It has not been thrown out of the vocabulary by artistic movements of the twentieth century which attacked artistic isolationism. It has become obsolete, together with the other romantic ideas about art because the industry of culture embraced and included art and its institutions. With the autonomy of art monarchist absolutism of the aesthetic collapsed as well, and that is why at the beginning of the twenty-first century, we have no hierarchy of arts and genres, styles and publics.¹¹ In spite of all these cultural turn and change usually collected under the label "Post-Modernism," there is still much opposing to politics in art, and anti-political criticism of engaged art, while on the other side there are many purely political artworks or attractions.¹²

These criticism and other tensions between art and politics¹³ prove that something has changed in the relations between art and politics between the end of the nineteenth century and the beginning of the twenty-first, and that we can not grasp all the changes only from the perspective of art. We have to take politics into consideration, especially

because, in spite of and against autonomy of art, the art of the twentieth century reconsidered its relations with politics, and did so in many directions and in many quite frightening and demanding political and artistic situations. There are at least three interesting features of the relation between art and aesthetics, and politics.

First, the development of political criteria, instead of the criteria of taste, for the evaluation of different artistic movements. This does not mean that political criteria were not relevant before, but the prevailing artistic ideology of autonomy overruled their possible use as non-artistic and external to artistic criteria. Neither does it mean that political criteria became a substitution for the older criteria of pure aesthetic taste. Political standards of art were used in the nineteenth century even explicitly, as in the case of Henry Beyle --Stendhal who declared himself as moderate in purely political sense, but extremely liberal in artistic sense.¹⁴ Romanticism, sometimes introduced as the last historic canon-style before the epoch of historical co-existence of different styles, or pluralism of stylistic possibilities of art, was already involved in political differentiation of art. On one side, it meant radical confrontation with "classicism" as the art of the past which has to be abandoned as something belonging to the pre-Revolutionary past. On the other side, romanticism has been already divided along political lines in conservative --Chateaubriand--, liberal --Victor Hugo-- and extremist --"poètes maudits"-- romanticism.¹⁵ But the universal importance of political criteria for art emerged in the twentieth century with all its numerous faces. It might be true that in the long run, we have just one artistic value --goodness of good art.¹⁶ The problem is that this becomes apparent only in the long run, and that even in the long run the idea of goodness in art is changing, as in the case of Gothic art, and in its change at least sometimes even political criteria are involved. From abundant experiences and cases of the twentieth century, we may name only some. The so-called *Nazi-Kunst*, institutionalised art of Nazi Germany, was introduced as opposition to modern "*Entartete Kunst*" --proverbial bad art. After the Second World War the evaluation changed radically, of course, and Abstract Expressionism, for instance, became good art, while *Nazi-Kunst* or anything remaking its popular realism and mythical blood-and-soil attitude was not just bad art. It was politically incorrect, for German artists even forbidden style.¹⁷ In the seventies, some enthusiasts of historical memory had an idea that this forbidden art should be shown once again as a warning, and organised the exhibition. What happened astonished all followers of good modern taste; people enjoyed the exhibition very much, and found in it what they strived for in art for a long time, but could not get from contemporary art. They found the artworks of the *Nazi-Kunst* beautiful. Because they were Nazis, or because their taste for art was bad, or because they were politically uninformed? Whatever the answer, in spite of the goodness of good art, until now nobody could find, especially after the postmodernist "anything goes," any unique and eternal aesthetic or purely artistic criteria for calling *Nazi-Kunst* good or bad art. It is a political art which needs political and not just aesthetic criteria. Criteria which label *Nazi-Kunst* a bad art, these pure artistic criteria of modernism, with their criticism of realistic mimetics and its vulgarisation, have their own political charge, and this charged bias, invisible in the century before, became evident in the twentieth century. If *Nazi-Kunst* seems to be somehow illegal example, as much as socialist realism which is different if discussed as an artistic style,¹⁸ we can look at the case from the other side, the movement of artists against fascism and nazism which would be much more important and successful if its main discussions were not from the beginning to the end about the politically correct style of artistic resistance. It was not enough to be against fascism and nazism to become a member of these Left Fronts of intellectuals and artists. Your art, and not just your political position, had to be anti-fascist, and this excluded bourgeois realism as well as surreal-

ism, while expressionism, at that time of the thirties more or less non-existent, became a major reason for dispute between exiled German intellectuals.¹⁹ What Klaus Mann, Alfred Kurella, Herwarth Walden, Béla Bálasz, Ernst Bloch, Georg Lukács, Hans Eisler, Bertholt Brecht and many others had to say about this subject was not and still is not completely understandable from purely artistic or even aesthetic criteria; we need political criteria to understand what it was all about. Expressionism seemed to be, because of its style which is quite an aestheticist outburst of romanticism and despair, different from avant-garde progressist optimism and anti-aestheticism; on the other hand, it was too radical with its distortions and ugliness to be accepted as a "fellow traveller" of socialist realism. The same political reasoning was involved when Peter Bürger accepted Italian Futurism and German Expressionism only as marginal and not really avant-garde movements.²⁰ On the other side of the Atlantic Ocean, we have a case of completely invisible artistic difference between David Alfaro Siqueiros and Diego Rivera, as they both belong to the same movement of Muralism which was a political artistic movement in itself and from the beginning in 1922.²¹ Still, in the thirties, the movement experienced a political struggle between the artistic Leninism of Muralist movement and the artistic Trockism of Rivera as seen from the position of Siqueiros, and/or as a struggle between the artistic Bolshevism-Leninism of Muralist movement and the artistic Stalinism of Siqueiros as seen from the position of Diego Rivera. Whatever the reasons and differences, they could be expressed and correctly understood only in the language of politics and its criteria, while in the language of pure aesthetics and autonomous art which was criticised and in most cases also abandoned by all these movements we can not even formulate the problem. There is no relationship between art and politics here --this kind of movements, groups, and artists say: "Good art promotes good politics, bad politics makes bad art."

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Second, as already apparent with the first novelty, in the twentieth century artistic groups and movements appeared as artistic political groups, sometimes even artistic political parties. While group work and movement organising was not unheard of before the twentieth century, this partisan politicisation of art is something new. That artists declared their art in political terms, and that their opponents were doing the same, so that political terms became artistic labels --German Art, Jewish Art, Decadent Art, Bourgeois Art, *Proletkult*, Socialist Realism, *Nazi-Kunst*...--, needs no examples. Perhaps the last of these politically founded labels is still interesting --Moderate Modernism as "fellow traveller" of socialist art after Stalin's death and Chruszczow's introduction of de-Stalinisation when socialism especially in countries with avant-garde and modernist traditions needed artistic legitimisation; this need emerged even before in Yugoslavia after its rupture with Stalin in 1948. In his *Soviet Marxism* from 1961, Herbert Marcuse already hinted that socialist realism as a "style" might not be the only kind of art without a utopian aesthetic dimension --if we use his own terms for critical avant-garde art--:

