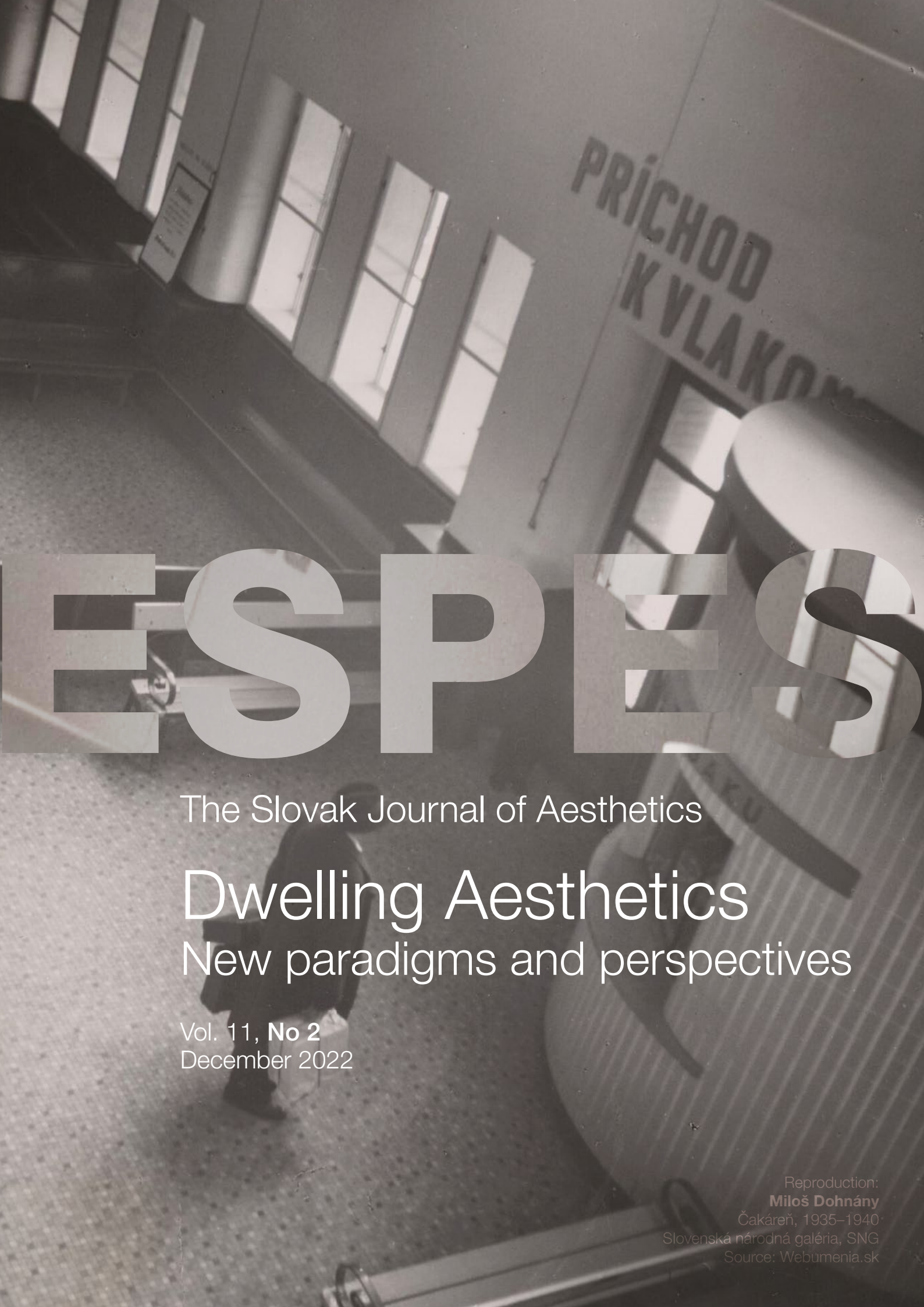

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Dwelling Aesthetics

New paradigms and perspectives

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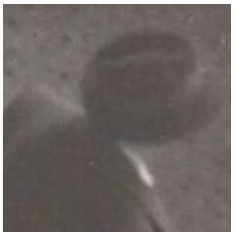

DWELLING AESTHETICS
NEW PARADIGMS AND PERSPECTIVES

Aurosa Alison
Guest Editor

Introduction

Dwelling Aesthetics: New Paradigms and Perspectives

Aurosa Alison

Why choose the theme of the aesthetics of 'dwelling' rather than of the lived or designed space? The verb 'to dwell' is often translated in English as 'to live'. This is not surprising. The existential connection between moving through and experiencing space has been explored in depth during the 20th century. Since the mid-20th century, a new culture of dwelling has emerged in philosophy and architecture, fueled by an interest in the lived, sensitive, and phenomenological dimension of space (cf. Husserl (1913), Merleau-Ponty (1945)). Following Heidegger's 1951 *Darmstadt lecture*, dwelling has been regarded as the fundamental form of our sensitive relationship with the world, a dimension that affects our being and existential condition. Many theorists and practitioners have focused on the aesthetic aspect of dwelling, highlighting its phenomenological and experiential aspects. Philosophers such as Gaston Bachelard, Otto Friederich Bollnow, Maurice Merleau-Ponty, and Steen Eiler Rasmussen, for example, have discussed the critical role of experiencing the space around us. Similarly, architects such as Steven Holl, Christian Norberg-Schulz, Juhani Pallasmaa, Alberto Pérez-Gómez, and Peter Zumthor have considered the relationship between the built space and the lived space, leading to a new phenomenological trend in architecture.

In this special issue of *Espes. The Slovak Journal of Aesthetics*, we aim to honour the culture of dwelling and explore the aesthetic question of dwelling from new perspectives. We are particularly interested in how these perspectives reflect a renewal of society as it faces the future. The central issue is that of a society renovating itself with a new ethic and way of life that involves a new way of living and, consequently, of dwelling. Our attempt is to analyse how we are learning to inhabit in the face of the epochal and theoretical changes that the post-post-human era is about to bring. Since the first lockdowns in 2020, our living interactions have increasingly retreated into small, digital,

virtual spaces, showing that humanity has an innate sense of resilience that has brought us closer to a greater understanding of what is 'outside'. Interest in the environment and the preservation of nature has increased, as people strive to rediscover outdoor wellness. At the same time, we are rediscovering the sense of the domestic hearth, the primordial dwelling, and the maternal sense of welcoming spaces that, in their 'interior', protected us during the global pandemic.

Moving away from the classical image of home (as described by Bachelard) allows us to overcome a kind of utopian nostalgia and consider the world as a place to live in. In this regard, Tonino Griffero's and Carsten Friberg's contributions offer a new vision of living that is not limited to this traditional image of home. They suggest that primordial places of living trigger a series of activities and realities that belong to everyone. The house is no longer just a place that represents our roots and the way we experience space but becomes an object that can be examined from an emotional and sensitive perspective and in the context of atmospheres. According to Griffero, "dwelling means cultivating atmospheres". The traditional image of home persists because of the idealization of the concept of dwelling. Instead, Griffero proposes a model that distinguishes between prototypical, derivative, and spurious atmospheres. Everyday experience gives rise to pathic-atmosphericological contexts that are not necessarily intentionally constructed, but that belong to the multiple modes of dwelling.

As Heidegger reminds us in his lecture *Building Dwelling Thinking*, "we must always learn to dwell". In this regard, Carsten Friberg's paper *Feeling at Home: Reflections on a Theme of Human Existence* allows for a dialogue with the consideration of the body in the Heideggerian dualism of dwelling and building, as well as Derrida's reading of it. Heidegger's influence on Derrida is crucial in understanding how dwelling is a form of bodily existentialism. The awareness of the body in space persists in human existence, where 'feeling' is a dominant aspect of living. In both Griffero's and Friberg's contributions, the use of neologisms such as 'come to my house' (Griffero) and 'feeling at home' (Friberg) move the concept of dwelling away from the traditional image of home and closer to a form of sensible existence.

The atmospheric context is an important part of the contextualization of dwelling, and Federico De Matteis' *The Climate of Spaces: On Architecture, Atmospheres and Time* and Elena Mancioppi's *Osmospheric Dwelling: Smell, Food, Gender and Atmospheres* offer some insights on this topic. De Matteis discusses the ongoing question of integrating architectural design with the atmospheric context and introduces a new design mode. Mancioppi discusses how the concept of atmosphere can intersect with other meaningful and non-consequential experiences, such as those related to smell, food, and gender, in an 'osmospheric' context. The relationship between climate and atmosphere allows us to understand climate change not only as the natural passage of the seasons but also as a design element that can create more sensitive architecture. Mancioppi emphasizes the power of the atmosphere as an evocative concept by exploring the context of flavour and introducing

the neologism 'osmosphere' to represent an affective aura. She argues that the issue of flavour can be traced back to two types of settings: food and smell, and that combining these two elements with implications for gender and an open air design, brings the atmospheric issue closer to the world of dwelling.

The discordant aspects of dwelling in contemporary society are closely linked to the social and political changes of our time. Civil and ethical rights are part of the evolution of the contemporary era in which we live, and in this context, Martin Charvát's *Disrupted Dwelling: Forensic Aesthetics and the Visibility of Violence* and Aurosa Alison's *Can an Extra-terrestrial Dwell on Earth?* focus on the profound changes driven by a new third gender context (Alison) and the concept of resilience experienced through forensic aesthetics (Charvát). The ability to live and inhabit the earth must be a necessity for everyone in an equitable and democratic way. Wars and suppressive actions raise ethical questions about dwelling that can be examined through a forensic aesthetic approach to survival. Another way to plan for good city living depends on the moral and sexual barriers that power has often put in place. The discussion of urban projects dedicated to the second and third genders highlights the direction that contemporary society is heading (Alison).

The turning point of post-human dwelling is complex and it is challenging to approach it naturally and accurately. Therefore, it is necessary to consider living in 2050 or inhabiting new ethical and social spaces. This kind of openness is rooted in the eternal principles of architectural practice. To close this special issue, *Juhani Pallasmaa 'TALKS' with Students* is a conversation between students from the University Federico II in Naples and the Politecnico di Milano and Juhani Pallasmaa. Pallasmaa answers students' questions about the various themes addressed in this issue, including atmospheres, future visions, and phenomenological contexts. Pallasmaa, like all masters of thought, reminds us that architecture is a mirror of the world and that learning how to inhabit the world is reflected in learning how to dwell and design a new and better world.

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Dwelling Means Cultivating Atmospheres

Tonino Griffero

Abstract: The paper addresses the issue of dwelling as a powerful way of cultivating atmospheric feelings without the risk of suffering their disturbing aggressiveness, and deals with inclusiveness or immersivity that true dwelling arouses. To avoid the widespread trend to consider every space a dwelling place, it proposes that only a really "lived" place, in so far it radiates a specific and particularly intense-authoritative atmosphere (in kinetic, synesthetic, felt-bodily sense) affecting the perceivers and finding in their body its precise sounding board, makes dwelling in the proper sense possible. Just as there are different types of atmosphere (prototypical, derivative, spurious), there are therefore different types of dwelling and inclusiveness. However, contrary to the today's projectivist-constructionist explanation and globalized orientation, for a "pathic aesthetics" only a lifewordly qualitative-emotional experience based on an atmosphere of intimacy-familiarity really turns a house into a home. | *Keywords: Dwelling, Atmospheres, Felt body, Inclusiveness, Intimacy*

1. A House is not a Home

A pathic-atmospherological aesthetics (Griffero, 2014a; 2017a; 2020a; 2021)[1] should be critical both of nostalgia and utopianism, focusing instead on presentness and in particular on dwelling presence. If it is true that one lives in the city, one really dwells, in an emotional and felt-bodily way, especially at home. Unfortunately, dwelling, including the cyclical mobility it implies (leaving and coming back home every day) has been forgotten and even stigmatised in recent decades by the postmodern allergy to every 'border'. Instead, I think it calls for a renewed philosophical-aesthetical attention, not so much because we "must ever learn to dwell" (Heidegger, 1971, p. 159),[2]

[1] Given the obvious impossibility of outlining my approach as a whole, it will suffice to point out that by 'atmospheres' I mean feelings poured out into lived spaces and thereby resonating into perceivers' felt-bodily processes.

[2] That is, to take care of the Fourfold (earth, sky, gods, mortals).

or because we find our true essence only in dwelling (Bollnow, 2020), but simply because dwelling preserves us atmospherically from a foreign and (also affectively) hostile space.[3]

There is much phenomenological evidence of the affective centrality of dwelling. Being a homeless person, in fact, means not only having no roof over one's head, but feeling at home everywhere without ever needing that lived (non-Euclidean-anisotropic) and safe space (Griffero, 2014b) that makes an essential contribution to our identity in terms of intimacy and immunisation.[4] Significantly, saying "come over to mine" means saying "come to my house", that is, to "an organic unity, whose essence is some definite power" (van der Leeuw et al., 1955, p. 395) providing an atmospheric well-being and consisting in "inscribing the things and places of one's environment, neutral in their meaning, into a profile of personal meaning" (Hasse, 2008, p. 109).

Today's globalisation makes this identitarian dwelling look like the mnestic-nostalgic trace of past (only alleged) idyllic conditions.[5] All the more so if, frightened by the extreme media porosity of our modern homes (Anders, 1956, p. 17), one is convinced that only an older way of dwelling could provide a "psychic landscape". In the same line of thought, one might nostalgically complain that "in Paris there are no houses, and the inhabitants of the big city live in superimposed boxes",[6] or that it is impossible "to live" in a hotel or nomadically (so far we can agree), because true dwelling requires at least two people and a female presence (of this I am not so sure), so that the apartment of a bachelor or widower cannot ever become an intimate interior (Minkowski, 1954, p. 180 ff.; Bollnow, 2020, p. 179).

While the nostalgic certainly overestimates and eternalises the rather recent intimacy of dwelling privileged by bourgeois society, the globalised modernist seems almost morally obsessed by ergonomic minimalism and efficiency imperatives. However, anyone wishing to carefully avoid these two extremes has to wonder whether dwelling is still really a biotope and a psychotope. There are a few elements to suggest otherwise: a) in the early 20th century, home comfort turned from an existential principle into a conservative and psychically regressive alibi,[7] b) throughout the 20th century interior cosiness[8] turned into a pseudo-homeliness, based on the "horror of comfort" and

3 As long as atmospherically dense things and the non-phobic lived space do not rigidly encapsulate us in a cement envelope, making us completely blind to the outside world.

4 Especially in view of the increase in free wake time in our affluent societies (Sloterdijk, 2016).

5 When, maybe, a person was as closely intertwined with their lived space as an animal with its territory.

6 For Bachelard (1994, p. 26) they would thus be deprived of cellars (and therefore roots), heroic verticality (inhibited by the elevator) and cosmicity (due to detachment from nature), forced to live in an anti-dreamlike horizontality.

7 Benjamin (2002, I, pp. 220, 19) talks about the Victorian individual as a "compass case" and the living room as a fictional "box in the theatre of the world".

8 Whose perhaps incomparable version is the self-satisfied (nordic) hygge-ideal: see for example Bille (2021).

a "secretly vexatious" intimacy (Mitscherlich, 1965, pp. 11, 125), c) a previously safe interior could become an uncanny place holding secrets or hiding places[9] (e.g. haunted houses in literature and alienated memories),[10] d) postmodern architecture has gone so far as designing a non-accommodating way of life.

Indeed, no one wants to underestimate these trends. They are, however, more theoretical-literary exceptions than actual circumstances of everyday life. The metaphysical extraterritoriality, implicit in the super-terrestrial and ubiquitous orientation of the major monotheisms[11] and then secularised in the Enlightenment as well as in its technoscientific consequences, has in fact never really penetrated into the lifeworld.[12] On the contrary, the need for a privatised-subjective existence became so powerful as to demand a (far from obvious) architectural design starting from the interior and its digital devices, making the *flâneur*, the human type of the belle époque for whom the streets were ultimately equivalent to the four walls of a house, anachronistic. And the increasing externalisation of interiors, which were "transformed into an object of mass consumption" (Sparke, 2008, p. 55) able to guarantee even in public places an immersiveness similar to that hitherto only provided by private ones,[13] is a clear indication of the unchanged emotional centrality of dwelling – an intimacy that provides a "material score for sentimental events" Meisenheimer (2008, p. 43),[14] whose memories seem to belong not to us but to the places themselves and to survive even when we are gone.

Dwelling as an atmosphere (or *ambiance*) is given by "a constellation of things and of relational arrangements" but above all by an "overall context of meaning" (Hasse, 2009, p. 180) also made of environmental *Stimmungen*. As a domosphere it should be considered as an aesthesiological *Uphänomen* that symbolically links space-time and the affective sphere. According to Hermann Schmitz, for example – the true *spiritus rector* of my pathic-atmospherological aesthetics – dwelling is nothing but a form of culture-cultivation of feelings within a defined space[15] (be it a home, a church,

9 An itinerary that reflected the "fundamental insecurity [of] a newly established class, not quite at home in its own home" (Vidler, 1992, pp. 3–4).

10 "The discrepancy between the longevity of homes and the relative transience of their occupants" (Miller, 2001, p. 107) can arouse anxiety about materially inheriting a house, creating an uneasy sense of cohabiting with the past (the agency of left-behind and already "lived" materials) that requires new occupants to employ negotiation strategies and often produces situations that cannot be completely controlled. See Lipman (2014).

11 For (especially) early monotheism the deity was never settled (as it was e.g. for the Greeks), so the faithful felt at home, paradoxically, only when they were elsewhere, for example in pilgrimage.

12 The suggestion of nomadism seems today even more weakened by formerly dormant anxieties of identity and locality, which it would be absurd to disregard (if only to adequately deal with them).

13 The so-called "homes away from home" (luxury shops and lobbies of big hotels, first-class carriages and clubs, today pedestrianised areas and shopping malls, etc.) aimed at providing an idealised replica of domestic spaces.

14 This score is multi-layered: "moving, ordering, renovating, and changing furniture are activities that act and feedback intensely on our emotional state" (Funke, 2006, p. 20 f.).

15 "The spatiality of feelings becomes so effective here that, again and again, people need these places of dwelling – rather than a simple safe accommodation – in order to capture their feelings, administer them and shape them on these places". In short, "dwelling means having atmospheres at one's disposal" (Schmitz, 1990, pp. 318, 320).

a garden, or a Japanese tea house), aimed at preventing the risk that these possibly aggressive-demonic feelings, as such floating freely,[16] may undermine our stability and self-control. The resulting "imaginary cartography of affective vital significations" (Hasse, 2008, pp. 109–110) generates in fact a temporary balance between emotionally letting oneself go and a rationalistic attitude.[17]

It is certainly not enough to have a "roof over our heads" to say that we are really dwelling. This condition implies a lived place that allows us to capture, cultivate and administer external atmospheres otherwise out of our control, i.e. to manage and filter the pathic "demonic" in a protected space and thus to give life to an intense and nuanced affective climate able to mitigate the external uncanny.[18] The resulting friendly and cosy familiarity relies on an *ad-hoc* felt-bodily communication between experiencer and environment whose atmospheric affordance must be considered "there", in the environment itself,[19] and not only as the result of a subjective projection. This is proven by the fact that moving to a new house – and "if you don't dwell, you can't move either" (Hasse, 2020, p. 53)[20] – we typically "feel" the affective-identity of a piece of furniture, of colours, smells, sounds, etc., of some movement and affective synchronisations, in short, one senses some indispensable (or even shunned)[21] "vitalqualities" (Dürckheim, 2005, p. 39) that were previously indifferent to us or perhaps completely unnoticed. After all, it is unlikely that these vitalqualities can be reproduced elsewhere, that atmospheres can be packaged and transported as if they were furniture, or that their reproduction, with its performative and proxemic implications, may still make sense in a completely different place.

I would now like to apply my general ideal-typical distinction between prototypical, derivative and spurious atmospheres[22] to dwelling. a) When we have structural affordances,[23] we can speak of prototypical atmospheres,

16 As many historical sources show, the sacred enclosure was precisely aimed at preventing local spatial deities from abandoning their residence and wandering outside their original dominion.

17 However, if dwelling domesticates feelings, it is certainly not an invention of modern bourgeois intimism, but rather the essential tool through which to develop our fine sensoriality and to experience an atmospheric pathicity that cannot constantly live with experimentation.

18 Imagine the lively creaking of wood in the fireplace in a country house or the maternal noise of dishes being handled for a child struggling to fall asleep, the tactile softness of a sofa or the half-shade generated by the interaction between the light and the shadows cast by the furniture, etc.

19 For Bachelard (1994, p. 71), a feeling of intimacy is suggested by each piece of furniture.

20 The very act of moving seems to be a precise indicator of the existential quality of our dwelling.

21 Hasse (2020, p. 74) reminds us that dwelling means approaching pericorporeal things but also stepping back from them.

22 A distinction (see Griffero, 2014a, p. 144) that was gradually expanded and clarified in all later works.

23 Rooms linked to each other – what Hall (1966, p. 104) calls a "Grand Central Station atmosphere") – rooms placed around a corridor or atrium (whence a more stable domestic atmosphere), and finally rooms that have become large open spaces, with their (illusory) atmosphere of vastness and democratic transparency, trigger three different prototypical atmospheres.

because they are so objective that they completely involve us or push us (in vain) to resist them. b) When dealing with less impactful aesthetic choices, which can generate both residential satisfaction or undesirable atmospheres depending on the changing relationship between place and its users,[24] one should speak of derivative atmospheres. c) Finally, when the affective affordance and the atmospheric halo mainly depend on subjective projection,[25] one can even speak of spurious atmospheres. Needless to say that, in everyday experience, these three ideal-types are often intertwined or experienced in succession.[26]

The important thing to remember is that an atmospherically "right" dwelling comes with cultivating – by virtue of its motor-suggestions, synaesthetic characters and (relatively variable) affordances[27] – inner feelings of comfort but not to the detriment of socio-expressive needs addressed to the outside world. Dwelling needs not replicate the aesthetic utopia of the *Gesamtkunstwerk* or, as required by a certain poetic-oneiric-existentialist topophilia, act as a sophisticated and timeless miniature of the cosmos (nest, shell, cottage, crypt, etc.).[28] Even the recent "good (especially orosensory) atmospherisation", in which psychotherapy saw (Tellenbach, 1968) the guarantee of a healthy psychic life, according to the principle that "being starts with well-being" (Bachelard, 1994, p. 104), does not at ill imply a form of desperate segregation.

In turn, the already mentioned circularity of dwelling[29] does not necessarily lead to a reflective pure *cogito* but first of all to felt-bodily well-being. It needs borders,[30] but especially a place so different from all others that all directions lead to it, a kind of home in the home ("centre of the centre") that acts as an authentic quasi-altar[31] where one can truly be oneself,[32] thus being able to rely on a protective and safe condition (*Geborgenheit*).[33]

24 Excessively elegant furniture may end up inhibiting conversation, too much domestic hygiene can turn into authentic fetishism, and a hall may be a disproportionate representative, as a "stately room with no castle behind it" (Mitscherlich, 1965, p. 138).

25 That is, on autobiographical data, felt-body condition, dependence on retention and protention effects, etc.

26 Thus providing a wide range of more nuanced, multi-layered and "nested" lifewordly atmospheres.

27 For an American and a German, for example, "whether the door is open or shut, it is not going to mean the same thing" (Hall, 1966, p. 137).

28 For Bachelard, exemplarily, "a nest-house is never young", and "to curl up belongs to the phenomenology of the verb to inhabit, and only those who have learned to do so can inhabit with intensity" (Bachelard, 1994, p. 99, xxxviii).

29 Consisting in leaving home, putting on the social mask, but then coming back home, stripping it away and withdrawing to safe spaces and "transitional" objects.

30 Hence the atmosphere of familiarity that is necessary for the human being to escape both nomadic uprooting or anonymous concrete-reinforced ant-hills. It requires setting boundaries, only to cross them cyclically.

