Building the Good Life: Architecture and Politics

by

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Dissertation submitted in partial fulfillment of
the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in the Department of
Political Science in the Graduate School
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2010
ABSTRACT

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Abstract

This dissertation examines the relationship between architecture and democratic politics in late-modernity. It identifies the refusal of architects to consider the political dimensions of their work following the failures of 20th century High Modernism and the scant attention that the intersection between architecture and politics has received from political theorists as a problem. In order to address these deficiencies, the dissertation argues for the continued impact of architecture and urban planning on modern subject formation, ethics, and politics under the conditions of de-centralized sovereignty that characterize late-modernity. Following an opening chapter which establishes the mutual relation of architectural design and political culture in the founding text of political science, Aristotle’s Politics, the dissertation offers a genealogical critique of modern architectural design and urban planning practices. It concludes that modern architecture shapes individual and collective political possibilities and a recursive relationship exists between the spaces “we” inhabit and the people that “we” are. In particular, it finds that there is a strong link between practices of external circulation and the interior circulation of thoughts about the self and others. The dissertation concludes by proposing a new understanding of architecture that dynamically relates the design of material structures and the forms of political practices that those designs facilitate. This new definition of architecture combines political theorist Hannah Arendt’s concept of
“world-building action” with the concept of the “threshold” developed and refined by Dutch architects Aldo van Eyck and Herman Hertzberger.
Dedication

To my family, for everything
Abbreviations

In the first chapter, I used Stephanus line numbers to direct readers to sections of Aristotle’s text that I am referring to. In the second and third chapters, I use the following abbreviations. For texts less cited, I used the traditional footnote format.

Hannah Arendt


Michel Foucault


Kevin Lynch


Contents

Abstract .............................................................................................................................................. iv
Abbreviations ..................................................................................................................................... vii
List of Figures ...................................................................................................................................... xi
List of Illustrations ............................................................................................................................ xii
Acknowledgements ............................................................................................................................ xiii
1. Introduction .................................................................................................................................... 1
2. Politics Takes Place ....................................................................................................................... 30
3. Circulation and Foucault’s “Governmentality” ......................................................................... 83
4: Judgment and “World Building” Power ..................................................................................... 131
5: Threshold Dwelling ..................................................................................................................... 206
6. Conclusion .................................................................................................................................... 262
Illustrations .......................................................................................................................................... 272
Note: Unless indicated otherwise, the source of all illustrations is Flickr.com, used
under the Creative Commons licensing agreement........................................................................... 274
References .......................................................................................................................................... 290
Biography ........................................................................................................................................... 300
List of Figures

Figure 1: Map of Crest St. Neighborhood with NC 147 overlay ........................................... 91

Figure 2: Aldo van Eyck’s Otterlo Circles diagram................................................................. 224
List of Illustrations

Illustration 1: Brasilia’s Plaza of the Three Powers ............................................................... 274
Illustration 2: Pruitt-Igoe ........................................................................................................... 275
Illustration 3: Pruitt-Igoe (Note broken windows) ................................................................. 276
Illustration 4: Herzog & Meuron’s Bird’s Nest Stadium, Beijing ............................................. 277
Illustration 5: Rem Koolhaas’s CCTV Tower, Beijing ............................................................. 278
Illustration 6: Panoptic Prison, The Netherlands ....................................................................... 279
Illustration 7: New Urbanism’s “Neo-Traditional” Design ....................................................... 280
Illustration 8: Start of American Tobacco Trail greenway, looking north towards downtown .......................................................................................................................... 281
Illustration 9: View of American Tobacco Trail ....................................................................... 281
Illustration 10: Boston City Hall, Government Center ............................................................... 282
Illustration 11: Aldo van Eyck’s playground, Amsterdam ......................................................... 283
Illustration 12: Aldo van Eyck’s playground, Amsterdam ......................................................... 284
Illustration 13: Aldo van Eyck, Municipal Orphanage ............................................................... 285
Illustration 14: Aldo van Eyck’s Student Housing, Amsterdam ................................................ 287
Illustration 15: Herman Hertzberger’s Centraal Beheer Office Building .................................. 289
Illustration 16: Herman Hertzberger’s Diagoon Dwellings ...................................................... 288
Illustration 17: Herman Hertzberger’s Public Housing, Berlin ................................................ 286
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everything I could ask for in a chair and more. He suffered through the development of these ideas with patience and humor, posing questions that I began to understand in their full significance only months later. Most of all, he kept his confidence in the intellectual project that I had proposed and called me to do the best work that I could.

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1. Introduction

In many ways, this work’s central point is an obvious one: that the structures that architects conceive have an influence on political habits and behavior. While some outside the academy, like Jane Jacobs and E.F. Schumacher, have written about the connection between architecture and politics with great skill, political scientists and theorists have tended to think of architecture as background. Taking the background as a given, they have overlooked the salience of architecture and space in their analyses of political practices and behavior.

A generation ago, feminist theorists faced a similar challenge in arguing for the importance of the body. At some level their point, that politics is an embodied practice, was also an obvious one. But it was also revolutionary. By foregrounding what had been background, feminist scholars opened up for re-investigation many of the basic premises of modern political life. They questioned the neutrality of the Cartesian subject, the gendered premises of liberal rationality, and the content of what counted as politics itself. Their efforts revealed political possibilities that had been obscured in the background. They brought these forward to politicize new areas of inquiry and to complicate our prior understandings of political phenomenon. I am making a similar point about architecture’s relationship to politics in this work.
Given the etymology of the word architecture, its near omission from among the subjects of interest to political theorists until now comes as a surprise.\(^1\) The word architecture is a combination of two Greek words, archē and technē. Archē connotes the practice of power, sovereignty, dominion, and command but also initiation and action. Technē refers to technical knowledge that can be systematized but also something that can be contrived as a skill or practice. Though technē usually indicates a system of rules or method of making or doing, it can also have a more allusive sense of an art. Thus by definition, architecture is concerned with power and knowledge, but what sort of power and what sort of knowledge is far from obvious.

Ironically the growth of the internet, which at first glance would suggest the declining importance of material space and face-to-face interactions, has spurred calls for political theorists to reconsider the spatiality of democratic practices. Recent works of the internet’s effect on democracy, according to one reviewer, “pose fundamental challenges to some of the critical core concepts in contemporary democratic theory… [which] requires democratic theorists to return more rigorously to theorizing space.”\(^2\) This dissertation takes up this invitation in order to rethink the consequences of architecture for democratic politics.

\(^1\) Geographers such as Doreen Massey, Jason Hackworth, David Harvey, and Edward Soja have authored pioneering studies of the political aspect of “space” in broad terms. This work, however, rarely touches on the impact of space or architecture on democratic politics.

\(^2\) Chambers 2005, 125-126.
The reluctance among the current generation of architects to consider the political dimensions of their work can be traced, in part, to the legacy of what James C. Scott calls the ideology of High Modernism. In his book *Seeing Like a State*, Scott describes how the aesthetic qualities of modern architecture as well as its aggressive promotion of new technologies and its well-intention commitment to improving the human condition lent themselves to state-initiated social engineering programs. Scott singles out the total city planning principles developed by the Swiss-French architect Antoine Le Corbusier for the Congrès International d’Architecture Moderne (CIAM) as examples of what made High Modernism so dangerous and, ultimately, disastrous. As Scott explains, Le Corbusier’s views “were extreme but influential, and they were representative in the sense that they celebrated the logic implicit in high modernism.”

Scott describes Le Corbusier’s confidence in the potential of architecture to solve social and political problems as bordering on a kind of faith. CIAM’s first manifesto in 1928 called for the League of Nations to mandate the adoption of standard building codes and a universal technical language that its members had drafted. Le Corbusier, whose submission for the League of Nations building had been excluded from competition on a technicality, believed that the adoption of CIAM’s architectural design and urban planning principles would improve daily living and working conditions and therefore diminish the causes of social unrest. Le Corbusier outlined architecture’s

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3 Scott 1998, 104.
potential social and political benefits in his 1923 book *Vers une architecture* (translated and published in English as *Towards a New Architecture* in 1927), presenting the matter as a choice between architecture and revolution.⁴

At each turn in his career, Le Corbusier sought patrons and opportunities which would help him evangelize this message. Chosen in 1950 to lead an international team of architects charged with drafting the design of the United Nations headquarters in New York, Le Corbusier addressed the members of his design staff before an audience of journalists and photographers. Speaking in French to those assembled in the small planning office on April 18, 1947, with his comments translated into English by Canadian colleague Ernest Cormier, Le Corbusier began: “It may be useful to take stock

⁴ Le Corbusier believed the solution to the challenge of political unrest was architectural order. Here is how he described architecture:

> Architecture is an act of compositional willpower. To create architecture is to put in order.

> Put what in order? Functions and objects. To occupy space with buildings and roads. To create containers to shelter people and useful transportation to get to them. To act on our minds by the cleverness of the solutions, on our senses by the forms proposed and by the distances we are obliged to walk. To move by the play of perceptions to which we are sensitive, and which we cannot avoid. Spaces, dimensions, and forms, interior spaces and interior forms, interior pathways and exterior forms, and exterior spaces—quantities, weights, distances, atmospheres, it is with these that we act. Such are the events involved.

> From there on, I consider architecture and city planning together as a single concept. Architecture in everything, city planning in everything.

(Le Corbusier 1991, 69-70)
of the situation today. What exactly is the position? For the first time in history we meet
with an overriding common idea, the realization of which will enable us to give the
world a clear and optimistic architectural solution.” There were many around the
world, Le Corbusier insisted, who “anxiously and perhaps even jealously watch this
dawn of world architecture which is manifested here in a solemn act.”

Like a prophet, Le Corbusier maintained a belief in his vision that was strident,
uncritical, and unquestioning. His plans for the cities of Paris and Buenos Aires
imagined these cities *tabula rasa*, with their existing infrastructure wiped away to make
way for a new order of things. Against the disorder of the historical city, Le Corbusier’s
plans rendered cities in a visual language that was graphically simple and geometrically
pure. Le Corbusier imagined cities suited for the political order appropriate to the needs
of modern age industrialism. He wrote, “We claim, in the name of the steamship, the
airplane, and the automobile, the right to health, logic, daring, harmony, perfection.”
Scott explains that Le Corbusier’s insistence on the interdependence of legibility,
efficiency, and political order in the city and, above all, the totalizing nature of his
designs made his urbanism and architecture appealing to state authorities. This helps
explain why almost all of the large-scale projects proposed by Le Corbusier, which were

\[5 \text{ Le Corbusier 1991, 210.} \]
\[6 \text{ Le Corbusier 1964, 134.} \]
realized, were either commissioned by administrative bodies like the United Nations or administrative capitals like Chandigarh and Brasília.

Brasília exemplifies Le Corbusier and CIAM’s total-city planning principles. Le Corbusier’s urban planner rules over and controls the conditions of possibility in the city. For him, architecture turns on an *archē* founded in dominion and a *technē* that privileges expertise. The key to the architect’s power is the plan, according to Le Corbusier. His description of the plan as encoding irrefutable “truth” reveals its key role in the ideology of High Modernism.

The despot is not a man. It is the Plan. The correct, realistic, exact plan, the one that will provide your solution once the problem has been posited clearly, in its entirety, in its indispensable harmony. This plan has been drawn up well away from the frenzy of the mayor’s office or the town hall, from the cries of the electorate or the laments of society’s victims. It has been drawn up by serene and lucid minds. It has taken account of nothing but human truths. It has ignored all current regulations, all existing usages, and channels. It has not considered whether or not it could be carried out with the constitution now in force. It is a biological creation destined for human beings and capable of realization by modern techniques.

(Le Corbusier 1991, 112)

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7 Here is how James Holston describes Brasilia’s modernist pedigree:

Brasilia is a CIAM city. In fact, it is the most complete example ever constructed of the architectural and planning tenets put forward in CIAM manifestos. From 1928 until the mid-1960s, CIAM remained the most important forum for the international exchange of ideas about modern architecture. CIAM’s meetings and publications established a worldwide consensus among architects on the essential problems confronting architecture, giving special attention to those of the modern city. Brazil was represented to the congress as early as 1930, and Brasilia’s architects Lúcio Costa and Oscar Niemeyer have practiced its principles with renown clarity.

(Holston 1989, 31)
The plan, as Le Corbusier put it, was the dictator. His confidence in its certainty is visible in his preference for technical “solutions” and expert knowledge over what he considered the unreliability of politics. Reflecting his inclination for thinking about human life in terms of technology, Le Corbusier wrote that the home and, by extension, the city were machines for living. The rigid segregation of the city by function that he espoused reflected his understanding that, just as machines were composed of parts, so, too, should cities. The principle of functionalism also followed from his preference for visual simplicity and efficiency over disorder and complexity. By clarifying and dividing the city by use, he aimed to make each part function more efficiently. The result was that CIAM’s principles specified the division of the city into separate zones for work, residential, recreational, and circulatory purposes.

Drawing on Jane Jacob’s The Death and Life of Great American Cities, Scott observes that Le Corbusier’s architecture was opposed to forms of power and knowledge rooted in daily experience. Cities like Brasília and Chandigarh represent Le Corbusier’s efforts to transcend their local contexts. These capital cities were to represent the future of Brazil and India, respectively. Specifically, CIAM’s second principle of urban planning “the death of the street” was put to great effect to cleanse its public spaces of the

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8 Scott 1998, 118.
activities typical of other cities in Brazil and India. For example, most Brazilian cities are arranged around a central square which serves as a public room where citizens could gather for religious and civic rituals, to meet one another, and to organize political meetings. Brasília’s public square, however, is unlike those found in other Brazilian cities. It is a monumental space, flanked by buildings occupied by government ministries. In comparison, Scott says, “Tiananmen Square and Red Square are positively cozy and intimate.” The square, named Plaza of the Three Powers, signifies the insignificance of citizens to the operation of state power in Brasília (see Illustration no.

9 Holston explains the motivations of CIAM’s effort to redefine the purpose and identity of the traditional street:

At the scale of an entire city, Brasília thus realizes one of modern architecture’s fundamental planning objectives: to refine the urban function of traffic by eliminating what it calls the corridor street, the street edged with continuous building façades. In its critique of the cities and societies of capitalism, modern architecture proposes the elimination of the street as a prerequisite of modern urban organization. It attacks the street for a number of reasons. On the one hand, it views the corridor street as a cesspool of disease. On the other, it considers the street as an impediment to progress because it fails to accommodate the needs of the machine age.

Yet, modernist planning derives only in part from public health concerns and technological innovations. More profoundly, modern architecture attacks the street because...it constitutes an architectural organization of the public and private domains of social life that modernism seeks to overturn. In the type of the city modernism attacks, the street is both a particular type of place and a domain of public life. In sustaining this contrast, the street embodies the concept of the public defined in relation to the private. Thus, the street is not simply a place where various categories of activity occur. It also embodies a principle of architectural order through which the public sphere of civic life is represented and constituted. (Holston 1989, 101-103)

10 Scott 1998, 121.
1). The only activity that takes place there happens inside the government buildings that surround it. In order to convey its inhospitality, Scott compares attempting to arrange a meeting with someone in the square to “trying to meet someone in the middle of the Gobi desert.”

The plan for Brasília made no accommodation beyond those for the families of the bureaucrats who would staff the government offices. Left out were the sixty thousand construction workers who built the capital over the four year period from 1956 to 1960. This group was joined by rural migrants called candangos escaping conditions of prolonged drought in Brazil’s northeast. Together they built unauthorized squatter’s settlements on the social and geographic periphery of the capital. The early squatters formed the so-called “autoconstruction” movement, voluntary organizations whose purpose was to demand government recognition for their land rights, the extension of city services, and protection from government police forces. Because the migrants initially acted as an unnamed group, they were at first able to thwart the state’s power to assimilate them unilaterally within its order. The uncertainty of their identity meant that they were able to continue living with their families in the capital where many of them worked in the service sector. During this early period, the candangos’s collective actions generated knowledge and gave public valence to legal actions directly related to the settlements, such as land seizures, that had previously affected families individually.

11 Ibid.
and privately. These interactions with state authority, however, allowed the state to recover its advantage.

Once classified, state authorities could distribute political and property rights that simultaneously enabled and limited the set of claims these unauthorized residents could make. Importantly, these rights were tied to accepting the state’s offer to be re-assigned to the settlements in the new satellite cities ringing the capital. As a result, the activities of the candangos were appropriated and made continuous with the existing order of administrative power. The government subsequently responded to the unplanned and spontaneous developments by resettling squatters to satellite cities around Brasília. As James Holston writes in his study of Brasília, “the government founded the satellite cities to sustain the intentions that were threatened by the formation of the illegal periphery: it attempted to counter the Brazilianization of Brasília by developing satellites in the image of an uncompromised Plano Piloto [Brasília’s

12 Holston notes that the residential pattern of the satellite cities conforms to the Master Plan’s specifications for the collective dwelling on display in the capital. Although the satellite cities feature freestanding homes and not blocks of apartment buildings (so-called supersquadras) they continue a principle of collectivity. The houses in the satellite cities “front onto a green area of public property that each resident is supposed to share and tend collectively with his neighbor. With their backs on the roadside, these houses therefore reproduce the front-back reversal distinctive of Brasília’s urbanism” (Holston 1989, 273).
central district]… . By projecting the order of this center to the periphery, the planners thus remain faithful to their model of the exemplary capital.”

In Brasília, modern architecture and urbanism became powerful instruments in the government’s effort to suppress the political activity of the candangos. Since the satellite cities were legally administrative units, the “rights” of their residents were granted at the discretion of bureaucrats in Brasília. Once they officially fell under the jurisdiction of the state, the candangos’s insurgent political claims were nullified under the capital’s “Organic Laws.” These laws denied the residents of the capital and surrounding districts the right to representative government and declared that Brasília’s affairs were to be managed by an administrative governor working in consultation with federal senators. In combination with the satellite cities, the Organic Laws were intended to cure the new capital region of the threat of civil unrest. They were justified by what the Minister of Justice cited as the need for “a climate of tranquility,” to prevent a situation in which the federal government might conflict with the local authorities. The effect of the Organic Laws and resettlement was to preserve the absolute power of the Federal Government in all domains related to the capital region.

Not only was the government able to politically neutralize the candangos in the name of security and stability, but in gaining property rights, the candangos became

14 Ibid, 274.
15 Ibid.
invested in the social and economic order that had once relegated them to their marginal status. Now as homeowners, the former members of the autoconstruction movement perversely enforce the terms of economic power and consumerism that had been agents in their exploitation. In Brasília, the state’s response extended the prevailing order of economic and social power into the psychology of its most marginal residents.\textsuperscript{16} While the \textit{candangos} gained the legal rights they had previously been denied, they remained at the very bottom of Brasília’s social, political, and economic hierarchy and their ability to advance their status was stripped of its vitality.

Outcomes like those witnessed in Brasília laid bare High Modernism’s undemocratic qualities and architects were quick to distance themselves from its ideology and explicit engagement with politics. Critic Charles Jencks officially dated the death of modern architecture to 3:32pm on July 15, 1972, when the City of St. Louis, Missouri, dynamited the Pruitt-Igoe Housing Project designed by Minoru Yamasaki. Like Brasília, Pruitt-Igoe was constructed according to the most up-to-date of CIAM’s principles and Jencks notes that the building won an award from the American Institute

\textsuperscript{16} See James Holston’s “Autoconstruction in Working Class Brazil.” \textit{Cultural Anthropology}, Vol. 6, No. 4 (November 1991), pp. 447-465, at 447. Holston writes, “autoconstruction became the focus of several class trajectories. Industrialists ceased calculating rent into salary considerations and began promoting the idea of home ownership for the labor force as a means not only to anchor and discipline workers but also to create a mass consumer market for building and household commodities” (Ibid, 449).
of Architects when it opened in 1951. The high-rise buildings reflected the functionalist principles espoused by Le Corbusier and bore a resemblance to his Unité d’Habitation in Marseille (see Illustration nos. 2 & 3). According to Jencks, referring to Pruitt-Igoe, “its Purist style, its clean, salubrious hospital metaphor, was meant to instill, by good example, corresponding virtues in the inhabitants. Good form was to lead to good content, or at least good conduct; the intelligent planning of abstract space was to...