Within the general framework of the political controls over art, a wide range of policy modification is possible. Relaxation and tightening, alteration of artistic standards and styles, depend on the internal and international constellations. Naturally, with the transition from terrorist to normal modes of societal regimentation, the claim for more artistic freedom will be heard and perhaps fulfilled. The rigidity of "Soviet realism" may well be loosened; realism and romanticism, in any case, have ceased to be opposites, and even "formalistic" and "abstract" elements may still become reconcilable with conformist enjoyment.²²

These formalistic and abstract elements, together with abstract expressionist colourism, were introduced and allowed to flourish in different countries, for example, in Yugoslavia and Poland. This kind of modernism was deprived of avant-garde criticism

and utopia, and served as a kind of legitimisation for socialist regimes. On the surface, it was just a kind of universal, apolitical modernism with its return to the autonomy of art; in concrete reality, it served a political cause, demonstrating that artistic freedom may exist even under socialist rule if, and only if, art is just aesthetic formalist realm. This kind of modernism has been "*l'art-pour-l'artisme*" possible under socialist control over artistic life. Its moderate character was not of artistic, but of political character --it was a modernist culture without teeth to bite. And as such, it has been directly criticised and negated by the postmodernist postsocialist art of the eighties.²³

More than just the appearance of political labels for artistic phenomena, the para-partisan organisation of the artistic groups and the use of political propaganda methods and means for the affirmation of their (anti-)artistic ideas, attitudes and artworks is something novel, present from the avant-garde (anti-)artistic practice on. It is the result of artistic activity with a cause which is unattainable through purely artistic or even aesthetic practice. The criticism of the institutional art-world turns into a criticism of life itself, of its rational - irrational organisation and institutionalisation. Artistic para-partisan public appearances and actions, on the first sight, might be just the usual parody; but, on the second thought, they become a very serious political position in special circumstances, especially those of political revolutions and where there is a general absence of stable political institutions. The typical outcome is the fight between "purely" political power and these artistic partisan political activities which sometimes happily resolve themselves into the old modernist division between art and politics, and at other times their art became victims of political power struggles.

That those avant-garde artistic groups were something new as sociological, aesthetic and philosophical phenomenon, was stressed by Miklavz Prosenec in his study, from 1967, on Dada movement which was concentrated on the Zürich Dada.²⁴ Of course, groups before the First World War already operated in para-party manner, with manifestos which were not just artistic statements but political partisanship at the same time. This was part of opposition to traditional autonomy and individualism of modern art, and to its pretension of being at the same time completely pure and independent from any non-aesthetic criteria, presenting itself as the highest court of humanity and politics, as in Zola's case. Miklavz Prosenec announced the following characteristics of the Zürich Dada: the members of the group were immigrants and thus in an exceptional situation; the group consisted of members of different nationalities, social position and professional background; the group was multi-artistic; their aim was to organise a cabaret programme; the relations between members of the group were extraordinary and somehow extremist due to the war and their immigrant position, but also oriented towards a common goal and aggressive against other groups of emigrant artists; their artistic production claimed to be non-art and anti-art, and they declared themselves as non-artists in revolt against art and literature.²⁵ We might add that this anti-art position was in itself political and met with instant political criticism --even from Lenin, who lived in the neighbourhood and visited "Cabaret Voltaire" from time to time. This anti-art position, even without direct criticism of World War collapse of humanity, progress and civilisation, was obviously political, and it made visible that the position of artistic traditionalism with its artistic autonomy, in spite of its a-political and anti-political independent and neutral surface, was political as well.

When the First World War ended, avant-garde artists who before the war had attacked art as an institution, began to attack the institution of politics directly, blaming both culture and politics for the catastrophic death toll and fall of civilisation. Their expectations

sometimes turned into messianic bathos, and their attitude to the post-war political situation was one of a contemptuous sarcasm. This brought out the will to power mentioned by Boris Groys in the case of Russian futurists and other avant-garde movements.²⁶ During post-war anarchy and fights in Berlin, the Dada group organised numerous (anti-) political and at the same time (anti-)artistic events, as at the occasion of promotion of their journal *Jedermann sein eigener Fussball* (Everybody Has His Own Football). Their promotion parade in Barnum style around Berlin won them the admiration of the common Berlin people but not the police who arrested them. They were ready for both, and prepared stickers for their prison cells with "Hurrah Dada!" printed on them. They were accused of exposing the German Armed Forces to contempt, and their journal was found obscene. That has all been true, together with a fact that the main characteristics of the journal were anti-capitalism and anti-imperialism. But there has been something that pointed over the usual political slogans and artistic mockery. It was the anti-attitude which now covered not only art as an institution but politics as well. The result and resolution of the post-war German crisis was Weimar Republic. At the inaugurating ceremony in the Weimar State Theatre in 1919, Johannes Baader, a member of the Dada group, was in the gallery. He threw home-printed flyers down onto the serious and self-promoting public which represented the political order of the new republic, and declared himself the first president of the new republic. Nearly fifty years after the event, the chronicler of the Dada movement Hans Richter still had some doubts about pure parody of this Dada gesture: "And he was quite serious...or was he?"²⁷ Dadaists declared a war against all authorities, left wing and revolutionary parties included, like in the case of Berlin flyer of 1919 --wrongly mentioned in Richter's book as flyer from 1920-- printed as an announcement for the presentation of the Dada president of the Globe, declaration of revolutionary war against Weimar republic --"*Wir werden Weimar in die Luft sprengen* (We will blow Weimar sky-high.)," and signed by "*Der dadaistische Zentralrat der Weltrevolution* (Dadaist Central Council of the World Revolution)" composed of Baader, Hausmann, Tristan Tzara, George Grosz, Marcel Janco, Hans Arp, Richard Huelsenbeck, Franc Jung, Eugen Ernst and A. R. Meyer--.²⁸ The case of *Proletkult* in the Soviet Union is an even more radical example of this transformation of artistic groups into para-political parties and movements. Avant-garde artists became leaders and organisers of *Proletkult* organisation after the war and revolution, getting some support from minister of culture Lunatcharskii and from Bogdanoff, the creator of the idea of a special proletarian culture. At the beginning of the twenties *Proletkult* had more members than the Communist Party, mostly young revolutionary guards who embraced artistic avant-garde ideas and methods as means of political struggle. The result was the first great struggle on the artistic front between Lenin's Central Committee and the *Proletkult* leadership. This conflict is usually explained in terms of aesthetic traditionalism of Lenin and his comrades who did not want the New World of Red Civilisation to become a world of avant-garde anti-art. But the essence of the conflict was situated elsewhere, in the pure political question of who is in charge of arts and culture, and who is in charge of revolution. At the decisive meeting of Politburo, on October 11, 1920, Lenin opened the discussion on *Proletkult* as a purely political question: The Party should be in charge of economical and cultural fields, members of the Party should be the main figures in these domains as well, and they should follow the politics of culture determined by party organs. When Bucharin expressed some reservations and sent Lenin a note with his doubts and questions, Lenin silenced his intervention with his own note. He wrote:

1. proletarian culture = communism;
2. Communist Party of Russia is its leading force;

3. class-proletar = Communist Party of Russia = the power of the Sowjets. Do we all agree upon that?"