31 Identified, depending on the ages and cultures, in the fireplace or the kitchen, in the dining table or living room, in the bed (in which, not coincidentally, our days and even our lives begin and end) or in the pudically inaccessible so-called night-zone.

32 As clearly shown by the almost sacrilegious thrill we feel when we walk into somebody else's house unexpectedly.

33 Dwelling clearly separates the inner-private "place" from the external-public "space", in which, after all, one can relatively feel at home only if one has previously inhabited a "place tonalised by familiarity" (Hasse 2009, p. 25).

A pathic-phenomenological aesthetics therefore has the task of explaining what space (what set of affordances) triggers a special "residential" atmosphere, to what extent it may depend on intentional-rational planning, what dimensions of the lived space it is based on,[34] where and why it condenses its atmosphere (also into things) and with what authority.[35] But due to space limitations, here I will only deal with dwelling as an inclusive-immersive space.

2. Inclusiveness and Immersion

We feel that a certain room is oppressive or relaxing in a spatial but not local and physical-geometric (isotropic and allocentric) sense. This involves the "absolute" (lived, pre-dimensional, anisotropic) space which perceivers "pathically" correspond to thanks a felt-bodily resonance to cross-modal "ecological" suggestions or *qualia* (affordances) (Griffero, 2020b). Only in this kind of space, made up of absolute and non-relative localisations, somehow sprung from the felt body (*Leib*) as a true orientative zero-point (Husserl),[36] does it make sense to talk about inclusiveness. Only if we avoid any plane geometry and neuroscientific reductionism[37] and take the (often unaware) felt-bodily contact with atmospheres seriously (without stopping at sight-based frontality) (Mallgrave, 2013, p. 109),[38] can we come close to understanding the really qualitative topology needed here.

This atmospheric qualitative approach to the spatial environment, whether its resonance effects are located in proprioceptive sensations or in the (even less easy to locate) "isles" of the felt (and not organic) body (*Leib*),[39] is obviously hard to analyse, the lived space[40] being like "the darkness needed in the theatre to show up the performance" (Merleau-Ponty, 2002, p. 115). Only in a lived space one can actually say that a "lived distance" "measures the 'scope' of my life at every moment" (Merleau-Ponty, 2002, p. 333);[41] or – and this is

34 For example on the ever-changing felt-bodily and affective integration between directional-vast space and relative-local space, as posited by Schmitz (1977, p. 237).

35 Tents, windows, furnishing, polymodal warmth, chromatic choices, objects' patina, order/disorder relationship, etc.

36 This means recognising a "spectrum of spatiality [that] is much more extensive than what is suggested by the classical conceptualization in the philosophical and scientific field" (Schmitz, 1967, p. xvi).

37 "To have a mind [...] requires more than a brain" (Noe, 2009, p. 10). See also Pérez-Gómez (2016, p. 22).

38 The atmospherogenic charge should be aimed not so much at facades and Potemkin villages – in short, a banal orchestration of effects (cf. Leatherbarrow, 2015) – but, on the contrary, at enabling inclusion or exclusion thanks to different means such as things and colours, shapes and sounds.

39 According to Schmitz's approach (2011, pp. 8–12). See Griffero (2017a, pp. 55–77; 2017b; 2017c).

40 For a brief history of the notion see Griffero (2014a, pp. 36–47; 2014b) and Hasse (2005, pp. 150–198).

41 As such, the aqualitative-abstract local space is hardly inclusive in the proper sense. Only from a lived-atmospherical point of view can one say that there is not enough space, that we want our own space, that we need it, that there is too much of it so that we seek shelter in narrowness, that we can or cannot have it, that we can make it (thus creating a void that was not there before), and so forth.

what we are interested in here – that inclusiveness as a non- or pre-dimensional voluminousness is particularly well suited to confirm that "by feeling in a certain way, we feel in what space we find ourselves" (Böhme, 2006, p. 89).

Inclusiveness relies on the constant interweaving of three forms of spatiality. It presupposes the local space with its quasi-thingly *qualia*,[42] the "ecstatic" qualities atmospherically irradiated by the individual spatial points that dynamically tonalise our surroundings;[43] but also the directional space, whose kinesthetic and synaesthetic aspects make, for example, a certain dwelling more immersive than another, in the sense that it can welcome or reject us[44] through its directional-vectorial affordances (centrifugal, centripetal, omnilateral, undecided, etc.). Finally it also presupposes the original-surfaceless space of the vastness (corresponding to very general feelings like satisfaction, despair, etc.) expressed by the "here/now" of what Schmitz would call "primitive presence/present". Given the transition from the semiotic-communicative (sender-message-receiver) paradigm to a performative and first-personal one (Jäkel, 2013, p. 32; Pérez-Gómez, 2016, p. 146), one should then ask what architectural and living "gestures" suggest inclusiveness more precisely – things and colours, shapes and sounds, more generally "orientations, kinetic suggestions, marks" (Böhme, 2006, p. 113)[45] understood as "frozen" gestures of perceivers' anticipated kinetic reactions and movements.[46]

An inclusive atmosphere provides a spontaneous and hermeneutically circular interlacement between the repertoire of architectural gestures and users' felt-bodily and kinesthetic experiences. The former either suggest (real or virtual) motor figures to users, or invite them to linger in that space (where they may be comfortable even without speaking) (Soentgen, 1998, p. 81), generally "tonalising" their whole subsequent experiential flow.[47] Inclusiveness here is the same as immersivity, provided that every densely atmospheric space, implying the full felt-bodily involvement of the percipient, is an immersive space.

Just relax on your armchair,[48] rather than lying down (full passivity) or

42 For an introduction to the notion of "quasi-thing" I limit myself here to referring to Griffero (2017a).

43 On "ecstasies" (as opposed to "properties") cf. Böhme (2017, pp. 37–54).

44 Cf. Pallasmaa (2005, p. 50).

45 See also Zumthor (2006, pp. 33, 35).

46 For example: a spatial felt-bodily resonance can invite percipients to distance themselves (bureaucratic-excluding coldness) or to immerse themselves, to walk through and inhabit a space telling them that they are safe and not alone!

47 Relativism must be rejected here. If an angular building, for example (think, prototypically, of New York's Flatiron skyscraper) powerfully excludes those who are outside (while including those inside) and can be certainly also perceived-felt a bit differently in a different (climatic, perspective, corporeal) context, it never suggests inclusiveness to outside observers, as it inevitably (and literally) "puts us in the corner" (Hasse, 2012, pp. 101–120).

48 With its backrest and armrests, it comfortably wraps around our body, almost acting as an archetypal enclosure (and therefore as a dwelling), and with its position not in front of but to the side of other seats it avoids the promiscuity of glances, thus ensuring a "relaxed

standing (full attentional operation),[49] and close your eyes. Through a sort of "inside look" you will access an authentic "new world", characterised by a vastness or an extradimensional vital spaciousness marked by orientations closely linked to the feelings that will visit you, to the symphony of "memories, needs, temptations, solicitations, delicate atmospheres, felt-bodily impulses".[50]

An important role is also played by some specific kinetic (familiar) possibilities,[51] founded not on metric geometry but on "measuring distances in terms of 'our hands and legs'" (Giordano, 1997, p. 18) and felt-bodily intentionality. That's why the steps taken at home are so qualitatively specific that they cannot at all be added to those taken outside; that's why only an inclusive dwelling allows for genuinely reversible (but not dysfunctional) directions;[52] and that's why one can "lose oneself" at home without being either socially sanctioned or condemned to the marginal and aestheticising figure of the *flâneur*.

3. Gemütlichkeit?

In Germany, since the Biedermeier period, the culture-cultivation of atmospheric feelings in interior spaces – the "art of staying at home" fulfilling a need for both human contact and privacy – has acquired the name of *Gemütlichkeit*. This term, however, was increasingly stigmatised as a symptom of petit-bourgeois pharisaism, a typically German comforting surrogate that would confuse home fetishism with the lived experience of dwelling (Mitscherlich, 1965, p. 129 ff. and especially Schmidt-Lauber, 2003). But is it really like that? Does *Gemütlichkeit* really evoke only the stale set of family interests, through dressing gowns and slippers, good living rooms and geometric decorations,[53] ambient music and "communicative pieces of furniture" like the sofa (Warnke, 1979, p. 677)? Is it only about the live embalming and trivial choices that are inevitably colonised by marketing, thus suggesting that "the house is past" and that "dwelling, in the proper sense, is now impossible" (Adorno, 2005, p. 38)?

Let's explore this a little further. The first thing to say is that the inclusive atmosphere of *Gemütlichkeit* is so fragile as to be threatened by any

social interaction which makes no demands, which is open-ended but above all open to play" (Baudrillard, 2002, p. 45).

49 See Schmitz (1977, p. 207 ff.).

50 Ibidem; cf. also Schmitz (2007, pp. 75–76).

51 Just to give other examples: when a certain environment contains a table and an armchair (as opposed to a table alone) it leads me to stop and sit. If there is only one chair, placed on the longer side of a table, I would even be led to sit down to work and read, whereas many chairs in front of a single table suggest that I should sit only if I intend to attend the public event to be presumably held there. In other cases a ladder directs me upwards, of course, but it is "how" it does so that constitutes the inclusive (or not) atmospheric gesture that interests us here.

52 In fact, only at home does one move without particular justifications from one room to another, using the same couch to sit or to lie down, perceptively moving in non-predetermined directions without excessively demanding (functional, psychological but also bodily) torsions.

53 Whose relaxing effects are maybe due to the fact that "the beholder is involuntarily affected by the slow, calm mode of production" (Sparke, 2008, p. 99).

unexpected event, while being really perceptible only when it feels threatened. The comfortable intimacy it triggers pathically individualises-ritualises things, places and gestures that are otherwise relatively indifferent to us: in particular it encourages small talk, discourses devoid of controversial edges and cuddles (with people and/or pets); it is favoured by moderate heat and soft light, avoiding "cruel" close-ups,[54] and by a smellscape and soundscape that do not prevent concentration (be it for reading, prayer or dialogue), etc.

But any codification of this atmospheric inclusiveness easily risks sounding ridiculous or marked by affectation.[55] Albeit stigmatised by any stylistic-political avant-gardism as regressive, late-Romantic, provincial, petit-bourgeois and *ipso facto* reality-denying, the atmosphere of inclusiveness and *Gemütlichkeit* instead proves to be completely unavoidable, not least because it makes a risk-free but rich emotional life possibile. Cultivating atmospheric feelings actually means giving life to an embodied affective scaffolding that, alone, allows our feelings to emerge or at least to become more precise, irrespective of what the generating centres of the affordance of intimacy might be,[56] and given a certain condition of (sociopolitical and corporeal) "normality".[57]

In my terms, you can therefore find, within an increasingly subjective range, a prototypical inclusiveness, a derivative one and finally a spurious-idiosyncratic one.[58] "Normally" there are phenomenally attestable invariants that, despite coexisting with more critical-ambivalent areas (thresholds, roofs, windows, walls, etc.) that generate a peculiar "anguish of the border" (Schmitz, 1977, pp. 229–232, 241), prevent us from perceiving inclusiveness everywhere.

4. Conclusion

There are obviously many open issues that can only be touched on here.

I'll give just a few examples. Is the most intimate-inclusive dwelling the place of maximum familiarity and maximum comfort (as in the case of harsh climatic conditions),[59] or of an epiphanic otherness? Can dwelling intentionally trigger an atmosphere of inclusiveness or is it simply its

54 For the atmospheric potential of dimmed light cf. Griffero (2017a, pp. 103–112).

55 Both because "certain" things may not generate the necessary wellness, but, above all, because atmospheric inclusiveness can neither be entirely observed in the third person nor survive a reflexive analysis of its components. Also, it cannot be intentionally produced, since its spontaneous and involuntary character is clearly an indispensable component of the effect it arouses.

56 But some of its objective catalysts can never be missing, like (mild) temperature, acoustic insulation, chiaroscuro lighting and architectural solutions (in the broader sense).

57 In fact, in the case of obvious and contingent divergence, for example, between excessive housing comfort and a serious external socio-political situation, or in the case of tension due to a guest's awkward remark, even the best-planned atmosphere could fail, or at least be felt as inappropriate.

58 Some may even feel included and protected by crowded city streets! Only in this projective-spurious case does the thesis apply that there is not a space in the world which cannot be intimate-inclusive for somebody.

59 Cf. Baudelaire (1996, p. 114), for whom winter adds to the poetry of a house. It needs "as much snow, hail, and frost as the sky could possibly deliver. [Those who live there] must have a Canadian winter or a Russian one".

condition of possibility, given that its maniacal and mechanical planning probably produces just the opposite effect? Does this pathic-atmospherological approach to dwelling sacrifice any political implication, or is it thoroughly "political" by referring to the affective segmentation of the lifeworld and to how to (even normatively) deal with atmospheres' authority (Griffero, 2014c)? And so forth.

The important thing, however, is to not throw the baby out with the bathwater: not to identify the unavoidable atmosphere of dwelling intimacy with alienated-fetishistic pseudo-familiarity for the sake of a hypothetical (utopian?) dwelling. Nomadism, that sort of global hotel that makes us feel at home nowhere and anaesthetises our dwelling, is certainly not a solution: as Balzac put it, the "privilege of being everywhere at home is the prerogative of kings, courtesans, and thieves."

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Feeling at Home

Reflections on a Theme in Human Existence

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This essay is about the significance of the body for dwelling. Considering the body implies considering a concrete body, i.e. asking for the experiences embedded in it. Consequently, the body in consideration is, for example, gendered. The topic of dwelling takes Martin Heidegger's work on the hand as the point of departure and uses philosophical anthropology and Jacques Derrida's comments on Heidegger as inspiration to suggest that the relationship between the hand and thinking implies asking whose hands build places of dwelling. When dwelling is related to the body, we must also consider what concrete body is involved in building and dwelling. | *Keywords: Dwelling, Heidegger, Existence, Body, Building*

1. Introduction

The following reflects on dwelling related to our concrete bodily presence, beginning with insights from Martin Heidegger's (1954/1997) *Bauen Wohnen Denken* (Building Dwelling Thinking) where the body, in particular the hand, plays a central role between building and thinking. I will begin with asking whether the order of the title of his essay, where dwelling appears between building and thinking, is trivial, reflecting that we first build to then dwell and lastly think; or if it is of significance because dwelling connects building and thinking.

To make this connection we use the hand. Obviously, we use our hands to build a place of dwelling. However, as we learn from Heidegger, dwelling is not a matter of taking up residence but of our existence, we must say that to build is to knowingly form human existence. It is to make something present, and making present relates to thinking. With Jacques Derrida (1983; 1988) we should ask whether 'Heidegger's hand' also reveals the importance of asking who the hand building a dwelling place belongs to. Heidegger seems to neglect this aspect, something a view to philosophical anthropology (Gehlen, 1950/2004; Plessner, 1976) can help emphasising the importance of. Thus, we should say that our body is not merely central for dwelling because we are

bodily present in places of dwelling. With our bodily interaction and our use of our hands, we design and construct dwelling places, i.e. places where we are at home because they correspond to our human existence.

In dwelling we find an aspect of human existence made present in the concrete, built environment. I believe the insight we acquire from Heidegger with a view to Derrida and philosophical anthropology is of how our hands and body form a constitutive connecting point between us and the world which, consequently, makes it clear how important it is also to pay attention to whose hands and body we speak of, i.e. to their history and gender.

2. The Order of a Title

To transform a space into a space for dwelling seems to require that we build. This is how Heidegger opens his essay. The English dwelling, used to translate the German *wohnen*, stresses that it is not merely where one seeks shelter and stays but where one has a home, lives and feels at home. I inhabit [*bewohne*] a building yet I do not necessarily dwell [*wohne*] in my apartment [*Wohnung*] (Heidegger, 1954/1997, p. 139; 1971/2001, p. 144). The place where I dwell is one where I am satisfied [*zufrieden*, omitted in the English translation] because I find peace [*Friede*]; where I am protected from danger (Heidegger, 1954/1997, p. 143; 1971/2001, p. 147). We must here notice the connotations in English and German differ which is a challenge one encounters when translating Heidegger.

Dwelling is more than housing which was a pressing concern six years after WWII when Heidegger wrote the essay. If we take a leap in time, the Syrian architect Marwa Al-Sabouni, witnessing the destruction of her home city Homs as well as a large part of Syria in another war, wonders about the difference between housing and home and she asks what home is:

> The question has haunted me for a long time, and the war in my country has taken me through several stages in search of an answer. At the very moment when I imagine I have arrived at a response, the letters blur before my eyes and become illegible. The truth is that I had no idea what home was before I saw the people of my country killing each other over its definition (Al-Sabouni, 2016, p. 118).

Her answer is not unlike what we should think with Heidegger: "The home was not just a place to stay in; it was a guarantee of existence. I own a home, therefore I exist'" (Al-Sabouni, 2016, pp. 118f.).

To own a place is often to make it one's own. Even though Heidegger relates to building and most of us do not build but buy, I think we can allow building to imply making a place one of our own regardless of how we transform and furnish it.

Building is not related to dwelling as a mere means to an end. The order of building and dwelling is not simply that first we build, then we dwell. Language tells us that building is already dwelling (Heidegger, 1971/2001, p. 144). To create a space [*Raum*] is to make room for [*einräumen*] something (Heidegger, 1971/2001, p. 152; 1954/1997, p. 149), and we make space for

something that matters to us. When trees are cut to create a glade in the forest, the space is arranged for something which appears in it and with it. Dwelling is not something happening between building and thinking, "man *is* insofar as he *dwells*" (Heidegger, 1971/2001, p. 145; 1954/1997, p. 141, italics in original; "is" in German is *modus coniūnctīvus*), and thinking in relation to building and dwelling is the attempt of understanding what building and dwelling is. Thinking is not the plan outlined for building, and it is not the rational conduct of constructing according to it. Thinking is to act with skills. Thinking makes something apparent which is different from thinking about something. Thinking in its strict sense is not the rules of conjunction enabling us to say something about something; it is to reflect on what saying something tells us about the world and us.

Heidegger dedicates another lecture to what thinking is (1954/1984) which gives us important clues about dwelling. The question asked, 'what is called thinking?', can be asked in more ways. One is: "What is it that calls us into thinking?" (*Was ist es, das uns in das Denken ruft?*) (Heidegger, 1968, p. 114; 1954/1984, p. 79). It is essential to understand its double meaning. From thinking comes a call to think, but there is also something calling us in the thinking, i.e. thinking is trying to tell us something; and "us" is an accusative and not a dative case (Heidegger, 1954/1984, p. 80, omitted in the English translation).

Our topic is dwelling and not thinking, but they are inseparable in our belonging to and feeling home. We reach with our hands into our environment to grasp or take [*nehmen*] what we are part of, and we use our reason which "is the perception [*Vernehmen*] of what is" (Heidegger, 1968, p. 61; 1954/1984, p. 27). We work towards being able to catch [*greifen*] in concepts [*Begriffe*] the significance of what there is. Essential for our world relation is the use of our hands. Heidegger can say thinking is a handiwork [*Handwerk*] (1954/1984, p. 51; 1968, p. 17 uses handicraft, I chose to follow Derrida 1988). "All the work of the hand is rooted in thinking" (Heidegger, 1968, p. 17) – *en passant* we notice that thinking is not an act of grasping in concept [*Be-greifen*] (Heidegger, 1954/1984, p. 128; 1968, p. 221). Regarding our world relation the hand connects us to our environment and makes us handle it in ways that enable us to form it and create our place of dwelling.

We must ask whether thinking as a handiwork is a metaphor used to explain thinking as a work of the mind, or if we have a world-relation that we maintain with our hands. Perhaps maintain, coming from *manu tenere*, from holding in the hand, reveals itself more clearly in French with the hand, *main*, in *maintenir*. Do we become human because the hand is an organ with which we intervene into and form the environment to liberate us from physical dependencies? Or is it because we are humans we have hands and are able to form our environment into a place for dwelling?

The latter is more plausible with Heidegger in mind, hence thinking as handiwork cannot be a metaphorical description. The role the hands play between our concrete physical presences and our interventions into the world

beyond our immediate range reveals our hands are no mere organs but hold our world relation.

3. The Hand and the World

A careful reader of Heidegger is Derrida who dedicates an essay to Heidegger's hand (1988). Here we read that "[t]he hand cannot be spoken about without speaking of technics" (Derrida, 1988, p. 169). Derrida relates to Heidegger saying thinking is a handiwork, Heidegger's example is of a cabinet maker, and we notice this is not a matter of a craftsman's skills in using the tools for making but to accord "himself with the forms that sleep in the wood as it enters man's dwelling" (Derrida, 1988, p. 170).

Let us turn to the most familiar place in Heidegger's writings when it comes to hand and tool, §15 in *Being and Time*. A handling use of things is essentially for learning about things we encounter in our world (Heidegger, 1927/1996, p. 63). We should keep the relation between building and dwelling in mind when we read how the tool, like the notorious hammer, is not of interest as an object, but for how it withdraws itself to be at hand for the work produced that "bears the totality of references in which useful things are encountered" (Heidegger, 1927/1996, p. 65). We produce and build to transform the environment and to integrate both it and us into a meaningful totality. Like building is already dwelling, making and producing already imply a meaningful use.

We must pay attention to the hand's role between our concrete presence and our interventions into the world. Let us take a step backwards from the making of cabinets and pay attention to when we began to use our hands. Perhaps it reveals something about how we handle our environment and what dwelling is.

The child must learn it has hands. To begin with, it does not use its hands with purpose, it does not relate to things in its environment and it does not pursue purposes but it moves its hands aimlessly and repetitively (Plessner, 1976, p. 35; cf. Gehlen, 1950/2004, p. 165). Such use of the hands would be considered a sign of mental weakening in an adult, but this is how the child learns that it has hands to touch, grasp and reach out with. To begin with, the child only has hands in an anatomical sense; it learns it can use them in ways that are of significance and make a significant impact on the environment. It is a learning process of considerable length because the human child, contrary to the animals, has weak instincts and makes indeterminate movements because it is not determined for a specific existence like the animal (Gehlen, 1950/2004, pp. 42ff.). Instead, it has a potential for defining its own role having a yet not determined existence (Gehlen, 1950/2004, p. 146; Plessner, 1976, p. 30). Our world is open exactly because of weak instincts and organs that are not determined for particular uses – specialisation is a loss of opportunities (Gehlen, 1950/2004, pp. 86f.). Consequently, we must learn to use our organs and train our senses which takes considerable time and we must determine what is handed over to us as undetermined. We must engage in and learn how to handle things and not only mechanically respond to them.

The child embarks on a long educational journey and we often focus only on the result. However, it is important to remember where this process takes its beginning and how it relates to our bodily existence. We must avoid what Annette Baier calls "the usual philosophical amnesia of the plain facts of gestation and breastfeeding" and of the direction of the child's development where it slowly "learns to do things for itself, rather than always with the parent and with the parent's presence and assistance" (Baier, 1997, p. 30). We learn to become individuals in so far we are with others, self-perception is no solitude process but it requires others; and an essential part of this process is our bodily experiences (Plessner, 1976, pp. 61ff.).

It should be a plausible suggestion that this process of embodied learning forms a fundamental background for all future learning. Thus, the hand's role in the connection between one's presence and the environment is not neutral. Like building is already dwelling, our handling of the world is already a world interpretation which reveals, to the attentive participant, what the world is and what one's existence is, i.e. what dwelling is.