17 The Encyclopedia of 20th Century Architecture’s entry for Pruitt-Igoe provides the following explanation of its significance:

Pruitt-Igoe was an early and important post-World War II public housing project. Built on the near north side of St. Louis as part of a massive urban-renewal program, Pruitt-Igoe was one of the largest public housing complexes in the United States. With 33 buildings rising through 11 stories and towering over 57 acres of the city, it was hailed in the early 1950s as an innovative application of modernist design principles to the problem of chronic urban-housing shortages. At its peak, it housed some 14,000 people in 2870 apartments. Yet by the early 1970s, the project was crumbling and nearly derelict, its residents plagued by crime, isolation, and persistent poverty. Pruitt-Igoe was not only the worst housing project in the city but also one of the most glaring failures of federal housing provisions in U.S. history...

Designed by Minoru Yamaski of Hellmuth, Yamaski, and Leinweber, the Pruitt-Igoe plan called for a Le Corbusier-like “ville raideuse” of garden apartments and high rise edifices interspersed with broad tree-lined and landscaped plazas. Innovative skip-stop elevators would open every third floor, enabling a broad gallery to stretch for 85 feet across the front of the building. Not only would the skip-stop elevators reduce costs, architects argued, but the galleries would provide space for "vertical neighborhoods" to replace the streets and sidewalks of the low-rise city. Here, above the noise and congestion of the old neighborhoods, children could play, and adults could gather without fear for their safety. (Heathcott 2004)
promote healthy behavior." Once built, however, Pruitt-Igoe failed to provide a positive environment for its residents, who regarded its long corridors and anonymous communal spaces as dangerous. Pruitt-Igoe was quickly vandalized and defaced, its windows shattered and elevators broken and unsafe. The housing project had become home to the city’s highest crime rates and The City of St. Louis ultimately decided it could no longer afford to police or upkeep a property its residents hated.

Surveying the destruction of Pruitt-Igoe, Jencks advocated for the separation of architecture from politics altogether. Post-modern architects should steer clear of committing the mistakes of their modernist forbearers. Writing a year earlier, Italian Marxist critic Manfreo Tafuri agreed. Writing to disabuse architects of their political pretensions he remarks:

Architects, after having ideologically anticipated the iron-clad law of the plan, are now incapable of understanding the road travelled; and thus rebel at the extreme consequences of the processes they helped set in motion. What is worse, they attempt pathetic “ethical” relaunchings of modern architecture, assigning to its political tasks adapted solely to temporarily placating preoccupations as abstract as they are unjustifiable... Today, indeed, the principal task of ideological criticism is to do away with impotent and ineffectual myths, which so often serve as illusions that permit the survival of anachronistic “hopes in design.”

(Tafuri 1977, 178-182)

\[18\] Jencks 1984, 9.
George Baird observes that the autonomy of architecture and its separation from politics that Jencks and Tafuri recommend is almost universally accepted within the profession.\textsuperscript{19} Take, for example, what Dutch architect and Pritzker Prize winner Rem Koolhaas told Nicholas Ouroussoff, \textit{The New York Times’s} architecture critic, when asked about the political aspect of building in new cities in Asia and the Middle East where over the last decade, cities like Shenzhen, China, and Dubai, U.A.E., have allowed architects to build on a scale that modernists like Le Corbusier could only wish for. Here is Koolhaas’s response: “Each time you ask yourself, Do you have a right to work on this scale if you don’t have an opinion about what the world should be like? We really feel that. But is there time for a manifesto? I don’t know.”\textsuperscript{20}

Retreating from politics, the “autonomous activity” of post-modern architecture revolves around questions of aesthetic formalism. During the generation since Pruitt-Igoe, the field has been dominated by debates over style and spectacle. That experimentation has yielded buildings that have been popularly celebrated for their unprecedented visual impact. Thanks to works like Frank Gehry’s Guggenheim Museum in Bilbao, Spain, Santiago Calatrava’s Turning Torso in Malmo, Sweden, and a trio of structures completed in time for the 2008 Beijing Olympics (Koolhaas’s CCTV Tower, Norman Foster’s Bird’s Nest Stadium, and Paul Andreu’s National Centre for

\begin{footnotesize}
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\footnote{Baird 2003, 3.}
\footnote{Quoted in “The New, New City,” by Nicholas Ouroussoff in \textit{The New York Times Magazine}, June 8, 2008, p. 95.}
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the Performing Arts; Illustration nos. 4-6), architects are enjoying a level of public attention that they have not received since TIME magazine put Le Corbusier on its cover in May 1961.

The importance of architecture’s relationship to politics has, it seems, been forgotten by architects as well as by political theorists but as Scott’s analysis of High Modernism demonstrates architectural design can have enormous consequences for the conditions of political possibility. The question is not a matter of designating categories of “good” and “bad” architecture since the relationship between architectural intention and outcome is not determinative and because what is built invariably outlasts the person(s) responsible for its planning and construction. Rather, the point is to understand—and judge—the relative merits of architectural designs and outcomes for democratic politics. In this dissertation, I concentrate on understanding the relationship between architecture since Le Corbusier and democratic politics. Like Scott and Jacobs, I am interested in the lived experience of architecture—how space is inhabited, how it can be inhabited differently, and how it can be reconfigured through activity and use.

Architecture, Walter Benjamin wrote, is perceived in a two-fold manner, by touch and sight. He explains that

Such appropriation cannot be understood in terms of the attentive concentration of a tourist before a famous building. On the tactile side there is no counterpart to contemplation on the optical side. As regards architecture, habit determines to a large extent even optical reception. The latter, too, occurs much less through
rapt attention than by noticing the object in an incidental fashion. For the tasks which face the human apparatus of perception at the turning points of history cannot be solved by optical means, that is, by contemplation, alone. They are mastered gradually by habit, under the guidance of tactile appropriation. The distracted person, too, can form habits.

(Benjamin 1969, 240)

In the following pages I approach architecture in terms of tactile habits that constitute the lived experience of space. With Benjamin, I believe that this approach contributes more to the understanding of architecture, in terms of political valence, than a discussion of its formal spatial qualities (although these are not unimportant). Unlike scholars interested in the symbolic qualities of architecture, I focus on the discursive and physical dimensions of architecture in order to indicate how the cities and towns we inhabit are at once real and imaginary formations that represent the conditions for political life and practice.21 John Pløger explains that such an interpretation treats architecture like a “text”, which means that it must convey “knowledge, experience, use-

21 My invocation of architecture as both material and imaginary space represents an extension of Benedict Anderson’s influential concept of the nation-state as an “imagined community.” According to Anderson, the inhabitants of the nation-state owe their sense of identification to texts like newspapers and novels which established narratives that linked together its readers, who could otherwise not assemble in a single space or possibly know their fellow citizens, into a common community (see Anderson 1991). In making an argument for the imaginary dimensions of architectural space, I am implicitly acknowledging that I not only consider but am interpreting architecture as a “text.” This implies that its design is open to multiple interpretations and that architectural design represents and conveys some epistemic content. For more on this methodological approach, see John Pløger’s discussion of interpreting architecture as a text in “Foucault’s Dispositif and the City” in Planning Theory 2008; 7, 51.
value or memories if it should work (be desired)... something ‘known’ (even only intuitively)... The effect of architecture is related to what schemes of signification, discursive formations, practices, ‘body-memories’ or interpretations it ‘touches.’”

Ploger emphasizes that the interpretations of these texts will vary with the number of interpreters since the social field is populated by multiple “readers.”

The first chapter returns to 5th century B.C.E. Athens to investigate the question of politics and architecture in relation to Aristotle’s *Politics*, (translated and short for, *politikê epistêmê* or ‘political science’) which is considered the founding document of political science. My purpose in examining Athens and Aristotle’s treatment of architecture in the *Politics* is to identify the importance of architecture to political science at its very origins. In a sense, I am advocating a return to Aristotle’s endoxic method inasmuch as his analysis of politics begins with a consideration of geography and city planning.

In a recent account, Carol Dougherty describes how architecture was an instrument in the struggle between the oligarchic Thirty and the democrats of the Piraeus in 403/404 B.C.E. She notes how both the oligarchs and democrats destroyed *horoi* and symbols erected by the opposing faction and replaced them with their own when they came to power. Her description suggests both that architecture represents

22 Ploger 2008, 59.
the reification of power. I ask whether this is the only possible relationship between the two. Is architecture only a reflection of power and conflict? Or does Aristotle’s description of the polis as a community defined by common ends offer another interpretation for the relationship between architecture and politics in Athens? Is it possible that architectural design in Athens made possible both unity and conflict—a sense of the common that preserves plurality and difference without insisting upon uniformity and conformity? That is, is it conceivable to speak of Aristotle’s sense of the common in Athens as something that invited challenge and contestation? By juxtaposing Aristotle’s sense of the common with that found in Athens, I hope to show how Aristotle’s articulation of the good life is in tension with a larger sense of the common that is shared with those formally excluded from participating or claiming their part in that common life.

In this chapter, I examine how the experience of the Athenian polis contributed to an understanding of the common good that was sensitive to its own limits and exclusions. My discussion centers on the spaces of deliberation in which Athenian citizens generated this sense of the common. I find that these diversely constituted spaces worked to habituate citizens to comprehend the common good of the Athenian polis not just in terms of their own interests as citizens but those of non-citizen residents. Reading Aristotle’s Politics along side other accounts of Athens from roughly the same period, I identify a correspondence and tension between Aristotle’s discussion of the
common good that was the end of the polis and the sense of the common gained in the activity of deliberation shared among citizens and non-citizens in the Athenian polis. This second sense of the common, I argue, was alert to its limits and inequalities and helps illuminate the exclusions of Aristotle’s invocation of the common good. In the *Politics*, Aristotle notably criticizes Hippodamus of Miletus, who was responsible for designing the Athenian Piraeus, for the way that his designs failed to foster a sense of the common among various classes in the polis.

I suggest that architectural features that made knowledge of Athens’s democratic ethos widespread across a range of citizens and non-citizens were important to the development of the sense of the common good particular to Athens. I argue these architectural practices, which include the wide-spread use of public inscription and inward facing circles, as well as spaces which were both public and private in nature, were partly responsible for the development of a democratic culture and community that recognized its own incompleteness. The resulting sense of the common was shared among citizens and non-citizens, who were each aware of democracy’s vulnerability to claims made by those who had no formal part in it. I conclude that in 5th century B.C.E. Athens’s architectural spaces contributed to a sense of the common that was a source of stability that nonetheless made innovation possible.

The next chapter examines how modern architecture conditions the possibility of politics today. In particular, I examine how modern forms of architecture have
introduced newer habits of circulation that produce patterns of political oblivion and obliviousness. The purpose of this chapter is advance of a genealogy of how the imbrications of architectural space and politics are experienced today. This genealogy attempts to make the operation of architecture, which has remained in the background of our collective attention, visible in order to examine it with greater scrutiny.

Specifically, I show how the effect of architecture on political and ethical habit has been so “naturalized” that architecture’s impact on political action and behavior goes unsensed. In particular, I use Michel Foucault’s lectures on the production of the political rationality particular to neo-liberalism that he termed “governmentality”, to explain how the regular encounter with persons representing racial and class difference can fail to yield insights that make those differences either less foreign and/or threatening. As I will explain, for Foucault, governmentality involves the individual subject’s adoption of the state’s concern for security with the probabilistic calculation at the heart of economic rationality as her own. This means that the subject weighs every choice she makes in terms of potential risks and returns to her “human capital.” Foucault writes that this represents a new form of governing the individual through their freedom. I elaborate this part of Foucault’s argument to argue that architecture plays an important role in aiding these habits of calculation and shaping this rationality.

Noting that architecture and urban planning emerge in manuals on governing in the 17th century, Foucault explains that when made part of larger public health
campaigns, architecture and urban planning offered visual cues that speeded shorthand calculations of risk. Just as CIAM’s principle of functional segregation was designed to promote efficiency, Foucault suggests that modern architecture’s graphic simplifications and emphasis on aesthetic purity helped designate the categories of “order” and “disorder.” The resulting visual clarity, I will explain, speeds calculations of individual risk. The effect of this architecture is to generate a political condition in which no one can claim to be denied the freedoms or the rights that are protected under liberal regimes but which nonetheless produce the claims of certain persons as politically inconsequential. Foucault identifies a strong correspondence between this social death and the hierarchical relations that characterize most encounters across race and class. These probabilistic calculations of individual security inform the individual’s perception of safety—both in terms of safety from physical violence but also exposure to feelings of vulnerability and humiliation. The perception of security, in turn, instructs patterns of circulation in addition to serving as a resource for understanding “appropriate” norms of behavior.

Habit shapes expectations about the kind of interactions that are appropriate between individuals in a hierarchical relationship. If what Foucault calls a deep or unsettling political truth is unexpectedly spoken, it can be dismissed as out of place and therefore, the expression of a fringe viewpoint. Cumulatively, the lived experience of difference leaves certain truths and the groups identified with those truths politically
irrelevant. Probability and security mean that their position will remain statistically insignificant barring an exceptional change in fortune. Practices of physical circulation and mental habit are, in other words, tied together. The implication is that changes in perception depend on the discovery of spaces that make possible new forms of circulation that re-introduce the possibility of risk and which reduce the self-policed barriers that sustain the isolation of the neo-liberal subject. The chapter concludes by evaluating new forms of architectural design, including New Urbanism, that are intended to foster habits that dispose individuals towards relationships of trust in which it may be possible to speak a deeper truth and have it heard.

The penultimate chapter looks to Hannah Arendt’s concept of the “world” and description of so-called “world-building” practices as a resource for thinking through a response to the particular form of oblivion-as-social death introduced in the previous chapter. This social death represents a characteristic paradox of modern democratic regimes in which individuals remain uncertain of their political significance despite having the benefit of full representation under the law. Arendt describes this phenomenon as an encroaching world-alienation. What she means by this term is a feeling of doubt about one’s own reality and the reality that is shared in common with others. Like Aristotle, her intention is to bring attention to the need to cultivate a sense of the common (vs. common good) as a condition for modern political life. Without it, she believes that politics cannot exist. She turns to the description of the sense of the
common that Kant offers in his discussion of aesthetic judgment in order to develop a notion of political judgment particular to democratic politics. For her, judgment depends on maintaining a diversely constituted world in which humans can appear in their singularity and uniqueness. Written against the backdrop of the Holocaust, Arendt’s calls for practices of judgment that evince a care for the world carry a moral weight.

She believes that the judgment that informs action is responsible for sustaining the conditions of plurality upon which it depends. What she does is furnish an understanding of democracy that is deeply tied to phenomenological spaces and practices. By defining judgment as an activity that cares for the world, she identifies democracy and architecture as mutually constitutive. Rather than seeing stability and innovation as opposites, she develops an understanding of archē that dynamically relates the two so that the introduction of the new turns on practices that preserve what already exists. Against those who regard change and conservation as irreconcilable values, Arendt insists that they rely on one another. By affirming that the spirit of the new, or what she terms natality, is a process of augmentation, she suggests that radical democratic politics is bound to conservative values that prioritize the continuity of tradition and culture.

Yet I note that for all her concern for judgment and the world, discussions of actual spaces and how they might guide the development of judgment are surprisingly
absent from her work. As a result, I think even her most sympathetic readers may have some difficulty grasping the full impact of her concerns for the cultivation of the kind of judgment she advocates. To address this potential confusion, I pair Arendt’s discussion of the world with an exploration of the work of Kevin Lynch, a mid-20\textsuperscript{th} century American urban planner, whose interest in shaping a shared political life mirrored her own. By examining Lynch’s principal theoretical work, \textit{The Image of the City}, and his plan for Boston’s Government Center, I describe how Lynch’s designs organized the experience of the city around a core set of images or what he called imageability.

Imageability refers to the legibility of the city and, specifically, how residents are able to recall the city in the memories shaped by their daily experiences. The memory of these images, Lynch contends, is a source of stability for individual and collective identity. Lynch believes that beautiful images are not only more memorable, they are also able to solicit care for the world in the way that Arendt imagines. Since the city is capable of provoking as many or more memories as there are people to form those memories, its ability to serve as a source of stability must be managed with finesse by the planner. Lynch suggests that if the planner pays attention to how bodies move through space and time as well as how the image unfolds in time a consensus image of the city may be formed. This consensus, he believes, can be the basis of a common political life. What Lynch’s work reveals is Arendt’s inadequate attention to the temporal dimension of judgment’s relationship to the world. I conclude this chapter
with an example of judgment that depends on slower tempos and Arendtian practices of world-building and which proposes understanding architecture as both space and activity.

The final chapter attempts to translate Arendt’s emphasis on world-building activities that produce and reproduce a diversely constituted world into the work of three architects who follow and, to some extent, precipitate the end of High Modernism. Unlike most of their colleagues, however, the response of these three architects to the failure of High Modernism has not been to forsake thinking about the political dimensions of their designs. While realizing that it is impossible to relinquish that part of architecture which is associated with the definition of archē linked to rule and control, each of these three have tried to re-imagine the practice of architecture in terms that are less architectonic by promoting designs which facilitate habits of Arendtian action and initiation. Le Corbusier’s statement that the house is a machine for living, with its implication that architects are responsible for their designs and that those designs and the development of human flourishing are reciprocally related, remains relevant to how each articulates the purpose of architecture. As a group, they advocate understanding architecture in terms of the activities and habits that structures make possible rather than focusing on the refinement of a structure’s formal qualities.

Beginning with the work of Italian Aldo Rossi, I consider the potential of his concept of the urban artifact to foster habits that correspond to Arendt’s call for practices
that care for the world. Rossi’s main work, *The Architecture of the City*, is indebted to Lynch’s work on imageability but, unlike Lynch, Rossi hopes to hold open the possibility for radical political action by preserving sites that encourage heterogeneous memories. So, while Lynch employs a central image or set of images in order to organize political consensus, Rossi hopes to use the same organizing principle to promote memories and actions that will be potentially heterodox. Rossi’s *La Tendenza* movement takes a conservative approach to tending to the fragments of culture. *La Tendenza* was concerned with the memories generated in the daily experience of the city as its residents lived and worked from birth to death. Rossi imagines that these memories are connected to the specificity of places within the city and together these create a palimpsest of memories that help resist any single narrative of the city or its residents. Rossi advances a notion of architecture that blends conservative and radical elements. But its potential remains limited, I think, by not only its highly aestheticized character but with Rossi’s tendency to see potential resistance as equivalent to political action (and, by implication, given his opposition to Italian fascism, as a commitment to democracy).

The second part of the chapter examines the work of a pair of Dutch architects, Aldo van Eyck and his one-time pupil Herman Hertzberger, whose writing and work together forms an ongoing conversation about architectural principles that each of them shared. The most important of these was the concept of the threshold that appears in
the buildings each designed. They elaborated the threshold as a physical place that articulates the end of one area and the beginning of another. In their buildings they demonstrate a variety of compositional techniques related to the use of color and materials that are intended to extend and exaggerate the length of thresholds. Their purpose is to create a space that is ambiguous—sharing qualities of each of the spaces that it joins, but reducible to neither. The threshold emerges as a form that is between forms in van Eyck and Hertzberger’s work, a liminal space capable of sustaining its own border culture. This space is marked by an uncertainty about behavioral norms, so it admits plurality and even a certain degree of experimentation according to the architects.

Van Eyck and Hertzberger multiply the number of thresholds they incorporate into their buildings by developing concepts like the internal street that serves, as Hertzberger says, as a “generative spine” for activities. Referring to the thresholds that link private and public spaces, Hertzberger writes that these spaces confuse perception of public and private in ways that draw individuals into the public by giving them reasons to care about how what belongs to them appears to others. Hertzberger insists that architects must “leave space” for residents to make decisions like this, since he believes that these decisions transform users into inhabitants by bringing them into contact, and in some cases conflict, with those with whom they share the world. Like Arendt, Hertzberger imagines that humans will come to value political life and the
conditions that make that political life possible, only when they have the experience of participating in it firsthand. He believes that it is the responsibility of architects to create incentives that encourage that kind of participation.