They did, and the avant-garde group lost its influence in the *Proletkult* which lost its importance and membership in the next few years, especially because of the "normalisation" introduced against radical political and artistic ideas, with the implementation of so-called new economical politics --NEP--, and with the progressive centralisation of political power in the Party leadership. At the same time of NEP "politically neutral" cultural institutions were introduced by the Party, like the journal *Krasnaya nov* (Red virgin Soil), and at the beginning of the twenties, Socialist Realism could be introduced as a politically neutral ground against the ideological struggles of proletarian artistic representatives in respective writers, painters and other societies.

This direct party politicisation of artistic groups and movements was apparent once more in communist countries in the eighties when artistic groups like Slovenian N.S.K. (*Neue Slowenische Kunst*) acted in public as para-political parties, albeit with more post-modern use of avant-garde tradition. Other artistic movements involved with post-modern identity making are para-partisan or even directly party political movements, as in feminist art, marginal groups art --such as African-Americans and Natives in U.S.A. or Australia-- or in post-colonial art. All these groups and movements fight for their art and its promotion with political means, and all these groups appear on the public stage with political and not just artistic or even purely aesthetic programmes and manifestos.

Third, with such engagement of art and artists, on the crossing between art and politics we arrived at a clash between the anti-autonomy attitude of these more or less avant-garde groups and movements, and the autonomised and reduced concept of politics and the political. On a number of occasions, this conflict was resolved by artistic groups with the avant-garde criticism of the concept of autonomy of the political, more or less using the same methods as against the autonomy of art. Modernist reduction of the political and delimitation of "political society" consisting of state institutions of power from "civil society" came under artistic critique and attack. Of course, part of the reduction and delimitation was the modernist "depoliticisation" of art, so this outcome seems completely logical --if art has to return into life and abandon its autonomy above everyday life of the society, politics has to abandon its autonomy from and above the civil society. Both the artistic and the political have to reconnect once again as universal characteristics of all human activities, which have been separated and differentiated in modernity. Modernist differentiation was negated in an overall manner, not just as much as it concerns art and its special ghetto. If we can agree that avant-garde was not successful in its attack against the institutionalisation and commercialisation of art, artistic criticism of reduction of politics was even less successful.

The acceptance of avant-garde artworks in an institutional framework might be somehow problematic, because those artworks were not produced to be artworks or to take part in art institutions at all, but while this contradictory acceptance gets some regular attention, the political dimension is more or less forgotten or actively put aside. Art but also anti-art, as it seems from the institutional perspective, have some eternal values worth preserving, but the political dimension of anti-art is negligible, reduced or absent in contemporary institutional representations of the art of the twentieth century. Perhaps the most typical feature of artistic institutionalisation is precisely the depoliticisation of art and consequently of all artworks included in the artistic institution. This happens with historical avant-garde all the time and everywhere, but also with what is actually pro-

duced as art of today. In Ljubljana, when an exhibition of post-socialist art was organised in Modern Gallery, a Russian artist demanded permission to present the political dimension and action. The institution answered that it wanted only an artistic event, without any political actions. Oleg Kulik --the usual trouble-maker of this kind-- protested against such institutional reduction of art by throwing eggs at the participants at the ceremonial opening. Something similar happened again on the occasion of the Manifesta exhibition in Ljubljana last year, as another political scandal designed by the same artist for the gala opening. On both occasions political dimension was present in the exhibition, but only in a polite manner of abstract humanistic representations of the Balkan wars --some call this kind of art "Soros realism", the other speak about highbrow soap operas-- which can still keep art and partisan politics at a distance, and leave autonomy of post-modern globalisation of politics and its distance from all the other autonomous activities untouched. This kind of engagement is quite similar to the status of moderate modernism under communist rule. The process of the institutionalisation of the art of the twentieth century is the process of distillation of art from all its political ingredients, especially those which testify that art could be involved with politics as an independent para-political subject and those which represent the negation of existing borders between exclusive "political society" and de-politicised "civil society".

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As a conclusion, let us recapitulate three characteristics of relationships between art and politics in the twentieth century:

1. art as something autonomous, organised upon the aesthetic which can offer support to the political through the use of its aesthetic "promesse de bonheur" enforcing the political "promesse de bonheur";
2. art as an autonomous entity which also has a political principle of its own, the aesthetic or anti-aesthetic as demanding and manifesting how the whole of humanity or any community could reach the gates of salvation; the (anti-)aesthetic is here the political principle of the universal in human being which answers the enigma/puzzle of history;
3. art crossing all boundaries and demarcation lines of its own competence, denying the political its own autonomy and sovereignty over the society in principle; this is sometimes articulated in the totalitarian manner, but more often today as "persiflage" or parody of the differentiation and demarcation of *politeia*.

FOOTNOTES:

1. The relation between private and public, and between *polis* and *oikos*, as much as the differentiation between political and civil society, is analysed in Tonci Kuzmanic, *Ustvarjanje antipolitike (Making of the Anti-Politics)* (Ljubljana: ZPS, 1996).

2. Clement Greenberg, "Modernist Painting," *The Collected Essays and Criticism. Vol. 4 - Modernism with a Vengeance. 1957-1969*, ed. John O'Brian (Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press, 1993), pp. 85-93 (first lecture on Voice of America 1960, printed unrevised 1961, then in *Art and Literature* - Spring 1965); the beginning:

"Modernism includes more than art and literature. By now it covers almost the whole of what is truly alive in our culture. It happens, however, to be very much of a historical novelty. Western civilization is not the first civilization to turn around and question its own foundations, but it is the one that has gone furthest in doing so. I identify Modernism with the intensification, almost exacerbation, of this self-critical tendency that began with the philosopher Kant. Because he was the first to criticize the means itself of criticism, I conceive of Kant as, the first real Modernist. The essence of Modernism lies, as I see it, in the use of characteristic methods of a discipline to criticize the discipline itself, not in order to subvert it but in order to entrench it more firmly in its area of competence."--Greenberg in O'Brian, ed. *The Collected Essays*, p. 85.

3. Scott Lash, *Sociology of Postmodernism* (Routledge, London: Routledge, 1990), p. 5.

"It is the standard structural-functionalist idea of social modernization by the means of differentiation. But, following Weber's famous methodological essays on the sociology of religion and Habermas in *The Theory of Communicative Action*, I want to confine this differentiation and modernization to the realm of culture alone. What I want to claim is that if modernization is a process of cultural differentiation, or what German analysts call *Ausdifferenzierung*, then 'postmodernization' is a process of de-differentiation, or *Entdifferenzierung*."

4. Sometimes, all history of aesthetics starting with Baumgarten on is reduced to this kind of philosophical aesthetics, which is not true. All the other different schools of thought are neglected, if we represent aesthetics of the eighteenth and nineteenth century in such a way: empirical aesthetics, psychological aesthetics, aesthetics as natural science, aesthetic Darwinism, aesthetics of positivism, and other, might be "metaphysical" as well, but they usually do not reduce art or artwork to their pure aesthetic dimension, quite the contrary.