4. Whose Hand?

Body and hands formed throughout years since childhood reflect the environment. Since our aimless first movements we have become skilled in touching and holding something – between clutching the handle of the hammer and driving in a nail passes a considerable time of bodily training. We have also learned restrictions as to touching one's body and another's body; moral codes prevent us from some forms of self-touching in public, and they outline rules for who we can touch and where. However, this learning also conceals interpretations we act along without awareness. One such interpretation is what technical devices provide us with. Derrida mentions how Heidegger believes writing should be done by hand and not with a typewriter because it is a machine that destroys the relation between thinking, hand, and word, reducing the word "to a simple means of transport" (Derrida, 1988, p. 179). Technical instruments mediate our acts. The problem, according to Heidegger, is not their mediation, not that we use levers and buttons to handle machines; machines are means for what we wish to do and we have no desire for returning to "a rustic idyll" (Heidegger, 1968, p. 23). The problem is that machines are inserted between us and the 'forms that sleep in the wood as it enters man's dwelling'. Machines are used to produce and reproduce what is required for us to achieve goals; they serve our interests but they also distance us from encountering "what is near [*das Nahe*]" (Heidegger, 1968, p. 129; 1954/1984, p. 88, a noun in German). Machines may serve well for producing housing, and it may answer an urgent need of providing protection, but it is not the same to say one has an address and one has a home.

Building requires the use of hands and one such hand is the architect's. Peter Zumthor writes, with respect to Heidegger, that his "wide sense of living and thinking in places and spaces, contains an exact reference to what reality means to me as an architect" (Zumthor, 2006, p. 37). And Al-Sabouni says: "Home is the goal of architecture" (Al-Sabouni, 2016, p. 125). But does the

architect's hand resemble the hand with the hammer? Is it compromised like the hand using a typewriter?

The architect draws with the hand like the philosopher writes. Today's architect most likely also draws aided by software like computer aided design (CAD). Is the architect's hand then out of touch with the material, perhaps led by technics when the programs used are based on pre-established parameters? Is the move from pen to typewriter and computer a loss of hands, hence of thinking? I believe Zumthor reflects on difficulties similar to Heidegger's concern for losing touch with the forms that sleeps in the wood as it enters man's dwelling when he wishes to "build houses like Kaurismäki makes films" where he shows the actors "in a light that lets us sense their dignity, and their secrets" (Zumthor, 2006, p. 53). His goal is to build for human living and not merely to construct houses.

Is it impossible with a computer or is it just difficult? After all, it is not the machines that make our age one of technics; it is the opposite (Heidegger, 1968, p. 24). But Heidegger makes us aware of how we maintain a world-relation with our hands and in our hands. If we follow him, should we not also be aware of other traces found in the hands? Taking inspiration from Derrida (1988, p. 182) we can ask if the hand is the furniture carpenter's making a cabinet, the mason's building a house, the philosopher's writing, the architect's drawing? If the role of the hand is significant, will it not also be significant whose hand it is? If it is a male, German, philosopher's hand or a female, Syrian, architect's? Hand and body are important for Heidegger, but what body do we speak of? As Derrida (1983) points out, *Dasein* has a body, and there is no body without gender, so is it not an absenteeism not to ask what gender uses the hand? Why should Heidegger care about the hand if we are without a body? If thinking as handiwork is no metaphor but a world-relation we maintain with the hands that are forming our environment into a place for dwelling, hands are different. So are dwellers.

The child's body and hand are formed by the world it interacts with. The child learns how to grasp a stone and to throw it, and the girl learns how she throws differently from the boy (Young, 1980). We learn from the culture we are formed by, and it comes to appear to us as obvious, as if it could not be otherwise. It appears to us as a second nature (Gehlen, 1950/2004, p. 38) and, consequently, it can make us blind to the privileges we acquire when growing up and others are excluded from (Ahmed, 2007).

Buildings are important components in this forming and educational process. We spend most of our lives in them and consequently, they have a manifest bodily influence on us. Another architect, Bernard Tschumi, tells us that "[a]ny relationship between a building and its users is one of violence, for any use means the intrusion of a human body into a given space, the intrusion of one order into another" (Tschumi, 1996, p. 122). Our "bodies rush against the carefully established rules of architectural thought" (Tschumi, 1996, p. 123). Sara Ahmed points out that when space takes shape "by being orientated around some bodies" (Ahmed, 2007, p. 157) we must pay attention to what

these bodies are – like their gender and colour, and to the institutionalised positions of power embedded in the space causing confrontations between space and bodies, especially when the bodies in the space are different from those the space was orientated around.

5. Conclusion

Dwelling reveals human existence. Building is already dwelling and to build is to make apparent how we are bodily related to the world which is a relation endowed with structures of power and interwoven with bodily differences. When we intervene into and form our environment into a place for dwelling we use our hands, and we use them not as mere instruments for executing deliberate plans. Our hands hold our world relation.

Heidegger is not the most prominent philosopher of the body; nevertheless, he provides us with important insight regarding the body when he clarifies the role of the hand in thinking, i.e. in making something apparent to us when we are also attentive 'listening' to what it tells us. Our hands, and our bodily relations to the environment in total, are formed in interaction, and this interaction origins with the infant. We learn to use our hands, and they come to embed a cultural practice.

Both philosophical anthropology and phenomenological studies stress the role of the body. The child learns how to act through interacting with others, and the acquired patterns of acting are sedimented in the infant's body memory (Fuchs, 2016, p. 201). Bodily interaction is decisive for our world-relation and for social cognition (Gallagher, 2017); we interact through bodily reactions, through emotions, and through physical interventions such as those performed with the hands. "In social contacts, our lived bodies become extended such that they are intertwined with those of others in a way that prevents any conceptual or ontological reduction to isolated entities" (Fuchs, 2016, p. 205). What is here a matter of social cognition is just as much a matter of our bodily relation to the built environment, and in this concrete bodily interaction appears the question inspired by Derrida: what body interacts? Of, for instance, what gender and colour is it?

One final reflection is that an awareness towards such questions in particular is a task for aesthetics because aesthetics is concerned with how something appears in forms that affect us. Affective forms provide us with a relation to ourselves and to the world. Consequently, dwelling in an aesthetic perspective draws attention to an aspect of human existence made present in the concrete, built environment, i.e. to a concrete aspect of how we maintain, administer and think about our existence.

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The Climate of Spaces

On Architecture, Atmospheres and Time

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This paper discusses the concept of *climate* in relation to architectural space. By elaborating on the notion of atmosphere, that today permeates a wide range of architectural research, I intend to expand its relevance by outlining a relationship between atmosphere and climate analogous to what occurs in meteorological studies. While climate represents a rather stable (if evolving) cycle of recurring conditions, atmospheric events are fleeting and less predictable. Equally, architectural spaces can establish a general climatic scaffolding that increases the possibility of particular atmospheres to unfold, without however evolving into a deterministic cause-effect relationship. By addressing and comparing philosophical notions and architectural questions, I intend to formulate a novel theorisation as a useful tool for both criticism and design. | *Keywords: Architecture, Atmospheres, Climate, Temporality*

1. Introduction

If we review the broad field of architectural and urban scholarship and its principal contemporary issues, we cannot but notice that, over the past years, there has indeed been a shift of perspective. Just as a photographer can adjust a camera's focus and reveal with greater clarity something that was previously blurred, occupying space in the frame but otherwise remaining latent, so the attention of many architecture scholars appears to have modified its point of anchorage. Architectural objects, in their physical dimension, are no longer a central concern: more than their materiality, it seems that we prefer to observe the process of their making; over their formal configuration, perhaps the conditions under which our encounter with them occurs. A building's political engagement with urban space may take the lead over its geometric articulation, signalling how what matters to us is the web of relationships it is capable of establishing. The way people dwell inside or around buildings has also come to the foreground, thus considering how architecture facilitates the unfolding of human (but also more-than-human) events. We are enmeshed in a network of invisible threads binding us to things: threads that are cultural,

social, affective, and that endow inhabited space with what we feel is its deeper sense. If extracted from this relational carpentry, architectural objects could be merely placed on exhibition shelves, or revered as highly polished consumer commodities.

In many ways, these are welcome news. To consider architectural objects as parts of wider and more complex systems of interaction helps them be more useful – not in a pragmatic, functionalist acceptation, rather intending their adherence to everyday reality. Yet while we can observe a growing sensitivity towards this way of thinking architecture, there is still a long way to go, for there are many aspects of practice that today, depending on the setting, appear as being faulty. To name but a few: the steep increase in technical complexity of construction can often divert the process of making into a barren, near-mechanical sequence, widely sustained by contemporary digital tools. The process by which architecture is made is indeed complex, but perhaps not articulate enough: while norms and regulations, tenders and certifications cannot be eluded, what becomes more easily marginalized is that which ultimately allows an architectural work to be embedded within a given space of human action. Feelings are not regulated by norms, but, on the contrary, do dictate how we go about with architecture.

Other digital tools, in turn, encourage aestheticization, a perennial crux of architectural design. While extreme image realism is no longer the talk of the town and has largely been out-fashioned by more symbolic forms of representation, what fuels a quest for ever-renewed visual narrative styles is the urge for their instant dissemination. As architectural works enter the ecosystem of images through social media, their consumption becomes rapid and epidermic, placing the focus on their immediate appearance and ability of striking the viewer well above the more articulate spatial engagement they would eventually produce.

Each of these practice-bound dynamics summons its own narratives and metaphors, arguments needed to sustain their necessity. And indeed necessary they are, as architectural objects have grown in size, cost and complexity, but their usefulness often appears more directed to how they can be practically achieved, over what we expect them to be and the power they can exert once the gates are opened. There is no need – and probably no possibility – to scrap these reductionist narratives, but we can imagine introducing additional ones to give a richer voice to the human space that buildings institute once they are made. These metaphors are what these pages are about.

2. Three useful metaphors

The gradual shift from considering architecture in its isolated, objectual dimension to the observation of the mesh of liaisons wherein its conditions of existence are given helps explain why atmospheric theories have gained so much attention.[1] Architectural atmospheres are by definition relational

[1] See, among others: Alison (2020), Böhme (2017), Borch (2014), Hahn (2012), Hasse (2014), Pallasmaa (2014), Tidwell (2014), Zumthor (2006). Several journals have recently published special issues dedicated to architectural atmospheres, e.g. *Oase* 91, 2013; *Archimaera* 8, 2019; *Journal of Architectural Education* 73/1, 2019; *Venti* 1, 2020.

entities: they belong neither to the physicality of objects nor to the observer's private sphere, but rather to both. They are not given in terms of objects, allowing a permanent and stable framing, since they only become manifest once they are encountered by a feeling subject. And encounters, as we know, only occur when trajectories align, when entities and agencies cross paths in the worldly horizon. Quite tellingly, today it is not uncommon to find records of architecture enriching the description with notes that one might have previously expected to remain silenced: for example, *who* is the observer reporting the experience? When did it occur? What is the broader background of culture articulating the spatial setting? And what was the very reason for my being here in the first place? More and more frequently, the description of an architectural situation today espouses the practices of (auto)ethnography, for objects in themselves are rather barren aesthetic devices, whose influence on our agency can only be exerted under specific and unstable circumstances.

This shifting of balance towards what lies between objects points to a conceptualization of architecture that is closely inherent to a common understanding of landscape. Landscape can hardly be conceived as a system that is static and solely anchored to material things: it is, by its own nature, a relational field where a variety of entities enact their agency. A theatre of sorts, with a stage that is furnished with objects and other paraphernalia, but where the overall narrative unfolds in an impenetrably more complex array of open-ended events, processes and cycles. For a natural setting to become a landscape we need to establish a frame defining a border, and a point of view from where we describe the ongoing drama. A landscape is altered by changing seasons, by the weather, and by the coming and going of material and immaterial agents. It is sometimes imbued with historicity, sometimes with ghosts: and one is left wondering why this thick density of layers is not normally observed in architectural settings as well. To consider architecture as a condition of landscape can thus offer a useful metaphor: the built environment as a stage for action, where the material scaffolding of things is but the starting point for the unfolding of meaningful events.

A second useful metaphor we should introduce is that of climate. Architects usually speak of climate as a congregation of external forces that influence a building's environment and energy performance. But climate also describes a landscape as much as its orography and vegetation do. In the 19th century the term extended to characterize the attitudes and practices of populations – including architectural customs. Climate is a cyclical structure, displaying a certain stability over time: neither entirely rigid nor completely arbitrary, climate establishes an atmospheric framework for a spatial horizon, where certain manifestations of weather are more likely to occur in a given season than in another. Some climates of the world have even acquired celebrity status – *sakura* season in Japan, fall in New England, the Mediterranean summer, wintertime in Lapland, April in Paris… – attributing to each a precisely connotated array of sensations, a feeling that cyclically returns, year after year. For certain places, we can even speak of microclimate, for example a park embedded within the city or a leafy neighbourhood: but

microclimates can equally settle around and within buildings. Affective microclimates perhaps: the room where intimate conversations are most likely to take place, or the sorrow embedded in a memorial hall. Yet the climate, and the way it gives seasons their recognizable character, does not equate with weather: mild and sunny days can bless us in the deep of winter, and even the high of summer is sometimes shredded by a storm of hail. Equally, a room's enduring ambience of comfort can be contradicted by the sudden conflict exploding between its walls.

A conceptual triangulation starts to take shape. Climate and weather are related to each other: one more stable and reliable (although Earth has known summer-less years that have spawned monsters and spectres), the second variable, bound to fleeting, mostly unpredictable events. Mood and atmosphere are related notions which signal affective states, yet with a different connection to the articulation of time. Moods can colour a felicitous day, extend into a remorseful week, produce a season of mourning and even tinge – as forms of character (Schmitz, 2011, p. 81) – an entire human existence. Atmospheres, on the other hand, can come and go in an instant, like the changing weather, and disappear without leaving a trace (Griffero, 2019a). In general, spatialized affective tonalities may be bound to subjects and their personal biographies, but also pervade space and exert their influence on groups and communities, spreading emotions like a contagion (Landweer, 2019) – the *Zeitgeist*, or one of its sibling concepts. A collectively experienced mood makes bodies resonate, adopting a shared corporeal dynamic (Rosa, 2019, p. 15). Architectural spaces also imply a twofold articulation: the domain of the stable, the permanent, the near-fixed array of material objects, vis-à-vis the action taking place there – action in terms of movement but also of *being moved*. The two spheres are not unrelated: the link between them is strong yet not causal, for the material scaffolding acts as the climate – the mood – affording possibilities of action that are more likely to emerge, but not altogether predictable. The third useful metaphor is therefore that of meteorology – just as climate, not new to architectural studies, albeit with a different orientation.[2]

Meteorology is a complex science. We can send astronauts to the moon but are unable to foresee if it will rain during the weekend. The oracular powers once deriving from pre-modern attunement to the natural world are unmatched by present-day computational capacity: beyond the 72-hour timeframe, predictions are an educated guess at best. Meteorology, however, is not only

[2] Swiss architect Philippe Rahm defines his work as "meteorological architecture", with a theory based on the natural and physical domain of climate, with no connection to the domain of emotions. His proposal is that of shifting the focus from the buildings' masses to their voids, designing the temperature, the air pressure and currents that give life to the interior spaces: "Travailler sur l'atmosphère, désagréger les limites entre intérieur et extérieur, entre corps et espace, physiologie et météorologie, ambiance et sensualité. Travailler sur le vide, sur l'air et ses mouvements, pressions et depressions, conduction, transpiration, convection. L'architecture comme dispersion des bordures, vaporisation des structures, evaporation des limites. Invisible, légère, claire, l'architecture deviant le design des mouvements d'air, la composition des temperatures, des taux d'humidité, des pressions et depressions" (Rahm, 2009, p. 99). The term "atmosphere" is here used clearly in the naturalistic sense rather than in the phenomenological acceptation introduced by Schmitz's *Neue Phänomenologie* (Schmitz, 2014; 2019). See also Rahm (2015; 2020).

about weather forecasts: it studies atmospheric phenomena in all their manifestations. Since its field of observation is the atmosphere, meteorology has no "hard" objectual focus, the only materiality being the fleeting volume of air enveloping the earth. It is a science of relations, which attempts to reconstruct how a vast variety of physical forces interact and resonate with each other. Describing architectural environments in meteorological terms is a useful metaphor since it conjugates the permanence of terrain morphology with the theatricality of landscape, the predictability of climate with the occasionality of weather, the duration of mood and the contingency of emotions.

The design-ability of atmospheric spaces has produced a heated debate in phenomenological aesthetics (Griffero, 2014a, p. 35). Thinking in meteorological terms can make us consider this issue from a different point of view: design intentions and experienced atmosphere are as removed from each other as climate and weather. Climate can broadly help us predict the likeliness of weather events, but will not determine them. Similarly, a constructed spatial scaffolding may instantiate an affective response, yet also clash against the emotional resistance of subjects bearing an adverse corporeal disposition. We can ultimately consider design a non-deterministic practice, where in terms of the affective impact cause-effect relations – despite all our best intentions and exceptional technical skills – are largely absent, and in any case not reliable. A building's affective microclimate can be deliberately oriented, but the subjects' response not crystallized – a landscape architect can design a garden knowing in which climate it will grow, but has no control over the weather. Spatially effused feelings can be artificially manipulated, a practice that architects have always been familiar with and that over the past century has been appropriated with equal zeal by totalitarian regimes and late-capitalist liberalism. There is no question that spaces can *do things* to us: the ethical dimension of what they end up doing, however, is left to the designer's responsibility (Camilli, 2021).

Oscillating between stability and variation, the situations emerging in architectural settings can be well described in meteorological terms. As weather affects our perception of landscape, modulating our sensations and thus altering our mood, so the situational encounters occurring in built environments change with the incidence of light, the view glimpsed from a window, the presence or absence of people, the depth of a shadow or an unknown smell: these are all entities eluding a material dimension, acting almost parasitically towards physical objects. They are all in-between, in a space of relations entangling humans and materialities. As atmospheric phenomena, they may come and go, sometimes quickly, sometimes with the brooding lentitude of a summer sunset.

In this fold lies another clue to what meteorology could mean in architectural terms: not designing the weather, but being aware of how atmospheric phenomena unfold over a certain landscape, in a certain climate. The sky and its actors offer a near-endless variety of manifestations: wind and light, clouds and rain, colour and temperature, a world of sensations encompassing so much

of what there is to perceive on the horizon. A storm is not just a rainstorm: it may sit lazily over our heads or rumble across the sky propelled by sharp jets of air, it can be seen cracking on the distant horizon far at sea, rage in the night or be hidden by a shelter of trees. Such atmospheric phenomena are never encountered in their isolation, and a storm is not an object that we can separate from the ambient world. Architectural atmospheres, all the same, belong to the landscape as much as clouds are native to the sky: they are *in the air*, we can sense their presence and be delighted or terrified by their onset, but we cannot extract them from where they are, for they lose sense outside of the horizon where they are encountered. They are too fragile and subtle to exist on their own: atmospheres only emerge with a corporeally present subject (Böhme, 2006, p. 113).

In a way, it is puzzling to note that many descriptions of architectural environments – the reductive narratives we take as our antagonist – somehow suppress the world of atmospheric events that spaces are capable of staging. Imagine describing a mountain landscape omitting any observation concerning the sky. A geologist could formulate statements on the sole morphology of mountain masses, but for any other observer the landscape-effect would be inextricable from the phenomenal solidarity between sky and earth. What is then the nature of an architectural environment? Does it lie in its material configuration, or must it extend to include the *effect* it sparks in those who encounter it? Can we state that a landscape is the same in any weather? And is a built environment not different if its atmosphere shifts?

Architectural meteorology may be only a metaphor, but it is a useful one. It allows us to frame an exceedance, a more-than-given closely concerning built spaces. Its perspective is not limited to observing the way things are, nor – in a metaphorical sense – what they are *like* (Vesely, 2015), but to what will happen to *us* once we encounter them. It is about how we move in and through a building, but also about how that building *moves us*. It does not only concern how things happen, but also precisely where. It looks at time: *when* events occur, and also *how long* they last. Time is hardly ever the subject matter of architectural discourse: at most, chronographic time, bearing no biunivocal relation to experienced time. Yet a gradual unfolding of architectural events can orchestrate theatricality: not merely as the picturesque sequence of disclosing views, rather as the possible accumulation of feelings pervading space. The atmosphere can strike us as a sudden explosion – something felt when crossing a threshold (Schmitz, 2011, p. 121; Griffero, 2014b, p. 130) – and stand clearly in front of us; or it can emerge slowly, as if seeping through cracks in the walls, and take hold of our feelings well before we are aware of it. Compare a violent thunderstorm, with its dramatic power, with the silent softness of the fog in the winter dusk: it does not matter which feeling is more intense, more aggressive, for both are worth observing, both can reveal something about how spaces act on us. Architectural environments can be designed to set up the climate for these atmospheric phenomena: it is up to the meteorologist to observe them, recognizing their dynamics, describing their effects and affects. The entanglements between the experiencing of

atmospheric spaces and their making form the core of architectural meteorology.

3. The Hours

In romance languages, words referring to weather and time are closely related. Stemming from the Latin *tempus*, they lead to a single word – *il tempo, le temps, el tiempo* – signifying both concepts. *Temporada* is the Spanish season, *printemps* is the year's first season for the French. *Temporale*, in Italian, means storm. The Greek ὥρα – a period of time – spawned the Latin *hora*, meaning both a season and a more indeterminate temporal extension. Well before it became the chronographic unit, it was divinized into the Hours, entities who oversaw the unfolding of seasons and the fruiting of plants. The origin of words may not explain the dynamics of experienced space, yet it points towards a deep bond between the atmospheric domain and human time. Before mechanical devices started measuring minutes and seconds with unprecedented precision and dryness, time could only be assessed in broad expanses – the phases of the day, the return of night, the moon's celestial wandering, the sun's and other stars' cyclical movement, or a human being's lifespan – metaphorically subdivided in the *seasons of life*.

Seasons are not a unit of time only: they can be defined atmospherically, as the returning cycle of emotions and affective states that our relationship to the environment and its manifestations affords. Each season is bound to a corporeal disposition, a physiological humour as per the classic tradition: autumn was the season of melancholy, summer choleric – associations that are all but incidental (Bowring, 2008, p. 73). The receding light of autumn, the fog and chill of November in the northern hemisphere, orchestrate bodies to resonate to a common, bitter-sweet feeling. Summertime heat fuels intense affects with the penetrating clarity of Meridian light. We can imagine both atmospheric instalments being performed by architectural environments: as a building is capable of modulating light and shadow, the tactile sense of humidity, articulate vision, so it can set up a sort of "artificial season," where we may be invited to corporeally encounter that feeling that is otherwise only afforded by the astronomic and climatic pulsation of the natural world. Among other stratagems, architectural spaces can organize affective microclimates that speak of moods, sensations, resonances with the elements of climate.

Is it appropriate to consider architectural environments in terms of the seasonal sensation they produce? Historically, the perennial quest for comfort prompted anyone who could afford it to migrate – like birds – to locations where the climate offered better living conditions. Entire royal courts transferred to cooler hillside locations during the summer, and emperor Hadrian preferred his villa by Tibur over his Palatine abode, amid Rome's mephitic atmosphere. During the Raj, British hill stations on the Himalayan foothills provided relief from India's sweltering summer climate. But even single spaces within houses – the winter garden, the conservatory – were meant to interact with external atmospheric conditions, producing comfortable settings. Victor Olgyay's notion of bioclimatic design (1963)

attempted to counter the dominant HVAC practice, which isolated the buildings' internal microclimate from whatever variable conditions were found outside, thus creating artificial temperature islands as "climatic heterotopias" (Diaconu, 2019, p. 42).

However, comfort is not about temperature only, no matter the extent to which it has been hijacked by scientific normalization: it refers to a corporeal condition that can have different origins. To be sheltered by things can evoke comfort, as a child seeking the secrecy of a hidden nook; to be protected from weather – observing a storm from the warmth of a heated living room, or chill under a shady pergola in the high of summer noon – can offer a similar sensation. Yet also an embrace – of a loved person, of a pet – can grant the warmth of comfort, just like the gentle feeling of an autumnal dusk. Comfort is only partially bound to climate and temperature: it is rather a returning state of corporeal affairs, an involuntary memory. The archetypal feeling of home speaks of comfort, protection, of being sheltered from unwanted events – but also from unwanted affects (Griffero, 2019b, pp. 116–125).