Without exception, all of these chapters are animated by a concern for democracy. Together with the title of this work, the chapters suggest that democracy and the chance to participate in politics is an important, if not critical, part of what it still means to live a good life. With Arendt, I am claiming that democracy is a moral good worth valuing. However, I understand that today we are surrounded by a surfeit of democracy or at least a surplus of speech proclaiming the value of democracy. One limitation of that speech may be that it does not adequately countenance the places where democracy must be lived, experienced, and practiced each day. The purpose of this work is to reveal the extent to which democracy’s condition of possibility depends on architecture—the spaces which we inhabit and our habits of inhabiting them with others.
2. Politics Takes Place

In 480 B.C.E, the Athenians, who had led the Greek defeat of the Persian navy at the Battle of Salamis, returned home to find the polis they had abandoned before the advancing enemy destroyed it. Herodotus reports that the Persian King Xerxes had “burned Athens, and whatever walls or house or temples were still upright, he destroyed and demolished” (9.13). Faced with the task of rebuilding, the Athenians chose to listen to Themistokles, who had urged them to take their ships again. Following his advice, they moved their harbor from its old location, Phaleron, to the deep water port of the Piraeus about 7 kilometers away, they erected the Long Walls to connect the historic Asty to the newer Piraeus district, and they reconstructed their homes, temples, and businesses. In short, in a matter of years, the Athenians had created their polis as a new place.

In a recent work on this period in Athenian history,¹ Carol Dougherty explains that the reconstruction of Athens represented a struggle between two ideological and geographical positions over the future of its civic identity. The first was associated with Athens’s agricultural, aristocratic past and centered in the Asty. The second was

¹ Dougherty 2010, 137.
associated with the Piraeus and represented its more recent turn towards the ocean and democracy. So when the Athenians elected to move their port from the inland Phaleron to the Piraeus, the decision had widespread political implications for the relations between the oligarchic and democratic factions in the polis. Indeed, the decision established a new population center, one with parallel civic and religious buildings and institutions, to rival the Asty. Moreover, the turn towards sea commerce and naval power brought citizens into the Piraeus district, which was home to the polis’s democratic stronghold. The migration made the original aristocratic character of the Asty more pronounced, and the polis could be seen in terms of these two opposing camps.

The tension between these two factions erupted in 404 B.C.E. when a group of oligarchs known as the “Thirty Tyrants” seized power with the support of the Spartans. When the Thirty Tyrants came to power, not only did they occupy the Tholos where the democratic Boule had met in order signal their ascendency to power,² they also destroyed public inscriptions praising democracy and revised the laws passed by the earlier democratic regimes (both of which then were restored when the democrats again assumed power).³ Dougherty recounts an episode in which Plutarch notes that the

² Camp 1986, 96. In the Apology, Socrates mentions that he was summoned to the Tholos by the Thirty and, with others, was ordered to capture Leon of Salamis so he could be put to death. Socrates ignored the order and went home (Apology 32c-d).
³ Hedrick 2000, 329.
Thirty re-positioned the *bema*, the platform from which orators addressed the Assembly, so that those gathered there would not face the ocean in the distance.⁴ Literally and figuratively, the Thirty turned their backs away from the Piraeus and the symbols of Athenian democracy they did not wish to see. Their action signified a desire to turn back from the democracy of the port and re-embrace the agrarian ethos of Athens’s oligarchic past. Their seizure of power provoked a response from the democratic majority, which rose up against the oligarchic Thirty to re-capture power in 411 B.C.E.

The ideological cleavage in Athens was so pronounced at this time that the conflict was understood as a clash between the “men of the city” and the “men of the Piraeus”—that is, between two separate poleis.

After they defeated the oligarchs, the victorious democrats set out to integrate the Asty and the Piraeus in order to establish their ideological position in the historic center of Athens. Just as the Thirty had repositioned the *bema* away from the ocean, the victors now made architectural interventions in order to forge a new democratic civic identity. They did so through a series of monuments (and civic rituals organized around those monuments) that brought the harbor into the city and, demarcated the

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⁴ According to Plutarch:

> Therefore it was, too, that the bema in Pnyx, which had stood so as to look off toward the sea, was afterwards turned by the thirty tyrants so as to look inland, because they thought that maritime empire was the mother of democracy, and that oligarchy was less distasteful to tillers of the soil. (19.4) (quoted in Dougherty 2010, 146)
Piraeus as a colony of the Asty, despite the port district’s economic and ideological predominance. According to Dougherty, the democrats attempted to stamp their power by establishing cults to honor two figures from Athenian history as “democratic” founders. What Dougherty suggests is that architecture was an ideological tool in ancient Athens, but, more importantly, one that was a lived, sensed experience.

Dougherty seeks to understand the monuments in terms of their discursive images. She describes how the first candidate, Themistokles, proved to be an ambivalent and ultimately contentious founding figure. To begin with, Themistokles’s legacy, even among democratic partisans, was ambiguous. Although the Athenians credited him with saving them from defeat by the Persians, his reputation subsequently was tarnished. He died in exile in Megnesia after being ostracized at the end of his life for reasons that remain unclear. Second, the choice of the location of the monument to honor him was a reminder of the mixed legacy associated with the transition to democracy in Athens. Located on a hillside overlooking the Piraeus, visitors to the memorial to Themistokles could watch ships entering and exiting the busy harbor. The harbor traffic was a visual reminder that this founding figure was responsible for not only the gains in wealth, ambition, and power that marked Athens’s imperial expansion, but also...

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5 The orthogonal grid of the Piraeus helped Athenians to see it as a colony. According to Spiro Kostoff, “The Greeks seemed to have latched on the grid in their colonizing efforts as early as the 7th century B.C. Colony is apōike in Greek, an emigration, an ‘away-home,’ not a mere tributary like the modern colonial cities of the Western powers” (Kostoff 1991, 104).
but also an Athenian preoccupation with accumulating wealth that many regarded as unsavory and damaging to political life. Both of the heroic and less favorable sides of Themistokles appear in references to the founder from this period. In a work by the comic poet Plato, for example, both are present and the ambivalence of Themistokles’s image is evident. According to Dougherty, the final line of Plato’s work, which imagines Themistokles judging ships competing in a race that honors the city, works against the image of Themistokles as a greedy merchant counting his profits as ships sail in and out of the Piraeus.  

Dougherty concludes that, after he was exiled, Themistokles was too controversial to be the founder of Athenian democracy. Instead, the democrats tried to identify themselves with the polis’s mythic founder, Theseus. Plutarch narrates the internment of Theseus’s bones and the establishment of an annual cult, the Theseia, to honor him as founder. In valorizing Theseus, the democrats chose to emphasize his voyage across the sea to subdue a Cretan tyrant as a precursor to their own trajectory after Salamis. They installed the ship he allegedly sailed to Crete in Athens’s old harbor, the Phalerium. Dougherty writes that, compared with Themistokles’s memorial in the

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6 Dougherty quotes the following lines from Plato the comic poet:

Your tomb mounded high on a fair place,
Will address merchants from everywhere
It will watch those sailing out and those sailing in
And it will behold whenever there is a race of ships. (Them. 32.5)

(quoted in Dougherty 2010, 145)
Piraeus, the choice to honor Theseus’s tomb in the Asty and his ship in the Phalerium, “projects a noble, heroic vision of Athens as a city of ships—far from any concerns for commerce and money, ridding the seas of pirates and tyrants alike.”

Around the same time that the Athenians established the monuments to honor Theseus, rather than Themistokles as the founder of their maritime power, they also created monuments on the Acropolis to Theseus’s father, Poseidon, god of the sea, in order to reinterpret the Asty in terms of the harbor. Poseidon’s emergence as Theseus’s father in vase paintings, literature, and a cult honoring him on the Acropolis, occur suddenly after Salamis around 480 B.C.E., culminating with his installation on the center of the Parthenon’s western pediment in the 430’s. According to ancient myth, Poseidon and Athena competed for the right to become the city’s guardian divinity and, although Athena won, the memorials to Poseidon helped to bring the sea into the city. In particular, Herodotus reports that the Athenians believed that Poseidon opened a salt-water spring on the Acropolis, close to his installation on the Parthenon, where Athenians could hear an “echo of the sea.”

The idea of the Asty as a virtual harbor was reinforced through monumental architecture that invoked the ocean, such as the diamond shaped tiles on the roof of the

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7 Dougherty 2010, 150.  
8 Quoted Dougherty 2010, 153.
Tholos that resembled a fishing net or even fish scales,\(^9\) and by civic rituals honoring the gods Athena and Dionysus. During the festival honoring Athena, The Panathenaia, Athenians watched Athena’s “ship,” a wheeled cart with a mast from which hung the peplos that was used to cloak Athena’s statue on the Acropolis, sail through the streets of the polis to its final destination. By the end of the 5\(^{th}\) century B.C.E., Dougherty writes that the peplos was as “big as a ship’s sail” and that the ship-cart was kept on display for the remainder of the year at the Aeropagus on the western side of the Acropolis. Dougherty reports that vase paintings depict Dionysus sailing on a similarly wheeled boat and that, while scholars disagree about the specifics of the ritual context in which it was used, it is evidence of another strategy to integrate the harbor into the Asty, noting that Athenians knew it was unwise to reject gifts from Dionysus.

The polis that appears in Dougherty’s account of 5\(^{th}\) century Athens, in which opposing political orders sought to instantiate power through the manipulation of built space, resembles Jacques Rancière’s description of politics as an irruptive force that reconfigures the distribution of the sensible. The democratic revolt of 411 B.C.E. contested the regnant oligarchic order. Once they gained power, the democrats labored to recast Athens as a physical and discursive space in their image. Rancière identifies democracy with the disruptive moment in which those members of society, whose part is continually miscounted in the calculation of the whole, rise up. Their protest against 

\(^9\) Camp 1986, 77.
this miscount, he writes, is the “very wrong that is the stuff of politics” (6). Referring to a scene in Livy in which the plebeians on Aventine Hill challenge their patrician masters, Rancière says that their action represents a staging of a non-existent right. Their words and action acquire a status that they formerly lacked through this conflict.

Politics, for Rancière, is the moment of disagreement or the establishment of a common stage on which those who previously lacked a part can now be seen or heard (26). Disagreement is the articulation of a problem that lacks prior political status. He explains that the form of disagreement to which he refers is less concerned with arguing what can be argued, the presence or absence of a common object between X and Y. It concerns the tangible presentation of this common object, the very capacity of the interlocutors to present it. An extreme form of disagreement is where X cannot see the object Y is presenting because X cannot comprehend that the sounds uttered by Y form words and chains similar to X’s own.

(Rancière 1999, xii)

According to Rancière, politics produces a common “stage” that “establishes a different order of the sensible” and reveals the “sheer contingency” of social order (24-25). Ranciere’s idea of the sense of the common among those who had been unable to perceive it before is an idiosyncratic appropriation of Kant’s description of common sense (or sensus communis). Kant introduces this term in his writings on reflective

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10 Unless otherwise indicated, all page numbers included in the text in the remaining part of this section refer to Rancière’s Disagreement (translated by Julie Rose). Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1999.
Kant uses the term *sensus communis* to refer to the capacity to communicate one’s aesthetic judgments in a way that is intelligible to others. This involves having a public sense, which turns on the ability to inhabit imaginatively the position of others on the matter in question. Rancière equates the production of common sense with the disruptive act of politics—again, politics is the claim to equality put forward by those who enjoyed no prior right to make such claims. Here, Rancière directly contradicts the notion of the common good at the center of Aristotle’s notion of political community.

He writes:

> Politics does not exist because men, through the privilege of speech, place their interests in common. Politics exists because those who have no right to be counted as speaking beings make themselves of some account, setting up a community by the fact of placing in common a wrong that is nothing more than this very confrontation, the contradiction of two worlds in a single world: the world where they are and the world they are not, the world where there is something “between” them and those who do not acknowledge them as speaking beings who count and the world where there is nothing.

(27)

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11 Kant explains that by the name of *sensus communis* is to be understood the idea of a public sense, i.e., a critical faculty which in its reflective act takes account (*a priori*) of the mode of representation of everyone else, in order, as it were, to weigh its judgment with the collective reason of mankind… This is accomplished by weighing the judgment, not so much with actual, as rather with the merely possible, judgments of others, as the result of mere abstraction from the limitations which contingently affect our own estimate.

(§40 of theCritique of Judgment)
Subsequent to this rupture, the order of the sensible reforms to incorporate what has emerged through conflict as it did in Dougherty’s description of oligarchic and democratic conflict in Athens. Rancière calls what follows politics the “police,” writing that the police is concerned with the administration and distribution of the sensible order (28). In staging the contrast between these two terms, he creates a stark division between structure and action. According to Rancière, architecture, or the distribution of the sensible, turns on principles of control and domination that are inimical to democratic politics, which he characterizes as inactions that partition the sensible order. This is not to say that Rancière has no regard for the constitution of the police order. He is quick to emphasize that, “There is a worse and a better police... The police can procure all sorts of good, and one kind of police may be infinitely preferable to another” (30-31).

Viewed through the lens of Rancière, Dougherty’s Athens suggests that democracy’s spontaneous qualities are contrary to what is a reifying tendency inherent

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12 Rancière names the functions of distributing and legitimating power commonly understood as politics, the “police.” Instead, he reserves the term “politics” for the … extremely determined activity antagonistic to policing: whatever breaks with the tangible configuration whereby parties and parts or lack of them are defined by a presupposition that, by definition, has no place in that configuration—that of the part who have no part. This break is manifest in a series of actions that reconfigure the space where parties, parts, or lack of parts have been defined. Political activity is whatever shifts a body from the place assigned to it or changes a place’s destination… Politics acts on the police. It acts in the places and with the words that are common to both, even if it means reshaping those places and changing those words. (29-33)
in the practice of architecture. In her account, architecture is an instrument reducible to the hegemonic ideology it reflects. But is this the only possible relationship between architecture and politics? Are architecture and democracy necessarily opposed to one another? Is it possible to speak of democratic architecture? Rancière and other radical democrats who (increasingly) identify politics exclusively with disruptive or fugitive practices would not say so, but perhaps the problem is with the question itself. After all, no style of architecture is definitively either “democratic” or “fascist.” We may identify a certain style with a particular type of regime, just as Albert Speer’s neoclassicism became the signature style for architecture during the Nazi Regime, but given that buildings often endure and outlast the intentions of their builders, it makes no sense to attribute this type of content to them. Perhaps the question of democratic architecture is understood better as the search for architectural forms and urban plans that enhance the development of democratic practices. In other words, is there a spatial order better suited to the cultivation of democratic forms of power and knowledge? This question

challenges the current opposition between structure and institutions, on the one hand, and political action and practice, on the other, in radical democratic theory by arguing for the reciprocally productive relations between institutions and democratic practices. In this case, I take the invocation of “structure” literally, not metaphorically. In this work asks how certain forms of architecture can facilitate better forms of democratic practice.

This chapter explores the answers to these questions through a reexamination of the Athenian polis. Using the reflections of Aristotle, a long-time resident but not a citizen of Athens, on the polis, I identify prevalent architectural forms that partially contributed to the development of deliberative practices in democratic Athens. Briefly, I argue that architectural spaces in Athens promoted deliberative practices that helped both citizens and non-citizens realize the interconnections between the political center and periphery rather than obscuring them. I contend that the experiences of deliberating within and inhabiting these spaces, both civic and otherwise, helped citizens and non-citizens simultaneously to gain an appreciation of the common good of the polis and the knowledge that, inevitably, there were hidden remainders in that common good. The resulting common sense in Athens was an active social process produced through a mutually reinforcing circle that linked spatial design and habit with
collective imagination. By regularly inhabiting spaces with the uncounted members of the polis, Athenian citizens remained aware that their democratic political order was founded contingently on exclusion—a fact of which non-citizens were similarly cognizant. It was the mutual awareness of the contributions made by the politically disenfranchised to the common good that helped citizens to regard the boundaries of their polity as revisable and which enabled non-citizens to claim repeatedly (but not always successfully) rights that they did not possess. The sense of the common in Athens, in other words, served as a source of stability and continuity while at the same time provided a mechanism for dealing with the introduction of new ideas, citizens, and possibilities.

I.

Unlike Rancière, Aristotle does not valorize politics as class or ideological warfare. In the Politics (politika, or “that which concerns the polis”), he imagines the

14 I will use “sense of the common” to refer to Kant’s sensus communis. Doing so better reflects Aristotle’s notion of the common good as something that is result of praxis or the activity of the multitude.
polis as a political community sharing an ethos, or way of life, together (Pol. 1276a27). This common good, he says, is justice that is capable of being shared by a diverse multitude. Therefore, according to Aristotle, Plato’s description in the Republic of the politeia as a large household (oikos) or military alliance is a categorical error. Households and military alliances are motivated by their common geography or desire to prevent mutual wrongdoing or to promote trade (Pol. 1280b30-40). Both are organized for the purpose of self-sufficiency and private benefit. Although he acknowledges that the polis has its origins in these purposes and grew out of the family, the polis “remains in existence for the sake of living well”—for the purpose of justice, which Aristotle says is the common interest (Pol. 1261b17). Aristotle believes that comparing the polis with the family or household is a mistake for a second reason. The polis represents a unity up to a point, but Aristotle insists that its unity is not the result of individuals who are identical to one another. Unlike family members who are “sharers of the same milk” (Pol. 1252b17-18) and are defined by their similarities, Aristotle says that the citizens of the polis are a multitude characterized by their differences.

Aristotle’s insistence on the diversity of the multitude follows from his understanding of the interdependence of the citizen and polis. Citizens share in the constitution without giving up their identities as individuals. By definition, if the polis

\[\text{15 All references to Aristotle’s Politics are taken from C.D.C. Reeve’s translation. Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing Company, Inc., 1998.}\]
is to be considered a whole, it must be composed of parts that are distinct from the whole (Pol. 1274b39-40). This explains why Aristotle can state that his inquiry into constitutions must start with citizenship (Pol. 1274b41-1275a2) while at the same time he asserts that the polis is prior to the citizen (Pol. 1253a19). Efforts to narrow individual differences among residents of the polis make it less of a polis according to Aristotle. Thus, Plato’s attempt to make the polis into a household is like “reduc[ing] a harmony to a unison, or a rhythm to a single beat” (Pol. 1263b329-35).

Aristotle employs several metaphors (the captain of the ship, the horse trainer, and the physician) to explain the relationships that characterize justice and political rule within the diversely constituted polis. Citizens of the polis are like the sailors of a ship on a common voyage, to take one example. The polis has an end, like the ship at sea and all objects in nature, according to Aristotle. United in common purpose, the success of the polis or the voyage depends on the contribution of each citizen or sailor (Pol. 1276b27-28). Since, however, the citizens of the polis “consist of dissimilar elements” (Pol. 1277a4-5), they do not possess the same virtue. This means that the polis is divided into those responsible for ruling and those who are ruled.

16 Aristotle describes his method at the start of the Politics as follows: “a composite has to be analyzed until we reach things that are incomposite, since these are the smallest parts of the whole, so if we also examine the parts that make up a city-state, we shall see better both how these differ from each other, and whether or not it is impossible to gain some expertise in connection with each of the things we have mentioned” (Pol. 1251a18-23).

17 Aristotle emphasizes that diversity is a matter not of numbers but of ability (Pol. 1326a12).
Yet Aristotle believes that if we look to the ship we see that the interests between those who rule and those who are ruled coincide. The captain of the ship is also a sailor and he shares the desire for a safe passage with those he is responsible for ruling. In order to carry out his duties as captain, he must understand how the sailors charged with dispatching this orders will interpret them. Knowledge of ruling is tied to the experience of having been ruled and exercising rule firsthand (Pol. 1277b12-13).