5. Théophile Gautier, "Préface," *Mademoiselle de Maupin* (Editions Garnier Freres, Paris 1966), p. 23.

6. Theodor Lipps, *Von der Form der Aestheticshen Apperception* (Sonderabzug aus: Philosophische Abhandlungen, Gedenkschrift für Rudlof Haym) Max Niemeyer, Halle, 1902. "Die Vollkommene monarchische Unterordnung bezeichnet die vollkommenste Einheit des Verschiedenem, die psychologisch möglich ist." (l.c., p. 372)

7. As demonstrated in Pierre Bourdieu, *Les règles de l'art. Genèse et structure du champ littéraire* (Paris: Éditions du Seuil, 1998).

8. The programme for the arts written by Maxime Du Camp on the occasion of Universal Exhibition of 1855 in Paris testifies that voices against autonomy of art and against its utilitarian character. His proposal is to modernize art with its cooperation in building modernity together with engineers, in manner of new cathedrals. See Maxime Du Camp, "Les Beaux-Arts à l'Exposition universelle de 1855," *Historienmalerei*, Hrg. Von Thomas W. Gaethgens and Uwe Flechner, (Berlin: Reiner Verlag, 1990), pp.337-342.

"Je ne me suis pas arrêté une seul fois dans des gares de chemins de fer, ces cathédrales modernes de l'industrie et de la science, sans penser aux peintures dont on pourrait orner leurs murailles nues et désagréables à l'oeil." --Du Camp in Gaethgens&Flechner, ed., *Historienmalerei*, p. 337.

9. "Histoire extraordinairement répétitive parce que le changement constant y revêt la forme d'un mouvement de balancier entre les deux attitudes possibles à l'égard de la politique, l'engagement et la retraite (cela au moins jusqu'au dépassement de l'opposition avec Zola et les dreyfusards)." --Bourdieu, *Les règles de l'art*, l.c., p. 548.

10. Greenberg, "Where is the Avant-Garde?," in John O'Brian, ed., *The Collected Essays and Criticism*, p. 261. This text has first appeared in *Vogue* in June 1967.

11. Pierre Bourdieu represented very graphically the stratification of literature at the end of the nineteenth century, including "political" left-right relations, and the tension between "La Bohème" and "L'Académie". This kind of political relations and hierarchical stratification of art was still there in the twentieth century, but was losing its grip and col)sed in the sixties. See, Bourdieu, *Les règles de l'art*, l.c., p.207 .

12. For a typical anti-political reaction, see, J.J. Charlesworth "Mayday! May Day!", *Art Monthly*, No. 236 (May 2000), pp. 13-16. It begins with even more typical accusation based on Greenberg's above cited "victory of the avant-garde": "Social conscience and political engagement in art is back in the mainstream." (p.13). His criticism put in the same context anti-WTO/anti-capitalist movements from Seattle to London, and politically engaged art/community art presented at Royal College of Art from April 14 to May 12, 2000 under the title "democracy!".

13. As in the U.S.A. where an unsolved controversy exploded at the beginning of the nineties, with Andres Serrano work "Piss Christ" attacked in the Senate by Alfonse D'Amato, and Robert Mapplethorpe retrospective "The Perfect Moment"; later, many other examples of obscene or politically incorrect art were pointed at, with well known "Sensation" exhibition which arrived in New York after being shown in London, and caused bitter and fanatic fights on both sides of the Atlantic Ocean. As freedom of artistic expression is usually successfully defended in courts, the political strategy against this kind of politically provocative art is to introduce special ideological rules for financing the arts, and special rules for artistic institution which could be eligible for getting public money.

14. Stendhal, *Du romantisme dans les arts. Textes réunis et présentes par Juliusz Starzynski* (Paris: Hermann, 1966), pp. 123-124.

15. Karel Teige, *Jarmark Umeni, Ceskoslovensky spisovatel*, Praha 1964, p. 46. (originally from 1936)
16. Clement Greenberg, "Avant-Garde Attitudes: New Art in the Sixties," (first as lecture on the Power Institute of Fine Arts, University of Sydney, Australia, 1969), l.c., p.292: "Artistic value is one, not many. The only artistic value anybody has yet been able to point to satisfactorily in words is simply the goodness of good art. There are, of course, degrees of artistic goodness, but these are not differing values or kinds of value. Now this one and only value, in its varying degrees, is the first and supreme principle of artistic order."
17. Arthur Danto, "Art After the End of Art", *The Wake of Art. Criticism, Philosophy, and the Ends of Taste* (Amsterdam: G+B Arts Int., 1998), p.124-125.
18. Berthold Hinz did not want to deal with socialist realism in Soviet Union in his book on *Nazi-Kunst*, in spite of criticism:
- "The occasional similarities that do exist occur in the manner of presentation, in the marked focus on objects, but this is hardly sufficient evidence for assuming that these two styles are identical. Not only are the dominant modes of art in these two political systems different in origin, a key factor in distinguishing between them is their divergent attitudes toward reality. Two major themes of Soviet art, the truck driver and the female tractor driver, do not occur at all in the art of the Third Reich. In contrast, men appear almost exclusively in the role of the plowing, sowing, or resting farmer, and there are innumerable paintings of women as nudes - the National Socialist version of the American pinup girl - and as mothers. Whatever similarities occur in symbolism and in the repertoire of emblems are the result of an effort to disguise National Socialism as a form of socialism and to 'prove' this identity visually by means of copying and borrowing." --Berthold Hinz, *Art in the Third Reich* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1979).
- Here the idea of *Nazi-Kunst* as a style in itself, as much as the same idea of socialist realism, allows the differences to be seen, but all these differences are political differences of two ideologies, and the one and only similarity, introduced as a similarity of disguise, is from the same, entirely political origin. If the author, instead of the concept of style which excludes non-artistic material from the analysis, would reconsider also the way of functioning of the Nazi Institution of Art, and Soviet Institution of Art, he would find out the source of "stylistic" differences and similarities of both artistic movements of the twentieth century directly in political field to which both these "styles" belong and from which all their artistic shape depended upon. For *Nazi-Kunst* and information about its political background and fundamental institutional organism, see, Hildegard Brenner, *Die Kunstpolitik des Nationalsozialismus* (Reink bei Hamburg: Rowohlt Taschenbuch Verlag, 1963).
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Colour, although being extensively studied in the realms of science, design and art, is still in many ways an undiscovered area of study. Aesthetics, in its attempt to understand, define and explain the “beautiful,” in various instances, discussed the notion of colour. Kant, in *The Critique of Judgment*, relegated colour in painting, along with the pleasant tones of a musical instrument, to the domain of the “charming” and not of the “beautiful.”¹ Kant’s primary qualities for the beautiful included design and composition, while colour, tone, taste, smell, and touch were mere sensations, lacking in form, thus constituting only secondary qualities in the experience of the beautiful.² Kant later softened his approach to allow colour the possibility of being perceived as “beautiful” whenever it was “pure,” rather than as a wholesome part of “the formative arts” (painting, sculpture, architecture and horticulture).³ Fry considered colour “the only one of our elements which is not of critical or universal importance to life, and its emotional effect is neither so deep nor so clearly determined as the others.”⁴ Until the middle of the twentieth century, most philosophers disconnected colour from form, giving more emphasis to form for being able to evoke aesthetic pleasure. Although colour was thought to be secondary to form, thus also to the experience of the “beautiful,” it was still impossible to disregard it totally. Wittgenstein, in the *Remarks on Color*, tried to unveil the colour experience, while Arnheim have detailed the historical neglect of colour.