Architectural spaces can serve as scaffoldings for these feelings: the emphasized intimacy of a hotel room provides an ersatz condition of homeliness – one that may easily cross the threshold into a sense of estrangement. More complex feelings, equally associated with bodily sensations, can also become the subject matter of architectural design, as in the classical Chinese gardens in Suzhou, where pavilions were set up to sustain the enjoyment of a precise atmospheric condition. The autumn pavilion opens the view towards the reddening foliage reflected on the artificial pond, brings in the smell of moist soil and the fragrance of blooming Osmanthus, resounds with the raindrops falling on the leaves: an architectural device that concentrates and amplifies sensations, inviting us to attune to the autumnal atmosphere. Here, meteorology is all but a metaphor: the diminutive pavilion, hinged on the garden's vegetal and natural agents, installs an atmosphere that speaks of autumnal moods, of melancholia. That spatially extended feeling is there for anyone to capture.

4. Designing time, designing climate

These considerations lead to a thought-provoking conclusion. For over a century, to design architecture has been conceived as the anticipatory vision of space – a space, as I have argued, that only emerges once we are there to engage it (De Matteis, 2021, p. 45). But is there more to this? If we take a step sideways to observe things from a different angle, placing lived time at the centre of our gaze, noting the relation between time and feeling – the affective climate that tinctures an environment we encounter – then we can ask: is the aesthetic practice of architecture not also about making time? A compelling hypothesis invites us to reflect on how movement occurs in architectural space – movement of persons, but also of the world, of the natural elements, of the sun's revolution and the weathering of materials: the building as a clock, a device that meters the cycles of time and existence (Leatherbarrow, 2021). In such perspective, architecture becomes a verb: no longer something that

simply stands on the ground, in the objectual fixity of material things, but a more subtle device that *happens*, and does so in varying ways.

Equally, making architectural space is about the construction of climate – of feelings that are experienced in time, bound to the recurrence of corporeal states and drives that we are familiar with and can name. Just as we are energized by the first day in which we sense the arrival of spring, we can shiver with anticipation when crossing the threshold of the opera house for the long-awaited performance; and the soft air of autumn speaks of the same emotions to which my body resonates when I linger in a certain room of my home. Architectural space is not an aggregate of material entities, each performing a separate script: it is rather a field of relations, where all that is accessible to perception resonates to an overarching tonality. The affective climate a space affords is this base tone, and it modulates the lived bodies of all those involved, who respond vibrating to emotions, moving in time, performing practices and rituals that corroborate the atmosphere, attuning to the architectural environment.

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Osmospheric Dwelling

Smell, Food, Gender and Atmospheres

Elena Mancioppi

Understanding the tight connections between human dwelling and the sense of smell seems nowadays urgent. Since human being-in-the-world finds its very prerequisite in being-in-the-air, an inquiry on air design, today particularly intrusive, is a philosophical necessity. The aim of this contribution is to sketch an exploratory investigation on the aesthetic relationships between space, smell and gendered atmospheres through the case of food, specifically through its *osmosphere*: its flavour *as* its affective aura. Firstly, I discuss analogies between atmospheres and smells. Secondly, I proceed by presenting olfactory devices whose aim is conveying gendered food-related and emotional atmospheres, scrutinising the phenomenological intertwining between food, cooking, gender, 'sense of home' and the olfactory imaginary of the matter. Finally, I put forward some observations which weave together aerial dwelling and ecological thought. | *Keywords: Osmosphere, Smell, Food, Gender, Atmosphere, Air Design*

Every dwelling has its individual smell of home.
Juhani Pallasmaa

1. Osmospheric Dwelling: Smell, Atmosphere and Space

Understanding the tight connections between human dwelling and the sense of smell seems nowadays compelling. In fact, the period we are facing is characterized by aesthetic practices and perceptual dynamics which make extremely tangible in daily experience that the olfactory sphere constitutes "the very ground base of life" (Sacks, 1998, p. 159). On the one hand, we are persistently subjected to the conditioning of 'scent marketing', namely the staging of olfactory atmospheres as auratic adherences to places and commodities.[1] Since human being-in-the-world – Luce Irigaray (1999) suggests – finds its very prerequisite in "being-in-the-air", as reworded by Sloterdijk (2002, p. 93), comprehending the influence of 'air design' becomes a philosophical necessity. On the other hand, although we are witnessing

[1] Cf. Anderson (2014, pp. 25–37).

a general renaissance of smell – in academics as well as in everyday perceptual awareness –, phenomenological inquiries on its shaping our dwelling are still disjointed.

After a general introduction, my aim is to sketch an exploratory investigation on the aesthetic relationships between smell and gendered atmospheres through the case of food, specifically through its flavour as its affective aura – its *osmosphere*, as I will delineate later –, since it appears irreducibly linked not only to the phenomenological experience of being 'placed', but also to gendered values. To do so, I firstly deem necessary to outline how smell moulds our engagement with the environment. In this sense, the COVID-19 pandemic is worthy of a brief remark, in that it is noticeably revealing the effects of olfactory malfunctioning.

As it is well known, the most common symptoms of such disease concern olfactory dysfunctions that usually recover in a few days. But approximately 10% of people who get infected suffer from post-COVID condition, which includes long-lasting anosmia (smell loss) or parosmia (smell distortion) (Burges Watson et al., 2021, p. 2). These sensory disruptions often coincide with a feeling of detachment from the world, which appears "very blank. Or if not blank, shades of decay" (Burges Watson et al., 2021, p. 10). The olfactory inability breaks off the vital links one has with people and the surroundings, triggering a spatial *qua* affective disorientation that, consequently, overshadows the 'I' as the core, the placed 'here', from which every experience unfolds. Some people precisely complaint a sense of alienation from themselves, together with a diffused sensation of loneliness. Besides causing paranoia and other psychological disorders, smell dullness can even make one feel claustrophobic in their own body.[2]

To cut a long story short, smell is paramount for our connections with ourselves and the world, as some philosophers have recognized.[3] In his pioneering investigation on the psychical links between atmosphere and oral sense published in 1968, Hubertus Tellenbach compares the family aura in which the child is immersed to the "smell of the nest [that] clings to the baby-bird" (Tellenbach, 1981, p. 229), fathoming that vague but distinctive and all-encompassing 'air' that radiates the most intimate tonalities outwards, inwardly condensing a peculiar way of opening up to the world. The analogy with smell is not just metaphorical; rather, it pertains to the olfactory sphere to such an extent that a kind of commutability between the two has been differently hypothesised. Following Eugène Minkowski, the way in which odours *spread* reveals not only the atmosphere as a peculiar spatial dimension,[4] but also its very aesthetic and moral quality (Minkowski, 1999, p. 115). But let's take a step back, as it is worth giving a concise overview to retrace their phenomenological and conceptual affinity.

[2] I have found these observations in *AbScent Covid-19 Smell and Taste Loss*, a Facebook discussion group created for research purposes. Being private, I just provide the general website (*AbScent Covid-19 Smell and Taste Loss | Facebook*, no date).

[3] From Friedrich Nietzsche to Gaston Bachelard and Michel Serres, just to mention a few prominent ones; cf. Le Guérer (1998, p. 151 f.), Jaquet (2010), Mancioppi (2022, pp. 85–151).

[4] "An odor has, in the air, an infinity" (Bachelard, 1988, p. 136).

Atmosphere[5] is the point of convergence between the geopsychic tradition of the *genius loci* and the phenomenological idea of *Leib* (Griffero, 2008, p. 76). Although atmospheres have to do with all the senses and reveal themselves synaesthetically (Böhme, 2017a), smells turn out to have a sort of 'atmospheric primacy' (Brennan, 2004; Diaconu, 2006; Böhme, 2019). This can be ascribed to manifold similarities; without claiming to be exhaustive, we can recall their hybrid ontology, the way they persist in memory despite being fleeting phenomena,[6] and the peculiar dialectic between introversion and extroversion in the felt body they both hint at, given their affective nature as 'spatialized feelings' (cf. Griffero, 2022). In the wake of the so-called "affective turn" (Clough and Halley, 2007; Thompson and Hogget, 2012; Slaby and von Scheve, 2019), an "atmospheric" one has followed in the humanities (cf. Griffero, 2019); not surprisingly, philosophical studies on smell – the atmospheric and affective (as in Kantian system) sense *par excellence* – have been booming.[7] Beyond the traditional prominence of visual aspects, also geography, urban design and architecture have not actually ignored atmospheric and olfactory environments.[8] The notion of *smellscape*[9] reveals the attempt to thematise such dimension.

Here, instead of resorting to the idea of smellscape – still vitiated, among other things, by an ocular, bi-dimensional and geometrical comprehension of space (Philippopoulos-Mihalopoulos, 2021, pp. 97–98; Mancioppi, 2022, pp. 161–162) – I propose the notion of *osmosphere*. Composed of ancient Greek ὀσμή (smell, odour) and σφαῖρᾰ (sphere, globe), osmosphere is my neologism whose purpose is to stress the immersive, unavoidable, ever-changing, affective and 'round' dimension of the olfactory space in which every entity dwells. An *osmosphere* is always perceived from within; therefore, it is relational, situated and self-reflexive, since every being is embraced by their own olfactory 'bubble'.[10] Osmospheric spaces, being bi-directional,[11] are in a continuous and mutual play of negotiation and adjustment, with substantial sociological implications (Simmel, 2009, pp. 577–579; Carnevali, 2020, pp. 154–

5 Of course, I employ this very ambiguous term in its philosophical sense; cf. Griffero (2018).

6 The "Proust Phenomenon" (Chu and Downes, 2000), that explains why "[e]veryone who clings to the past dreams of indestructible odors" (Bachelard, 1988, p. 137), or why "in fragrance and flavor the enduring element of the past, its atmosphere, is preserved" (Tellenbach, 1981, p. 224); for observations on Proustian olfactory poetics, Benjamin (1968, p. 214). Cf. also Kluck (2019).

7 In addition to the works cited throughout the text, cf. e.g. Keller (2016), Barwich (2020), Shiner (2020).

8 In antiquity, the aromatic profile of buildings was considered paramount (Tuan, 1995, pp. 64–65); nowadays, architects are much concerned with materials and spaces' atmospheres (cf. Borch (2014), Bressani (2019), Alison (2020), De Matteis (2020)), as well as with ambient scent. The same applies to designers (Henshaw et al., 2018) and geographers (Porteous, 1996). Cultural studies and sensory history – both fields in great expansion, with much research on smell (cf. Kettler (2020), for a remarkable bibliography) – have shed light on odour control strategies in city planning throughout the ages (cf. Corbin (1986), Classen, Howes and Synnott (1994)).

9 Coined by J. Douglas Porteous (1985) and then adopted by different disciplines (cf. Henshaw, 2014).

10 Main reference is here Peter Sloterdijk's trilogy on spheres (Sloterdijk, 2011; 2014; 2016).

11 Linguistically but also phenomenologically, the transitive and the intransitive are interwoven in smelling – 'to detect' *and* 'to emit' odours.

159; Hsu, 2020). Many would agree that "[s]cents capture the aesthetic-emotional quality of place" (Tuan, 1995, p. 69; cf. Griffero, 2014, pp. 63–69); hence, smell encourages a phenomenological comprehension of the environment: not in the measurable meaning of space, but in the surfaceless dimension of presence on which felt-bodily experience is incardinated (Schmitz, 2019a; 2019b).[12]

If we take seriously the idea that perception is ecological – as supported by the most updated theses stemming from J.J. Gibson's theory –, every sense has to be understood not as a separate and passive channel; rather, as an active and cross-sensory perceptual system. To put it differently, we can suggest the 'olfactive' as a peculiar modality to 'pick up information' which has not so much to do with stable objects,[13] but with processes, affections, imagination and a *poetics of space*. Further to this point, a "whiff of perfume or even the slightest odor", Gaston Bachelard maintains, "can create an entire environment in the world of the imagination" (Bachelard, 2014, p. 191). There seems to be an 'olfactive' as opposed to an 'optic' way of perceiving space.[14] We are in the olfactive mode when recollecting our relations with it: "[t]he most persistent memory of any space is often smell" (Pallasmaa, 2012, p. 58) or, as a variation on the theme, "[w]hen memory breathes, all odors are good" (Bachelard, 1969, p. 136). This is why, according to the French philosopher, odours are "the first evidence of our fusion with the world" (*Ibid.*). Moreover:

> These memories of odors from the past are recovered by closing our eyes. Long ago we closed our eyes to savor them fully. We closed our eyes and then, right away, we dreamed a little. […] In the past as in the present, a beloved odor is the center of an intimacy. […] Poets are going to give us testimony on those odors of childhood, on those odors which impregnate the seasons of childhood. (*Ibid.*)

In fact, osmospheric space is always intertwined with felt time as 'climate', i.e., seasonal weather; odours, to use Lefebvre's words, are "traces that mark out rhythms" (Lefebvre, 2004, p. 21).[15] At this point, we can enter two further conceptual knots that are to be tackled in the following pages: food and

12 This point raises central issues which explain the traditional marginalisation of smells in philosophy and aesthetics due to their materiality, the lack of 'objectuality', structure, universality, neutrality in perception, etc.; in this sense, borrowing Juhani Pallasmaa's words, "[a]mbience is like an invisible fragrance or smell that fuses and heightens the sensory experience" (Pallasmaa, 2014, p. 24). For an analysis on 'olfactory world', cf. Nogué (1936).

13 Merleau-Ponty proposes the idea that "each sense organ interrogates the object in its own way, and that it is the agent of a certain type of synthesis" (Merleau-Ponty, 2012, p. 232) quoting Marius von Senden, whose patients recovered from blindness "see colours much as we smell an odour […] which enfolds and intrudes upon us, but without occupying any specific form of extension in a more exactly definable way" (von Senden, 1960, p. 129).

14 I take inspiration from Nicola Perullo's concept of *haptic perception* versus optic one; cf. Perullo (2022).

15 In this sense, Michel Serres describes smell as the sense of *singularity*: "Forms reappear, invariant or recurrent, harmonies are transformed, stable across variations, specificity is countersigned by aroma. With our eyes closed, our ears stopped, feet and hands bound, lips sealed, we can still identify, years later and from a thousand other smells, the undergrowth of such and such a place in a particular season at sunset, just before a rain storm, or the room where feed corn was kept, or cooked prunes in September, or a woman" (Serres, 2008, pp. 169–170).

gender. Food flavours emblematically dot and provide space and time with a characterizing atmospheric tone which transforms occupied space into inhabited one: migrant literature insists on the healing power of food osmospheres for homesickness (cf. Law, 2001). In the opening of her queer phenomenology about orientation as 'feeling at home', Sara Ahmed offers interesting observations about relocating; through smell, the contours between space and time become blurred and, thanks to it, a 'house' can turn into 'home':[16]

> Then I arrive, an empty house. It looks like a shell. […] The familiar smell of spices fills the air. […] I feel flung back somewhere else. I am never sure where the smell of spices takes me, as it has followed me everywhere. Each smell that gathers returns me somewhere; I am not always sure where that somewhere is. […] Such memories can involve a recognition of how one's body already feels, coming after the event. […] So we ask the question, later, and it often seems too late: what is it that has led me away from the present, to another place and another time? (Ahmed, 2006, p. 10).

Space and time assume an atmospheric timbre also according to the seasonality of ingredients, recipes, traditions and cooking methods: "smells have seasons and each season smells" (Seremetakis, 2019, p. 30), first of all thanks to gastronomy.[17] In their turn, food and gastronomy are strongly gendered domains (Bordo, 1993); *eo ipso*, as I will try to show, the perception of food osmospheres is always intertwined with gender imaginary,[18] claiming a specific phenomenological investigation that is still lacking. What follows is a first attempt to open new lines of research.

2. Food, Gender and Olfactory Imaginary

The emotional influence of food is a key subject in the psychology and philosophy of taste (e.g. Shepherd and Raats, 2006; Kaplan, 2012). Without going into detail of such a broad topic, suffice it to say that smell plays a fundamental role in it (cf. Drobnick, 2006). As a confirmation, we can resume COVID-induced olfactory complications, where eating becomes extremely problematic. Food is commonly perceived as bland or awful; for that reason – together with eating disorders or unhealthy dietary behaviours – nostalgia, depression, sadness, unsociability and melancholy take over (Burges Watson et al., 2021, p. 10).

16 Dealing with the philosophical complexity of such a notion (from Husserl to Bollnow and Lévinas) would keep me from getting to the point of my contribution. Here, I use 'home' when stressing the affective property of intimacy with space, regardless geographical position; 'house' when referring to material buildings, even if the distinction sometimes fades.

17 Think of the geographical and sociological notion of *foodscapes*, meaning environments shaped by food systems (cf. Sobal and Wansink (2007)); Pallasmaa evokes an olfactory foodscape when writing: "sales counters on the streets are appetising exhibitions of smells: creatures of the ocean that smell of seaweed, vegetables carrying the odour of fertile earth, and fruits that exude the sweet fragrance of sun and moist summer air. The menus displayed outside restaurants make us fantasise the complete course of a dinner; letters read by the eyes turn into oral sensations" (Pallasmaa, 2012, p. 59).

18 By necessity, I overlook the large debate on male/female olfactory oppositions in relation to bodily secretions, perceptual sensitivity and cosmetics. I just note that today, consistently with the rejection of binary genders, unisex fragrance is the new frontier in industrial perfumery (Graham (2006); Fetto (2020)), a strongly (hetero)sexualized market until recently (Kjellmer (2021, pp. 150–151), Grand-Clément and Ribeyrol (2022, p. 11); for perfume in erotic arts, cf. Shusterman (2021)). For its part, artistic perfumery is fighting gendered categories since decades; cf. e.g. Ellena (2013).

Food affective impact can be traced down considering the relationships children establish with their mother. Since the primordial stages of new-borns' life (and even before, in intrauterine environment), maternal scent coincides with her emotional atmosphere which, in the same breath, "is condensed into taste" (Tellenbach, 1981, p. 226), so much so that moods, flavours and nourishment, being concurrent and permeated with the sense of love, trust and protection, acquire an interchangeable atmospheric value. Certainly, such aesthetic link between female identity and food is not limited to biological or psychological instances; cultural paradigms largely contribute to settling and reinforcing it. I will recall the heart of the matter in broad outline. In many societies including the Western one, women have been expected for a long time to look after kids, to cook and to do the house cleaning;[19] men to hunt and, in general, to run their activities outside the household. According to such a picture, while the feminine is placed in the intimate sphere of the house,[20] the masculine occupies the public space (Tuan, 2013, p. 23).[21] As Carolyn Korsmeyer and other scholars have extensively argued, the long-lived marginalisation within the academic discourse of food, the domestic and the 'lower senses' (specifically taste and smell) can be reasonably attributed to their connection to female activities.[22]

If, in general, food has a privileged relationship with women, nonetheless some edible items and cooking methods are perceived as more feminine than others. Despite political and social changes directed at dismantling such rigid demarcation in areas of responsibility or in binary gendered values, such sexualization of food, preparations and flavours seems to be still in force today. 'Air design' largely leans on these categorisations; in fact, we are witnessing a massive, often gendered, *osmospheric foodification*, with far from negligible consequences for the phenomenological experience of aesthetic dwelling. By presenting some symptomatic olfactory devices which are clearly aimed at conveying gendered food-related atmospheres, I will comment such imaginary around food, cooking, gender and 'sense of home'; this inspection will be then instrumental in hypothesising how osmospheres deal with the felt body as deeply affected by the imaginative power of matters.[23] For this, I will largely refer to Bachelard's works on the imagination of matter. Aware of the risk of

19 For the aesthetics of laundry, where smell is crucial in appreciating it, cf. Saito (2017, pp. 115–138).

20 According to a perspective that today appears extremely reactionary, localisation also concerns respectability: "Wife in the kitchen. Whore in the street" (Agrest, 2000, p. 368).

21 For domestic spaces, duties and gender, cf. also Locke (2007, p. 55).

22 "[I]f the business of preparing meals is the job of women, servants, slaves (and of course women are in all those categories), then food, the sense of taste, and gustatory appetites reside in the wrong social place to merit much notice" (Korsmeyer, 1999, p. 36; cf. also Korsmeyer (2004, pp. 83–104)). It is not by chance that these topics have begun to gain philosophical interest in conjunction with the challenging of gendered hierarchies and stereotypes, or with an interest towards marginality as such. Curtin and Heldke (1992), Telfer (1996), Perullo (2016), Boisvert and Heldke (2016) are some leading-edge works.

23 Being smell the 'essence' of the matter from which it exhales: "Thus, the odour of water mint calls forth in me a sort of ontological correspondence which makes me believe that life is simply an aroma, that it emanates from a being as an odour emanates from a substance, that a plant growing in a stream must express the soul of water" (Bachelard, 1983, p. 7).

presenting, instead of a rigorous analysis, an evocative impressionism, I believe that facing these topics through Bachelardian intuitions deserves further and meticulous development.

Food-themed motifs implying gendered orientations can be found in different scented commodities.[24] Here, I am particularly interested in room sprays and scented candles, since their explicit purpose is to endow space with an emotional atmosphere. "Grandma's Kitchen" candles can be considered as iconic examples of interior environmental fragrancing through feminine food. As a case, we can consider *Homesick*[25] branded candle – designed to recall warm apple pie with ice cream and fresh-baked snickerdoodles –, which is the olfactory transposition of the idiom "sugar and spice and everything nice",[26] from a 19th-century nursey rhyme to typify girls' character. Even if variations are manifold,[27] perceptual, emotional *and* spatial leitmotifs are evident. Olfactory sphere revolves around baked goods, often sweet – pies, biscuits, etc. – together with spicy and fruity notes (such as vanilla, cinnamon, apple), while the end is to trigger cosiness and warmth: a hugging osmosphere which folds the space inwards. Before delving into this point, which arises interesting phenomenological concerns, I want to set forth a diametrically opposite case. *Homesick* designed also "Bud Light Tailgate" candle, which embodies a typical masculine food-related event.[28] The olfactory nuances are, among others, smoked charcoal, lawn chairs, grass, old pigskin and hops,[29] evoking an open-air barbecue and traditionally male sports. The virile is therefore expressed through woody and musky tones (similarly *Budweiser Backyard BBQ Candle*, no date). In this case, the osmosphere is extroverted and exposed: the space unfolds outwards, assuming an *outgoing* character in every possible way.[30] Broadly speaking, the same applies to cookout-themed fragrancing devices that, among the various 'home fragrances', have a more eccentric than hedonistic function, epitomizing a sort of inherent inconsistency with the domestic

24 In the toy market, for instance, many food-scented toys are female-targeted. As Varney (1996) argues, fruity and sweet smells (strawberry, vanilla, raspberry, marshmallow, etc.) would symbolise the female olfactory code, at the same time exemplifying the features a woman should have according to sexist stereotypes, i.e., to be attractive and pleasing. However, toys have increasingly become unisex; think of the kitchen sets, cf. Delfin (2021).

25 (*Homesick*, no date) is famous for its candles reproducing the 'olfactory *genius loci*' of American states and cities. As the company's name suggests, scents are designed to soothe nostalgia and 'sense of place'; on the same line *Govalis* (*Govalis*, no date), Spain-based and themed.

26 A recurring description reads: "No one can bake like Grandma. Her love of making people happy fills each recipe and her entire home with a comforting, warm scent that feels like a hug. It's a spicy, sweet happiness" (*Grandma's Kitchen Candle*, no date a).

27 Just to mention few brands with "Grandma's Kitchen" candle in the catalogue: *Rustic Creation USA* (*Grandma's Kitchen Candle*, no date b), *Country Home Candle* (*Grandma's Kitchen*, no date), and *Govalis* (*Vela Aromática Cocina de la Abuela*, no date).

28 Tailgating is an American way of partying where people – not exclusively but mostly males – drink alcohol, grill and share food (mainly meat-based); it usually takes place in parking lots, before or after sporting events or music concerts. Vehicles' tailgates are used just like a stove or a table, hence the name.

29 Cooked meat and fermented drink can be interpreted as "the principle of the banquet, that is to say the principle of primitive society" (Bachelard, 1964, p. 103).