Rotation of offices among free and equal citizens (Pol. 1277b7-8) offers each citizen the experience of ruling and a share in both the “deliberative and authoritative elements” (Pol. 1273b12-14). Each side of political rule carries its own insight, a point that Aristotle underscores by noting that the makers of flutes have a different understanding of the instruments they create from those who play them (Pol. 1277b27-30). Political rule comes from knowledge of different positions or perspectives within the polis. It is the virtue of a citizen to have knowledge of both ruling and being ruled and to be able to do both well according to Aristotle (Pol. 1277b12-13).

Without the opportunity to share in the offices and to participate in ruling and being ruled, humans cannot realize the best possible human lives.18 These opportunities

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18 While Aristotle identifies contemplation as the highest possible activity in the *Nicomachean Ethics*, he is at pains to emphasize how elusive an activity this is for most humans. He writes:

*Such a life would be superior to the human level. For someone will live it not insofar as he is a human being, but insofar as he has some divine element in him.*

(NE, 1777b28-30)
give humans the chance to exercise their speaking faculties, the fact which distinguishes humans from other animals that form communities (Pol. 1253a7-18). Unlike the communities established without the benefit of speech, such as a colony of bees or herd of cattle grazing together on a hillside, human communities are deliberate and deliberative. The best possible human life is only possible in a community that allows humans to deliberate the best means of achieving their shared ends and to act on these decisions (Pol. 1325b13-15). Put another way, speech is the source of the diversity that marks the polis as a political community because it allows people to discover what makes them similar or different. Speech is what leads Aristotle to declare that humans are political animals by nature (Pol. 1253a3-4). By implication, humans are drawn to,

Note that all references to the *Nicomachean Ethics* are taken from Terence Irwin’s translation published by Hackett Publishing Company, Inc. (Indianapolis), 1999.  

19 Aristotle acknowledges that action and the thinking that is involved in judging are yoked together, going so far as to call this kind of thinking a form of action: “Yet it is not necessary, as some suppose, for a life of action to involve relations with other people, nor are those thoughts alone active which we engage in for the sake of action’s consequences; the study and thought that are their own ends and are engaged in for their own sake are much more so” (Pol. 1325b15-22).

20 Aristotle justifies ostracism—removing the persons whose outsized virtue makes them a “god among humans” (Pol. 1284a1-11)—on the grounds that it preserves a community. That is, the differences between humans must not be so great that they dissolve those qualities that allow them to share in a life as equals. Such dramatic differences violate the grounds for political community. While I do not conclude that ostracism has a place in contemporary political society, I extend Aristotle’s insight and argue that, in order to preserve the possibility for politics, differences in political power and knowledge must not be so dissimilar as to compromise a community’s viability.
and delight and flourish in, spaces that allow them to realize this part of their nature.

When Aristotle says that anyone who lives outside the polis and is unable to join others in a community (and therefore lives both without an end and without speech) is either a beast or a god (Pol. 1253a29-30), he implies that the polis should promote this diversity by facilitating the ability of individuals to speak with—and listen to—others across the polis.

Aristotle uses the example of a hypothetical disagreement about who deserves to play the superior flute, to illustrate what it is that communities deliberate. He says that some believe that their greater beauty or superior birth should merit getting the flute over someone who is better at playing the instrument. While Aristotle decides a greater good would result if the instrument were given to the person with superior flute-playing skills, he notes that the presumption in this comparison is that every good is commensurable with every other. This assumption, however, is faulty. Rather, debate must be “based on the things from which a city-state is constituted,” knowledge of which calls for “justice and political virtue” (Pol. 1282b24- 1283a21). What comprises

21 C.D.C. Reeve translates the Greek word *arête* as “virtue” but I prefer and will use “excellence” instead because this translation better reflects the usage of *arête* in ancient texts. One could speak, for example, of the *arête* of a certain tool just as easily one could refer to the *arête* of an individual’s character.
justice and the borders of the political community is not a known *a priori* and must be ascertained through deliberation.\(^{22}\)

If we take Aristotle’s remark that the “deliberate choice of living together constitutes friendship” (Pol. 1280b38-39), perhaps we should see the discussion of friendship, especially political friendship, in the *Nicomachean Ethics* as continuous with the description of political life offered in the *Politics*.\(^{23}\) Bernard Yack offers an interpretation of political friendship that appears consistent with Aristotle’s regard for diversity and the potential for conflict that it invites. Against commentators who place greater weight on Aristotle’s repeated insistence that friendship develops among those who are similarly disposed, Yack points to the wider set of possibilities connoted in the Greek word *philia* that Aristotle uses.\(^{24}\) Yack draws on the same passage (among several

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\(^{22}\) As Aristotle’s example indicates, deliberation refers to a category of speech concerned with those matters that cannot be ascertained empirically (who deserves to play the superior flute) but which nonetheless call for action. The activity of the polis centers on the instruction and exercise of that judgment which is meant to guide action in circumstances where the outcomes and consequences of action are uncertain and unknown beforehand. Indeed, the *Politics* is about the constitution of the polis and mirrors its main activity. Aristotle is engaged in the activity of judging better and worse arrangements of collective life, evidence for which is seen in his repeated use of the phrase “most choiceworthy” as he evaluates the various constitutional regimes and associated patterns of settlement.

\(^{23}\) Yack notes that Aristotle offers two related definitions of friendship. The first involves feelings of mutual goodwill (NE 1156a, 1157b) that develops from the second, which connotes active engagement in the lives of others (NE 1157b, 1171b-1172a, and Pol. 1280b).

\(^{24}\) These include the relationships between those engaged in trade and travel as well as more intimate relations between close friends and family.
others) that I cited earlier, in which Aristotle compares the citizen to the sailor, to suggest the capaciousness of political friendship. For example, he argues that conflict can actually draw a political community closer together by promoting greater understanding of the sources of conflict. In his adversarial understanding of political friendship, citizens of the polis share an argument about the nature of justice and how to pursue it.\textsuperscript{25}

Susan Bickford, however, is critical of Yack for holding onto the mutual concern implied in friendship and its association with ethical rather than political attachments. Bickford believes Yack’s insistence on friendship originating in mutual concern predisposes these citizens to certain agreements and puts other potential conflicts off the table. Instead, she turns to Aristotle’s discussion of deliberation in the \textit{Nicomachean Ethics} and \textit{Rhetoric} to identify a portrait of political life that is consistent across Aristotle’s various works. Deliberation, she notes, “is a practice that can enable citizens who do not perceive themselves to have substantive common interests, and are not bound by friendship, to interact politically.”\textsuperscript{26} She points to the accounts of class-based conflict that proliferate in the \textit{Politics} as evidence that, unlike Yack, Aristotle imagines political interaction operating outside the bounds of friendship.

\textsuperscript{25} Yack 1985, 94-97.
\textsuperscript{26} Bickford 1996, 39.
Deliberation, according to Bickford, represents this other kind of political interaction. She explains:

For Aristotle, we have the capacity to try and see from other people’s perspectives, to imagine their perceptions, not to be selflessly or morally good, but because we are creatures who are capable of politics and not simply warfare. Despite enmity, inequality, and conflict, Aristotle tells us, citizens can feel committed to politics as a means of addressing problems if they feel that as a practice it pays attention to their needs and interests. ‘Paying attention’ in this way does not erase conflict; we may still have clashing needs, serious conflicts or interests, and other disagreements. But attention works as a bond because it keeps such conflict political.

(Bickford 1996, 40-41)

This attention has two connotations according to Bickford. The first implies an emotional orientation towards others that corresponds to the mutual concern of friendship for which she criticizes Yack’s attempt to match political friendship to Aristotle’s description of the multitude. The second kind of attention involves “a sense of focused awareness, of being mindful or observant of something or someone,” which does not call for any prior commitment to our partners in deliberation.27

Bickford finds the latter form of attention in Aristotle’s discussion of rhetoric, where the speaker anticipates how well her comments will be received based on a deep contextual understanding of the conditions that define their relationship.28 The

27 Ibid, 41.
28 Bickford notes that Aristotle distinguishes deliberative rhetoric and political deliberation. While both involve these kind anticipatory moves on the part of the speaker, the former involves “persuading others what is already figured out” while the latter is “an inclusive, collective figuring out” (Bickford 1996, 46). What she means is
persuasiveness of the speaker’s argument will depend upon her prior reputation, her history with the audience, and her choice of examples that are appropriate to the audience and larger setting, as well the emotional context surrounding her words. The speaker must cultivate sensitivity to her audience’s response and make minute adjustments based those reactions in order reach them with her message. This knowledge is gained over time in the lived experience of sharing a constitution.

While Bickford turns to Aristotle’s *Rhetoric* to understand his account of deliberation in the polis, I want to contextualize deliberation within the spaces of the polis. Bickford calls deliberation a “collective figuring out” process in order to mitigate potential critics who would see her description of deliberation as too strategic. Yet her substitution of deliberation for Yack’s political friendship still comes off as strategic, or at least abstract, in part because it foregoes much of the deeper context and habit in which Yack’s account of political friendship is steeped in. Aristotle’s move towards deliberation in the *Nicomachean Ethics* may be an acknowledgment of the weakened *autarkic* qualities of the polis during the Hellenistic period. Specifically, he may be signaling a change in the significance of deliberation that was possible in the polis that participants emerge from political deliberation different from where they began: there is something transformative about being part of a deliberative community. Aristotle imagines that opinions are rethought and refined through the process of deliberation. For Bickford, deliberation connotes more than simply reaching agreement. It is a process that facilitates multiple levels of understanding (Ibid, 47-52).
following the rise of the Macedonian Empire. Nevertheless, I want to put deliberation within its spatial context. I believe that doing so will more fully illuminate the political dimensions of deliberation—who speaks to whom, about what, for what purpose, where and when—in Aristotle’s work. So while I depart from Bickford and Aristotle’s texts in the next section before returning to the latter again, I take up his implicit invitation to think about the architectural design of the polis in the context of deliberation with greater care. That invitation is most apparent in Aristotle’s remarks about the ideal territorial size and population of the polis, which are issued from the perspective of how they impact social structure and opportunities for participation in deliberation. Aristotle’s critical remarks on Babylon’s size and Hippodamus’s constitution reveal his concern for the conditions affecting deliberation.

29 Scholars disagree when the polis lost its political significance. W.G. Runciman observes that the poleis that “survived and indeed flourished in the Hellenistic and even Roman periods were, therefore, poleis in name only” because they were without political and economic autonomy. At the same time he asserts that the appointment of an administrative aisymnetes “is perfectly consistent with the definition” of the polis (Runciman 1990, 348). During the Macedonian period, poleis retained some limited autonomy. They could negotiate treaties and exchange embassies, for example.

Athens’s defeat at Chaironeia in 338 B.C.E. brought the polis, where Aristotle lived until his flight (under disputed conditions, in 323 B.C.E.), under the de facto control of the Macedonian protectorate, which suggests Aristotle witnessed these political transformations firsthand. See Peter Green’s “Occupation and co-existence: the impact of Macedon in Athens, 323-307) in The Macedonians in Athens, 322-229 B.C.E. (2003) as well as “Aristotle and the Foreign Policy of Macedonia” by Anton-Hermann Chroust in The Review of Politics, Vol. 34, No. 3 (July 1972), pp. 367-394.
Aristotle clearly thinks that if the polis is too small it will not be self-sufficient and, by definition, should not be considered a polis. But, if it is too large, people will be unable to participate in public matters and have their judgments count. Aristotle declares the size of the ideal polis to be defined by the distance the voice of a single herald can be heard (Pol. 1326b4-6). The polis should be “easily surveyed as a whole” (Pol. 1326b22-24; 1326b42-1327a1). This size permits people to know each other’s character, to act together, and to, in his words, “share” a constitution (Pol. 1276a27-30). Sharing in a constitution is not a matter of formal rights and duties but rather acting at various levels: showing concern for one’s friends and neighbors as well as the city as a whole:

For a city-state’s actions are either those of rulers or those of the ruled. And a ruler’s task is to issue orders and decide. But in order to decide lawsuits and distribute offices on the basis of merit, each citizen must know what sorts of people the other citizens are. For where they do not know this, the business of electing officials and deciding lawsuits must go badly, since to act haphazardly is unjust in both these proceedings. But that is plainly what occurs in an over-populated city-state. Besides, it is easy for resident aliens and foreigners to participate in the constitution, since the excessive size of the population makes escaping detection easy. It is clear, then, that the best limit for a city-state is this: it is the greatest size of multitude that promotes life’s self-sufficiency and that can easily be surveyed as a whole. The size of the city-state, then, should be determined in this way. (Pol. 1326b12-26)

He points to Babylon as an example of a place where the public business “goes badly” because of an excessively large population and territory. He disapprovingly relays a report that three days passed before some residents of Babylon realized that the city had been conquered. Babylon’s size meant that its residents could not and did not
share a constitution (Pol. 1276a27-30). Without a shared notion of justice and the good life, the residents of Babylon remained indifferent to the fate of their fellow citizens even during what should have been a moment of common crisis in the city. In Aristotle’s eye, the indifference of its residents disqualifies Babylon from being considered a political community. The residents of Babylon could not be considered citizens because the enormous size of the city rendered their judgments and actions powerless. For the same reason no one could be considered a citizen of Macedon, which is probably why Aristotle excludes it from his classification of political regimes.

Aristotle’s critique of Hippodamus of Miletus is motivated by his implicit belief that the ability to participate in public life, as well as a sense of felicity for the common life of the polis, follows from and should be well matched to the territorial and architectural aspects of the polis. In his engagement with Hippodamus of Miletus, who could be considered the urban planner of his day, Aristotle treats architecture as a political matter that has implications for the development of human capacities broadly and for deliberation in particular. As he puts it, “He [Hippodamus] also aspired to understand nature as a whole, and was the first person, not actually engaged in politics, to attempt to say something about the best constitution” (Pol. 1267b21-22). According to Aristotle, under Hippodamus’s scheme, the various classes within the city could neither share in the offices equally nor were they united in common purpose. The concentration of arms in the hands of the warrior class translated into a monopoly on authority that
left the farmers and craftsmen “virtually slaves of those who possess weapons” (Pol. 1268a19-20). The resulting lack of participation was so divisive that it made “friendly feelings for the constitution” nearly impossible. “Besides,” Aristotle questions, “what use are the farmers to Hippodamus’ city-state?” (Pol. 1268a29). Aristotle implies that the laws proposed by Hippodamus were so badly matched to the characteristics of the territory that it would be extremely difficult for a shared life to develop among its citizens because they would remain entrenched in their particular class identities, unable to get a glimpse of what they could hold in common. The resulting polis would not be a political community—it would be something else. Or as Aristotle concludes, “There is a lot of confusion in all of this” (Pol. 1268b2-3).

Aristotle, however, is clear in holding Hippodamus, and what today we understand as the architecture and planning “professions”, politically and ethically responsible for this confusion. Aristotle’s criticism underscores that political power and habit are generated in the spaces of the polis. Architectural design affects the development of political habits and relationships. Aristotle’s insistence on the polis as the site of habit formation emphasizes the way that political dispositions are learned through regular patterns of encounter and contact. That Hippodamus, in Aristotle’s

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30 Aristotle’s criticism of Plato’s proposal for communal property is grounded in a similar logic, which values the importance of action. He writes that in Plato’s scheme, the people will not feel responsible for the common property and it will fall into neglect (Pol. 1261b35).
opinion, had so poorly judged the territorial factors relevant to the design of the polis had great political consequences.

To emphasize the importance of the assessment of the spatial conditions of polis, and to reinforce his call for complementary architectural and political design, Aristotle immediately follows his criticism of Hippodamus in Book 2 of the *Politics* with a discussion of Crete. He writes that Crete’s geography encouraged habits that proved resistant to the laws it shared with Sparta. To begin, Aristotle asserts that the Cretan constitution was modeled on the Spartan constitution despite the fact that the Cretans held that their constitution was the invention of Minos, their mythic forbearer. He speculates that the constitution was likely brought to the island by the Spartan legislator Lycurgis, who sojourned on the island after relinquishing the Spartan guardianship to King Charillus (Pol. 1271b20-31). Whatever the provenance, the constitutions of the two cities resembled one another.31 Crete’s location in the center of the Aegean, however, gave these institutions a much different cast. Crete, Aristotle writes, “seems naturally adapted and beautifully situated to rule the Greek world since it lies across the entire sea on whose shores most of the Greeks are settled. In one direction it is not far from the

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31 Aristotle observes that the Cretans organize their mess halls in a similar manner to the Spartans and the Spartan overseers have powers similar to their Cretan counterparts, although the latter differ in number and are called by a different title (order keepers). Likewise, the power of the senators in Sparta corresponds to those in Crete.
Peloponnese, and in the other from Asia (the part around Cape Triopium) and from Rhodes” (Pol. 1271b32-37).

In spite of all of the advantages Crete’s location seemed to offer, Aristotle insists that it was also a handicap. The island’s geography insulated it from potential aggressors and allowed a certain level of inefficiency to go uncorrected. While the island’s more limited resources necessitated greater attention to their management — Aristotle singles out the skill with which the Cretans ran their messes and governed sexual procreation by separating men and women — order on the island, as a general matter, he notes, was “less well organized” (Pol. 1272a27). In fact, the character of the island’s “order keepers” reflected their habits as islanders — specifically the prominence of certain families in public life and their penchant to form factions — rather than the influence of the institutional forms that the Cretan and Spartan constitutions shared. In Crete, Aristotle writes, much of “the benefit of the constitution there is absent” (Pol. 1272b30-31). To potential detractors of his analysis, Aristotle has this blunt reply: “The fact that the people remain quiescent even though they do not participate is no indication that it [the island’s constitution and offices] has been well organized” (Pol. 1272b39-40). Aristotle concludes his examination of the Cretan constitution with the following assessment:

A city-state in this condition is in danger, since those who wish to attack it are also able to do so. But, as we have said, Crete’s location saves it, since its distance has served to keep foreigners out. This is why the institution of subject peoples survives among the Cretans, whereas the [Spartan] helots frequently
revolt. For the Cretans do not rule outside their borders—though a foreign war has recently come to the island, which has made the weakness of its laws evident. (Pol. 1272b14-20)

Crete exemplifies the complex relationship between the territorial factors that impact the constitution of the polis and its laws. In the case of Crete, sometimes these factors should have aligned with and deepened the effect of the laws and sometimes they revealed the inappropriate fit of the laws to the habits of the people who lived under them. Beginning with a concern for the common good, Aristotle is able to incorporate many factors that are, on the surface, separate from politics within his consideration of the constitution. In his analysis, these factors are grouped around the design of the polis and, specifically, that design reflects and shapes the structure of social classes and the relationships that emerge among them.

Hippodamus, however, had judged these factors inappropriately and the resulting imbalance meant a lack of comity between classes that had the potential to endanger the very existence of the polis. Occupying intransigent positions, the various classes were likely fated to a recurring cycle of conflict, violence, and vulnerability to external threat, all of which would make living a good life more difficult. Unlike laws, which can be more easily modified, Hippodamus’s design had much longer lasting and, therefore, graver consequences. Habits, because they are formed over a long period of time and are enforced through the daily experience of inhabiting the polis with others, are more difficult to address once they have become part of the fabric of a society since
“the law has no power to secure obedience except habit; but habits can only be developed over a long period of time” (Pol. 1268b20-21).

In his critique of Hippodamus’ constitution, Aristotle suggests that where the opportunity to deliberate is denied and the judgments that inform our deliberations do not inform political rule, there is neither justice nor a political community. Deliberation among citizens around their shared vision of the good is guided by judgments that reflect their long experience with the elements of the constitution and in the polis, namely knowledge of its habits and customs, social relations, history, and character.\(^{32}\) Aristotle’s preference for poleis that allow citizens to see and know one another emphasizes his communicative notion of power. Political power originates in the sites where citizens gather to discuss public matters. The guiding motive for Aristotle’s study of the factors that shape the constitution is the desire to better comprehend the constituency of this deliberating public. It is seen in his worries over the presence of sailors in poleis that are weighted towards ocean commerce as well as the possibility that metics (resident aliens) and foreigners will insinuate themselves among the citizens

\(^{32}\) Aristotle’s discussion of the ideal polis in Politics, Book 7, is divorced from a discussion of these contextual factors, and the idea of justice that he articulates is focused upon the administration of justice. Less alert to particularity and less grounded in daily experience, rather than doing justice—that is, determining what is most appropriate to a person or community—the picture of justice that he offers becomes more a matter of institutional balance and pragmatic calculation. One sees evidence of this shift in the very language that Aristotle uses to describe justice in the ideal polis. He calls, for example, for the “organization” of “supervisors” and “officials” that will be responsible for the development of youths and sexual reproduction (See Politics 7.17).
at meetings of the Assembly in poleis that are too large. The emphasis on participation in power—sharing in a constitution, as he puts it—indicates that Aristotle is worried about the harmful effects of anonymity. In the case of poleis like Babylon, let alone the Macedonian Empire, the size of the population makes each person virtually anonymous since the ability of individual actions to effect change is almost inconsequential.