Similar attitudes towards appraising form over colour, and neglecting colour have also been the case in the early twentieth century architecture. The Dutch De Stijl movement was an important development in the use of colour not as ornamentation, but as a tool in theoretical approaches to architectural form. Artists such as Mondrian and van Doesburg, and architects like Rietveld and Oud of the De Stijl set their goal as to establish “a balance between the universal and the individual” and they sympathised “with all who work to establish international unity in life, art, culture, either intellectually or materially.”⁵ In order to achieve their goals, they worked through the arts, so that all walls that separate men would be broken down and a socially integrated urban environment of abstract forms would be constructed. These artists and architects found the three-dimensional properties of mass and volume restrictive to their movement, thus they suggested altering these formal characteristics with the use of colour. They used bright primary colours and white-green planes of colour defined by black borders. They displaced the corners and the boundaries of floors and ceilings with planes of colour and tried to alter the volumetric characteristics of architectural space. In the spaces they have created one

could experience an assemblage of spatial effects created by colour juxtapositions. De Stijl used colour as one of the inputs to the visual experience of the human eye, thus using colour's deconstructing capability to create alternative spatial experiences in the conventional cubic volume.

Bauhaus also emphasised the importance of colour especially through its instructors like Itten, Klee and Kandinsky. Itten⁶ and Kandinsky believed in a correlation between emotional states, colours and forms. Kandinsky defined colour as follows: "... color is a means of exerting a direct influence upon the soul. Color is the keyboard. The eye is the hammer. The soul is the piano, with its many strings. The artist is the hand that purposefully sets the soul vibrating by means of this or that key. Thus, it is clear that the harmony of colours can only be based upon the principle of purposefully touching the human soul."⁷ Klee, an accomplished violinist, considered that the pitch of colours functioned like major or minor keys, enabling a person to improvise freely on the chromatic keyboard.⁸ Klee saw colour as the richest aspect of optical experience.⁹

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Bauhaus emphasis on colour was strongly applied in painting, but not as enthusiastically in architecture. The Bauhaus of 1920s and early 1930s in architecture inclined towards minimising the use of overt colour and focused on the colour of architectural materials in its aim to disseminate a utilitarian aesthetic and to stress functionalism. Taut, when commissioned to design the small garden suburb of Falkenberg, in East Berlin, in 1914, found the opportunity to combine the rational and social skills of his architecture with his vision as a painter. The colours selected were light red, dull olive-green, golden-brown, saturated strong blue and white. Taut's use of colour might be seen as a form of liberation, freeing working-men's housing from the tyranny of refined and alien forms, where Taut saw it as a means of making "the people who live there a little happier."¹⁰ Taut's architecture which emphasised colour, continued with low-cost slab blocks of flats in Prenslauer Berg in the district of Weissensee, the Hufeisensiedlung, and the Waldsiedlung Zehlendorf. Taut described his colour choices in terms of space: "color should be used to underline the spatial character of the development. By means of variation in color intensity and brilliance we can expand the space between the house rows in certain directions and compress it in others."¹¹ With the rise of National Socialism, as opposed to Taut's own version of Socialism, his work came to an end. The Bauhaus was forced to close in 1933.

Le Corbusier, influenced by De Stijl, explored the potentials of colour in Pessac Housing of 1929. Lancaster explains Le Corbusier's attitude as "embracing colour completely, seeking to achieve an effect of weightlessness by painting the surfaces in different colours which met at the corners, so that a light grey, for example, bordered on a light sky-blue without any hint of structural thickness."¹² Although architects like Mies van der Rohe and Gropius were influenced by Le Corbusian theories, the great prejudice against colour as an ornamental element has led to its being downplayed, since the International Style favoured hard-edged geometries and absence of ornamentation. Their work was characteristically restrained in the use of colour except for the colour of unadorned materials like steel, glass, concrete and stone. White was the colour of the Modern movement, and apart from the elaborate and extensive uses in the social projects of Taut, applied colour was limited to a few individual buildings.

In 1960s, Lenclos and Lenclos began analysing various regions of France with the aim of identifying predominating colour characteristics. Lenclos and Lenclos treated colour as an independent element existing in nature. They analysed various regions of France

with diverse climates, from Mediterranean to Nordic, where they listed the building materials used. They then established an analysis of region, colour and building material. Lenclos and Lenclos visualised their analyses both with colour panels of a region and its architectural elements. In *Atelier 3d Couleur* in Paris they used these panels to design colour schemes for projects of existing or proposed buildings. Linton stated Lenclos and Lenclos's approach as a design strategy for new urban landscapes where simultaneous constructions of large-scale complexes that are out of context with nature could either be categorised as urban complexes like housing or industrial zones.¹³ Lenclos and Lenclos, following ideas first introduced by Taut, used colour in materials to add a poetic dimension complementing the large-scale, high-rise, man-made environment. Jean-Philippe Lenclos coloured the housing ensemble at *Chateau-Double*, built in the Paris suburb of Aix-en-Provence by the architects Siame and Besson. The complex consisted of two-hundred-and-fifty apartments in seven identical pyramidal buildings. Each apartment had a large terrace. The overall colour palette was chosen from within a range of fifteen descending shades of ochre, beginning with a tone that is almost white, moving through tones of yellow, orange, pink ochre, ending with red ochre. The rhythmic movement of this colour palette not only gave each building its own identity, but also re-scaled this huge development into human dimensions.

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Yoshida, former research fellow for Jean-Philippe Lenclos, is with the Colour Planning Centre in Tokyo. He has undertaken numerous environmental colour projects in urban sites throughout Japan, one of the latest being for *Faret Tachikawa*, an urban redevelopment project in Tachikawa-shi, Tokyo, completed in autumn 1994. Linton described stages of Yoshida's work¹⁴ as first surveying the exterior colours of the surrounding architecture to find out the colour distribution of the site, and then suggesting several possibilities for the base external colours of the planned redevelopment. For the *Tachikawa-shi* project, a range of low-chroma colour tones was chosen. The selected colour range was plotted on a Munsell Diagram, and given to the architects, who were required to conform to this colour utilisation range. Similarly, external materials of existing buildings in the area were also documented. Existing materials were then lined up on site for comparison with proposed materials, so that colour interrelation adjustments could be made. Through this careful consideration of environmental colour, the newly constructed development was able to create unity and appropriate variation to the site. Thus, a visual harmony between the architecture of new projects and the surrounding areas was ensured.