30 The advice is to "add crispy boys" when burning it, so as to having a full experience of tailgating also in its social and light-hearted dimension.

sphere as such, not only with regards to its spatial dimension, but also to its 'mood'. This justifies and concurrently explains why my investigation is unbalanced towards the feminine pole: in olfactory terms, 'home' seems to coincide with feminine osmospheres.

Philosophy could be reproached of overlooking gender issues when accounting for atmospheres, a subject which is inversely much explored by consumer science for its effectiveness in 'emotional marketing'.[31] Certainly, thinking of 'feminine' and 'masculine' in term of deep unconscious principles of the subject would betray and misrepresent a theory whose main purpose is to de-psychologise emotional life proposing an anti-introjectionist conception of atmospheres (Schmitz, 2019a). 'Externalising' sexualized principles into the realm of matters' affordances (or in the relationships between dweller and material environment) allows to test the opportunity to integrate theories on olfactory atmospheres with intuitions on genders as spatial tendencies.

What has been considered so far would confirm the conclusion many scholars have come to: meat and other animal products are 'masculine', while plant-based foods are 'feminine' (Kaplan, 2020, pp. 47–48; Bentley, 2005, pp. 190–193);[32] and cooking methods are not gender-free (Montanari, 2006, p. 49). Specifically, roasting and baking embed opposite gendered osmospheres. Implying different bodily engagements, timing, occasions, settings, instruments and matters, they are dense with sexualized symbolism. This could be narrowly ascribed to the contexts the activities of roasting and baking normally take place in: the former outdoors, the latter indoors.[33] Otherwise, the former is masculine because requires mainly fire, high heat and, as a rule, little time; the latter is instead feminine as gentler and slower (Shapiro, 2001). Working the dough is a complex process of elemental generation (cf. De Beauvoir, 1956, pp. 439–442) – "a feminine labor", Bachelard parenthetically notices (Bachelard, 2002, p. 34) – which implies the creation of a new 'ecosystem'. Actually, cooking itself involves varied levels of cooperation among the elements, together with diverse thermic dynamics.[34] But earth, air, water and fire, 'gynandromorph' if considered as static ideas, undergo sexual differentiation according to their performative actuality.

31 The so-called 'retail atmospheric'; cf. e.g. Spangenberg, Grohmann and Sprott (2005), Borges, Babin and Spielmann (2013).

32 On this point, ethno-anthropological investigations highlight strong similarities among societies (e.g. Pollock, 1998). The contraposition is implicitly present in some linguistic expressions. In Italian, the term *finocchio* (verbatim 'fennel') – an offensive epithet for effeminate man – seems to originate from the practice of using this vegetable as an olfactory camouflage during persecution: once thrown into the fire of the stakes in which witches and homosexuals were burned in the Renaissance period, its scent would have concealed the stink of human burning flesh (Federici, 2004, p. 197).

33 Indeed, domestic kitchen as a female domain is a *topos* which ranges from paleoanthropological insights to the most worn-out male chauvinist rhetoric. Cooking per se is not exclusively a female prerogative; rather, in professional kitchens and public restaurants, the male majority is evident; cf. Rendell (2000, p. 101); Perullo (2017, pp. 38–40). This point opens to further reflections, which I cannot develop here.

34 "From the calorific point of view, the sexual distinction is quite clearly complementary. The feminine principle of things is a principle pertaining to surface and outer covering, a lap, a refuge, a gentle warmth. The masculine principle is a principle of the center, a principle of power, active and sudden as the spark and the power of will. The feminine heat attacks things from without. The masculine heat attacks them from within, as the very heart of the essential being" (Bachelard, 1964, p. 53).

Like atmospheres, also staged osmospheres seem characterized by what Hermann Schmitz calls suggestions of motion and felt-bodily stirrings, which are, following new phenomenological insights, articulated between the two poles of contraction and expansion. I suggest distinguishing between *unfolding* and *folding* food osmospheres. The former are characterized by various levels of expansion, therefore vastness; they are 'masculine' in the sense that their orientation is centrifugal, promoting a sense of spatial extroversion. The latter, instead, suggest contraction, hence narrowness; they are 'feminine' as they are centripetal, affording the intimacy of inhabiting an introverted, 'uterine' space. 'Feminine' and 'masculine' osmospheres are therefore to be understood as motosensory tensions through which an olfactory affection is perceived. They do not coincide with the gender of the perceiver, but their opposition has to do with different oriented intimacies. As a psychoanalytic acquisition, both sexual instances (and even more than two) coexist in the same personality.

Baked foods find their osmospheric counterpart in a feeling of closeness which rarely has virile traits. We can draw a parallel between such folding orientation and food considering the symbolism of the *placenta*, which is related to baking in many respects (the mammalian organ takes its name from a cake with honey and cheese from ancient Greece and Rome). A key aspect is discussed by Peter Sloterdijk in the rich pages devoted to it:

> According to earlier traditions of midwifery, however, the dough baking in the maternal oven was not so much the child itself as that mysterious placental cake on which the child evidently fed *in utero* [...]. Thus the pregnant womb was always imagined by mothers and midwives in earlier times as a twofold workshop: a placenta bakery and an intimate child kitchen. While the child itself is prepared in the uterine cauldron, the mother's second work, the flat cake, ensures the appropriate nutrition during the longest night (Sloterdijk, 2011, p. 377).

We can fully grasp the essence of the feminine as enveloping shelter – like a mother's womb, or that protective smell of the nest as depicted by Tellenbach – when we read this Bachelardian recollection, even if without any gastronomic specification: "The house clung close to me, [...] and at times, I could smell her odor penetrating maternally to my very heart. That night she was really my mother" (Bachelard, 2014, p. 66). Indeed, an olfactory topoanalysis of the domestic would likely reveal that we are primitively 'housed' while sniffing baking aromas. Elsewhere, the philosopher suggests something similar:

> an odor of warm bread invaded a house of my youth. The custard (*flan*) and round loaf returned to my table. Festive occasions are associated with this domestic bread. The world was in joy for the celebration of the warm bread. [...] In days of happiness, the world is edible (Bachelard, 1969, p. 141).

3. Final Observations on Osmospheric Foodification

When Elsa Morante writes: "The tepid air, especially in the sun, smelled of bread" (Morante, 1979, p. 417), she is rendering the vital and welcoming

quality of the air through the flavour that incarnates the idea of 'home'.[35] As 'beings-in-the-air', we deeply – albeit mostly subconsciously – rely on odours as aesthetic indicators of our "domosphere" (Griffero, 2014, p. 96): the unbreathable air, whether in chemical or moral terms, is inherently bad-smelling (Minkowski, 1999, p. 117).[36] Nowadays, we dwell in spaces which are massively, synthetically and indiscriminately food-scented.[37] Naively, one could explain such osmospheric foodification as a counterbalance aesthetic strategy, given the decreased time we devote to cooking.[38] I suspect the reasons are deeper.

Since odours are *qualia* that let us "sense through our disposition (*Befinden*) *where* we are" (Böhme, 2017b, p. 125), emotional *qua* spatial disorientation which follows olfactory disorders becomes even more clear: "I feel discombobulated – like I don't exist. I can't smell my house and feel at home" (Burges Watson et al., 2021, p. 11). In a way, the course of events showed that Italo Calvino was not too far off the mark when prophesizing, already in the 70s of the 20th century, that the man of the future would be noseless.[39] But smell loss or malfunctioning is not exclusively a medical condition, it is also a daily reaction as a result of olfactory fatigue. The more the osmosphere is saturated, the higher the possibility of anosmia becoming chronic, even ontological (cf. Philippopoulos-Mihalopoulos, 2021).

That said, we must not forget that the germ of the consumer society was born in the 19th-century arcades, where it "learned to breathe the intoxicating scent of an enclosed, interior-world full of commodities" (Sloterdijk, 2002, pp. 95–96).[40] But late capitalism is taking such embryonic osmospheric aestheticization to extremes (cf. e.g. Lipovetsky and Serroy, 2013).[41] Designed

35 Curiously, a trick to easily sell a house would consist in baking some bread before potential buyers visit it (Pollan, 2013, p. 208).

36 This is particularly evident in the dismissed but long-lived miasma theory, according to which air is a vehicle of disease precisely when fetid.

37 From the 50s of the 20th century, as chemical industry started creating and improving artificial flavours, food itself is food-scented. This is due, among many other reasons, to the aromatic impoverishment resulting from intensive production, and to the industry's need to make ultra-processed foods more appealing. It is also interesting to note, in this sense, the renovated trend of meal replacements. However, far from being universal and stable, aesthetic values attributed to kitchen odours has remarkably changed throughout history; the collocation of the kitchen within the house has been modified accordingly (cf. Potter, 2015; Rybczynski, 1986, especially pp. 132–133). In general, spaces undergo gendered differentiations according to each room's function; smells are both causes and consequences. Over the centuries, architectural arrangement and spatial organisation have also followed olfactory sensitivity. In modern times, for instance, the smoking room, a male territory, "was distanced from the rest of the house […] because of the smell of cigars" (Spain, 1992, p. 114).

38 Relying on take away or delivery services, there is also the eventuality of removing the kitchen from apartments. As Federici argues, this is in line with the disaccumulation of capital in the home and of the services provided by households (Federici, 2012), a focal point in gender studies and Marxist feminism.

39 The reference is *The Name, The Nose* – drafted between 1971 and 1972 –, and collected in the posthumous *Under the Jaguar Sun* (1986).

40 Cf. Borch (2011).

41 The link between late capitalism and postmodernism is interesting in olfactory terms, since the latter, as some have noticed (Classen, Howes and Synnott, 1994; Graham, 2014, p. 55), finds its allegorical sense in smell, also because of the dismissal of normativities (including gender ones) in favour of *fluidity*, a characterising aspect of odours in many respects.

scents no longer linger exclusively in shopping malls, urban streets, etc., but they invade, with our consent, private houses, making them 'home'. This is the furthest frontier in scent marketing, and fast-food chains, with their flavoured merchandising, are representative promoters (Mancioppi, 2021). The evolution of the "aroma-technical modification of the atmosphere" (Sloterdijk, 2002, p. 92), besides revealing an obstinate addiction to market seduction, seems to be infected by the ecological thought, as Timothy Morton (2010) would put it. Let me clarify: gaseous atmosphere is today brimming with the ghosts of ecological crisis, climate change, pollution and, above all, viruses. Air – we are having global and first-hand experience – is *the* space of co-existence; co-existence is not necessarily harmonious and safeguarding. It has to do with an unavoidable familiarity with the unfamiliar, potentially dangerous, deeply sinister and uncanny. It implies the full, ecological awareness that we share our very *Heim* with *das Unheimliche*. Apparently, as '(aerobe)beings-in-the-air', we still carry the memory of when, in Paleoproterozoic era, great part of the life on Earth underwent its first mass extinction for the so-called 'Oxygen Catastrophe'. We started proliferating at the expense of other species; the fear is that something similar could happen again, but this time to our detriment. More than the ground under our feet, we are basically losing our breathing space, that imperceptible milieu "within which all beings, all things, and any other come alongside one another" (Irigaray, 1999, p. 161), for long given for granted also in theoretical terms. Hence, osmospheric foodification could be seen as an aesthetic strategy of making air familiar, folding, illusory controllable, maternal, 'uterine' and substantially life-sustaining again.[42] Ultimately, an attempt to tame it through *domestication*. Thanks to olfactory technology, the domosphere is designed, quite literally, like a *pregnant womb as a twofold bakery*.

To come full circle, if "[e]very dwelling has its individual smell of home" (Pallasmaa, 2012, p. 58), every osmosphere is the way we dwell homewards.

> On a small scale, we leave [...] a smell of food that lingers in the kitchen after we cook. If we consider smell as a trace of existence, then we can maybe slowly try to understand lines of habitation, not that of occupation (Ngamcharoen, 2021, p. 36).

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[42] But, actually, if "atmoterrorist model" – inaugurated by German army during the War World I through the release of chlorine gas on Ypres (Belgium) – is based on rendering uninhabitable the enemy's environment (Sloterdijk, 2002, pp. 9–46), a terrifying 'osmoterrorist' strategy would consist in making toxic air undetectable or, even worse, reassuring through the olfactory qualities of food. Smell was, and is, paramount for soldiers and civilian population when dealing with chemical warfare; reports highlight the salvific role of olfactory training to detect deadly substances. However, the most used gases smell like food (garlic, horseradish, mustard, onion, etc.) or have particularly 'atmospheric' scents such as new-mown hay, which make them even more insidious; cf. Plunkett (2014).

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Can an Extra-terrestrial Dwell on Earth?

Aurosa Alison

In this contribution, I discuss the potential inclusion of the third gender in future city projects. Drawing on Braidotti's post-human context, which opens up new ways of reinterpreting the evolution of our species, I focus on the concept of 'other' understood as 'extraterrestrial'. To do this, I use two structural paradigms: Richard Shusterman's somaesthetics, in which body and gender are seen as identifying with each other, and the third gender, which allows the body to detach from its usual subjugation to gender. Paul B. Preciado's book Can the Monster Speak?, published only one year ago, opened a conversation about the epistemological deconstruction of bodies. Preciado tells us that "we are all in transition", which means we must consider how to welcome others and adapt public and private spaces for a new way of being in the world. To propose a possible answer to the question of living, in particular, I refer to two case studies from the contemporary history of urban planning: the Vienna Women Work City and Petra Doan's theory about the tyranny of gender in public spaces. | *Keywords: Second Gender, Non-binary Gender, Post-Human, Urban Planning*

1. Prologue: From Mars or From the Earth?

Oh man, wonder if he'll ever know
He's in the best-selling show
Is there life on Mars?
(David Bowie, 1971)

Every day I check the Instagram Perseverance channel on my phone to see what rover is doing on Mars. I look carefully at the photos, zoom in on the image, gaze meticulously at the craters, and even better at the red ground as a huge tennis court. But my imagination does not let itself be restricted to what is seen in the photos. It rather pushes forward into something more mysterious and radical. First, it makes me wonder: Is there life on Mars?, just to, in a second step, prompt me to ask: Is there really nothing mysterious left

on Earth, so that we have the capacities and reasons to wonder about extraterrestrial life? Eventually, I come to marvel at precisely this binarity (at the direction into which precisely this binarity is always only thought): Why do we only ever ask how an Earthling like me could live on Mars? And why do we never question how a Martian, Plutonian, or Uranian could live on Earth?

This metaphor helps to deepen the question: why, until now, have we focused on our species and not gone outside, considering 'the other' as a form of further knowledge? More and more, the paradigm of post-human alterity is reflected in specific images such as the outsider, the monster, and the extraterrestrial. The culture of the post-human is based on the recognition of the other beyond his species, his individuality, and his earthly life (Braidotti, 2013). Overcoming association systems, as well as the binary system, weakens dichotomous differences, neutralizing their power: "My own concept of nomadic subject embodies this approach, which combines non-unitary subjectivity with ethical accountability by foregrounding the ontological role played by relationality" (Braidotti, 2013, p. 93).

The only solution to a system that for Braidotti neither solves nor improves is therefore relationality. In the paragraph *Difference as the principle of Not-One*, Braidotti uses the metaphor of the scientific redefinition of matter to develop an overcoming of the binary scheme:

> As I argued in the previous chapter, the most striking feature of the current scientific redefinition of 'matter' is the dislocation of difference from binaries to rhizomatics; from sex/gender or nature/culture to processes of sexualization/ racialization/naturalization that take Life itself, or the vitality of matter as the main target. This system engenders a deliberate blurring of dichotomous differences, which does not in itself resolve or improve the power differences and in many ways increases them. In other words, the opportunistic post-anthropocentric effects of the global economy engender a negative cosmopolitanism or a sense of reactive pan-human bonding by introducing the notion of 'Life as surplus' and of a common human vulnerability (Braidotti, 2013, p. 93).

Braidotti emphasizes the sexualized form of our identities and bodies, focusing on overcoming limiting dualities and on unclosing a 'multiple' form of post-anthropocentric solutions. I interpret her as saying the following: Given that all existence must be considered as varying, we also need to finally confront our own sexual multiplicity:

> In other words, we need to experiment with resistance and intensity in order to find out what posthuman bodies can do. Because the gender system captures the complexity of human sexuality in a binary machine that privileges heterosexual family formations and literally steals all other possible bodies from us, we no longer know what sexed bodies can do. We therefore need to rediscover the notion of the sexual complexity that marks sexuality in its human and posthuman forms. A post-anthropocentric approach makes it clear that bodily matter in the human as in other species is always already sexed and hence sexually differentiated along the axes of multiplicity and heterogeneity (Braidotti, 2013, p.99).

Heterogeneity is one of the many concepts expressed by the post-human condition that Braidotti emphasizes because of the progressive acquisition of a non-dualistic method. In fact, the posthuman condition can be addressed in a variety of areas, including social policies and activisms. The still elsewhere used conceptual difference of the given (nature) versus the constructed (culture) can be taken to emphasize the power abuses of modern times:

> My point is that this approach, which rests on the binary opposition between the given and the constructed, is currently being replaced by a non-dualistic understanding of nature-culture interaction. In my view the latter is associated to and supported by a monistic philosophy, which rejects dualism, especially the opposition nature–culture and stresses instead the self-organizing (or auto-poietic) force of living matter (Braidotti, 2013, p. 3).

I claim that overcoming the dualistic view on gender, post-humanist thinking offers us the possibility to elaborate a feminist ideology from a nondialectical, that is, 'non-gender' (Braidotti, 2008) point of view. And this was probably the starting point of my reflection on the habitual direction in which we think about the possibilities of extraterrestrial life. A posthumanist conceptualization of what I will from now on call 'dwelling' implies that this activity must be exercised aside from all limits of ethnicities, species, or races. And I suggest that such a conceptualization can be elaborated via thinking of the dwelling extraterrestrially, that is, thinking of both the varieties of living together on Earth and Mars. And precisely this variety of co-dwellings can help us develop an aesthetics of dwelling. In fact, I would like to propose that the aesthetic experience[1] of dwelling is one that: is accessible for all 1) genders and 2) species (including, especially, extraterrestrials).

Mine is not meant to be a critical reading of how the issue of gender is involved in the field of dwelling, the latter here being broadly understood as a factor of architectural design or building. Much less is this paper meant to connect with the field of future studies regarding design. But the post-humanist (and thus non-binary) idea of dwelling I here propose is rather meant to reflect on two main points: First, I wish to address the question of how the second gender was and is involved in city designs. I wish to understand the city here as the mirror of our daily experiences, as in it we can find both intimate and shared habitability.

What is more, I see the body as a tool via which one can have aesthetic experiences in and of the the urban context. And here is where, Richard Shusterman's somaesthetics theory comes in, as it helps us to better understand how the body interfaces with the city.

Second, I will confront how non-gender or the third gender can function as a concept, that is gainful not only in architectural design but also in the existentialist condition of an intentionally hybrid gender that freely inhabits

[1] The central theme of this paper is to offer an additional key to considerations of the aesthetic experience of dwelling. I want to recall that the theoretical basis to which I refer when writing about the aesthetic experience is to be linked to the context of *Pragmatist Aesthetics* (Shusterman, 1992) and the fundamental importance of the concept of art as experience (Dewey, 1934). I consider dwelling as an aesthetic experience now when Dewey reminds us how the acts of everyday life and essential life functions.

an apartment and a city. This reflection takes its cue from wanting to surpass the right concept often found in the context of gender concerning the reappropriation of the city. The non-gender or third gender should inhabit post-human towns, and 2050 is closer than we may think.

2. Women Urban Planning: The Gender and City

"This world has always belonged to the males" (Beauvoir, 1956, p. 87). Simone de Beauvoir introduces the historical concept of the second gender. The organization of society is entirely patriarchal: only man counts as an individual. The woman as a biological machine stays retained in her contextualization of human reproduction. Also, Richard Shusterman interestingly analyzed the second sex, based on his concept of *somatic subjectivity* (Shusterman, 2008; 2015). For the present purposes, especially his conceptualization of the living body is held as significant for the issue of gender. It is even that, according to Shusterman, the liberation of all 'weakness' would occur if Beauvoir appreciated more the concept of somatic experience. Last year, during a conference at the Academy of Fine Arts in Kraków titled *Body and Public Space*, Shusterman introduced his lecture by illustrating how the somatic experience can be used as a tool for understanding how body and space manifest each other. Moreover, for Shusterman, the body does not predefine the difference between private and public spheres but rather summarizes both in a difference, or, to put it in the terms of Braidotti, in multiplicity.

> This lecture examines the relationships between the soma (the living, sentient, purposive, culturally shaped body) and the varieties of space, both public and private. We begin by considering the ways that the soma both defines space and is conversely defined or shaped by it. We then explore the soma as constituting space that is articulated into different parts with different significance. Here we critique the familiar view that the body is essentially a private matter by instead showing the body's crucial role in public space and the body's own expression of the public/private distinction through its division into public and private parts or spaces. This leads to a discussion of the nature and value of public space, considering both philosophical and legal approaches to defining such space and its relationship to privately owned space. Among the key values examined are democratic freedoms of access, mobility, and expression but also social integration. However, these values face a problematic dialectic of inclusion and exclusion with respect to the range of the public and those individuals or groups who are on or beyond its margins (Shusterman, 2021).

The engagement with both body and gender in recent years has been increasingly associated with a consideration of the soma as a person that owns a sentient body. This idea offers a reading of the city in which numerous examples of how the female body has already been taken seriously in the urban, both socially and politically (cf. Serra (2019), Castelli (2019)). We are currently witnessing multitudes of Iranian women who, motivated by the killing of Mahsa Amini on September 16, 2022, caused by her not wearing the veil 'properly', are demonstrating daily. In the streets of Tehran, these women are fighting for their civil and human rights. The Islamic government's exclusion of women from customs and traditions is strongly and unrestrictedly

becoming manifest in the concealment of female bodies. One specific symbolic gesture these women undertake to draw awareness to their revolt against a reign of repression and injustice is to cut off entire locks of their hair in public squares. Here, the woman's body is highly demonstrative of her gender, and a part of their bodies, namely their hair, becomes a symbol of revolution. The idea of a body that represents the urban context is generally linked to political, social, or governmental issues.

But in this paper, I would like to become more specific and engage with the role of the gendered body in the context of designing and planning urban environments. For more than 30 years now, various arguments have been proposed for making the city 'gender-friendly'. It hence should be unneeded to still write about gender and cities, perhaps because it is assumed that the respective body of literature has moved in new directions already. However, I claim that there still is an immense necessity to elaborate on gender as a *barrier*, a *limitation*, something which we need to go *beyond*.

Since the 1990s, women have become increasingly involved in the urban planning context. One case that I would like to illustrate here is the *Frauen-Werk-Stadt* (in English ca.: Women-Work-City), a district in Vienna that was designed between 1993 and 1994 by eight female architects, and commissioned by the *Frauenbüro*, the Viennese Municipal Department for the Promotion and Coordination of Women's Affairs, which itself was established only in 1992 and back then was led by urban planner Eva Kail. Two years before the realization of the *Frauen-Werk-Stadt*, in 1991, Kail, together with her colleague Jutta Kleedorfer organized the exhibition *Who Owns Public Spaces? Women's Everyday Life in the City*, which later came to be described as the *turning point* (Jacowska and Novas Ferradás, 2022) for a reconsideration of women in public. The exhibition dealt with the daily city life of eight women. The photo series made by photographers Didi Sattmann, Barbara Krobath, and Milan Poupa highlighted the difficulties faced and the solution approaches attempted by Viennese women in balancing their identities as mothers and workers. To give an example, one picture from Barbara Krobath shows women at the subway platforms, trying with incredible difficulty to get their strollers into the carriage: the carriage entrance is located higher than the platform, so those female subway passengers are forced to single-handedly lift strollers, bags, shopping bags, and whatever other everyday items not only daily but several times a day.