This is why his description of sharing a constitution stresses the importance of taking responsibility for its ongoing life and especially the spaces of the polis where that life takes place. It means caring for the preservation and maintenance of the city’s laws and institutions as well as its public and private buildings: “For without the necessary offices a city-state cannot exist, and without those concerned with proper organization and order it cannot be well managed” (Pol. 1321b5-9). Along with offices for the supervision of the market and contract enforcement required for self-sufficiency, Aristotle cites “town management” as a closely related task that “leads people to join together in one constitution” (Pol. 1321b17). Town management includes the following functions: “the supervision of public and private property within the town, so that it may be kept in good order; also, the preservation and repair of decaying paths and roads, the supervision of property boundaries, so that disputes do not arise over them, and all other sorts of supervision similar to these” (Pol. 1321b19-22). In this way, town

Additionally, Aristotle specifies the office of country manager and foresters who must deal with the territory and natural resources surrounding the polis. In both cases,
management represents a form of ongoing attentiveness to the conditions that shape political life. Through a care for how the public spaces of the polis look, Aristotle imagines that a growing care for its public life will also take hold. The duties related to maintaining the polis are meant to draw citizens out of anonymity and into relationships that allow them to know and become known to others as public persons.

Given the dependence of deliberation upon the spatial conditions of the polis, one would expect Aristotle to discuss this in greater detail since these arrangements could be modified. While Aristotle’s remarks on town management and urban planning are limited, his concerns for the effects of geography and climate on the constitution of attention to infrastructure and the management of resources are integral to the polis’s strategy for defending against external threats (Pol. 1321a32-34). Town managers contribute the internal stability of the polis, too. Not only do they keep harmony in the polis by maintaining it in good condition, robbing individuals of one category of warrant for complaints, they also help those charged with maintaining the laws with their responsibilities. Aristotle emphasizes that town managers should work in tandem with officials responsible for enforcing the outcomes of the judicial process (carrying out sentencing and collecting penalties, for example) to reduce the enmity that these tasks provoke towards those who are charged with carrying them out.

Aristotle recommends, for instance, that the walls should be built so that they enhance the beauty of the polis. This way the inhabitants of the polis will regard them with special care and attention (Pol. 1330b31-1331a18). John McK. Camp II points out that polis walls were built for a variety of reasons, defense and civic pride, among them. He finds evidence that walls were built with the same attention to detail, materials, and preparation found in ancient Greek art forms like clay pot making, coin design, public architecture and inscription: “The care with which each block is finished, the use of varied coursing, the tooling of the surfaces, and the decorative effect of polychromy belong to the same aesthetic milieu which we admire in other forms of artistic expression among the Greeks (McK. Camp II 2000, 44).
the polis are better known. The cause of the discrepancy is, I suggest, tactical and it has consequences for understanding the sense of the common that is the object of deliberation according to Aristotle. The reason behind the imbalanced survey of conditions affecting the political life of the polis has to do with Aristotle’s split understanding of constitution and polis. On the one hand, the constitution refers to the ruling deliberative element, i.e. the citizens of the polis (Pol. 1274b36-37). On the other, the polis is also composed of its non-citizen residents. Both groups are said to “share in the constitution” (Pol. 1276a27-30) as both contribute to its particular character. As a result, the deliberative activity of citizens generates a sense of the common that is aware of the exclusions and inequalities it is founded upon.

Some people say, for example, that a polis performed a certain action, whereas others say that it was not the polis that performed the action, but rather the oligarchy or tyrant did. We see, too, that the entire occupation of statesmen or legislators concerns city-states. Moreover, a constitution is itself a certain organization of the inhabitants of a polis. But since a polis is a composite, one that is whole and, like any other whole, constituted out of many parts, it is clear what we must first inquire into citizens. For a polis is a multitude of citizens. (Pol. 1274b33-38)

Citizens and non-citizens—all of them are counted among the inhabitants of the polis—together contributed to its defining political and economic impendence or autarkeia. This larger entity, what Josiah Ober calls the “geo-polis”, was the precondition

35 I have altered Reeve’s translation here. For the sake of consistency, I have substituted the Greek “polis” where he uses city-state.
for the more restricted “politico-polis.” As Dougherty’s account of Athens shows, these two poleis exist alongside one another, becoming symmetrical only in the case of the ideal polis. Aristotle says both the politico- and geo-polis are the concern of statesmen and legislators living in non-ideal poleis and must be weighed in the process of deliberating the common good.

Climate and geography affect the way of life of the geo-polis, especially in terms of the societal structure of the polis—in short, the distribution of citizens and non-citizens and the classes present within the citizen body. Aristotle likens territory to the raw ingredient of statecraft and citizenship. “Our first task now is to discuss the distribution of land, who the farmers should be, and what sort of people they should be” writes Aristotle (Pol. 1329b38-49). According to him, the geographic and climatic characteristics of the territory will affect the distribution and, in turn, habits of its citizens, whose traits will reproduce and deepen those starting conditions.

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37 He writes that, “For other craftsmen—for example, a weaver or a shipbuilder—should also be supplied with suitable material to work on, and the better the material has been prepared, the finer the product of their craft must necessarily be. So too a statesman or legislator should be supplied with proper material in a suitable condition” (Pol. 1325b29-326a4).
38 The colder temperatures of the region to the north of Greece meant a short growing season, making it more likely that the people there would become nomadic, relying on a combination of herding, raiding, and hunting to survive. In these nomadic societies, Aristotle observes, many are skillful in warfare but there are few craftspeople or farmers (Pol. 1256a30-1327b25). By contrast, Asia’s hotter climate and abundance of water made for very fertile growing conditions that made slave labor more common there (Pol.
geographic and climatic profile of the polis influences the types of people present in the polis and their capacity to participate in its public life on a regular basis. While it is the

1263a8-9). Asian poleis were wealthy and that wealth encouraged the development of a large class of merchants and traders but fewer farmers and warriors (Pol. 1327b26-27). Greece, by virtue of its intermediate climate and geographically advantageous position on the sea, combined elements of both its neighboring societies in a proportion that Aristotle declares to be “well blended” (Pol. 1327b29-38).

Many commentators read an implicit determinism and Greek-centrism at work in these passages (Hansen 1996, 203-204, for example), but these interpretations assume much more stable divisions between classifications than Aristotle does because they overlook the dynamic quality of Aristotle’s theorizing. Aristotle’s ontology of motion combines temporality and teleology, calling readers to distinguish the process of change from the fulfillment of that process. An object’s potentiality or *dunamis* suggests something that may or may not happen in the future. Jill Frank interprets Aristotle’s categories in terms of his theories of motion and change, a move which challenges more deterministic readings of Aristotle. For Frank, the nature (*phusis*) of an object is neither immutable nor fixed. Rather it is a reflection of circumstance and human activity (*energeia*). What is observable is a matter of potential that either actualizes or fails to do so (Frank 2005, 101-102).

In the case of the Aristotle’s climatic and geographic remarks, he notes that the Asians live under a king just as Greeks used to which implies that they may live differently in the future just as the Greeks may be returning to such an arrangement in the future under the Macedonians. Aristotle notes that all poleis (including Greek poleis) were originally ruled by patriarchal kingships just as “nations still are” (Pol. 1252b17). By grouping Greek poleis among the universe of poleis, Aristotle suggests that their different trajectories are contingent outcomes rather than absolute identities and that their status now remains mutable in the future.

In addition to affecting the distribution of social classes within the polis, Aristotle notes that disputes over the just allocation of property was a recurrent source of internal political conflict in many poleis. Where slave labor did not predominate and the work was done by citizens, Aristotle says that there will likely be conflict over the contribution each makes towards the common enterprise. Namely, he says that those who perceive that their contribution to the common to be greater than others will resent those who are held to receive benefits disproportionate to their contributions. This is why he faults
case that in all democracies the poor have more authority than the rich, the number of poor and their ability to participate in public life is influenced by the kinds of work that the territory makes feasible. For example, poor rocky soil conditions in Attica meant small land holdings, rather than large concentrations of territory in a small number of hands, would be the norm. The relatively limited opportunities for agriculture provided the impetus for many to turn towards livelihoods associated with the sea (fishing and oceanic commerce), craft, and trade.

Democracies, Aristotle observes, vary according to their combination of farmers, craftsmen, and laborers, and he judges democracies that have a higher percentage of craftsmen and laborers than farmers less favorably (Pol. 1317a23-24). These democracies have “no element of virtue” because craftsmen and laborers, who “wander around the marketplace and town” can easily attend meetings of the assembly. By contrast, because farmers are scattered at some distance outside the city it is more difficult for them to attend assembly meetings and participate in public business. Their regular absence from meetings means that it is “easier to create a democracy that is serviceable and a constitution” where many, but not too many, can participate (Pol. 1319a24-37).

Plato’s scheme for communal property ownership in the Republic, a proposal which logically stems from thinking of the polis in terms of a large household. He observes that since disputes over property are a frequent source of faction, the legislator should pay careful attention to the arrangement of property (Pol. 1266b15).
Aristotle places these seemingly peripheral factors prominently in his text rather than just focusing on the physical design of the polis to emphasize how what is strictly political nevertheless is bound in relationships of dependence to what is not seen, on first glance, to have any political status. This means that the activity of deliberation should recognize the profound entwinement of the geo- and politico-polis. Citizens must consider how justice advances not only their own common purpose but also the best outcomes of those who are non-citizen residents of the polis (women, slaves, and metics); to consider both those inside and outside the prescribed borders of their political community. Aristotle never resolves the tension between the two understandings of constitution that he noted at the start of Politics, Book 3, which suggests the sense of the common involves an oscillating attention to the political center and periphery. In the next section, I outline how Athenian architecture and the spaces of the Athenian polis helped develop the sense of the common I am describing among its residents. Specifically, I indicate how the spaces of Aristotle’s two poleis were deeply intermingled in Athens. This meant that especially in spaces that were both public and private in character, citizen and non-citizen circulated alongside one another, they generated a

40 Because he proceeds in evaluating different types of constitutions by focusing on the authoritative elements (whether one, few, or many)—since he notes that “constitution” and “governing class” signify the same thing (Pol. 1279a25-26, 1278b11)—after he locates citizens within a broader social context he de-stabilizes who it is that constitutes that political community.
“sense of focused awareness, of being mindful and observant” concerning the incompleteness of the common good and democratic community in Athens.

Beginning with his democratic understanding of politics as the relation between ruling and being ruled, four reasons justify my choice to look at Athens to understand Aristotle’s spaces of deliberation despite the fact that, although he lived in Athens for much of his adult life, Aristotle was not a citizen of Athens and remained a sharp critic of its democracy. Second, Aristotle makes the practices of citizen deliberation and participation that characterized Athenian direct democracy the basis of his evaluations of other regime types. His definition of the unqualified citizen who participates in judgment and office (Pol. 1275a32-33) is “above all a citizen in a democracy” (Pol. 1275b5-6). Evidence for this claim is found in Politics, Book 3.2, where Aristotle lays out who should be considered a citizen. The two-parent rule that he cites as the “general convention” defining the citizen as well as the “bigger problem” posed by those who become citizens after revolutions, and those who were enfranchised by the reforms of Cleisthenes, are both taken from Athens. Next, he acknowledges that at the time he is writing most poleis had grown so large in population, “it is perhaps no longer easy for any other constitution to arise besides democracy” (Pol. 1286b19-21). Finally, democracy and especially, Athenian democracy had proven the most stable of all the existing

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41 Ober 1998, 313.
constitutions suggesting that it most closely matched Aristotle’s ideal regime where the number of actual and potential citizens were identical.\footnote{According to Ober, “The upshot of these considerations seems to be that democracy, which Aristotle has designated as unnatural and unstable, is at the same time the most natural and stable of the existing regimes in that it most closely equates potential with actual citizens” (Ober 1998, 307).}

II.

In this section, my goal is to dramatize how architecture in Athens helped produce a sense of the common as a dialectical process between center and periphery, one that attuned citizen and non-citizen residents of the polis to its incompleteness. I argue that it was the awareness of the inadequacy of the sense of the common that enabled democratic citizens in Athens to sustain innovations, and for non-citizens to mount challenges to the constitution that contested the circumscribed borders around the common good and political community. I point to architectural forms and spatial practices that facilitated deliberation as an exercise that created a sense of the common by providing a form of stability that made it possible to deal with conflict and innovation without seeing these as irreconcilable values.
Ober cites mention of the traitor’s stele in a speech by the statesman Lycurgus at the trial of the trader Leocrates on charges of treason in 330 B.C.E. Lycurgus had accused Leocrates of fleeing Athens at a critical moment of its defense in the period after the Athenian loss to the Macedonians at the Battle of Chaeronea. Lycurgus proposed that, if convicted, part of Leocrates’ punishment should involve public dishonor. Specifically, Lycurgus wanted Leocrates’ name to be added to a public monument dedicated to recalling past acts of treason so that his name and deed would be notorious. This monument, the so-called traitors’ stele, was part of the famous “Attic stelai”, located in the Athenian agora, which commemorated the sale of Alcibaides’ property, by the democratic state after he had been convicted of violating the Eleusinian mysteries in 415 B.C.E. This stele and its message were well publicized and easily understood according to Ober, who writes that

[T]he stele was famously enmeshed in Athenian history. As Lycurgus understood, history—past events and stories that become known—is itself a medium for common knowledge. A similar “publicity triad” of prominent physical presence, clarity of message, and historical fame recurs in other Athenian monuments and rituals.

(Ober 2008, 192)

As with Dougherty’s evaluation of the discursive image around Themistokles and Theseus, Ober’s narration highlights the sense of the common in Athens as an active social experience reinforced by elements of its architecture. In this case, as with other monuments and stoa located in the Agora, the traitor’s stele publicized the value Athenians placed on loyalty as well the punishment that awaited those who violated
those norms. Other monuments, like the group of statues consisting of those known as the “tyrant killers” (dedicated in 447 B.C.E.) and the memorial for the Eponymous Heroes, served similar functions of coordinating common knowledge.43

The statue for the Eponymous Heroes, which was raised in the fifth century and rebuilt on the same site a century later, consisted of bronze statues of the ten heroes corresponding to each of the tribes created by Cleisthenes’s reforms. Located close to the seat of government, the statue served as a public notice board for general legislation and proposals submitted before the Assembly as well as more tailored information for each tribal unit. Notice of those called for military service and other public announcements, including honors and court appearances, for the members of each tribe were regularly posted beneath the statue of the appropriate hero.44 Ober remarks:

43 Ober also points out that in addition to coordinating stability and consensus, the public meaning of these monuments was open to social and political conflict. He cites the strategic setting of the Lincoln Memorial in Washington, DC, for Martin Luther King’s 1963 “I have a dream” speech (as well as an explicit reference to Lincoln’s Emancipation Proclamation of 1863) as an example which publicized a particular gap between the democratic values of the American constitution and the history and treatment of African-Americans within that society. The source of the conflict over the meaning of these sites, David Harvey notes, is related to the desire for power over collective memory and identity. The aim, he writes, is…

to release a different imaginary concerning the past is to release a different imaginary as to the possibilities in the future. The genius loci is open to contestation, both theoretically (as to its meaning) and concretely (as to how to understand a particular place). The absence of active political controversy can then be taken only as a sign of domination of some hegemonic power. (Harvey 1996, 309)

44 Camp 1986, 97-98.
These very self-consciously democratic monuments served as both focal points for coordinating the movements of citizens through public space, and as history lessons, recalling the revolutionary origins of democracy and the establishment of the new democratic institutional era that followed it. Each publicized a clear and unitary body of information relevant to governance by the people, and did so by appealing to particular histories and values. The point is that (unlike many other monuments in Athens and elsewhere in Greece) these particular monuments, and some others like them, were distinctively concerned with making democratic content public—and thereby with building a distinctively democratic body of common knowledge. (Ober 2008, 199)

Charles Hedrick argues that the public display of the laws was more monumental than documentary. Given the level of citizen illiteracy, he concludes that the public display of information was an architectural practice that organized collective identity and memory around democratic values. John Camp emphasizes that, unlike other stoa in the Agora, these were not erected for a specific purpose or reserved for the activity of a single group (as many associated with religious cults or official uses were). They were meant to and supported a variety of uses for the population at large. According to the extant literature, each day these stoa attracted a mixed crowd who gathered to gawk at captured weapons put on public display, to witness legal proceedings, to watch street performers like jugglers ply their trade, to engage with loitering philosophers, and to listen to the fishmongers hawking the day’s catch. This

46 Camp 1986, 72.
meant that a body of persons larger than the male citizen body had a sense of the common in Athens, specifically knowledge of its democratic ethos.47

In Athens, the public Agora and palaistra—where the ephebes or youngest male citizens met—were formally reserved for male citizens while the private household (oikos) was the domain of women and slaves.48 Yet the deliberation and discussion that

47 These monuments were also the setting for processions, like the Panatheneia, that publicized Athenian values. While the right to participate varied from ceremony to ceremony, a range of public rituals including “parades, public sacrifices, communal feasts, dances, and political rituals (e.g. ostracism),” were organized at various levels, from deme to polis-wide events, within Athens. Although public and private life in Athens were not regulated and participation in rituals was not, therefore, compulsory, given the sheer frequency of these public rituals on the Athenian calendar, “virtually all members of the Athenian community, including resident foreigners and slaves [and women], were drawn into public and private ritual activity.” According to Ober, at least 120 days per year and as many as 170 days per year, may have featured some kind of state-sponsored ritual in democratic Athens (Ober 2008, 194-195). Michael Chwe (2001) has characterized such processions examples of “rational rituals” because of the way they successfully coordinate the production of public knowledge.

48 Religious rituals, festivals, and funerals were the only activities that permitted citizen women to officially appear in public in ancient Athens. Even on these occasions, women’s modes of appearance were severely circumscribed because they were viewed as a potential threat to political order. Nicole Loraux details how the Athenian state attempted to control women’s “emotional excess” during these activities, passing laws prohibiting self-laceration and including lamentations for those who had died earlier, during mourning rituals (Loraux 1998, 21). According to the Athenian, and larger Greek ideal, women were not to appear in public. Thucydides reports Pericles’s praise for those women who “are least spoken of among men” (quoted in Powell 2001, 349). On this point, Aristotle repeats Sophocles’s claims that “To a woman silence is a crowning glory” (Pol. 1260b28-29) and says that a woman would “seem garrulous if she had the temperance of a good man” (Pol. 1277b22).

Anton Powell elaborates the importance of gender separation reflected in Greek words referring to women and their activities: “The behavior of women was commonly appraised with words from the root kosm-, which often implied the orderly separation of
characterized the activity of citizenship were not tied to these spatial divisions and the divisions themselves were not so precise. Even the household, which was organized around a central courtyard and typically had only one entrance to the street in order to shield women from the public realm, had an area—the andron—reserved for male-only meals, drinking parties, and discussion. The andron, often a front room or parlor, was separate from the rest of the house, the gunaikonitis, occupied by women and slaves.⁴⁹ The discussion of the Republic takes place in such a room in the Piraeus home of things” (Powell 2001, 349). Mixing with men was considered unseemly, especially for and by upper class citizen women, since those women who did mix regularly with men were hetairai—courtesans prized for their conversation and sexual abilities—who kept company at the drinking parties from which citizen women were barred (ibid, 351). While gender separation was the ideal held for upper class citizen women, poorer women did appear in public. Reports indicated that in Athens these women fetched water, sold goods in the markets, and were employed in craft work (Cohen 2000, 44). Even Aristotle implicitly acknowledges this reality when he writes that it would not be possible to have a gynaikonomos—an official responsible for controlling the behavior of women—in a democracy because, as he asks, “for how can one prevent the women of the poor from going outdoors?” This supervision is an oligarchic feature since, he says, only “the women of oligarchs live luxuriously” (Pol. 1300a5-7). Aristophanes’s Lysistrata dramatizes the Athenian fear of what would follow if somehow women were to take power. Despite some marginal evidence for the appearance of women in Athenian public spaces, it would be a great stretch to conclude that they were included or allowed to participate in the activities that produced the sense of the common I am describing.