Colour in the built environment was not restricted to exteriors. During and after World War II, in an effort to increase manpower efficiency, much research was conducted on environmental factors including lighting and colour in the interiors. In this period, began the colour to be explored not only for its appearance, but also for its capacity as a tool to solve problems relating to visual, physiological and psychological needs of people. Birren, in *Light, Color and Environment*, formulated many colour-design solutions for various building types such as offices, schools, hospitals, hotels, etc.¹⁵ Hope and Walch stated some commonly known research findings like warm colours being applied to walls to compensate psychologically for cool temperatures, and conversely, cool colours being used for warm temperatures.¹⁶ High levels of illumination and luminous colours such as yellow and orange commanded attention, thus were used to alert workers to the details of their surroundings.¹⁷ It was also found that the perception of interior space, its size and mood, was affected by the colour of surfaces and lighting conditions. Cool, light colours would make a ceiling seem higher and the walls of a room wider. A bright hue on a far wall would make a long room seem shorter, while a cool, dark hue would length-

en the same room.¹⁸ Subsequently, the functional colour approach came to be used widely in the colour schemes of the interiors.

At the turn of the century, colour design and research attempt to combine functional usage of colour with its aesthetic appeal. A recent project developed by Cook and Dalke is based on a prior research project by Bright et. al., which found out that for the visually impaired people colour design, was critical in contributing to the visibility of environments. The widespread use of monochromatic colour schemes and highly reflective surfaces such as glass and metal in environments are known to be problems for the visually impaired people and all. Cook and Dalke aim to establish guidelines for colour design to increase the accessibility for the visually impaired people and elderly of various public transport environments like bus, coach, train, underground stations and airports. With these guidelines, the performance of transportation systems would be increased, inter-modal travel would be encouraged and suitable, safe, visually appealing inclusive environments for all would be designed. The project not only brings together two research centres in the United Kingdom, The University of Reading and South Bank University, but also the Government institutes, for example the London Transport and the British Airport Authorities.

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Throughout history, there have been times where colour has been regarded as an element of non-crucial importance to life in its functioning, and secondary to form in its aesthetic appreciation. Nevertheless, whether from a functional or an aesthetical point of view, it has been impossible to disregard it totally. Colour is an inherent property of materials and an inseparable component in decisions considering design and art. It is functionally important, as it is essential that an object be discriminated from its background in a proper way. It is also aesthetically important, from the point of view of an artist, designer or architect that the colours of materials do not have a negative impact on those who interact with their products. Research that combines function and aesthetics, visibility and pleasure at the turn of the century is inclined towards studying the built environment and applying the findings. Recent concerns include the way colour design can be used in the built environment for the well-being of users of that environment, the role that colour design plays in creating harmonious and functional environments through materials and specification of detail, and the way attractiveness and appeal of environments could be improved through colour design. An awareness and concern for colour design would enhance the functional aesthetics of the built environment. Colour, as a complicated but powerful tool in design, cannot be separated from the environment, yet alone from formal concerns in architecture. As Taut wrote in 1925:

Everything in this world of ours has to have some color or other. All of nature is colourful, and even the grey of dust or soot, even the most depressing and melancholy places always have their own typical colours. Wherever light is, there color must be. All we as human beings have to do is give these physical phenomena, like everything else we touch, form, and as soon as we do it even the darkest corners are bathed in the resplendence of sunlight.¹⁹

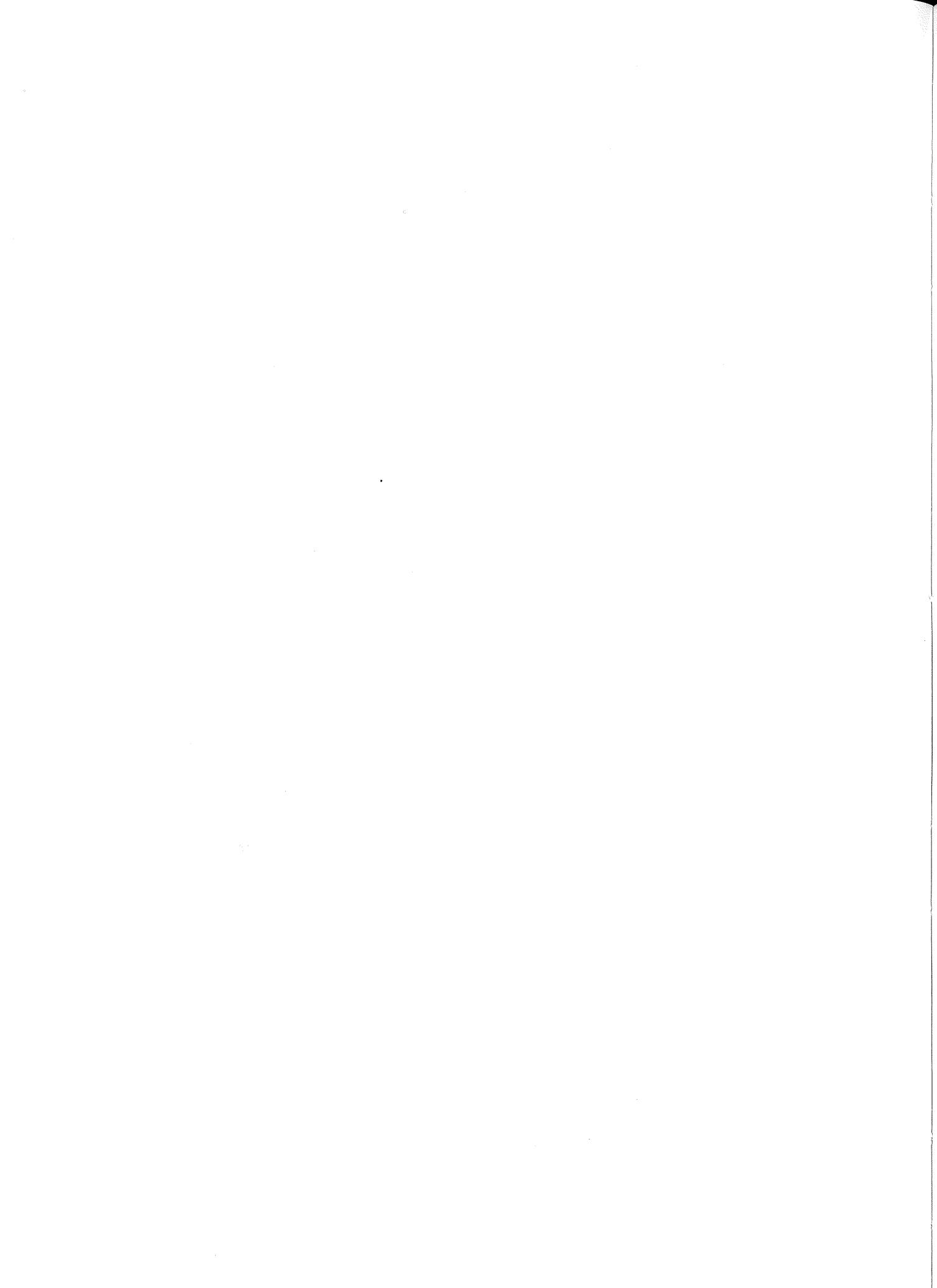
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I would like to thank all the participants for their contributions. These two days have been very successful in general and extremely pleasing for me personally. As you know, the symposium was entitled: "Retrospective: Aesthetics and Art in the 20th Century." By definition, a retrospective is a selective look at the past from the present. Thus, such a look is indisputably biased as it is inevitably conditioned by present conceptual frameworks, as well as present *problematiques*. This is, in fact, true for all attempts to write about history and particularly true for a retrospective in which we do not find such serious claims of being objective or even impartial. An attempt to create a retrospective of twentieth century Art and Aesthetics is particularly problematic since the philosophical frameworks and aesthetic theories of the twentieth century particularly the early twentieth century continue to concern us deeply, though from different perspectives which, in turn, are conditioned by epistemological frameworks of the late twentieth century including the idea of the necessity of a "critical distance" in re-interpreting the past, especially the recent past.