The *Frauen-Werk-Stadt* was born when Vienna was ready for a sensitive and identity-based approach to city space. The many difficulties women face in their daily lives became the starting point for an inclusive and specific project. The exhibition by Kail and Kleedorfer elicits the urgent need to create urban solutions for working mothers. The housing itself comprises 357 units that were designed to fit each stage of life, from childhood to high age. The common inside areas inside the units include hallways as well as courts for playing, e.g. basketball. There are also outdoor areas that invite play and sojourning in the open. Since the 2000s, many sites have been added, following the standards of Vienna's gender-sensitivity-guidelines:

> Parks – ways to implement gender mainstreaming: Children are socialised and have roles allocated to them which are specific to their gender. As a result boys more often turn out in bigger groups, they tend to be noisier and assert their claims and interests more successfully. They take care of and needs at the cost of other park visitors, such as girls, small children and elderly people. 70 percent of girls (and 44 percent of boys) believe it is not wise to try and share spaces already occupied by older boys, thus foregoing any attempts at participation. 82 percent of girls (and 47 percent of boys) who did make relevant attempts were turned away. In the case of girls acts of rejection were often accompanied by sexual insults, as well as threatened or actual sexual aggression.
>
> Solutions: If parks are to be used by girls and boys on equal terms they need to be planned and designed in ways that ensure gender equality. Much depends on additional features such as teams of park supervisors trained in leisure time management and social pedagogics.
>
> What matters most to girls and young women?
> - Games and physical activities, such as
> - Volleyball, badminton
> - Rollerblading
> - Climbing, balancing acts, using swings
> - Basketball; football in their own safe environment
> - Niches for privacy (e.g. pergolas, low walls for seating)
> - Safety, such as
> - Footpaths must be clearly visible (clear route concept, in direct line of sight to streets and apartment buildings)
> - Footpaths across parks must be well lit
> - Cleanliness in the park, clean and functioning toilets close to the playground or park if not in the park
>
> What matters most to boys and young men?
> - Playing football (cages and open pitches)
> - Basketball baskets
> - Skater ramps
>
> What matters most to parents/caretakers of small children?
> - Separate play areas for small children
> - Sufficient numbers of benches and tables with a good view of the play areas
> - Places in the shade
> - Access to water
> - Clean and functioning toilets, close to if not in the park
> - Change tables
> - Lighting - so that parks can be used after dusk in winter
> (*Parks - ways to implement gender mainstreaming*, no date)

I have deliberately taken up the main features of Vienna's guidelines for designing play areas for children aged 0-18. Decisions to include one play area rather than another are based on children's tastes and movements, which seems crucial to me when even the smallest space must be designed for play. In this regard, Vienna achieved several successes: The named exhibition created awareness of the female role in cities. Urban planning was done by women only. Services following gender-sensitive guidelines were implemented. All this newness provided insights into how crucial it is that the female gender as a living body takes up space and creates space for the city.

The primary concept in planning a city for working women is the everyday, which was first used in 1994's EuroFEM Network, a consortium of planners, policymakers, community-based organizations, and architects, which was founded to reimagine the built environment as "a just, harmonious and equal society" (Gilroy and Booth, 1999).

> The EuroFEM network is the foundation stone of this action-research project. EuroFEM is a network of European woman working and teaching together in the built environment arena, who have come together to exchange ideas and experiences connected with women's projects in the field of planning, housing and mobility. The purpose of the network is to draw attention to the fine grain of women's, children's and men's lives not simply with the aim of demonstrating the differential impact of policy on women but to construct a new vision for a 'just, harmonious and equal Society. On a practical level EuroFEM has established a network of European's Women's projects that have attempted to develop gender sensitive approaches lo the provision of infrastructure for everyday life (Gilroy and Booth, 1999, p. 311)

In a city built based on an equal notion of gender, women must be legitimized to carry out their daily routine without having architectural or social barriers. In *Gender, Urban Space and the Right to Everyday Life* (Beebeejaun, 2017), Yasminah Beebeejaun underlines the importance of the everyday concept for the planning activity. In the context of urbanism, there are many philosophical references involving the concept of the everyday, e.g. the writings of Henri Lefebvre, who considers it the site of authentic experience of self, the body, and our engagement with others (Beebeejaun, 2017, p. 326). More generally speaking, contemporary aesthetics, in addition to stressing the importance of aesthetic everyday experiences in the urban (cf. Lehtinen (2020), Ratiu (2021)), has also put a strong focus on the role living bodies play in city streets (Shusterman, 2019).

Here I would like to quote the headword on the aesthetics of the everyday as found in the *Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*:

> In the history of Western aesthetics, the subject matters that received attention ranged from natural objects and phenomena, built structures, utilitarian objects, and human actions, to what is today regarded as the fine arts. However, beginning with the nineteenth century, the discourse has become increasingly focused on the fine arts. This narrowing attention occurred despite the prominence of the aesthetic attitude theory in modern aesthetics, according to which there is virtually no limit to what can become a source of aesthetic experience. The tendency to equate aesthetics with the philosophy of art became widespread in twentieth-century aesthetics, particularly within the Anglo-American tradition. Challenges to this rather limited scope of aesthetics began during the latter half of the twentieth century with a renewed interest in nature and the environment, followed by the exploration of popular arts. Everyday aesthetics continues this trajectory of widening scope by including objects, events, and activities that constitute people's daily life. However, it is more accurate to characterize this recent development as restoring the scope of aesthetics rather than opening a new arena (Saito, 2021).

The popular concept of the aesthetics of the everyday is the aspect most likely to emerge from the defence of the right of the everyday, even, and especially, about the female gender.

> The continuing neglect of gendered and embodied rights to everyday life reveals the limits of the right to the city as conventionally understood. If we consider multiple rights to the city and recognize the contested publics that coexist within the city and their spatial tactics, there may be more productive ways to incorporate divergent experiences within planning practices. A reengagement within the multiple uses of space within a framework that is attentive to difference can provide potential to sustain a fuller sense of gendered rights to everyday life (Beebeejaun, 2017, p. 331).

3. An Extraterrestrial on Earth–City

The following are questions I consider necessary for us to confront if we want to welcome an extraterrestrial on earth: What does the body of an extra-terrestrial look like? Does it have two legs and two arms? One leg and three arms? Does it have six hands? Does it have no hands? Does it have a tail? What does its head look like? Does it suffer more from cold or heat? How tall is it? Is it three meters, or only 50 centimetres? As a consequence, we need to ask: Would our roads, docks, and subway cars be accessible for it? Would it be able to purchase a streetcar ticket? Would it be able to sit on our benches, and stroll on our sidewalk?

Looking at Judith Butler's interview with Sunaura Taylor (Taylor, 2008), these questions come to mind as we talk about how people walk and move through the city. It is no longer a question of the 'right' to the city, but of those who no longer have accessibility to everyday due to a physical non-conformation to the given standards.

Here I refer again to Braidotti's concept of the post-human: "Sexualized, racialized and naturalized differences, from being categorical boundary markers under Humanism, have become unhinged and act as the forces leading to the elaboration of alternative modes of transversal subjectivity, which extend not only beyond gender and race but also beyond the human" (Braidotti, 2013, p. 98). If we want to speculate future cities, I argue that we must reconsider several given standards, *inter alia* the one of gender.

In the contemporary philosophical landscape, the figure who stands out in consideration of overcoming the gender question is Paul B. Preciado. Through the transition of his gender and body, Preciado shows that the concept of liberation is not the same as that of enfranchisement: "It is the new world, even if we don't see it. But it is the real world. It is not the world of feminists who do nothing but defend their privileges. And talking about freedom is not enough because it is often a concept that defends the old patriarchal regime. Freedom is different from liberation" (Preciado, 2022). And it is in this sense that Preciado often emphasizes in his texts how the appropriation of a male body helps him find a way out of the perennial contextualization of rights advocacy.

> So, since in the heteropatriarchal binary circus women are offered the role of belle or victim, and since I was not and did not feel myself capable of being since or the other, I decided to stop being a woman. Why couldn't abandoning femininity not become a fundamental tactic 'of feminism? This amazing association of ideas, lucid and magnificent, must have hatched somewhere in

> my womb since women's creativity is said to reside solely in the uterus. And so it must have been in my rebellious, non-reproductive uterus that all the other strategies were conceived: the rage that made me mistrust the norm, the taste for insubordination… Just as children endlessly repeat gestures that give them pleasure and allow them to learn, so I repeated gestures that violated the norm so I could find a way out. And yet I had no desire to become a man like other men. Their violence and their political arrogance held no attraction for me. I had not the least desire to become what the children of the white middle classes called being normal and healthy. I simply wanted a way out: I didn't care what it was (Preciado, 2021, p. 24).

This reflection helps us realize that changing the body is not enough to change the concept of gender. Rather, changing the body offers the ability to acquire the sense of a 'multiple' or a 'plurality' that we found already in the post-human (cf. Braidotti (2022), Harris and Rousell (2022), Steinmann (2022)). Being transgender no longer indicates gender dysphoria but represents both a lucid and rational as well as a political and social choice, that opens new ways of being in the world.

> In one of my last dreams, I talked about my problems with artist Dominique González-Foerster in deciding which part of the world to live in after years of nomadic existence. We were looking at the planets turning gently in their orbits as if we were two giant children and the solar system was a moving creation by Alexander Calder. I explained to her that for the time being, and to avoid the conflict implicit in the decision. I was keeping a rented apartment on each planet and spending little more than a month in each, even though this situation appeared economically and existentially untenable. Of course, as the author of the 'Exoturism' project, Dominique seems in the dream to be an expert in real estate matters for the extraterrestrial universe. "I would keep an apartment on Mars while maintaining a pied-à-terre on Saturn", Dominique said, showing great pragmatism, "but I would leave the apartment on Uranus. It's too far away. It increases in me the feeling not only that I have a home on Uranus, but that Uranus is where I want to live" (Preciado, 2018).

Preciado takes up the *uranian*, a concept introduced in 1864 by Karl-Henrich Ulrichs, to refer to what he calls *third-sex* loves. Ulrichs is the first who does not use the ordinary division of gender into man and woman. Instead, he defines the third sex as a uranian, a female soul residing in a male body, who feels attracted by male souls. Instead of seeing it as a pathological deviation, by his concept of the uranian, Preciado strongly works on affirming the third sex as a rational choice of freedom.

The fashion world owns already a history of overcoming the sex-gender pair. In February 2022, during the *London Fashion Week*, the Dutch designer Dirk Vaessen (Vaessen, no date) presented a hybrid collection. Its bodies move slowly, the feet of the models almost crawling on the ground. Their shoes are made of wood, weighing them down, as if to remind us to keep a firm footing on what will be a planet in the solar system. If we take a closer look at the various outfits in the collection, they appear neutral enough to be used for walking on other planets, such as Mars or Uranus. I wonder whether we here already witness clothes of the future, clothes that do not need to be gender-indexed. In these creations, no shapes, colours, or alterations reveal any difference.

Another example of a work that engages with clothes to reconsider the notion of gender is that of Alessandro Michele, art director of Gucci, who reminded us in July 2022 that his clothes are for human beings (Salto, 2022). To this last statement of Michele's, we might add that his collections are also for extra-terrestrials, that is, for those who want to feel free to be regardless of their gender.

But what about architecture and city planning? Are we ready to welcome an extraterrestrial who wants to live on earth? Petra L. Doan, Professor Emerita at Florida State University, has been conducting research for many years regarding urban planning for marginalized populations with a specific focus on LGBTQ communities (Doan, 2016; 2015; 2011; 2010a; 2010b). According to Doan, space can be an object of gender tyranny. That is, how public space strongly denotes the binary system may make it inaccessible to a transgender person (Doan, 2010a). As Preciado does, Doan addresses the issue of gender and overcoming it through her experience as a transgender person. At the age of 42, she began her transition period with her coming out. The personal involvement of a transgender person in public space surely can be a huge reference for the elaboration of a new urban planning system: "Part of my intellectual journey has involved coming to grips with the way that the spaces in which I live, work and play are inherently gendered. For many years I literally only expressed the gender of my true self in the most secret spaces within the privacy of my own home – in the very real confines of a large walk-in closet" (Doan, 2010a, p. 638). Doan takes up the model of the genre that transcends the limits of the body to denote its experience (Butler, 1990). Bodies defined by gender are in fact subjugated by a regular regime (Foucault, 1978).

But how does gender tyranny operate in space? Doan illustrates her experience of being marginalized due to being transgender. Especially when frequenting public spaces, people feel affected by what they consider to be the standards. Harassments experienced verbally at airports or physically in elevators, make evident our society's unpreparedness to include a person with multiple genders, or without any gender. In this regard, places such as the office or the classroom stick out, which Doan calls *quasi-public spaces* such as that of the workplace and classroom:

> Coming out at a public university provided many unique experiences of gendered spaces. My first day on the job as a woman was especially memorable. As I entered the building I felt I was entering the eye of a hurricane, at the calm center of a turbulent storm of gendered expectations. As I walked down the hall I could hear conversation in front of me suddenly stop as all eyes turned to look at the latest 'freak show'. As I passed each office there was a moment of eerie quiet, followed by an uproar as the occupants began commenting on my appearance. Some people just stared, a few others told me how brave I was, and one person told me that I looked 'just like a woman'. Another gave me a taste of what it means to be objectified by telling me proudly that I was his very first transsexual. These events helped me to realize that my presentation of gender was not just a personal statement, but a co-constructed event. I presented myself, and the academic world watched and passed judgment. I am grateful for the presence of my colleagues and students whose support deflected some of this turbulence (Doan, 2010a, p. 642).

This co-construction of gender presentation implies participation in the community, which takes place in shared, social, and everyday spaces. Promoting such purposes, the latter should disengage from the body object, and rather focus on how different bodies could coexist. The last hurdle for any person who is transitioning is the division preset by public restrooms. In this regard, Doan tells of her experience in disabled bathrooms during her transition to show that standard space design still does not include hybrid toilets. Through auto-ethnographic analysis, Doan altogether uncovers the dualist design of spaces as Pandora's box, in which even such private spaces as the home or the own telephone are included:

> The telephone constitutes the most significant invasion of my private space. Though I have put my phone number on a Do Not Call list for telemarketers, I still receive many unsolicited calls… However, many callers refuse to disbelieve their ears and continue this pronoun abuse by calling me Mister and Sir (Doan, 2010a, p. 647).

Doan's proposal for the introduction of planning rules for LGBTQ Communities (Doan, 2015) helps to advance the overcoming of the struggle for rights, and gender complexity to become a normality. Following Doan, the most serious shortcoming in contemporary urban planning is their omission of gender inclusion: "Some of the resistance from planning staff may be linked to planners' reluctance to engage with the LGBTQ population because the non-normative nature of this community is stereotypically linked to the topic of sex and the city that many municipalities would rather cleanse or purify" (Doan, 2015, p. 4). In the line of thought opened up by Doan, I thus propose urban planners to confront questions such as the following: How could LGBTQ communities be advocated for? How could urban planners provide facilities (social and community supports) that are suitable for LGBTQ communities?

Fortunately, however, in the past ten years, urban planners have increasingly worked on inclusion, from which e.g the concept of queer urbanism resulted. James Rojas, an urban planner, activist, and artist who has worked on over 400 planning workshops in Los Angeles, San Francisco, and Minneapolis that incorporated and implemented LGBTQ perspectives, writes:

> I have a strong sense, rooted in my own life and my knowledge of queer lives in general, that queers experience urban space differently from others—and from this awareness I created Queer Community Visioning Workshops in Los Angeles, San Francisco, and Minneapolis. The workshops allowed participants to explore their visual, spatial, and emotional experience of the city through storytelling, objects, artmaking, and play. The goal: to have queers reflect on their difference as a foundation for shaping (and healing) their communities. Among the lessons learned: urban design needs to give queers a seat at the planning table (Rojas, 2018, p. 32)

In his workshops, Rojas managed to elaborate on a crossing of body confidences. Indeed, what is crucial for LGBTQ communities is surely not only a sense of inclusion, but a normal everyday experience, that is, an everyday that crucially is not defined by a perennial struggle for one's rights:

> What emerges from the process? Well, in the three workshops I facilitated, many of the designs embodied themes that are crucial for the queer community: inclusion, equity, nonjudgment, gender safety, openness, access, beauty, comfort, and living harmoniously with nature (*Ibid.*).

Inclusiveness must not remain in the context of marginalization, but it must promote a push, Rojas stresses, to develop new forms of living in the city. And therefore, the voices raised from within the LGBTQ community are crucial for city plans. A satisfying multiplicity must certainly include all human beings.

> Queer planning, as I experienced it in the workshops and understand it in my own work, begins with embracing and celebrating difference—and for queers that difference is inevitably connected with powerful emotions. The confusion, hurt, and perseverance that have been a part of our lives have given many of us a desire to create a healing community. This is what has inspired me to advocate a healing-based planning process that takes a deep, holistic approach aimed at restoring all aspects of the environment, from human relationships to nature… Queers can make an important contribution to a new vision of planning that begins with the lessons of difference and the experience of emotion (including personal pain) and moves forward to find planning solutions that address the whole human being and the whole human community (*Ibid.*).

4. Conclusions on the Extraterrestrial Meaning of Dwelling: A Letter to Uranus

We are human
After all
Much in Common
After all
(Daft Punk, 2005)

Are our cities, public spaces, and homes ready to welcome an extraterrestrial? Are architects, planners, and designers working with a whole system of integration in their projects, that goes beyond the issue of inclusiveness and safety? I believe that such questions must be approached by those who want to speculate and create the cities of the future.

As Shusterman reminds us, at times it certainly is still difficult today to detach from the social role that the body plays in private and public spaces. And it surely can be similarly complex to deconstruct the role of gender, or even more, to reduce the overall epistemological to a transgender context (Preciado). "Paul B. Preciado has put the notion of transition at the centre of his epistemology and defined transition as the only possible adventure to remove the sexual body from the machine of colonial capitalism." He also says: "in transition we all are, the world is in transition" (Valerio, 2021). Perhaps it is because the body does not need to accept gender as its primary role? If we are all in transition, is there still a need to talk about gender differences? The theory of a continuous transition, as Preciado suggests, can give a view of a future coined by multiplicities. And it can also make us listen with respect to other living species, that probably are themselves in transition.

In the Western hemisphere, several models were used to capture the relationship between architectural space and the body: For instance, Vitruvius, in the late 400s and echoing Galen, understood the beautiful as a harmony between the parts. In present times, namely in the 1950s, Le Corbusier demonstrated how to construct housing units and buildings according to human measurements. Braidotti brought these ancient thoughts into posthumanism already, see e.g., *New Vitruvian Woman* (Dowdalls, no date), *Leonardo da Vinci's dog* (Harris, 2017), *Vitruvian Cat* (Stiefvater, 2007), and *Robot in the style of Leonardo's Vitruvian Man* (Maninblack, no date), are all examples of an evolving post-human model.

I consider it is time today to start thinking about the introduction of a new model of reference, in which beauty is no anymore restricted to a given harmony of parts, but rather consists of an ongoing inclusion in and of foreign worlds. Unfortunately, the elements, that we need to rely on to create the image of a body that finds its gender identity in transition, are still exclusively Western. However, we can nonetheless formulate a message to send out into the solar system, directed to those who want to come and dwell on the earth:

Dear Extraterrestrial, we are from the land of humans, and we would like to design for you a plural and complex space. You will not need a specific outfit to be recognized. We will welcome you as an extraterrestrial, perhaps with a hyper-developed mind, and certainly of multiple genders. We are preparing for your arrival, and we will do our best to provide you with safe, anthropocentric-free environments at your arrival, that are open to new and changing forms of life.

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Disrupted Dwelling: Forensic Aesthetics and the Visibility of Violence

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The aim of the present text is to offer an interpretation of Eyal Weizman's concept of forensic aesthetics, demonstrating how this approach reveals the ways in which the aesthetic perception of violence, trauma, and decomposition of human dwelling can be transformed in the current digital optical war regime. Forensic aesthetics tries to grasp a forensic sensibility as both an aesthetic and political practice, requiring individuals to become sensitive to violence and be able to comprehend and experience the affects of disintegration, trauma, and despair that are characteristic of the experience of the survivor. The environment, dwelling, and architecture are not only inert observers, but rather have become material witnesses of crimes, violence, and destruction of various dwellings inhabited by various species. The application of digital technologies in forensic aesthetics carries a strong ethical appeal to avoid injustice. Traces and fragments of evidence, as well as multiple videos and images, are synchronized and recomposed within digital architectural environments and dwellings, as an optical and interpretative tool that shapes a new type of aesthetics. | *Keywords: Forensic Aesthetics, Violence, Dwelling, Visualization, Operational Images*

1. Introduction

In 2010, a research group called Forensic Architecture was founded at Goldsmith, University of London, under the leadership of Eyal Weizman. The group seeks to investigate abuses of human rights by governments, militant organizations, police forces, and corporations through the use of technologies such as visualization, digital projections, and cartographic tools. These tools are used to reveal and make visible the traces of violence inscribed in both human bodies and architecture and urban environments. According to Weizman, the group's objective is "to bring new material and aesthetic sensibilities to bear upon the legal and political implications of state violence, armed conflict, and climate change" (Weizman, 2014, p. 9).

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Weizman's approach, referred to as 'forensic aesthetics', diverges from the traditional understanding of aesthetics as a formal or structural analysis of an autonomous work of art, which often neglects its pragmatic utility and relies on concepts such as beauty or aesthetic function (see Shklovsky (1991), Mukařovský (1970), Culler (1975)).[1] It also distinguishes itself from the phenomenological-aesthetic concept of environment, home, or dwelling, which is linked to the ancient tradition of poetics (*poésis*) as a means of producing relatively stable objects or buildings, and to the capacity to be affected and afflicted by the arrangement of one's surroundings (cf. Heidegger (1993, pp. 343–363), Harries (1998)).

Forensic aesthetics focuses on dwelling, particularly the unhabitable and disrupted dwelling, as evidence of violence and the transformation of aesthetic perception of violence, trauma, and the decomposition of the (human) milieu. The disrupted dwelling serves as a 'material witness' of violence and has the ability to alter human sensitivity, leading to a deeper awareness of the impact of conflict on the surrounding environment and on human lives.

This text is organized into three main sections. The first section introduces the inception of forensic aesthetics and the concept of material testimony. The second section provides an overview of the forensic investigation of disrupted dwellings, including an explanation of the basic concepts and principles used in forensic aesthetics. The third section addresses the visibility of violence within the current optical regime of war, which establishes and reinforces forensic sensibility through visualizations and 'operational images'.

2. Preliminary Notes on Material Witnessing

The introduction of the main principles of forensic aesthetics appeared in a book written by Eyal Weizman and Thomas Keenan called *Mengele's Skull. The Advent of Forensic Aesthetics*.

The identification of the presumed remains of Mengele was a peculiar one because not only the skull and bones were at the disposal for the eyes of the various experts, but also photos and images from Mengele's war file, including his medical reports. Therefore a diverse scientific forum was formed: in addition to Brazilian investigators and forensic anthropologists, there were graphologists, radiologists, dactyloscopists, and experts in dental analysis records and X-rays and photographs, as the potential range of evidence allowing identification was highly variable. Experts had to come up with a technique, which would prove that these different registers fit together and that the remains and archive materials refer to the same person. One of the members of the investigating team (Richard Helmer) perfected the video-imaging process "called face-skull superimposition, in which a video image of a photograph is placed over a video image of a skull to determine whether the two are the same person" (Weizman and Keenan, 2012, p. 32).[2]

[1] Anne Mari-Forss' seminal study on the aesthetics of dwelling suggests that "art-based aesthetics has been challenged, particularly by inquiries in environmental and everyday aesthetics that expand the aesthetic domain by considering everyday environments and matters as objects of aesthetic appreciation" (Forss, 2014, p. 170).