⁴⁹ Antonaccio 2000, 524.
Cephalus, a metic. That discussion suggests citizens and non-citizens engaged in
discussion about public matters outside of the Agora, Boule, and Assembly.\textsuperscript{50}

Still, the \textit{andron} was located inside the \textit{oikos} and formally remained a private
space. But workshops, as Sian Lewis explains, literally represented a space in-between
the public and private realms. Even if they were attached to the house, workshops
opened only to the street and had no contact with the other interior rooms. They were
the setting for semi-private discussion of public matters and semi-public discussion of
private affairs. According to Lysias, Athenians regularly passed time in such shops,

\textsuperscript{50} Although Plato’s \textit{Meno} depicts a conversation between Socrates and one of Meno’s
slaves, and slaves worked alongside citizens in Athenian workshops and on Athenian
ships, slaves remained apart from the political community. As Orlando Patterson has
written, slaves had pasts but no heritage or communal tradition which they could call on
or access to give meaning to the present. Slaves were cut off and isolated from the past
and present, always strangers within the community (Patterson 1982, 5). And yet their
physical presence in these spaces was a reminder of the contingent limits of citizenship,
especially since, as Edward Cohen notes, “the residents of Attika were remarkably
homogenous in appearance and worked in commerce, agriculture, and craft without
differentiation of status or compensation. In daily life, individuals would have had little
or no knowledge of whom they had contact, and virtually no way of determining to
which of the three groups [free/slave/metic] a person belonged” (Cohen 2000, 105).
Many of the slaves in Athens were often prisoners captured in battle with other Greek
poleis. With the exception of their forced immigration, they were otherwise no different
from the foreigners who traveled to Athens willingly. Ascertaining citizenship and
slave status with confidence was, in practice, a difficult matter. For this reason, the
question of one’s origins remained an object of suspicion in Athens and it was common
to undermine the credentials of one’s political opponents by alleging foreign or slave
ancestors (Ibid, 76).
especially those closest to the Agora.\textsuperscript{51} Those who were officially barred from entering the Agora, would often set up or occupy shops close by, so that they could conduct public business without entering public space. In the \textit{Memorabilia}, for example, Socrates discovers Euthydemos, who was too young to enter the Agora, waiting to transact a public matter in a nearby shop. Lewis cites evidence that shops were frequented by a regular set of customer-interlocutors, and that they served as nodes of gossip and local information, at a time when Athens was too populous for all the citizens and residents to have firsthand knowledge of one another.\textsuperscript{52} Lewis reports that Lysias, in his speech \textit{Against Pankleon}, narrates how the speaker first found a barbershop where those from the deme Dekelesia gathered and then a fresh cheese shop that set up in the market on the last day of the month, frequented by Plataians, to ascertain the identity of Pankleon.\textsuperscript{53}

Lewis notes that shops differed in terms of their clientele and their suitability for exchanging information.\textsuperscript{54} Shops where clients waited for services and which invited customers to linger, like the shoemaker, perfume-maker, or the barbershop, were

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\textsuperscript{51} Lysias writes, “For every one of you is in the habit of spending time in a shop, one in the perfume-seller’s, another in the barber’s, a third at the shoemakers, or wherever, and mostly in those shops which are closest to the Agora” (quoted in Lewis 1996, 16).
\textsuperscript{52} Lewis 1996, 16.
\textsuperscript{53} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{54} Wine shops, shoemakers, potters, sculptors, and metalworkers workshops are among the variety of shops discovered in the excavations of the Athenian Agora (Camp 1986, 135-147).
\end{flushright}
stronger nodes for these kinds of interactions. Diogenes and Plutarch both refer to Socrates meeting his pupils in a shoe shop belonging to Simon, an Athenian. According to Diogenes, Simon collected his notes from these lectures and these were known as ‘The Shoemaker’s Dialogues’. Plutarch writes that “I wish I were a shoemaker in ancient Athens so Socrates would come and sit besides Pericles in my house and chat with him.”

Barbershops, in particular, were ripe for gossipy exchanges across social class and they were popularly identified as the source of the most unverifiable rumors.

The workshop was a site where citizens and male non-citizens overlapped. Ellen and Neal Wood write that “slaves and free men often worked side-by-side at the same tasks.” What distinguished slaves and free men, for whom there was otherwise no division of labor, was their dependence upon long-term employment. The preference for avoiding long-term employment meant that citizens most often worked as wage-laborers, leaving occupations that prized expert knowledge and required on-going management responsibilities such as those related to banking, finance, and maintaining public order, to slaves. Aside from these specialties, citizens, metics, and slaves, worked

55 Both quoted in Camp 1986, 145.
56 Lewis writes that “common rumor of the barbershop” was a pejorative saying in Athens (Lewis 1996, 17). Ober highlights the role that gossip in these diverse settings played in public decision making: “Gossip” he writes “permeated Athenian society, linking the private life of its target with his public performance, and (at least potentially) allowed all residents of the geo-polis to participate in the enforcement of social norms. Because Athenian norms tended to equate a politician’s private behavior with his public value, gossip and rumor had profound effects on political practice” (Ober 1996, 182).
57 Wood and Wood 1978, 38.
in the same banausic occupations, leading Wood and Wood to conclude with Victor Ehrenberg that citizens and metics “whether rich or poor, were roughly on the same social level, and actually formed one and the same social body.” While Wood and Wood demur from including slaves in this social body, noting that the wide spectrum of occupations—from the bondage of the mineworker to the “relative freedom of the bank manager and policemen”—results in a “fluid picture that makes a precise class distinction between slaves and citizens impossible to draw,” they depict the workshops as sites of overlapping encounter and interaction among citizens and non-citizens.

Together these accounts suggest that the common sense of the polis achieved through deliberation was practiced outside formal institutions and, to some extent, with non-citizens. Ober imagines the overlap between members of the politico- and geopolis in democratic Athens in the following terms:

In the citizen assembly and People’s courts and in the public square—but also on the streets, in the fields, and workshops, and in mercantile and service establishments—citizens gathered, conversed, persuaded or failed to persuade, and chose course of action accordingly. They behaved towards one another conventionally or innovatively, were noticed or ignored, and were rewarded or

58 Ibid, 47.
60 Ober contests both the widespread belief that women were confined to the oikos and fully excluded from public life. He reports anecdotal evidence that show that some women “went regularly to the agora and that the Athenian citizen discussed public matters with female (as well as juvenile male) members of his oikos.” Women, he notes, were also allowed to make legally binding depositions under oath in the public courts (Ober 1996, 181). See footnote no. 47 for a longer discussion of the status of women in Athens.
punished accordingly. They took note of this activity, forming opinions, thereby confirming or challenging their presuppositions, and resolving or changing their minds. And in doing so, they reproduced political culture and reconstituted social structures by their various accurate and subversive performances of popular ideology. (Ober 2005, 105)

He postulates that “in practice and over time, the values of freedom, equality, and security of the person might prove robust enough to survive their application in more unexpected contexts and to persons outside the ranks of the NAMs [native-born Athenian male citizens].”

These various experiences of inhabiting shared spaces like the Agora and the workshop, I suggest, facilitated a sense of the common in Athens that was understood to be premised upon exclusion but open to revision. Deliberation in Athens was an activity that was plausibly practiced among citizens and non-citizens in a variety of settings in the polis where it was not yoked to authority. The experience that citizens had deliberating with those who were the constitutive other of their democracy reinforced an understanding of the common interest that carried remainders with it. Placed in this context, democratic deliberation becomes more than just a matter of being able to see from the place of other citizens, it extends to awareness that one’s position, the common good, and the political community are contingent upon forces that continually reproduce Rancière’s part-that-has-no-part. The sense of the common that animated Athenian spaces and political life was alive to asymmetries of power—what

61 Ober 2005, 104.
Rancière has called the tendency towards suspicion in democracies that encourages the practice of “looking underneath.”

This sense of the limitations of one’s knowledge and political community was reinforced in the inward-facing circles that characterized much of Athenian public architecture where citizens formally deliberated and, in doing so, refined the sense of the common particular to their polis. The inward-facing circle design facilitated “mindful attention” by optimizing eye contact and allowing participants to visually verify that others in these spaces were also paying attention. Ober records the widespread construction of inward-facing public buildings and spaces during the democratic period of Athenian history. These inward-facing spaces were designed for audiences and participants that ranged in size from 50 to 17,000 persons and were located in the demes and center of the polis. Ober identifies the construction of these spaces with the establishment of democracy in 508 B.C.E., beginning with the inward-facing design for the Bouleuterion, which was built on the western edge of the Agora to house meetings of Council of 500, and the semi-circular seating area called Pynx used for the meetings of the Assembly. It was during this same general period that the Athenians marked off the Agora as a public space with boundary stones (horoi), populating it with monuments like the traitor’s stele, and using it for civic purposes that probably included viewing works of drama.

In addition to grouping participants around common objects for discussion, “inward-facing circles” reinforce the perspectival character of knowledge that is operative in Aristotle’s description of deliberation. Buildings that incorporate these forms in their designs publicize the fact that everyone has a different vantage point on what is perceived in common. This kind of public knowledge consists of knowing some information is held in common as well as what others make of that information.\textsuperscript{63} The latter information is gathered from auditory and visual cues as much as what others actually say or do. As the setting for deliberation among citizens in Athens, the inward-facing circle design matches Aristotle’s description of deliberation as an activity that transforms the character and opinions of those who take part in it.

The spaces of the Athenian polis helped form an imaginary attachment among its residents to a sense of the common that was recognized as incomplete. The sense of the common particular to Athens was tied to the lived experience of the polis. That experience was one that offered its residents a sense of shared purpose while at the same time allowing for the contestation and conflict over its content that Dougherty describes. The sense of the common that remained incomplete, which pulsated in its attention to its interior and exterior dimensions, helped nurture a democracy that was open to challenge and revision, even if it did not always accept those challenges. Peter Euben narrates the successful claim to citizenship put forward by oarsmen after the Athenian

\textsuperscript{63} Ober 2008, 192.
victory in the Battle of Salamis in 480 B.C.E. On this occasion, citizens voted to extend citizenship to the rowers, who, Aristotle would have regarded as part of the autarkic class in recognition of their efforts to preserve Athenian democracy and the life it made possible.

On other occasions, however, this was not the case. The refusal of the Athenian citizens to grant citizenship to the metics and slaves who joined their rebellion against the Oligarchs in 403 B.C.E. is an example where this awareness did not result in greater democratization and power reconsolidated along its former lines. Both instances, however, represented reconstituting moments where the borders of the existing political community opened up for reconsideration. The sense of the common I have described in this chapter involves a mutually constitutive, even enhancing, relationship between architecture and democracy rather than one that sees these as opposing forces.

Yet there is something too idealized in this portrait of Athens. Even as I have tried to depict the sense of the common expanding and contracting, an object of power and political action, rather than ascribing a universal character to it, perhaps too stable an image of the polis remains present within it. Such a reading ignores Aristotle’s worries that the form of political life the polis made possible was slipping away even in his own time. This knowledge should curb any easy appropriations of the polis or its

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64 See Euben 1997, 64-90, esp. 64-69.
65 Wolin 1994, 41.
sense of the common for contemporary democratic politics. Just as in Aristotle’s Athens, it is less clear who the “we” invoked in the name of political community today refers to. As the next chapter shows, expanded geographies, new forms of circulation and migration, and increasingly diverse polities have made the exercise of locating a common “we”, and let alone speaking of a common “political life”, fraught. If architecture in Athens enabled the habit of “looking underneath,” the next chapter argues, with Michel Foucault, that much of contemporary architecture habituates patterns of oblivion and obliviousness that deny some persons, their ways of life and being, political status whatsoever. Despite this contrast, however, Foucault continues to advance Aristotle’s case for attentiveness to space and architecture for understanding politics and ethics in a distinctively modern context.
3. Circulation and Foucault’s “Governmentality”

I must say that what interests me more is to focus on what the Greeks called technē, that is to say a practicality governed by a conscious goal... if one wanted to do a history of architecture, I think it should be much more along the lines of that general history of the technē... government is also a function of technology: the government of individuals, the government of souls, the government of the self by the self, the government of families, the government of children, and so on. I believe that if one placed the history of architecture back in this general history of technē, in this wide sense of the word, one would have a more interesting guiding concept....

—Michel Foucault, *Space, Knowledge, and Power*

For almost every day for the last six years, I have passed either over or under North Carolina Highway No. 147, the “Durham Freeway,” that allows drivers to travel north- and southbound across Durham, on my way between home and Duke University, without giving the fact of this roadway and its history much consideration. But this roadway, which was completed in the early 1990s and connects Interstates 40 and 85 via Downtown Durham, has had major political and social consequences for the way that race and class are lived and experienced in Durham today (see Map of Durham, Figure A).¹ Durham’s racial and class cleavages were made visible, distorted, and

¹ According to the NCDOT’s “East-West Expressway Environmental Impact Study”: “A major African-American community, Hayti, was virtually dismantled by a combination of urban renewal and the East-West Expressway, and the result was long-term resentment and distrust of government agencies among Durham’s African-American...
sensationalized by a national audience in the wake of the so-called Duke Lacrosse Case, in which three white members of the university’s men’s lacrosse team were accused of raping a local black woman who performed as an exotic dancer at an off-campus party on the night of March 13, 2006. Although the charges were ultimately found to be false, the case and its aftermath highlighted the profound distance that separates Durham’s black and white residents on issues at the intersection of race and class. While those differences predate the construction of the Durham Freeway, I will argue in this chapter that the roadway has introduced forms of circulation that have enabled those differences, when voiced, to be alternatively silenced or unheard.

The North Carolina Department of Transportation (NCDOT) had proposed one version of the route as early as the late 1920s, but the first leg of the freeway was not constructed until the early and mid-1960s when Federal Highway Trust and Urban Renewal funds became available for the project. The construction of NC 147 reflects the mid-century prominence of the urban planning principles put forward by the Congrès Architecture International Moderne (CIAM) in its influential 1933 Athens Charter, a document authored by architect Antoine Le Corbusier. NC 147 not only enacted CIAM’s principle of functional segregation and streamlined circulation (“the death of

the street”), it also represented Le Corbusier’s emphasis on technical expertise and a call for a greater standardization in architecture and urban planning. The technology and planning required to construct multi-lane highways like NC 147 represented a shift away from prior understandings of architecture and building which stressed local craftsmanship. The shift towards methods that relied on lower wage, flexible labor in construction represented an effort to industrialize architecture and bring it in line with larger transformation in the structure of labor and capital. For Le Corbusier, architecture had to adapt to the machine age and provide a rational order for the new industrial economic activities.

As he writes in *Towards a New Architecture*, “Modern life demands, and is waiting for, a new kind of plan for both the house and the city.”² Architecture had to shed its association with natural materials, “which are infinitely variable in composition” (and therefore more difficult to work with), and instead move towards standardization and manufacturing.³ Pre-cast structural members, like the concrete spans used in the construction of the Durham Freeway, would replace those cast in place. These elements would be manufactured off-site and transported by truck, where they would be assembled by unskilled labor working under the supervision of technical experts,

² Le Corbusier 1986, 45.
³ Ibid, 232.
reducing construction time from years to months.\textsuperscript{4} Industrialization would yield an architectural process more regular, predictable, and hence controllable. In short, architecture, according to Le Corbusier, had to conform to the “Economic law [which] unavoidably governs our acts and our thoughts.”\textsuperscript{5}

When the plan for NC 147 was first proposed, Durham’s black and white business and political leaders appear to have agreed with Le Corbusier. Both groups supported the construction of the roadway, believing that increased transit access would translate into economic growth for downtown businesses. For reasons of self-interest, Durham’s black business elite had a long history of cooperation with their white counterparts. Durham acquired a reputation for progressive social relations between whites and blacks partly on the basis of this cooperation and partly on the existence of the Hayti neighborhood. Hayti was recognized nationally as the “Capital of the Black Middle Class.” Settled by free blacks after the Civil War and named in honor of the nation founded by African slaves who rose up against their French colonial masters, Hayti was a center of black culture, finance, and social life that paralleled white institutions in Durham. It was home to two of the largest black owned financial institutions in the country, North Carolina Mutual Insurance Company and Mechanics & Farmers Bank. Hayti’s reputation as a black community in a city that had prospered

\textsuperscript{4} Ibid, 236-237.
\textsuperscript{5} Ibid, 227.
since Reconstruction on the back of the Durham Tobacco’s Company’s sales of machine-produced cigarettes and fabric mills was widely celebrated. The national press, both black and white, heralded the city. The Atlanta Independent reported in 1921 “There is more grace, grit, and greenback, among the Negros in Durham and more harmony between the races than in any other city in America.”

Yet the popular assessment promoted by elites captured, at most, relations among them. White and black elites had strong political and financial interests in furthering the image of Durham as a city of prosperity and opportunity. This involved cultivating their respective power bases. In practice, it meant enforcing racial solidarity at the expense of class and aggressively policing institutions and spaces where lower class whites and blacks would interact with one another without hostility. Jim Crow had made it easier to police public spaces, but elites collaborated to keep strong ties from developing among working-class blacks and whites in Durham’s mills, workshops, and factories. Factories were segregated, with white workers assigned higher paying jobs operating machinery and blacks relegated to handling raw materials and cleaning

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6 Davidson 1996, 39.
7 Quoted in Fulkerson 2007, 60.
8 Referring to the Populist Party of the mid-1880s that organized whites and blacks to form worker-owned mills; warehouses; transit, bank, and insurance companies; and newspapers, Davidson writes that:

“The Big Men of Durham an important lesson from the Populist Affair: the best way to preserve the status quo was to keep blacks and whites fighting each other. It was clear that if workers of the two races ever united they could challenge the industrialists’ rule” (Davidson 1996, 67).
for lower wages. They frustrated unions that threatened to challenge the availability of cheap labor that fueled Durham’s wealth.⁹

Underneath the veil of Durham’s progressive narrative, relations between blacks and whites were layered with tension and ambiguity. A small, radical minority of black religious leaders operating outside the sphere of influence of Durham’s business elite—for many years, according to historian Walter Weare, NC Mutual controlled the black church, putting photographs of its ministers on calendars and making sure each minister received a hand delivered five dollar bill from its president each Christmas¹⁰—organized one of the first public declarations for full equality in 1942. In 1957, Rev. Douglas E. Moore organized a sit-in at the counter of Durham’s Royal Ice Cream Company three years before the more well-known lunch counter sit-in at the Woolworth’s in Greensboro, NC.¹¹ These calls for social equality played into the fears of white supremacists. For them, these were code words for black men’s supposed sexual desire for white women, as exemplified by a parade float sponsored by the Durham White Supremacy Club consisting of sixteen white women dressed in white sitting beneath a banner that read “Protect us with your vote.”¹²

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⁹ Davidson 1996, 55.
¹⁰ Davidson 1996, 41.
¹¹ Fulkerson 2007, 60.
¹² Davidson 1996, 47. The descriptions of black life during and since Jim Crow are taken from Davidson.
If the reality of social relations in Durham was more complicated than the city’s reputation suggested, Hayti’s status was also more vulnerable. Despite their renown, members of Durham’s black middle class numbered few. Most blacks in Durham lived in substandard housing around downtown, without indoor plumbing, plagued by a thirty-three percent infant mortality rate and a life expectancy of only forty years. Working in unskilled professions, most black residents lived physically close to and, in some cases, in the homes of white elites, cleaning their mansions, laundering their clothes, and caring for their children. Class similarly defined their relationship to black elites and their institutions. Writing of the relationship between the black working class and NC Mutual, Osha Grey Davidson observes that NC Mutual “was, and at the same time was not, part of the black community.” If working class blacks had a bivalent relationship with elites, their relationship with their white counterparts was much less ambiguous and straightforward.