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In our attempt to create a retrospective, we have not tried to be comprehensive, but preferred to let fragments make a mosaic of twentieth century Art and Aesthetics. Yet, we believe that it is essential to place each system of thought, aesthetic philosophy, school of art, and also each work of art within its historical context, and that it is fundamental to understand its epistemological foundations. This has been expressed by the participants many times during the symposium while the accent has frequently been placed on the uniqueness and individuality of each work of art. However, the individual retrospectives presented here and discussions generally focused on the idea that Modernism is the movement that marked twentieth century Art and aesthetic philosophies. This also reveals the fact that we are still deeply concerned with understanding the philosophical background, aesthetic principles, and socio-historical context of Modernism. The question of political engagement in art has been raised as an intriguing issue in this perspective. Yet the necessity of bringing into the open alternative modernisms that were occluded by dominant artistic or political ideologies has also been expressed.

In the face of the depoliticisation of contemporary art, is the artist still criticising society and dominant order, and does art still have the capacity to change life? There comes the question of avant-garde. Does avant-garde still exist? Although the term is specifically associated with Modernism as a historical event, avant-garde which has the inherent

meaning of being on the front line, indicates a fragile position that requires to be continually re-defined, just like the term "modernity" which can be defined as the dynamic and ever-changing condition of being modern. Therefore, the condition of being avant-garde can not be associated with a sort of formalism which has become fashionable and mainstream, or with a mere attitude of ironic decontextualisation. If it ever exists it necessitates a certain engagement or at least a critical stance *vis-à-vis* the existing order of things.

Without falling into a totalitarian vision, does art, as an autonomous practice, have the inherent quality of being critical and making recommendations for a better world? This question still remains suspended in the air after this Retrospective on Art and Aesthetics of the twentieth century, held on the threshold of a new era.

The symposium was quite a success in several ways. For the panel discussion to take place at the end of the Symposium, "Retrospective: Art and Aesthetics in the 20th Century," I prepared three types of talks; one took two hours, trying to decipher and underline every position and contribution; the other was forty minutes, bringing several issues to the fore; and the last one, which I decided to make, was five minutes: It constituted my subjective views, impressions and remarks.

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In this new century, which began with the new millenium, the search for and discussion on the definitions of art, about the definitions and delimitations of the Avant-Garde, about the range and domain of topics like taste, engagement and autonomy in art, and its integration with daily life will still be the topics of prior concern, as they pertain to the essential presence, existence and self-sustenance of art itself. The discussion on the dissemination of artwork and its nature, its content and its form, its essence and its shape, its syntax and its semantics, will be valid all through the century. They were valid at the turn of the twentieth century; they are valid at the turn of the twenty-first century; they will still be valid for the coming centuries in relation to the nature of art.

The search for a kind of changing/transforming/ever-evolving construct of plurality/ pluralism will continue. This was a construct, especially emphasised by Alan Colquhoun, through the Symposium, which is not new; it was introduced in the early 1960s. However, plurality and pluralism are current and influencing constructs defining the subjects of artistic creation and delimiting the conception and reception of the artwork. The statements made by Ünal Nalbantoğlu, I would argue to be an attempt to achieve the craved-for integrity in understanding artwork, aims to form a new unity, an integral theoretical stance that tries to cope with Althusserian views. It is a challenging counterpoint in terms of pluralism, in a way, because if this attempt for integration, this call for integrity ends up with uniformity deciphering unity in understanding meaning --and production, of course-- of artwork, producing uniformity of meaning in the reception of artwork, then, it will be marketed in this way. So it easily opens up the way for the marketing of oppositional views and stances! So easy is the mechanism of the dominating to adopt or collect the opponent subject! I strongly believe that this discussion will be crucial throughout the coming century as well.

Hardly mentioned through the Symposium were questions about the definition of art history; and more than that, the fate of art criticism. Though picked up here and there, their links and relation to the aesthetic field, to artistic theory, may well offer us topics to be handled yet in another Symposium. As for the names of figures of the past century, some were reflected in the very content of the papers given here. Ales Erjavec for instance, started with Adorno and Heidegger; and other names of key figures were Jameson, Bergson, Hildebrand, Kant, Hegel, Benjamin, Dessoir, Man Ray, Bunuel, Leger, Gombrich, Baudelaire, Muthessius, Le Corbusier, Taut, Sartre, Barthes, Simmel, Bachelard, Lukacs, Needham, Marcuse, Althusser, Lenin, Bukharin, Nietzsche. But I think, other names may well be standing beside these, as representatives of twentieth century art theory and art criticism. On my part, I would suggest them to be Caudwell, Gramsci, Brecht, Eco, Foucault, and, of course, Berger. Their endeavour will continue to cast new light on new definitions, new points of departure and new horizons through the new century.

Lastly, not mentioned again were the names and representatives of the creators of expression, the enduring strugglers, the survivors in glory, the self-surpassing artists! I want to conclude with two pieces of poetry by one of them, the Mexican poet of the last century, Octavio Paz. These illustrate the transformation in his poetry, as well as his position in the world as an artist. The first poem titled "A Poet," is dated 1925 and from the book, *Eagle or Sun?*.

A POET

"Music and bread, milk and wine, love and sleep: free. Great mortal embrace of enemies that love each other: every wound is a fountain. Friends sharpen their weapons well, ready for the final dialogue to the end of time. The lovers cross the night enlaced, conjunction of stars and bodies. Man is the food of man. Knowledge is no different from dreaming, dreaming from doing. Poetry has set fire to all poems. Words are finished, images are finished. The distance between the name and the thing is abolished; to name is to create, and to imagine, to be born."

"For now, grab your hoe, theorize, be punctual. Pay your price and collect your salary. In your free time, graze until you burst: there are huge meadows of newspapers. Or, blow up every night at the café table, your tongue swollen with politics. Shut up or make noise: it's all the same. Somewhere they've already sentenced you. There is no way out that does not lead to dishonor or the gallows: your dreams are too clear, you need a strong philosophy."