[2] Helmer became a 'cameraman' switching between two viewfinders of the camera and

The skull and the bones became material witnesses (see Schuppli (2021)) of the violence of events that happened during Mengele's life, they were sensors of his decisions, accidents, and ways of living, but not only that; in an abstract sense, they also conserved the violence produced by Mengele in the past, and conserved the violence of crimes against humanity that had happened forty years before Mengele's death. The newly produced image by face-skull superimposition, which merged photographs and the skull, was the ultimate evidence for identification. But the image, as well as bones and the skull, could not speak for themselves. The experts needed to present this evidence in front of different forums: in places where the expert is the translator and representative of these material witnesses and the task of the expert is to convince others (whereas it is the media, public or jury) in order to convict someone without any 'reasonable doubt'.

The moment, when the bones and image appeared in the courtroom was a decisive one: the existence of material witnesses was acknowledged and affirmed and thus the so-called forensic sensibility was established (Keenan and Weizman, 2012, p. 70). Without the use of technologies of visualization this turn in contemporary political aesthetics would not be possible, as Keenan and Weizman believe.

3. Forensic Aesthetics and the Investigation of the Disrupted Dwelling

Forensic aesthetics investigates the ways in which violence can alter the appearance of structures, such as buildings and infrastructure. It involves examining the physical traces of violence on these structures, including damage caused by lethal weapons. Prefabricated houses and collapsed buildings that have been disrupted by military-political conflicts can also be considered material witnesses, as the event of destruction is often inscribed in their walls and structures through visible signs such as holes from gunshots and bomb shrapnel, shards of broken windowpanes embedded in human bodies, and complete environmental devastation.

To further discuss what has previously been mentioned, Weizman (2011, pp. 5–6) regards architecture as a 'pathology' of the present times, as it is not a static and unchanging entity. Rather, it is 'elastic' and 'responsive', constantly undergoing deformation in response to the forces it encounters. The traces of these forces remain present in the architecture, waiting to be revealed and presented before relevant committees and tribunals. Technologies used for reconstruction, visualization, and analysis reveal the affective level of environmental deterritorialization. As such, Weizman (2017, pp. 95–96; Fuller and Weizman, 2021, pp. 37–40) asserts that architecture acts as a 'sensor'. The concept of a sensor has a dual meaning in this context. On one hand, architecture serves as a surface upon which the effects of political, social, and

focusing on the skull. Shuffling between these two with different images until upon the third screen, the television screen, emerged from the two images only one image: "With the exact positioning of the skull corresponding to the head position on the photograph in the electronic superimposition, complete conformity has been found to exist concerning all recognizable proportions of the head, face, eyes, nose, and mouth. The outline of the soft tissue layer model on the skull was congruent with the facial contours lying in the photographic plane" (Weizman and Keenan, 2012, p. 35).

military forces are inscribed. At the same time, it also has the ability to recursively reshape these forces. Additionally, architecture serves as evidence in trials and media accounts of conflicts, potentially helping to prevent further crimes against humanity.

One notable example of this approach is the work of Weizman and Mir Ali, who sought to explore alternative paths for accessing traumatized human memory *via* digital technologies. Typically, their fieldwork involved examining walls and ruins to determine if the structures matched the instruments of death (for example, by comparing the inscription in the walls to the material structure of bullets and missiles, or by analyzing the shape of the ruin to determine the type of missile attack that caused it). However, in this particular instance, they did not have access to the site in question. All that was available for Weizman and Mir Ali to work with was satellite imagery, which showed only a blurred outline of a house that had been attacked by drones (Weizman, 2017, p. 45). With the help of a survivor of the attack, they attempted to create a digital model of the house as the survivor remembered it, without pre-determining which details were important. Using the survivor's memories as a guide, they populated the model with objects such as doors, furniture, and kitchen utensils, striving for as much accuracy as possible. In this case, architecture did not serve as material evidence, but rather as "a mnemonic technique, a conduit to testimony. The model was a stage on which some of her memories could be accessed and performed" (Weizman, 2017, p. 46).

The dwelling was plundered, reshaped, and consequently rendered uninhabitable.[3] The only remnants of its previous state were in the survivor's memory (Fuller and Weizman, 2021, p. 25). However, visualization technologies were able to 'reconstruct' the dwelling and produce affectivity associated with it, synthesizing the broken pieces of material objects into a representation of the home that existed prior to the attack. The difference between the dwelling's 'before' and 'after' highlights the terror that occurred. The disrupted dwelling and its digital double, presented by Weizman and Ali before legal and public forums, demonstrated the consequences of the transformation of the milieu into a toxic environment inhabited not by humans but death itself. The digital double created by Ali and Weizman served to illustrate the lost sense of home, subjective feelings, and attachment to a particular location but also revealed the raw reality of losing one's dwelling due to violence, which can never be restored to its original form. The digital double merges the subjective sensing of dwelling and the global terror of losing a home, highlighting the powerlessness of those who have lost everything.

Forensic aesthetics makes these situations visible through the creation and presentation of evidence in various forums. It exerts pressure on geopolitical, state, military, and militant organizations or institutions by exposing their acts of violence to public scrutiny.

[3] The destruction of dwelling can be called an event. For Gilles Deleuze, the event is a radical transformation of everything in everything, i.e., it destabilizes the territory, milieu, or dwelling, it disrupts the stratification of habitual and everyday orientation in known space, and thus it rearticulates our schemes of perception and affection, unfolding new ways of experiencing the world (cf. Deleuze (1990), Deleuze (2003)).

In this context, forensic aesthetics can be considered a form of investigative aesthetics. Utilizing advanced visualization technologies, it 'slows down time' and deconstructs it into frames of temporal relations involving the subject's lived experience and the duration (and decay) of material objects. Its investigation is centered on forensic operations, initially focusing on the material environment and treating objects as sensors of events capable of recording transformations in space. These objects and transformations are then reconstructed and presented in a legal or expert forum (Weizman, 2017, p. 94).

According to Weizman, forensic aesthetics involves a method of revealing information in forums, which includes gestures, techniques, and technologies of demonstration, methods of theatricalization, narration, and dramatization, as well as the use of technologies to project, deconstruct, and differentiate images, ultimately leading to "the creation and demolition of reputation, credibility, and competence" (Weizman, 2011, p. 10). Weizman supports his argument by pointing out that forensic aesthetics is closely related to the Greek concept of *aisthésis*: to experience something sensually is to be 'aestheticized', and conversely, to be 'insensitive' to sensory impressions is to be immune to the experience being presented in the forum (Weizman, 2017, p. 10). The ability to experience sensory impressions is a necessary condition for the possibility of being affected by the information presented in the forum, while the material thing itself is also 'aestheticized' or made perceptible and visible. In other words, Weizman asserts a recursive relationship between the human capacity to feel, which allows for the potential radical transformation of perceptual schemas through affectation, and the material 'sensors' in which events are inscribed, and the deterritorialization of the norms and practices of witnessing. From this perspective, aesthetics is a mode of interaction among socio-political-economic-legal-war forces, material things, and the human capacity for sensibility. Aesthetics, as *aisthésis*, not only plays a role in the production of evidence but also fundamentally influences the reception of evidence and the confirmation of its existence, potentially altering the perception of a specific event or situation (Weizman, 2017, p. 95–96).

4. Visibility of Violence and the Optical Regime of War

In the previous section, the use of digital and visualization technologies in tracking the violence of ongoing conflicts through an epistemological forensic aesthetics perspective was discussed. In the following paragraphs, I will delve further into the contemporary optical-warfare regime created by technologies and machines of vision, which enables war at a distance, significantly altering our perception of violence and its impacts on the human dwelling.

Paul Virilio has theorized about the relationship between the apparatus of vision and war, stating that the incorporation of film and photography in the First World War significantly accelerated war operations due to the dissemination of film footage and photographs, which allowed for new modes of representing the environment through images (Virilio, 2009). However,

in recent decades, technology has advanced to the point where what was previously made possible by 'new' media in the early 20th century has evolved into a completely new optical regime of war.

Since the 1970s, the digitalization of camouflage has led to its evolution and expansion, with computer-controlled algorithmic procedures now responsible for the "production of its patterns". The emergence of "stealth technologies" allowed camouflage to "dynamically adapt to their immediate environment" (Bousquet, 2018, p. 155): "[D]igital camouflage uses computer algorithms to produce designs that incorporate multi-scale patterns intended to deceive at a variety of observational ranges" (Bousquet, 2018, p. 170).

As a result, 'vision machines' (Virilio, 1994), new systems, and technologies for deconstructing camouflage had to be invented. These war technologies are simultaneously duplicated and supplemented by the use of satellites scanning the entire surface of the war conflicts, but also the Earth itself. Therefore, they can be described as sensors (in Weizman's sense) because they are very effective in making the battlefield "transparent" (Glezos, 2012, p. 57).

In this context, Bousquet refers to a 'martial gaze' that is able to reveal all the patterns and invariants of the transformed environment. This 'martial gaze' is capable of detecting the enemy that is hidden below the level of ordinary visibility. While photography and film have achieved this to some extent, it was in the context of a different perceptual situation, as the images were interpreted by trained human experts who dealt directly the medium in question.

The current optical situation requires a distinct form of perception and aesthetic attunement. The earth's surface, buildings, cities, settlements, and roads are replaced by their digital representations, or digital images (DeLanda, 1991, p. 189). A fundamental characteristic of these images is that they are primarily designed to be read by technology or computers, only secondarily by the human subject. Harun Farocki referred to this type of images as 'operational', meaning that they are structured as a sequence of digital code that is readable by a computer. In the case of these operational images, communication occurs at the machine-to-machine level (see Parikka, [forthcoming]).

In other words, it is necessary to translate the digital encoding of data (or images) into a form that is readable and interpretable by human beings. This leads to two consequences: the conflict is conducted based on communication between the technologies that evaluate the data, with the human serving as an operator and command giver, but only having access to already translated information. The conflict becomes increasingly mediated and almost becomes a virtual and abstract conflict, in which individual people, deaths, destroyed buildings, disrupted and devastated environments, and dwellings are nothing more than simulations of data, resulting in a remote death that is removed from the sphere of affective reaction. After all, the use of homing missiles or the involvement of combat drones in conflict is based on this principle. Drone operators sit in front of a screen, removed from any physical threat, while they sow death through individual commands articulated on a monitor screen.

In his films *Serious Games* (2009, 2010), Harun Farocki discusses the incorporation of computer technology into the training of soldiers and how the new optical warfare regime is based on creating the illusion of being a simulation. Consequently, deadly conflict is being gamified. Nevertheless, computer games and simulations are also being used as therapeutic tools for soldiers returning from conflict zones. As Farocki writes: "Traumatised U.S. troops returning from combat are treated with video games. In therapy, they watch virtual scenarios that simulate some of the situations they experienced in Iraq. The idea is that the virtual images will help the soldiers to remember the events that caused their trauma" (Farocki, 2014, p. 89). In the second case, the trauma is superimposed by a simulation, as if to create the impression that its physical aspect was simply a simulacrum of a distant and phantasmagoric past and that the psychological consequences are easily removable. However, it is characteristic of both cases that physical violence is downplayed and movement in virtual reality is controlled by digital images and computers. But how do these observations relate to forensic aesthetics as an investigative practice? The Centre for Forensic Architecture has featured attacks using homing missiles or drones in various art exhibitions, including a drone strike in Miranshah (Pakistan) in 2012 and the use of white phosphorus in urban environments in Gaza between 2008 and 2009.[4] In these exhibitions, forensic architects and aestheticians retrospectively reconstruct the process and impact of the violence, including identifying the technologies that disrupted the environment and dwelling. Two other aspects are noteworthy: the technologies of visualization and vision, as well as the aforementioned 'operational images', are used to make violence visible. Even forensic aestheticians must work with the translation of digital DNA of images into a form where violence can be seen and confronted (albeit mediated). This practice of tracking and making violence visible is both a deconstruction of the optical regime of war and a revelation (and confirmation) of the perceptual and aesthetic schemas that enable violence to be seen and or remain unseen.

By this practice, forensic aesthetics demonstrates that violence, even if it is largely experienced through images and visualizations, is real and physical violence that results in the loss of human lives and the destruction of human dwellings to the point of uninhabitability, disrupting the fabric of everyday life, habits, joys, and sorrows. Forensic aesthetics stands against all forms of relativization. Gunshot wounds on walls and bomb holes alter the character of the dwelling, making it uninhabitable.

The current optical regime of war creates the conditions for the emergence of new forms of violence and their visibility. Forensic aesthetics utilizes the means of war against themselves, demonstrating that what may appear on a monitor as a mundane explosion on a few pixels is actually a radical destruction of human dwelling, a radical experience that necessitates a new form of perception and affectivity that is sensitive to human suffering.

[4] See section 'airstrikes' on home web page of Forensic Architecture (*Forensic Architecture*, no date).

5. Conclusion

The use of digital technologies by forensic aesthetics carries a strong ethical appeal to avoid injustice. Traces, fragments of evidence, and multiple videos and images are synchronized and recomposed within digital architectural environments and dwellings, as digital models become an optical and interpretative tool that shapes a new type of aesthetics (Fuller and Weizman 2021). As Weizman writes: "No matter if you are a building, a territory, a photograph, a pixel, or a person, to sense is to be imprinted by the world around you, to internalize its force fields, and to transform. And to transform is to feel pain" (Weizman, 2017, p. 129).

Forensic aesthetics, through the localization of the disruption of our environment and dwelling on microscopic and macroscopic levels, provides a way to address the unsustainable path humanity has chosen. It attempts to cultivate a 'forensic sensibility' as an aesthetic and political practice, enabling individuals to become sensitive to violence and to comprehend and experience the effects of disintegration, trauma, and despair that are characteristic of the survivor's experience. The environment, dwelling, and architecture are not merely passive observers, but have become material witnesses to crimes, violence, and destruction affecting all forms of living beings. Forensic aesthetics disturbingly and unflinchingly reveals those responsible for the current state of affairs.

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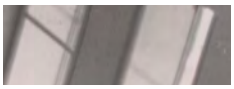

INTERVIEW

Juhani Pallasmaa ‘TALKS’ with Students

Aurosa Alison – Juhani Pallasmaa

Presentation

Aurosa Alison

In 1958, Le Corbusier had a lengthy conversation with architecture students, during which he discussed some fundamental points about the design process in architecture and the importance of experience (Le Corbusier, 1958). Rather than focusing on practical technicalities, he talked about topics that he felt were important for understanding people’s predisposition towards architecture, including the concept of disorder, the construction of dwellings, the nature of architecture, and the research workshop. Le Corbusier emphasized the importance of the architect’s personal involvement in the spatial and technical aspects of a project, and argued that without this experiential and aesthetic engagement with the natural, biological, and social elements of reality, an architect cannot truly design.

Michaël Labbé (2021) recently devoted a fascinating book to Le Corbusier’s peculiar conception of architecture, *La Philosophie architecturale de Le Corbusier. Construire des normes*. Labbé examines the relationship between beauty and utility in Le Corbusier’s architectural theory, and how he understood beauty as “a plastic emotion”. For Le Corbusier, spatial perception was not just a matter of reason, but also involved an aesthetic engagement. He believed that “architecture must touch”, and that this emotional experience could reveal the nuances of the atmospheric, phenomenological, and neo-phenomenological world that architecture has always evoked. Le Corbusier was not only a pioneer of an entire architectural movement – the Modern Movement – but also offered a modus pensandi and operandi for architecture, emphasising the crucial role played therein by aesthetic elements. The way he approached the students, through questioning and conversation, remains highly relevant today. It involves democratizing the learning process by exploring foundational themes in a collaborative way.

Inspired by the model of intellectual exchange demonstrated in this conversation, I also wanted my students to have the opportunity to engage with a leading figure like Juhani Pallasmaa. In the 1990s, Pallasmaa began to examine the role of perception in the spatial contexts of architectural and urban design, and he drew upon a wide range of authors and thinkers from diverse cultural backgrounds who shared an understanding of the concept of "experience". Among his primary philosophical references were Bachelard, Benjamin, Böhme, Casey, Dewey, Griffero, Husserl, Merleau-Ponty, Schelling, Serres, and Wittgenstein. He also frequently referenced scholars in the fields of embodied cognition and neuroscience, such as Gallese and Mallgrave. This array of theoretical references makes Pallasmaa's work a crucial point of reference for re-contextualizing architectural theory and recognizing the centrality of aesthetic and experiential sensation in design.

In this conversation with Pallasmaa, I have selected twelve significant questions from a public debate that took place on May 13, 2022, in Helsinki and on Zoom, involving more than two hundred students, researchers, and professors. I especially wanted to involve students from the Politecnico di Milano (DaStu) and the Department of Architecture (DiArc) of Federico II University in Naples. Together with Professors Gioconda Cafiero (Federico II, Naples), Antonio De Carvalho (Politecnico di Milano) and Gennaro Postiglione (Politecnico di Milano) we decided to open the meeting to students of all grades from bachelor, to master and PhD. The covered topics are diverse and numerous. The questions explore the theme of experience from different angles and perspectives.

The first set of questions in this conversation (1, 2, 3, 4) explore the relationship between sound and visual elements in architecture, and how Pallasmaa critiques the concept of ocularcentrism. In *The Eyes of the Skin*, Pallasmaa discusses various models of experience from a non-visual perspective, and argues that all the senses are necessary for a complete understanding of reality. In the chapter *The Body in the Centre*, he references Merleau-Ponty and emphasizes the importance of using the whole body as the primary receptor of space. These first four questions address issues related to ocularcentrism and the role of the other senses in experiencing architecture, as well as the critical topic of disability and how it can be addressed in design.

The second set of questions (5, 6) in this conversation deals with the issue of historicisation of time, or the centrality of 'time' in both architecture and cultural heritage theory.

The third set (7, 8, 9, 10) explores the concept of habitus by examining the relationship between public and private space, the image of the home as a reference point for both architecture and philosophy, the idea of the 'primordial dwelling' of animals, and the concept of clothing as an existential and bodily embodiment of space.

Finally, the fourth and final set of questions (11, 12) discusses the themes of silence and atmosphere, which bring the conversation to a close and leave room for considering new visions of the future of architecture.

Juhani Pallasmaa is a leading figure in the field of architectural theory due to his ability to integrate neuroscience, literature, philosophy, and mathematics in his work. His comprehensive approach to design and emphasis on the experiential aspect of architecture are highly relevant and influential. This conversation provided students with the opportunity to hear from a theorist who considers himself 'a reader', yet is widely respected for his insights on aesthetics, perception, and sensibility in architecture. By sharing this conversation with a wider audience, we hope to offer others the same valuable opportunity to learn from Pallasmaa's insights.

Preface: The World, the Self and Design

Juhani Pallasmaa

The twelve questions I received touch on several seminal issues in the crucial understanding of architecture today. This understanding calls for the recognition of the grand systems of the world, but unavoidably, also for the recognition of ourselves as biological, cultural and mental beings. The questions are focused on the bodily, sensory, experiential and mental issues in the craft of building. The questions also indicate that there is currently a shift from the technical, intellectual, formal and aesthetic projections of architecture to its human, experiential, emotive, mental and biological dimensions. We tend to think of our buildings as sheer material and utilitarian artefacts, but we also structure our understanding of the world and our consciousness through our constructions. The buildings, roads and bridges which we build are also mental structures. They express our understanding of the world and we understand the world through our own constructions. This interweaving of our internal and external worlds makes it difficult to see and judge its relevance.

Architecture, as all art, is fundamentally relational and mediating; it is not about itself, but about human existence, our relations with the world, our own institutions, as well as with each other. We also experience and understand time through our own historicity; architecture materializes time and duration. Architecture and man-made landscapes also express our understanding of ideals, beauty and ethics. As a consequence of this unavoidable mirroring of our inner worlds in our constructed world, our mental worlds are in an essential dialogical interaction and they constitute a continuum from our private mental lives to our shared external lifeworld.

Today, architecture is facing its most severe situation since the beginning of the modern world. The traditionally essential and respected craft of architecture, which has projected mental worlds into the physical world, is losing its sense of self and cultural authority. I am using the word 'craft' to convey that architects of the industrialized world need to maintain their bodily and tactile contact with the processes of making. In our time, architecture is turning from an autonomous art into a technical and economic service.

Instead of structuring and providing hierarchies in our lifeworld, architecture has been directed to the service of estheticized investment and speculative construction.

Now that we are beginning to understand that our choices, priorities, and actions are causing catastrophes in climate as well as the natural world, also architectural thinking needs to be sensitized to the processes, principles and values of the natural world. The philosopher of biophilic thinking, Edward O. Wilson, the world's leading myrmecologist, points out our human ignorance as the cause of our global problems: "All our problems arise from the fact that we do not understand who we are, and we cannot agree on who we want to become".

Conversation

I – Ocularcentrism and Visions: Through the other Senses

1) "A space is understood and appreciated through its echo as much as its visual shape". During the design process, sketchings or 3D programs help us visualise architecture. How could we design the audible component of space as we do with the visual one and incorporate it within the already existing sounds? And how could we combine the two (the audio and the visual)? (Architectural Design Studio, Polimi – Group 1 Sveva, Matteo, Gloria)

Juhani Pallasmaa: I wrote about ocularcentrism (Pallaasma, 2009) as the character of Modern culture, but I have increasingly recognised the role of all the other senses. Aristotle named our five senses. Some recent studies determine that we have over 30 senses. The understanding of sensory and communicative capacity is changing dramatically. Researchers have, for instance, recently revealed the chemical 'language' or communication of trees, and trees and fungi. We have also discovered areas in human communication that are not verbal. It was already established in psychological studies in the 1960s that 80% of human communication is non-verbal and unconscious. Therefore, a zoom contact, like the one we are having right here, diminishes our communication to the flattened visual image and sound, which is unreal. I am always dead-tired after a zoom lecture or conference, because the communication is so weak, as 80% has been eliminated.

However, the question concerned the role of sound. Aristotle classified the hierarchy of the senses from vision down to touch. Besides, the sense of vision has been culturally strengthened throughout human history, particularly through reading and book-printing since the middle of the 16th century, and nowadays with the digital instruments that we all have in front of us. The world becomes increasingly visual, and I would also say that our visual reality becomes increasingly focused. We are increasingly living in a world of focused vision. I have been writing quite a lot about the importance of peripheral and unfocused sensing. My current way of thinking is that our most important sense in architecture is our *existential* sense. We experience

architecture through our existence rather than any one of the senses alone. In that existential sense all the five Aristotelian senses and maybe two or three dozen other systems of sensing - like our intestinal processes. What we do not know yet, is the meaning of our sense of being, the sense of self, which is the sensory ground that relates us with the world and architecture. I would also add here that the other senses are somehow hiding also in vision; we see textures, weight, temperature, moisture, etc. The sensations hidden in or communicated by vision, can be critical to the quality of a sensation or place. One of the biggest problems in contemporary architecture is that we have lost the secret touch of visions in our architecture, because architecture has become purely visual and ocularcentric. This sensory reduction also concerns sound. Sound is, of course, part of the holistic experience, and there is a lot of coordination and interaction between vision, hearing, and touch. As I was working on the concert hall of the Korundi Art Center in Rovaniemi, the capital of Lapland, I became very aware of the significance of visual phenomena for the acoustic feeling; I used the notion of 'visual acoustics' of the materials, details and colours, and discussed these properties beyond hearing with the conductor and the musicians. The concert hall is now valued as the best recording hall in our country.

2) Given that your book focuses on the way we experience architecture through the senses and raises the question of which sense is most important for architecture, we wanted to ask about the opposite perspective. As we read your book, it was natural for us to think about people with disabilities, such as blindness or deafness. In an era when inclusivity is increasingly emphasized in the media and society as a whole, how do you think the relationship between architecture and the senses can be understood? And more dramatically, can the connection between architecture and the senses be completely severed? (Architectural Design Studio, Polimi – Group 1 Sveva, Matteo, Gloria)

Juhani Pallasmaa: I had an intense, emotional, and educating experience about disabilities thirty years ago, when I was commissioned to design a new building for the Association of the Blinds in Helsinki. (*Tervetuloa Näkövammaisten liittoon!*, no date). I was naive enough to go to the project presentation without really preparing for the fact that the ten members of the Board were without vision; the chairman was the only one with normal vision. I came to the meeting with my drawings and model, and only then realized that none of these persons with the exception of the chairman couldn't see the project. I explained the project as well as I could from the point of view of a blind person. At the end of my presentation, the blind board members of the Association of the Blinds all supported my project.