Working and middle class whites and blacks lived in almost entirely different worlds, clouded in mutual suspicion, with few points of contact. When black elites threw their support behind NCDOT’s plan for the state to exercise its right of eminent domain in order to build the first leg of the highway through Hayti, it marked the abandonment of the neighborhood by its politically and financially most adroit

14 Davidson 1996, 38.
constituency. The first part of the highway was constructed over the objections of its residents, who argued that the public housing offered to them was not equivalent in value to the stable community and ongoing relationships that existed among them.

NCDOT plans to finish the final southwesterly spur linking I-40 to I-85 stalled during the early 1970s as it faced legal challenges related to the relocation injustices brought forward by the former Hayti residents and new hurdles introduced with the National Environmental Policy Act of 1970 (NEPA), which required the completion of Environmental Impact Statements (EIS) in connection with large-scale infrastructure projects such as the Durham Freeway. According to NCDOT plans, this final spur would run through and necessitate the appropriation of the Crest St. (also known by its earlier name, Hickstown) neighborhood through the state’s power of eminent domain (see Map of Crest St. Neighborhood with NC 147 overlay, Figure 1). While NCDOT and the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) officials maintained that an EIS was not required for the completion of a project that had been planned prior to the passage of the NEPA, a group of Duke University Law Students working in conjunction with Crest St. residents successful challenged the opinion and in 1973 obtained a court order requiring NCDOT to complete the EIS.
Several activist groups that remain in existence, including Durham People’s Alliance, a local multi-racial citizen’s action organization, emerged in order to organize a response to NCDOT’s plans to extend the freeway through the Crest St. neighborhood. According to Steve Schewel, a Duke graduate and later Durham County school board member involved in the People’s Alliance led-efforts to oppose the freeway construction, white and black activists, many of whom were veterans of the civil rights
struggle in Durham, saw the fight as the next phase of their shared cooperation and struggle. For them, he explained, the protest against the NCDOT’s plans represented the evolution of the civil rights movement after the abolishment of de-jure forms of injustice.\textsuperscript{15}

These groups prepared several reports that included evaluations of the economic and social impact the construction would have not only on the mainly Black working class Crest St. community but also on the adjacent (mainly white) Old West Durham neighborhood. Citing the aftermath of Hayti as precedent, they argued against any action that would threaten the integrity of Crest St. and the surrounding neighborhood. In particular, they rejected NCDOT’s offer of the same package of relocation benefits extended to Hayti residents. The residents did not believe that the community relations their neighborhood streets made possible could be recreated or would stand if the residents were scattered. As the People’s Alliance report, \textit{A Case against the East-West Expressway: a People’s Alliance Position Paper}, to the NCDOT states:

\begin{quote}
In short, the Crest St. community is an unusually strong, well-established community, with extensive family ties, convenient, steady employment, and vibrant neighborhood spirit (p. 17).
\end{quote}

\textsuperscript{15} Interview with Steve Schewel, conducted April 21, 2010, Durham, N.C.
The residents and their allies refused to see the payments—indeed at any amount—as commensurable with the quality of lives they enjoyed on Crest St. Working with lawyers from North-Central Legal Assistance program, the Crest St. residents and their supporters filed a claim with the Federal Department of Transportation that the NCDOT’s Durham Freeway plan was racially discriminatory and in 1980 they won. As a result, NCDOT, FHWA, and Crest St. residents formed a “Joint Taskforce” to reach a settlement and produce a plan for going forward. The Joint Taskforce reached the conclusion that the only equitable solution for the Crest St. residents would be to transfer the entire community, a total of 96 homes, en masse to a new site. The outcome represents the only instance that FHWA funds have been used for the transfer of an entire community and today the Crest St. neighborhood stands not far from its original location.¹⁶

The efforts to save Crest Street from the fate of Hayti marked a shift in the direction of inter-racial cooperation in Durham. Unlike the earlier generation of elite cooperation across racial lines, these post-Civil Rights era activists worked to further conditions that brought whites and blacks in greater contact with one another rather than kept them apart. They regarded NC 147 as a threat to the kinds of relationships that existed within the working class community of Crest Street and those that could

form between them and their mainly white neighbors in adjoining Old West Durham. Their assumption was that proximity would allow daily encounters and trust to grow between these two populations. Their victory, however, can be considered a half-success at best. While Crest St. residents were not scattered like the residents of Hayti, according to one local commentator their current location “feels like a bit like a place apart today... Given its easy-to-overlook entrance off of Fulton St. or Douglas St., many folks in Durham likely don’t even know that the neighborhood exists.”\footnote{See “Hickstown/Crest Street” entry at www.endangereddurham.blogspot.com (Accessed December 9, 2009).} I was certainly among the many that were unaware of the neighborhood despite passing by it almost daily.

Crest Street has been preserved intact through the one-off, architectonic action of the state, but it is cut off from larger patterns of circulation in Durham. In this case, the residents of Crest Street are consigned to a peculiarly modern type of oblivion in which they are not eliminated or scattered like their Hayti predecessors, but are marginalized to the point where they and their story are almost forgotten and unknown.

How can a body of residents, in this case a geographic community, exist as visible but unseen? What does such a situation say about political life and the possibility of politics in Durham in the post-Civil Rights era? More broadly, how does contemporary architecture contribute to patterns of seeing and not seeing what exists as
visible but unseen? How does this paradoxical condition come to pass? What kind of
power is being exercised in the production of these forms of oblivion and obliviousness
now that Jim Crow segregation and the acceptance of direct forms of racism have passed
into history? This battery of questions should suggest how difficult it is to speak of a
sense of the common today.

Michel Foucault has described this modern form of oblivion as a form of
“political death” a formulation which recalls Orlando Patterson’s description of the
slave as someone defined by her “natal alienation”—cut off from her history and
community—and living in the condition of “secular excommunication” in the present.18
According to Foucault, political death does not simply refer to actual killing, but indirect
forms of murder that mean the expulsion, rejection, or exclusion of individuals from the
larger political community. Foucault’s remark on political death is part of his late-career
lectures on the emergence of a phenomenon that he calls governmentality, a political
rationality characteristic of the modern subject living under the regime of neo-
liberalism.19

18 Patterson 1982, 5.
19 Foucault addresses the theories of neo-liberalism developed and exemplified by
members of the German Ordo-Liberals and American Chicago School during the mid-
to late-20th century. I follow the description of neo-liberalism that he offers in his lectures.
According to Foucault, neo-liberalism represents a hybridization of liberalism where
market logic and the market itself assume the highest priority.

Like the family of ideas and ways of governing that travel under the label of
“liberalism”, neo-liberalism represents a “whole way of thinking and being” at the level
Governmentality is a productive “bio-political power” (or simply “bio-power”) that finds expression in reflexive practices of external and internal circulation. Bio-power emerged in the 18th and 19th centuries and refers to “control over relations between the human race, or human beings insofar they are a species, insofar are living beings, and their environment, the milieu in which they live. This includes the direct effects of the geographical, climatic, or hydrographic environment” (SMD, 245).

Foucault points to the practice of draining swamps to prevent the spread of mosquito borne diseases as an example of manipulating the environment for the purpose of of individual and society (BP, 218). It extends market rationality as a “general style of thought, analysis, and imagination” to all spheres of life (BP, 219). Economic calculation, Foucault observes, becomes the only socially responsible measure of external behavior (BP, 223). The neo-liberal subject is an “entrepreneur of himself” because he weighs all decisions in terms of his own capital costs (BP, 226). That is, all actions are viewed as investments and evaluated in terms of expected profits (BP, 253). In Aristotle’s terms, this makes a political life impossible. It substitutes calculation for reason and mistakes a community’s material wealth for its genuine moral flourishing.

Foucault labels the citizen of neo-liberalism homo economicus because this governing rationality defines the relation between the individual and collective life. In the mind of the individual, economic thinking is so ascendant that it comes to stand as a “permanent economic tribunal confronting government” (BP, 247). Under these conditions, it becomes the purpose of government to strengthen and support the operation of the market not in terms of exchange between equals but in terms of competition, so that the resulting inequalities are regarded unremarkable (BP, 118). There is, for instance, little in neo-liberalism that resonates with Aristotle’s endorsement of ostracism on the grounds of preserving equality as the basis of political community.

Like Aristotle, who also considered geographic, climactic, and hydrological factors in his analysis of the polis, Foucault expands the categories of politics and ethics to include architecture even as he leaves behind (as I do) Aristotle’s teleology.
promoting life. Governmentality represents the mutually reinforcing collection of “discourses, institutions, architectural practices, regulatory decisions, laws, administrative efforts, scientific statements, philosophical, moral and philanthropic propositions”\(^{21}\) that shape the disposition (dispositif) of the modern subject.\(^{22}\) The ensemble of knowledge that comprises governmentality gain traction in the individual because, like measures taken to control the spread of disease, each is intended to help individuals live life to its fullest, which is why Foucault calls them by the term bio-power.\(^{23}\)

Populations, not individuals, are the target of disease prevention efforts. Unlike the disciplinary techniques that have their grid on the surface of the individual, where the individual stands in relation to a central panoptic tower whose gaze is internalized,

\(^{21}\) Foucault 1980, 194.
\(^{22}\) As James W. Bernauer notes, “the proper meaning [of dispositive] is conveyed in the term ‘deployment,’ which captures the military connotation Foucault intended in its usage” (Bernauer 1990, 145).
\(^{23}\) John Pløger explains the importance of cities to the concept of bio-power that I am developing in this chapter with respect to neo-liberalism. It was through the city that societies developed ideas about how to discipline life through space. This recognition in part followed medical experiences with uncontrollable diseases threatening cities. Government discovered that forms of bio-politics—building on techniques of surveillance, registration, classification, division of inhabitants, and, if necessary, exclusion from space—made it possible to control the spreading of disease. European cities were then seen in the great hygiene projects of the 1820s in France and in Scandanavia from about 1880 to 1930. Through cities, architects and planners recognized the social power of space and especially its normalization forces. Hence the interest in ethics of organized space. The city became the laboratory for the emergent disciplinary society, which Deleuze calls ‘the society of control’. (Pløger 2008, 52)
biopolitics correspond to conditions of de-centralized sovereignty. Under these new permissive conditions of circulation and mobility, static modes of control are impossible.

Management of disease within a population does not eliminate disease altogether. Rather, management of disease within a population implies assessing phenomena that are unpredictable within a single individual to establish baseline levels of incidence in order to devise techniques for keeping the transmission of disease within acceptable levels. The instrument that drives the evaluation of these techniques is statistical

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24 In his early analysis of disciplinary power-knowledge, Foucault focused on the sites and the mechanisms by which these relationships were formed. Chief among these was the design for the panopticon, which Jeremy Bentham advocated for in his lifetime. The design, which was adapted for schools, military barracks, hospitals, and factories, was intended to enable the “supervision of the smallest fragment of life and of the body” necessary for creating an efficient gesture (DP, 140). As Foucault explains, the panopticon’s architectural design, composed of a central tower from which the surrounding cells are visible (see Illustration no. 7), fixed a disciplinary gaze that “arranges a positive economy; it poses the principle of a theoretically ever-growing use of time” (DP, 154). Before this constantly scrutinizing gaze, individual subjects came to regulate their smallest movements to conform to this economy by seeking to “intensify the use of the slightest moment… by an ever more detailed internal arrangement, one could tend towards an ideal point at which one maintained maximum speed and maximum efficiency” (DP, 154).

While the architecture of the panopticon embodied the “highest form of disciplinary practice” where “the art of constructing, with located bodies, coded activities and trained aptitudes” (DP, 167), there is no such co-coordinating agent or power today. Instead, with bio-politics and governmentality, Foucault re-conceives power in fluid terms that entails a circular link between the organization of dispositions and architectural design that is distinct from the panoptic model of transmission from center-to-periphery operating in the disciplinary power.

25 As Foucault explains, bio-politics is “therefore not a taking of the individual at the level of individuality but, on the contrary, of using overall mechanisms and acting in such a way to achieve overall states of equilibrium or regularity; it is, in a word, a matter
probability. Statistical forecasts and measurements correspond to a new form of rule that “lets things happen” within a population and comes to exist along disciplinary modes of power (SMD, 249).

In the case of disease prevention, the state must enlist its subjects to take responsibility for managing its spread by incorporating habits that safeguard their individual health. This self-scrutiny explains why a lengthy discussion of Hellenistic and early Christian practices of self-governance is grouped with Foucault’s examination of governmentality. These practices of self-governance cover not only the individual’s relationship to herself but also her responses to others as far she must be aware of her responses to external stimuli. As Foucault explains, in much of the Stoic literature on governing the self there is an emphasis upon closely monitoring how these external matters effect the one’s constitution. For this reason, there is great attention given to one’s response to the food and news consumed each day with the hopes of keeping oneself in a state of equilibrium (HS, 157-164). Governmentality represents the alignment of techniques of self-governance with the regime of state power under these new conditions of freedom. Foucault sees the asymmetric relationship of exchange operative in the pastoral relationship as a conceptual antecedent to the modern

of controlling life and the biological process of man-as-species and of ensuring that they are not disciplined, but regularized” (SMD, 247).
challenge of governing subjects at a distance. This is why in the epigraph to this chapter Foucault indicates a history of architecture that falls under a general history of *technē* that includes various forms of governance.

He explains that governmentality has its origins in the period when the boundary walls surrounding medieval cities came down and the networks of roads between them multiplied. The resulting increase in circulation of persons, commerce, and ideas posed the sovereign with new challenges related to the regulation of these things (STP, 12-13). Architecture and urban planning began appearing in handbooks on governing at this time.26 As Foucault explains, the goal of town planners is to design and achieve a milieu that is, “a certain number of combined, overall effects bearing on all who live in it. It is an element in which a circular link is produced between effects and causes… one tries to affect, precisely a population. I mean a multiplicity of individuals who are and fundamentally and essentially only exist biologically bound to

26 In an interview, Foucault clarifies an earlier remark about when architecture takes on this political color. Here is Foucault:

I did not say that discourses upon architecture did not exist before the eighteenth century. Nor do I mean to say that the discussions of architecture before the eighteenth century lacked any political dimension or significance. What I wish to point out is that from the eighteenth century on, every discussion of politics as the art of the government of men necessarily includes a chapter or a series of chapters on urbanism, on collective facilities, on hygiene, and on private architecture. Such chapters are not found in the discussions of the art of government of the sixteenth century. This change is perhaps not in the reflections of architects upon architecture, but it is quite clearly seen in the reflections of political men. (Foucault 1984, 240)
the materiality within which they live” (STP, 21). Planners do this through the use of statistical probabilities to calculate, for instance, the ideal width of a roadway and traffic flows at a particular time of day, just as public health officials use these techniques to forecast rates of disease transmission.

To underscore the link between architectural design, individual behavior, and the imperatives of state power, Foucault emphasizes that these same statistical calculations are at work in Machiavelli’s *Prince*. Just as Aristotle examined the external and internal sources of instability for each type of regime, an exercise which required an assessment of the physical aspects of the territory and the resources it can support, Machiavelli counsels the need to govern against the possibility of inter-state competition, internal riot, and sedition by knowing when to behave a lion, from a position of strength, and when, instead, to act cunningly like a fox. Governmentality brings these techniques of self-evaluation to the individual alongside the state and makes them vibrate together. Statistics, Foucault notes, allow leaders to make a more precise count of their total resources. Statistical analysis of yearly harvest yields, for example, sharpened the ability to predict future grain and food production, thus bringing political economy more closely in line with the state’s defensive calculations. As an individual political rationality, governmentality means that individuals start making similarly defensive calculations about their own safety and economic productivity. Examining American neo-liberalism, especially Gary Becker’s *Investment*
in Human Capital (1971), Foucault notes that human capital represents a shift in which the individual comes to view her activities in terms of potential rewards and penalties on her investments (BP, 220-225). Law, which bases penalty on the probability of infraction, gets the apparatus of security started (BP, 219).

Foucault indicates that urban planning’s historically close alignment with public health campaigns was meant to facilitate these kinds of calculations about one’s security and economic potential (since the latter fluctuates with the former). Take the example of the move from open to covered sewers. In the same way that sites like the sanatorium designated normal and abnormal, the work of urban planners established a sharp visual contrast between healthy and unhealthy, safe and unsafe, orderly and disorderly part of the city, speeding the individual’s shorthand calculation of his or her security.

Unhealthy, unsafe, and disorderly parts of the city are to be avoided because they come to be seen as not just unfamiliar but threatening ways of being and doing.

This wariness has been exacerbated by the segmentation and functionalization characteristic of modern urban planning. Recall that CIAM divided the city according to four functions (work, leisure, residential, transit), yielding the planning monoculture and rigid segregation that Scott criticizes as a typical byproduct of High Modernism.\(^{27}\) These divisions carved up the city by function and behavior, introducing not only new patterns of circulation connecting Durham’s more functionally segregated spaces (NC

\(^{27}\) Scott 1998, 109.
147 was meant at once to speed access to Downtown and make it function more exclusively as a downtown commercial center) but also new habits of circulation within them. Under the laissez-faire conditions of initially liberalism and now neo-liberalism, there are no restrictions on movement or the freedom to associate as one prefers. In Durham, whites, blacks, and now a growing Latino population, are in ever more frequent contact with one another. But the color line persists, to paraphrase DuBois. As David K. Shipler notes while there has been “an allowance of public contacts. Blacks can ride in the fronts of buses or eat at lunch counters” personal attitudes have lagged. After surveying the disjuncture between the attitudes and behaviors concomitant with the slide towards more aversive forms of racism, he concludes, “Something beyond contact was [is] needed.”

Why has the increased frequency of contact been insufficient for addressing the conditions of political oblivion? After all, in Durham one encounters and interacts with individuals who represent difference on a daily basis. Foucault’s reflections on security and probability suggest that the experience of difference has been routinized so that it does not threaten the “truths” that we each subscribe to about our identity and our place in the world vis-à-vis that identity. In Foucault’s lexicon, what we hold to be “truth” represents a certain socially constructed epistemic order that is modulated and contested by power relations. “Truth” corresponds to what is looked upon as “natural” in any

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28 Shipler 1997, 6.
human relationship. Foucault’s genealogical work on madness and sexuality were designed to illuminate the contingent formation of psychic and sexual “abnormality,” first in medical science and then more popular discourse. Foucault indicates that “truth” is positioned within a hierarchical order, never separated from what it is positioned against. This means that power is always present in these relationships, working to enforce or challenge the status of any regime of truth.

29 Foucault defines each of his prior studies (madness, disease, punishment, and sexuality) as well as his investigation of neo-liberalism, in terms of the power and knowledge that establishes, enforces, and contests a “regime of truth”. He explains his use of the word “truth” in this context:

When I say a regime of truth... I mean that the moment I am presently trying to indicate is marked by the articulation of a particular type of discourse and set of practices, a discourse that, on the one hand, constitutes these practices as a set bound together by an intelligible connection and, on the other hand, legislates and can legislate on these practices in terms of true and false... [I wish to] show how the couplings of a set of practices and a regime of truth form an apparatus (dispositif) of knowledge-power that effectively marks out in reality that which does not exist and legitimately submits it to the division between true and false. (BP, 18-19)

30 Foucault contrasts his notion of power to theories of power that posit the exercise of power as a binary system: a matter of who rules and who is ruled or of domination and liberation. This concept of power prioritizes the ability to lay down the rule. This is linked, Foucault says, to the belief that “power” rules through “the act of discourse that creates, from the very fact that it is articulated, a rule. It speaks and that is the rule. The pure form of power resides in the legislator....” (HoS, 82).