The second poem is dated 1959, and from the book *Salamandra*:

DAWN

Cold rapid hands
 Draw back one by one
 The bandages of dark
 I open my eyes
 Still
 I am living
 At the centre
 Of a wound still fresh.

I think the coming century will be "a wound still fresh," and we will not be able to escape the wound, and its points of reference, interest, and especially indulgence and pain.

CONTRIBUTORS

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Can Bilsel is a Getty Fellow at the The Getty Research Institute in Arts and Humanities. He is currently completing his Ph.D. in Architecture at Princeton University.

Cânâ Bilsel is an Assistant Professor at Middle East Technical University. She holds a Ph.D. from Universite de Paris X-Nanterre. She teaches architectural design, urbanism and housing research. She is currently the editor of the Journal of the Chamber of Turkish Architects.

Nilgün Camgöz is an Instructor at the Department of Architecture at Middle East Technical University. She teaches on colour and its applications. She holds a doctoral degree in Art, Design and Architecture from Bilkent University.

Ali Cengizkan is an Instructor at the Department of Architecture at Middle East Technical University. He teaches architectural design and housing research. He received his Ph.D. in Architecture from Middle East Technical University. He is a poet. He has written widely in prominent Turkish literary journals.

Alan Colquhoun is Professor Emeritus at Princeton University. He has practiced as an architect with his firm Colquhoun and Miller Architects, since 1961. He has written widely on Modern Architecture and taught at the School of Architecture at Princeton University as professor since 1981.

Nina Danino is a film-maker and artist. She has lectured and written on her work and on artists' film and video. She taught at the Architectural Association School of Architecture and is currently lecturer in Fine Art at Goldsmiths' College of the University of London.

Aleš Erjavec is currently Research Director of the Institute of Philosophy of the Centre of Scientific Research of the Slovenian Academy of Sciences and Arts and Professor of Aesthetics in Ljubljana University. Also, he is currently the President of the International Association for Aesthetics. He has written widely on aesthetics. He holds a doctoral degree in Philosophy from Ljubljana University. He has been awarded the Fulbright Postdoctoral Fellowship in 1993.

Jale Nejdet Erzen is a painter, art historian and an art critic. She is a Professor of Architectural History at Middle East Technical University. She holds a Ph.D. in architectural history from Istanbul Technical University. She has been awarded the Fulbright Postdoctoral Fellowship in 1986 and the Chevalier dans les Arts èt les Lettres Prize of the French Ministry of Culture in 1990. She has edited *Boyut Journal of Art* (1980-1984). She has been a founder member of SANART and currently the President.

Lev Krefc is an Associate Professor and the Head of the Department of Philosophy at the University of Ljubljana. He received his Ph.D. in 1986 on "The Struggle on the Artistic Left." He has been an M.P. and Deputy Speaker of the Slovenian Parliament. He is currently the President of the Slovenian Society for Aesthetics.

Hasan Ünal Nalbantoğlu is a Professor of Sociology at Middle East Technical University. He has been an "Leverhulme European Visiting Fellow" at Durham University in 1975-76. He received his Ph.D. in Sociology from Hacettepe University in 1975. He has taught at Hacettepe University and the University of California, Berkeley before joining Middle East Technical University.

Rana Nergis Ögüt is an Instructor at the Department of Architecture at the Middle East Technical University. She teaches architectural design. She holds a Ph.D. in architecture from Middle East Technical University. Her doctoral study is published as a book entitled *The Autonomy of Art and Aesthetics in Architecture*. She worked as an official architect in the Turkish Ministry of Reconstruction and Settlement between 1979-84.

Deborah Semel is an artist. She received her Master's Degree in Art from Maryland Institute. She is currently working on a Doctorate at Hacettepe University. She has taught art in the United States and at Bilkent University in Ankara, has written about art and culture for the Turkish Daily News, and has exhibited her work in both the US and Turkey.

İpek Türeli is currently pursuing a Ph.D. in Architecture at Middle East Technical University.

Richard Woodfield is a Professor at the School of Art & Design of Nottingham Trent University. He is currently the Secretary General of the International Association of Aesthetics. He has written widely on art history.

Dionysis A. Zivas is Professor Emeritus at National Technical University of Athens. He received his Ph.D. in Architecture from National Technical University in 1970. Prof. Zivas has been particularly involved in problems related to the conservation and revival of historical buildings and settlements. He is the president of the Panayotis & Effie Michelis Foundation and also the President of the Hellenic Society for Aesthetics. He has been awarded the Europa Nostra Award in 1982 and the Gottfried von Herder Prize in 1993.

CORRESPONDENCE

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SANART, Association of Aesthetics and Visual Culture
Kennedy Caddesi, 42/1, Küçükesat, Ankara, 06660, Turkey

e-mail : erzen@arch.metu.edu.tr

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Işıklar Pazarlama A.Ş.
İlhan Otel A.Ş.
Institut d'Etudes Francaises d'Ankara
İstanbul Turizm Otelcilik A.Ş.
Kaderoğlu Elektik Ticaret A.Ş.
Kapadokya Oteller Birliği
Kavaklıdere Şarapları A.Ş.
Kavala Grubu A.Ş.
Kris Cam Ltd. A.Ş.
L'Instituto Italiano di Cultura di Ankara
M.E.T.U. Rektor's Office
M.E.T.U. Faculty of Architecture
Mas Matbaası A.Ş.
MESA Toplukonut Yatırım A.Ş.
Meteksan A.Ş.
Mimarlar Derneği 1927
Mondriian-Stiftung
Municipality of Ankara (1992) and Murat Karayalçın
Municipality of Çankaya
Municipality of Göreme
Municipality of Ürgüp

Murat Yazıcı
Netaş A.Ş.
Nurul A.Ş.
Osmanlı Bankası
Otel Almira A.Ş.
Otel Mustafa A.Ş.
Representation of the European Commission to Turkey
Republic of Turkey, Central Bank
Republic of Turkey, General Directorate of Highways
Republic of Turkey, General Directorate of Rural Services
Republic of Turkey, General Directorate of State Railways
Republic of Turkey, Ministry of Culture
Republic of Turkey, Ministry of Environment
Republic of Turkey, Ministry of Foreign Affairs
Republic of Turkey, Ministry of Tourism
Republic of Turkey, Prime Ministry
Rockerfeller Foundation
Sevda-Cenap And Müzik Vakfı
T & T Turizm A.Ş.
TESK
Türkiye İş Bankası
Türk Elektrik Endüstrisi A.Ş.
TV 8
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Teletaş A.Ş.
Tepe İnşaat A.Ş.
The British Council
TÜBİTAK, The Scientific and Research Council of Turkey
Türk Elektrik Endüstrisi A.Ş.
Turkish Airlines
Uğur Mumcu Araştırmacı Gazetecilik Vakfı
Ulusoy Seyahat Nakliyat A.Ş.
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