In contrast, the chairperson who had eyesight objected to it and said, for instance, that there were too many corners. The blind members defended my design. These reflecting walls were exactly what they needed to orient in the spaces. Another educating example took place at a dinner in the home of Glenn Murcutt, the Australian architect. One of the guests, a French artist, who had no eyesight told me, that he had come to Australia from Germany,

where he had directed a ballet. And he also said that he was on his way to Greenland. Alone, without eyesight? I said, "excuse me, I understood that you have no eyesight". He answered assuredly: "No, I see with my whole body". I now think that is how a fine architect needs to sense through her/his whole body; this means sensing through one's existential sense. In my childhood farm background, in the poverty of the wartime, I learned how to imagine absent things. You just imagine wonderful things. I think that one can train one's imagination to this. This is an existential situation to relate yourself with architecture.

3) Would the world be different today if ocularcentrism had not been so central since the Greeks? Do you think it was inevitable for them to believe in ocularcentrism? And if the Greeks had believed in the equality of all the senses from the outset, do you think ocularcentrism would have inevitably emerged at some point in history? (Architectural Design Studio, Polimi – Group 1 Sveva, Matteo, Gloria).

Juhani Pallasmaa: I taught architecture for two and a half years in Ethiopia in the early 70's. And early on, during the first weeks of my stay in Addis Ababa, I began to suspect that my students saw the world differently than I, that their eyes or system of vision, do not function the same way mine do. And I started to make experiments and became more and more confident of my observations. Soon after my experiments I spotted a book, published at that time by a group of scientists led by M.J. Hershkovits, with the title *The Influence of Culture on Visual Perception* (Segall, Campbell and Hershkovits, 1966). The point of the book was that seeing is culturally conditioned, and it is learned, which shocked me, as I had believed that we are born with our sensory abilities. We tend to believe that, seeing is something automatic. No, certain aspects are learned, and the very fundamental things in seeing have to be learned before the age of seven, because after that, this neural window closes. I even think nowadays that to some degree, different vocations or professions tend to have their specialized sensory worlds. Architects have one kind of a world, poets another one, filmmakers yet another one, etcetera. As I started to buy books as a student, I classified my books into two categories: architecture books and other books. But very early, I realised that the category of other book was much more important for me, because in those books architecture was described as a living thing, or as an environment where people lived in, whereas architecture books were most often formally oriented. I often advise my students to read literature, watch films and visit art museums and exhibitions because they tend to massage your entire neural system and improve your capacity to sense.

4) In his essay Cezanne's Doubt, Maurice Merleau-Ponty argues that Cezanne's focus on light leads him to a transcendental state in which his subjective perception of light becomes almost objective, resulting in the discovery of the optical behaviour of light. In architectural practice, what techniques (that are meaningful to architects) allow one to transcend the layers of obscure reality and reveal the truths of nature? (Architectural Design Studio, Polimi – Group 4: Jabrail, Ian, Andrei)

Juhani Pallasmaa: Merleau-Ponty affirmed that Paul Cézanne's paintings make us understand how the world 'touches' us, and in my view, the task of architecture is exactly the same. The existential mission of architecture is here, and also the reverse, how we touch the world. Architecture has a mediating task; it mediates between us and countless aspects of the world, culture, places and time. I believe that the modern architectural theory, art theory, and common appreciation are wrong in focusing on the inner qualities of the artistic work, architectural aesthetics, conceptual structures, etc. Architecture and art are relational things. Their meaning and value I come from, their capacities to relate us with something else, associate us with the continuum of time, divinities, and connect us with ageless myths. For me the notion 'transcendental' implies a capacity of seeing into the essences of things. It is an ability see the deep essence and meaning of things.

II – Time, Identity and Cultural Heritage

5) In your books, you often discuss the concept of 'time' as it relates to architecture and the built environment. However, physics has shown us that 'time' does not exist as a fundamental aspect of the universe, but rather as a subjective experience shaped by our emotions and the events of our lives. Given this, how can architecture measure time? (Luca Esposito, PhD Student, DiArc, Federico II, Naples)

Juhani Pallasmaa: This is a fundamental question. I have recently written couple of essays (2014, 2015)[1] on the relationship between space and time. In modernity, this topic was formulated by Sigfried Giedion, especially in his book *Space, Time and Architecture: The Growth of a New Tradition* (Giedion, 1941), in which he quoted physicists and particularly Hermann Minkowski, the famous mathematician. He supported the fusion of space-time. Minkowski argued that time and space as separate concepts will disappear from consciousness; they must be combined. I have myself believed this modernist dogma for fifty years, yet, in the last ten years, I have become doubtful about it. It is not very helpful to completely forget the differences between the scientific conceptual attitude, poetic artistic image, and emotional feeling. Or, between observation and dreaming, sensing and imagining. I would say, that in the lived world - which all the arts, including architecture, reflect - time and space are separate entities. We also deal with them separately in our design work. Karsten Harries, Professor of Philosophy and Art at Yale University, and a good friend of mine, has argued that we live in space and time. He uses a theatrical expression: the 'terror of time'. I understand that he's referring to our homelessness in time and frightening endlessness of time. Time must be tamed to human understanding and dimension in the same way as space. Architecture and cities, the entire human artefactual world, deal with this taming of time to human cultural experience. So, I would say, that time is a central issue in our profession, but differently from the sciences. Also, in human history, everything meaningful has to be based on tradition. We can

[1] Pallasmaa is referring to his lectures about Silence and Light at the Finnish Embassy in Washington in 2014 and at the American Academy in Rome in 2015.

only continue a tradition; an artistic revolution implies a re-channelling of the stream and force of tradition. The idea of inventing culture is just naive.

6) What role does proprioception play in understanding cultural heritage, particularly in relation to archaeological sites? Does physical presence contribute to the interpretation of the time gap between the past and present? (Master's degree student, Giovanni Gallero, Heritage, Naples)

Juhani Pallasmaa: Time is concrete, materialized and concretized for us exactly through physical phenomena and physical objects. Time and physical processes petrify and store human life and culture. Most importantly, human constructions, cities, and architecture concretize and materialize the course of time, which is difficult or impossible for us to grasp otherwise. As I think of the centuries after Renaissance, for instance, I immediately think of the human inventions and works of art, that concretize the advance of time for me. That is the reason why also architecture is so important: because it is constructed history and constructed time. We live in the continuum of time because of the passing of time is concretized in our culture. That makes us experience thousands of years and I also want to say that for me, the understanding of time as a one-way causality, is mistaken. I believe that this is entirely wrong, particularly in the poetic and artistic world.

When Aldo van Eyck was named professor at Delft University, the Rector asked him to give his inaugural lecture on Giotto's influence on Cézanne. He refused and gave the lecture on Cezanne's influence on Giotto. I think this is very important that in the world of ideas and art, time goes in two directions. One of my finest friends was the legendary Finnish designer and artist Tapio Wirkkala. He confessed to me couple of times, that his most significant teacher was Piero Della Francesca; Piero died 423 years before Tapio was born, but this fact did not prevent the unusual teacher-student relationship.

III – Habitus

7) Luis Barragan argued that architects worldwide have placed too much importance on large windows and spaces open to the outside, which can cause a loss of a sense of intimate life and force us to live more public lives. In the modern era, where open spaces are often in trend, how would you balance the need for intimacy with the desire for transparency? (Architectural Design Studio, Polimi – Group 3: Kamelia, Rachelle, Giulia)

Juhani Pallasmaa: In a way, those tendencies are exclusive. The human eye and the human mind were not meant to function in bright light. Biologically we are twilight animals of the African savanna. Humans did not hunt in the daytime as there were no animals to hunt in bright daylight. Animals begin to move when the evening falls. Early humans lied down and slept underneath trees in the shadows or in a cave, and only as the twilight period of the evening came, they started to hunt. In evolutionary terms our eye is specialised for that twilight vision. Twilight vision also activates our peripheral perceptions. As you visit an old historical house or even a public building, what makes you feel most pleasure is usually the semi-darkness, or the rhythmic changes in

illumination. Rhythmic variation between brighter and less bright spaces, and particularly the nesting of different places in an unevenly illuminated space. I am just writing a lecture on Alvar Aalto's light, and I call his light 'atmospheric and tactile light'. This light creates specific atmospheres and places, and it sensitises our tactile sense. I feel that the argument by Barragan, which comes from his acceptance speech of the Pritzker Price, is correct and significant. The huge windows and even the high illumination levels in offices, go strongly against our biological being. This is one example of how biology has a role in today's design. It is essential that Alvar Aalto in the late 30s said: "I have a feeling that architecture is related to biology". Now, 80 years later, I would echo Alvar Aalto and say that we have too little understanding and interest to understand our evolutionary past. But the next step, I think, in understanding architecture is to see it in the long story of human evolution. As some of you might know, I have studied animal architecture and building behaviour, which reveal new things or biological facts that are contrary to our shared beliefs.

8) Our homes reflect our individual selves. We use (or don't use) the space in ways that suit us, and it is shaped by our experiences, knowledge, and perception. We believe that everyone has their own way of experiencing architecture, of touching, tasting it, or of feeling attracted to or repulsed by certain aspects of it. In your opinion, is there a way to standardize human perception, or do you think this is simply impossible? (Architectural Design Studio, Polimi, Group 3 Kamelia, Rachelle, Giulia).

Juhani Pallasmaa: I think it is impossible simply because we understand and feel as human individuals, as unique individuals. Of course, we need to try to understand the generality of these things, otherwise we do not know anything meaningful about them. But I feel that it is crucially important to understand the specificity and uniqueness of each individual experience. And particularly to understand that architecture exists exactly in the experience, not in the house out there, a building or even a cathedral. The material structure is not architecture. It becomes architecture only after someone has experienced it. This is what the British Romantic poet John Keats wrote in the early 19th century: "Nothing is real until it has been experienced". Here is again an essential aspect about teaching architecture. In my view, we teach architecture too intellectually and conceptually. We must bring students next to architecture and have them feel architecture and understand it through their own bodies and minds. When you look at a picture of a painting by Claude Monet in a book you are not looking at a real Monet. The students must be taken to the museum to see real works. After they have seen the real Monet, even the picture makes sense, because that reminds them of certain true aspects of the work. I think this also applies to architecture. It could and should be analysed intellectually, only after the experience, not analysing first and then experiencing, because the encounter has already been spoiled and misguided by intellectualized explanation.

9) Our senses allow us to experience many things, including architecture. If we were to design architecture solely based on the comfort of our senses, without

considering functionality, what might the resulting buildings look like? Would they resemble nests or caves, and would we live in them like animals? (Architectural Design Studio, Polimi – Group 3: Kamelia, Rachelle, Giulia)

Juhani Pallasmaa: As I said earlier, I have studied animal construction for almost 50 years. The animal constructions are not naive and fairytale-like, as usually thought. They are highly functional, and often much better in terms of performing a specific purpose than our constructions. So also, our concepts of utility and functionality need to be broadened and critically considered. The purpose of relating us with the world, is part of the definition of architecture. Architecture is not just a place to keep the rain away, it's also to relate us with the frightening vastness and anonymity of space and the immensity of time. We feel protected when confined by architecture, so architecture is not only to keep the dangerous animals away. It is also to guide our understanding, emotions, beliefs and emotions, and architectural spaces are connected to our primordial feelings in space. Sigmund Freud wrote *The Interpretation of Dreams* in 1900, and it became almost symbolic to the Modern Century. But our time has almost completely forgotten Freud and Jung and their profound teachings that our human mind is very complex. It has so many layers that our day-consciousness by which we operate in our work and home is just a little fragment of what we are, and our architecture needs to recognise the vastness of human consciousness and deal with dreams and fears in addition to intelligence.

10) Clothes and dwellings are extensions of the human body. Clothes are a second skin, while dwellings are a third skin. These are inherently physical dimensions. What other physical or abstract extensions of the human body shall an architect consider while designing? (Architectural Design Studio, Polimi – Group 4 Jabrail, Ian, Andrei)

Juhani Pallasmaa: I agree with this analogy of nested worlds. We are in the middle of becoming instruments or systems by which we are related to the world and one to the other. This expanding artificial structure can relate us to the extremely small and the extremely large. We would not have any chance to have an opinion about the cosmos and universe if we wouldn't have this capacity to relate us from one scale to the other. The problem with today's architecture is that it has become too much its own project. Architecture is too self-centred today, enclosed within its own aesthetics, and that is why it has lost its cultural and human capacity to be in dialogue with life. There is another issue behind this and that is what my German philosopher friend Gernot Böhme wrote about as Aesthetics Capitalism (Böhme, 2017). His idea is that in the Marxist theory production is motived by need, but in the consumer society, the actual need has already disappeared. To keep the production system going, or even expanding, all the time, capitalist society needs to invent new modes of need, one of which is aesthetic desire, as fashion. First there were two annual seasons in fashion, then there were four, now, I believe, there are eight. This is a very remarkable issue, which also we architects need to know. We are turning into consumers of our own lives.

IV – Atmospheres

11) In your book The Thinking Hand, you argue that "architecture must defend us against excessive exposure, excessive noise, and excessive communication" and that "the task of architecture is to preserve and design silence". Given the changes to our way of living brought about by the pandemic, and the increased ability to work and study from home, do you believe it is possible to pursue the goal of 'designing silence' and defending 'natural slowness' while also reevaluating the peripheries and small towns? (Architectural Design Studio, Polimi – Group 12: Natal, Uzi, and Zisan)

Juhani Pallasmaa: I have given several lectures and written a couple of essays on light and silence connecting the two areas because of specific illumination, for instance, in a mediaeval structure. Also the illumination emphasizes silence and we begin to hear the silence. For me, silence is a meditative, healthy and natural condition for human beings. But in our current culture, we often seem to believe the reverse, that we need noise, a lot of noise. Our culture is a noisy one. Also much of the popular music culture is about noise rather than silence. One of my favourite composers is Arvo Pärt, the Estonian composer, whose work is about silence. I don't want to romanticize these things, I am rather speaking on a biological ground.

12) In your book The Eyes of the Skin, you frequently discuss the concept of 'atmosphere' and its importance in the experience of architecture, despite the significant emphasis placed on form in architectural theory. I have often noticed that I am unconsciously drawn to the atmosphere of certain places and only later realize the small details that contribute to my enjoyment of the space. Do you believe that such atmospheric elements can be planned during the early stages of a project, or is this something more primal and instinctive that cannot be intellectualised and simply emerges as a result of a well-crafted work? (Architectural Design Studio, Polimi, Group 12: Natal, Uzi, and Zisan)

Juhani Pallasmaa: Atmospheres are experiences of total sensory situations. All real-life situations are multi-sensory atmospheric situations. Isolated components exist only in laboratory conditions. We can experience situations where some dimensions of our consciousness or sensory world have been eliminated and those feel un-natural, and will quickly begin to cause mental or even physical problems. As I said earlier, we need varying levels of twilight, darkness and daylight in various degrees and rhythms. Everything in life is needed in different rhythms. There is not a single spatial quality that would be sufficient all the time without variation. And the most crucial variation is the circadian rhythm of natural illumination. Architecture should enhance circadian rhythms, whereas much of modern architecture goes violently against this need for variety, and tries to make everything evenly illuminated. That is not what we biologically need. It is time that we architects begin to understand ourselves as biological beings.

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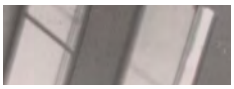

BOOK REVIEW

První den zbytku života umění

Lenka Lee

Danto, Arthur Coleman, 2021. *Po konci umění: Současné umění a oblast mimo dějiny*. Prel. Šárka Lojdová. Praha: Academia.

„Proč jsem uměleckým dílem?“ Touto otázkou končí podle Arthura C. Danta v 60. letech dvacátého století modernismus a s ním i dějiny umění v tom smyslu, jak je (stále) chápeme. Ústředním tématem, k němuž se Danto cyklicky vrací v souboru svých jedenácti přednášek, z nichž většinu přednesl na začátku roku 1995 v Národní galerii ve Washingtonu, je onen tolik diskutovaný konec umění, o němž ale ve skutečnosti nikdy nepsal, jak neustále zdůrazňuje, ačkoliv stejnojmenný text publikoval v roce 1984 ve sborníku (navíc s poněkud nešťastným názvem) *Smrt umění*. Jeho vysvětlení je nyní, dvacet pět let po prvním vydání, k dispozici i v českém překladu nazvaném *Po konci umění. Současné umění a oblast mimo dějiny*, jehož se s precizností sobě vlastní zhostila estetička Šárka Lojdová.

V době prvního vydání (1997) má Danto těsně po sedmdesátce, je uznávaným filozofem, estetikem a uměleckým kritikem. Už dávno se proslavil a rozvířil akademické vody svými texty *Svět umění* a *Konec umění*, už je dlouho obdivován díky svým publikacím, z nichž sám nejčastěji připomíná *Transfiguraci běžného* (1974). Proto si může dovolit esejistickým, sebejistým, ale uvolněným a zábavným stylem psaní znovu a znovu vysvětlovat, jak to celé s oním konce umění vlastně bylo. Ale, podíváme-li se na název v kontextu celé knihy, je nám jasné, že na to „jde zase špatně". Ona oblast mimo dějiny je totiž oblastí umělecké produkce, která nezapadá do tradiční linie dějin umění. Jestliže Danto zapomněl ve své stati *Konec umění* vložit doprostřed slovo „dějin", nyní zase opomněl dodat na konec slovo „umění". Tím vlastně dopředu vzbuzuje kontroverzi, která se ale nekoná.

Základní Dantova teze, nehledě na to, zda s ní souhlasíme, či ne, je v podstatě klasicky kunsthistorická. Dělí totiž historii umění na období umění před uměním, kterému se věnoval Hans Belting v knize *Obraz před érou umění* a které končí zhruba rokem 1400 a zahrnuje především náboženské obrazy, ikony, jejichž primární funkce nebyla estetická, ale religiózní. Po něm následuje období vasariovské, etapa reprezentace, mimeze, která se snaží o stále věrnější nápodobu, až jí její snahy zmaří takřka ze dne na den vynález fotografie, na což umění reaguje na konci 19. století obrácením pozornosti k samotnému médiu, včetně tahů štětce, které do té doby měly být neviditelné, a přestože tato doba začíná impresionismem, svého vrcholu dosáhla v modernismu překypujícím manifesty nejrůznějších uměleckých skupin, v oblasti teoretické reflexe se pak jejím mluvčím a advokátem stane kritik Clement Greenberg, objevitel Jacksona Pollocka a propagátor abstraktního expresionismu. Jenže pak přichází 60. léta, Warhol vystaví (ne úplně zdařilou) kopii krabice na drátěnky značky Brillo a Greenberg si s tím najednou neví rady, proto na něj a další představitele pop artu dokáže pouze zaútočit, nicméně právě toto jeho (z hlediska Danta fatální) nepochopení nástupu nového paradigmatu vlastně nahrává vodu na mlýn Dantovi, který je naopak *Brillo Boxem* uchvácen stejně tak jako John Ruskin, když v roce 1848 uviděl v Turíně Veronesův obraz *Šalamoun a královna ze Sáby*, a začíná promýšlet tuto novou etapu umění, v níž je možné vše a pouhé smysly, ale ani předchozí zkušenosti nám už nemohou býti spolehlivými rádci při vynášení soudů o umění a umělecké hodnotě či kvalitě, protože uměleckým dílem se může stát cokoliv, čímž skončily ony předchozí velké narativy a nastává estetická entropie.

Toto nové stádium, které v době vydání publikace trvá již třicet let, nazývá Danto posthistorickým a ukazuje, že umělecká produkce již není určována, formována a reflektována dějinami umění (protože o jejich konec tu celou dobu běží, nikoliv o konec umělecké produkce, ta naopak vesele pokračuje dál), nýbrž filozofií. Tato myšlenka se, v podstatě až do omrzení, v souboru jedenácti vybraných přednášek neustále opakuje, nicméně je obalována dalšími zajímavými a někdy i vtipnými postřehy, které prozrazují autorovu oddanost světu výtvarného umění. Jsou to jeho narativní věty, v nichž popisuje určitou událost, kterou spojuje s budoucností, o níž ale aktéři původní události

nemohli vědět, např. Petrarca ani jeho současníci nemohli vědět, že jeho výstupem na Mont Ventoux začíná renesance. Tento způsob přednesu je samozřejmě atraktivní, skoro by se chtělo říci sexy, ale v literární médiu přece jen funguje trochu jinak než na (synchronní, jak nás nyní covidová pandemie naučila zdůrazňovat) přednášce a pozorný čtenář se jím nenechá obalamutit a stále čeká na rozluštění rébusu, co tedy je uměleckým dílem.

A nakonec se vskutku dočká, když téměř v závěru Danto říká, že „být uměleckým dílem znamená (i) být o něčem (*about something*) a (ii) vtělovat svůj význam (*embody its meaning*)" (Danto, 2021, s. 292). Tím se dá vysvětlit, proč několik vedle sebe ležících plochých objektů s červeným čtvercem na bílém pozadí má rozdílnou uměleckou hodnotu, ač na první pohled vypadají stejně, a proč mohla být vystavena čokoládová tyčinka *We Got It*! Zároveň připomíná, že v posthistorické době je sice v umění dovoleno vše, ale to neznamená pobízení ke svévoli ani možnost, že by člověk vstupem do posthistorického období unikl svým dějinným omezením. Naopak, nyní sice máme k dispozici všechny dřívější (umělecké) formy, ale nemůžeme se k nim vztahovat jako ti, kteří v daném období žili. Proto jsou dokonalé padělky van Meegerena oblastí mimo svět umění a ve své podstatě tragickou záležitostí, zatímco malby Russella Connora, který v nich kombinuje různé části mistrovských děl (třeba spojením Manetova Baru ve *Folies Bergère* a Picassovy *Guerniky*), se mohou svým způsobem citování klasických děl zařadit do této (již třicet let trvající) nové posthistorické epochy. Stejně tak do ní patří i dvojice sovětských malířů Melamid a Komar žijících v Americe, kteří byli stejně jako řada umělců konfrontováni s rozpadem komunistického režimu, proti němuž ve své tvorbě bojovali. Na onu obligátní otázku „Co dělat?" (která i ve svobodném Československu zaskočila autory protestsongů či divadla menších forem, která vždy lavírovala na hraně vládnoucí stranou povoleného a zakázaného obsahu) si totiž brzy našli odpověď v podobě rozsáhlého sociologického průzkumu, který se zajímal o to, jaký druh umění lidé chtějí. Zjištěné výsledky pak zapracovali do svého obrazu *Nejžádanější malba Ameriky*, na níž si vedle George Washingtona vykračuje nukleární rodinka na piknik, zatímco se na mořské hladině procházejí jelen a laň. Obraz se pochopitelně dotazovaným z průzkumu nelíbil, protože jejich přáním nebylo vidět všechny výše uvedené komponenty společně na jednom obrazu.

Dantův soubor přednášek je dílem uznávaného autora, který si již může zkoumat jen to, co sám uzná za vhodné. Je to ale také soubor textů stárnoucího filozofa, který se rád opakuje a sem tam přihodí zábavnou a bezesporu zajímavou či přitažlivou historku nebo myšlenkový experiment, který nás přinutí promýšlet hypotetické situace, čímž dokážeme rozšířit naše vědomí a povědomí o světě umění. Musíme ovšem také třeba říci, že ač Danto neustále proklamuje onen konec dějin umění, z pohledu čtvrt století po vydání můžeme trochu škodolibě poukázat na to, že onen jeho posthistorismus není nic jiného než další etapa dějin umění a že nevíme, zda právě v tuto chvíli někdo výstupem na nějakou jinou horu, než je Mount Ventoux, zrovna nezačíná jejich další kapitolu.

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