Rather than offering a “theory” of power, Foucault proposes an “analytics” of power that traces its fluctuation and circulation among a body of actors defined by a discursive field.

Foucault’s analytical method diffuses binary understanding of power. Drawing from Nietzsche, who observed in The Genealogy of Morals that even the individual in the most
Foucault maintains that a probabilistically calculated concern for “security” is a hallmark of governmentality, influencing individual patterns of exterior and interior circulation. The corresponding circulatory habits are productive of certain truths for the individual subject that naturalizes economic and political inequalities, leaving individual subjects at a loss to recognize the contingent status of their own privilege or powerlessness. Insomuch as architecture and urban planning affect populations, they normalize the functions of particular spaces and, correspondingly, expectations about behavior within those spaces. Because circulation is guided by a regard for security, individuals anticipate the behaviors and interactions they will encounter on a day-to-day basis in familiar spaces. The conversation between the office worker and food subordinate position in society looks to advance her position, to use, what Nietzsche says in the case of women, their femininity over men, Foucault sees “power” and its possibility everywhere and not simply in the hands of those who have “it.” There is no absolute ruler or one who controls others.

Rather, there is the constant interplay as power is shifted among persons depending on how and where they interact. For Foucault, everyone—even the sovereign—submits to the power of another when it comes to the question of desire, for example. With this prominent example from his research, Foucault moves his analysis of power outside of what is conventionally thought to be political or concerned with politics. Perhaps to the frustration of some, he insists that power is ever present. He is emphatic on this point: “the fact [is] that there is no escaping from power, that is always-already present, constituting that very thing with which one attempts to counter it with” (HoS, 82).
service worker from which she purchases her lunch, to take one example, rarely touches on any truth of consequence to either speaker. These superficial exchanges can function as a form of self-inoculation against claims of economic and political injustice. These solicitations, Foucault notes, can more often than not, work to affirm the existing hierarchy of truth about political and economic opportunity. Foucault explains:

Discourses are not once and for all subservient to power or raised up against it, any more than silences are. We must make allowance for the complex and unstable process whereby discourse can be both an instrument and an effect of power, but also a hindrance, a stumbling-block, a point of resistance and starting point for an opposing strategy. Discourse transmits and produces power; it reinforces it, but also undermines and exposes it, renders it fragile and makes it possible to thwart it. (HoS, 100-101)

On those occasions where a jarring truth is spoken, it is figuratively and almost literally out of place with the experience and expectations of that space and encounter. That unsettling truth must struggle against the accumulated weight of mental habits. These internal circulations offer strong resources for dismissing its claim. With time, even the unsettling claim about poor working conditions made by the service worker to her customer, comes to be regarded as the “expected” complaints of unhappy workers. Or, to take another example of this mental process by which one accommodates a person or activity that is either misplaced or out of place: the presence of the homeless person
becomes normalized and thus unremarkable.\textsuperscript{31} The situation of the individual homeless person is acknowledged to be “tragic” but the existence of a perpetual homeless population is recognized as a societal inequality that is and will be.

More ruthlessly, according to the calculus of economic productivity that characterizes governmentality, in which “work” is the norm, homelessness or chronic underemployment are viewed as choices and thus failures on the part of individuals. In keeping with this logic, issues of inequality are, broadly speaking, pushed off the political agenda. Since no individual or group is openly dominated or oppressed under neo-liberalism, their marginal presence does not register as the consequence or object of political action. Rather, their status simply appears as what is, i.e. the choices they have freely made. The status of inequality is relegated to a category for which only one single person is responsible. The persistence of inequalities underlines the naturalness of competition. The result is a reinforcing circle of belief in its appropriateness—meaning that criticisms of systemic inequality fall on deaf ears. In short, inequalities of power

\textsuperscript{31} Leonard C. Feldman (2006) analyzes laws and punishments effecting homeless persons in the U.S. and concludes that they are instruments in the attempts by local and state governments to exclude homeless persons from the political community and to deny their claims legal standing. Feldman notes how the dominant framework of justice founded upon claims of redistribution and recognition “performs” its own kind of misrecognition by de-legitimizing efforts, like homeless encampments, that protest these political exclusions. He concludes that homeless persons are, in effect, denied citizenship status. I am trying to explain why homelessness, in this particular case, and other types of oblivion or political death do not register as political matters.
and knowledge are rendered natural, and thereby cut off from what registers as a political matter.

Iris Marion Young explains how a range of planning measures that affluent communities employ, including building regulations, minimum lot size, prohibitions on multiple family dwellings, and limited access to public transportation routes, shape patterns of circulation and contact within such communities resulting in a form of obliviousness—ways of seeing and not seeing themselves and others—among residents.32

Those who lead relatively privileged lives in a segregated society see no injustice in their situation. Indeed, they often become indignant at the suggestion that they benefit from injustice, because they experience their lives as so average, normal, and full enough of troubles. Many of these people who think of themselves as average, good, and decent could be made uncomfortable by frequent everyday human encounters with those excluded from these benefits,

32 The concern for psychic security appears in both the privileged and less privileged and works to secure members of each group in their relative positions of power and powerlessness. In American Apartheid, Massey and Denton discover that many residents of Chicago’s South Side report have rarely left “the immediate confines of their [heavily segregated] neighborhood” and have few friends or contacts outside the neighborhood (Massey and Denton 1993, 160-161). Their knowledge of a world beyond their milieu is limited and in their individual and collective isolation they are separated from forms of knowledge and resources, both inside and outside their neighborhoods, which might allow them to address their circumstances. As the authors note there is a protective dimension to the sameness that residents experience that makes stepping outside the neighborhood and developing new habits of circulation and, for the authors, work especially daunting. This means that one’s local milieu is often identified as a source of security, even if that security is manifest in the “oppositional culture” of the inner city (Ibid, 169).
within their daily living environment. Their sense of justice may be pricked; some of them might even think that something should be done to change the situation. But the everyday separation of the lives of the more or less privileged that is part of process of residential segregation makes it unnecessary for the privileged to think about social justice except in the most abstract terms.

(Young 2000, 208)

Security, therefore, pertains to the internal circulation of thoughts in addition to a regard for physical safety. These interior habits of circulation are in tension with exterior patterns of circulation. Together they are productive of what Foucault terms the “sovereign individuality” of governmentality, wherein the individual subject measures all decisions in terms of her own capital costs and believes that her “sovereign” decisions—rather than systemic factors—are responsible for her outcomes. Security means that one must jealously guard one’s sovereign status so that every associate must be viewed as a potential threat. While probabilistic calculation enables one to rank the potential “harm” these pose to her “sovereign individuality,” strategies of isolation follow from the same logic. In Durham, where non-elite blacks and whites had long been figured as economic competitors, this political rationality undermines the development of trust. As a consequence, it becomes difficult to address systemic

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33 Again, here is Davidson on the hostility between white and black workers in Durham: “Soon, a pecking order was developed in Durham (as elsewhere) in which the fiercest battles raged between the bottom-most groups. The white workers saw the black population of Hayti as a dark and threatening cloud always hovering nearby, ready to roll in with the next wind, taking jobs, food from their tables, and (given how close to the edge mill hands lived) life itself. Toss in the old sexual fears of black men ravishing white women and the result was not so much
inequalities of power and knowledge that affect working class populations. Not least
among the barriers posed by insensitivity and indifference to political organizing
around inequality are the strategies of self-policing that disenfranchised individuals use
to protect themselves from further injury. Specifically, calculations of probability
suggest that most actions are fated to fail, barring exceptional turns of fortune. The cost
and risk of action appears too high to the individual. There is the attendant fear of
sustaining further losses that reinforce feelings of powerlessness and isolation.

Foucault imagines “heterotopias” in which it is possible to think different truths
about ourselves and our relationships with others. Dismissing the promise of an
untroubled utopia as a region of fantastic fables that literally has no place in the world,
Foucault calls heterotopias ambivalent countersites that can support practices that are in
opposition to mainstream society. Heterotopic counter-practices contest regimes of
truth by producing different understandings, use, and relationships to what already
exists which “desiccate speech, stops words in their tracks, contest the very possibility of

a color line or even a color wall as a virtual color fortress. As a final insult, Durham’s Big Men now derided the ‘vulgar’ racism of their white employees. It was often remarked throughout the South that the ‘better class of people’ were far more relaxed, even friendly, in their relations with blacks. At least, it was remarked upon this same ‘better class.’ Of course, they could easily afford that cordiality—towards blacks of the ‘right sort,’ a tiny circle that included the heads of the North Carolina Mutual, the Mechanics and Farmers Bank, and a few others.”  

(Davidson 1996, 67-68).
grammar at its source” (OT, xv). These alternative relations have the potential to initiate reconfigurations of power and knowledge.

Foucault limits himself to thinking about heterotopias abstractly, but I want to think about the design of spaces that encourage practices of external circulation that could potentially alter internal forms of circulation that are currently guided by dispositions towards security and isolation, according to Foucault. In the next section, I consider New Urbanism not only because it is the dominant, if not the ascendant movement in architectural design and urban planning today, but more importantly because it is explicitly styled as a response to the functionalism of High Modernism.

II.

The CNU Charter is a mirror-image of CIAM’s 1933 Athens Charter. The latter, under the influence of Le Corbusier, advocated functionalism and the death of the street among its four guiding principles. The CNU Charter, in contrast, advocates for architecture and communities that echo Aristotle’s concern for diverse persons and activities. The motivating force behind the creation of the CNU are South Florida architects Andres Duany, Elizabeth Plater-Zyberk, and Jeff Speck, who are authors of the movement’s manifesto *Suburban Nation: The Rise of Sprawl and the Decline of the American Dream*. Where the tone of CIAM was revolutionary, the pitch of *Suburban Nation* is
decidedly bourgeois. Its key notes are a distaste for suburban living, including an aesthetic critique of “cookie cutter” housing developments and the bane of long commutes to and from the city center, mixed with a concern for isolation and anomie that resonates with Foucault’s description of the sovereign individual, that compels their call for richer associational life. New Urbanist movement is “Neotraditionalist” (the CNU Charter acknowledges that the term “leaves much to be desired”) a position which is “non-ideological to its core.” The CNU Charter explains that neotraditionalists “happily pick and choose whatever works and looks best… as is often is the case, what seems to work best is a historical model—the traditional neighborhood—adapted as necessary to serve the needs of modern man” and better responds to modern man’s needs for richer associational life.

The historical neighborhood offers, according to the authors, an antidote to what post-war planning has wrought: a “national landscape that is largely devoid of places worth caring about.” In their criticism of contemporary architecture, aesthetic and social critique lean on one another. Standardization in architecture, epitomized in the

34 Suburban Nation opens “You’re stuck in traffic again” and is filled with references to McMansions, big box stores, “soulless subdivisions” that are “a beige vinyl parody of Leave It to Beaver” as objects of frustration and disdain (Duany et. al 2000, i-x).
35 The depressed, middle-age father Lester Burnham suffering through a life emptied of joy at the center of the 2000 Academy Award winning film American Beauty embodies the CNU critique of the American suburb.
36 Ibid, 255.
37 Ibid.
38 Duany et. al 2000, x.
“endless repetition from lot to lot of the same house type” found in suburban housing developments, fails to provide for and stimulate what the authors affirm is our inherent desire for variety and the unexpected. Rather than fulfilling their promise of a better quality of life, these suburbs have turned out to be an isolating experience for many who live there, but especially for the young mothers with children, teenagers, and the elderly who spend their days there. Those feelings of disassociation, the authors argue, have implications for the health of our political and civic life.

For this reason, the designs of the New Urbanists are intended to encourage more frequent relational contacts and, potentially, a richer associational life. Instead of zoning laws that mandate low density construction; the strict separation of residential, work, civic, and shopping districts; and the associated network of road ways and parking lots characteristic of suburban sprawl; which making car ownership and use a necessity, the traditional neighborhoods that the authors recommend feature six

39 Architect and planner Peter Calthorpe’s remarks about Stapleton, a New Urbanist community located on the redeveloped site of Denver’s former airport, captures the tone of New Urbanism well: “[A]s a designer you’ll hate it because it’s very nice, it looks so pretty with white picket fences, the ad nauseam New Urbanism. But if you walk around and talk to people there, because of that income disparity that is already embedded in that community, and because they walk and you have a neighborhood school they can walk to and they have parks they can get to on foot, they actually encounter and they have more unexpected experiences than in the traditional suburban world. I consider that the foundation of freedom, to have those unexpected events in one’s daily life. That’s urbanism. And it can happen with picket fences” (See Fishman 2005, 65. Quoted in Kolb 2008, 167).

40 New Urbanists share this critique with not only Foucault but Hannah Arendt, as we will see in the next chapter.
fundamental elements that distinguish them from sprawl.\textsuperscript{41} These elements include a clearly defined center, such as a town green or plaza, that provides a common space for commercial, cultural, and civic activities; neighborhoods that integrate schooling and daycare, workplaces, corner groceries, cafés and restaurants, within a short walk of most residences; a continuous street network with relatively short blocks that permit drivers and pedestrians many different paths; narrow and versatile streets that are enjoyable to walk along because they slow down traffic and reduce noise while relieving the burden placed on larger arterial roads; mixed use zoning blocks and buildings which define the street and the continuity of its pedestrian spaces; and finally unique sites that contribute to the prominence of civic and other community buildings like places of worship and schools.\textsuperscript{42} Each of these elements is intended to resuscitate the activity and publicity of street life to encouraging slower forms of circulation and interpersonal contact.\textsuperscript{43}

Historical communities such as Alexandria, Virginia; Princeton, New Jersey; and Charleston, South Carolina, which the authors identify as models for New Urban developments, include mixed-income housing options such as town homes, apartments over stores, the garden or over-the-garage apartment suited for in-laws, singles, or those

\textsuperscript{41} Duany et. al 2000, 4.
\textsuperscript{42} Ibid, 15-17.
\textsuperscript{43} Additionally, homes are intentionally placed on small lots and many feature covered front porches and wide steps suitable for sitting that are intended to encourage residents to congregate outside and interact with their neighbors and passersby (see Illustration no. 8).
without large families. The authors contend that the varieties of housing options in such neighborhoods are the reverse of the housing monoculture that has proliferated during the post-war period. The uniformity of post-war housing developments has meant that “for the first time we are now experiencing ruthless segregation by minute gradations of income.” Writing that the segregationist pattern is “self-perpetuating,” Duany et. al state that “A child growing up in such a homogenous environment is less likely to develop a sense of empathy for people from other walks of life and is ill prepared to live in a diverse society.” In contrast to the heavily segregated suburbs, New Urbanist developments do not isolate individuals and that by “Sharing the same public realm, these people have the opportunity to interact, and thus come to realize that they have little to fear each other.”

Aimed at addressing the fear behind concerns for security, New Urbanism would appear to be an architectural solution to many of the isolating conducts at the heart of governmentality. The authors conclude, in a chapter titled “The Physical Creation of Society” that echoes the 17th century manuals on governing that Foucault elaborates: “There have always been better and worse neighborhoods, and the rich have always taken refuge from the poor, but never with such precision. It would appear that, for many, there is little distinction between someone slightly less wealthy than themselves and a Skid Row bum. To prove this point, one need only to attempt to built a $200,000 house on an empty lot in a $350,000 [housing] cluster; the homeowners’ association will immediately sue” (Duany et. al 2000, 43).
profiles, “we shape our cities and then our cities shape us.”\textsuperscript{47} But, I want to pull the lens back on these communities, to evaluate the circulation particular to New Urban neighborhoods within larger circulations of political and economic power. I have two major criticisms. First, I wonder if New Urbanists simply scale up and reproduce sovereign individuality at the level of community. While they may successfully approximate the slower patterns of circulation and habits of associational life that cities like Alexandria have developed over time, they run the risk of mistaking societal ways of relating for political ones. In one way these communities recalibrate the bandwith of “safe” places, persons, and activities defined by the preoccupation with security. While the bandwith expands, it remains a bandwith. I offer this criticism while at the same time acknowledging that it is likely impossible to get beyond any kind of borders—physical or psychological.

Indeed the concern for security is real, and I do not mean to dismiss it, yet evidence for my worry that New Urbanist communities may fall short of their own goals of recreating the economic and social diversity of historic neighborhoods maybe seen in the increasing gentrification of the towns and cities, like Charleston, South Carolina, which they are patterned after. At worst, New Urbanism represents a “collective politics, willingly arrived at, gone awry”\textsuperscript{48} where residents, under the pressure to protect

\textsuperscript{47} Ibid, 83.
\textsuperscript{48} Harvey 2000, 239.
the image of their communities and the associated property values, stress social
conformity through the regulation of certain activities, especially the public airing of
grievances.\textsuperscript{49} In practice, the concern with property values, which as the authors note
are so often grounds for exclusion, is in tension with New Urbanism’s stated values of
diversity and inclusion. So, despite being diversely constituted along a range of racial
and ethnic indices, the residents of these communities share or are pressured to share a
limited body of truths about who they are as a community.

Second, to members of the CNU, the aspiration of High Modernism to re-make
the world in its image does not represent a category error. Rather, New Urbanists
simply believe they are armed with a vision better than their predecessors. New

\textsuperscript{49} Writes David Kolb:

Although civic arrangements to bring people together can encourage liberating
kinds of interaction, they can also become instruments of social control.
Speaking of New Urbanist developments in connection with The Truman Show,
Reed Kroloff worries that “we wonder just how much identity, freedom, or
variety we’re willing to sacrifice in order to purchase the stability these places
seem to offer in an increasingly unstable world” (Kroloff 1998, 11). The Truman
Show exteriors were filmed in Seaside, the first New Urbanist icon. Herbert
Gans and Robert Bruegmann have argued, though, that complaints about
suburban conformity are marked by stereotyping and class bias. Investigating
the conflicts in Celebration, Ross concluded that while individuals in Celebration
do have plenty of personal “identity, freedom, and variety,” the residents were
being pressured to conform by the need to be consistent with their choice to
come to a town with such a public emphasis on community. It was also
important to keep up the image of the town in order to protect the property
value of their homes. What is significant is that these pressures arose not from a
supposed culture of the community but from how the town was inserted into the
wider flows of capital and images.

(Kolb 2008, 168-169)
Urbanists believe that if the entire world were made over according to their design principles, circulatory and associational patterns would change. Undoubtedly this is true, but Foucault would suggest that the related desires for sovereign control and political “solutions” are impossible dreams. By concentrating on the activities that occur within these communities and neglecting the fact that they are largely bedroom communities rather than the intensive mixed-use neighborhoods they purport to be, New Urbanists ignore how the circulatory practices exclusive to their neighborhoods relate to larger circulations of power. By insisting on wholesale reform rather than thinking about patterns of circulation that might increase the complexity of relations across already existing communities, New Urbanism sets too easy a task for itself and this, in a sense, is also politically irresponsible.

New Urbanist communities heed to disciplinary model of power that corresponds to fixed sites that habituate individual behavior. But since its residents are not exclusively bound to these sites anymore than workers are solely defined by the place of the factory, I suggest shifting the focus to circulatory spaces. Just as bio-politics exists alongside disciplinary power in Foucault’s thinking, I want to suggest that New

50 Kolb 2008, 166. Kolb notes that New Urbanism tries to address these limitations by stressing regional solutions: “New Urbanism urges metropolitan areas to build toward a denser polycentric form made up of many distinct mixed-use neighborhoods or towns rather than a spread of large single-use tracts. Concentrations of commercial and civic activity should be embedded in neighborhoods rather than strung out along strips” (Ibid, 164).
Urbanism should be supplemented by heterotopic spaces that are more ambiguous, both in terms of their borders and the behaviors they permit. Rather than locating heterotopias and counter-conducts in well-demarcated sites such as bathhouses, theatrical performance, and communities consciously assembled for the exploration of difference, as Michael Warner does in his elaboration of counterpublics,\footnote{Warner 2005, 121. See also Samuel A. Chamber’s “Review: Democracy and (the) Public(s): Spatializing Politics in the Internet Age,” Political Theory, Vol. 33, No. 1, pp. 125-136, on the relation between Warner’s counterpublic and Foucault’s heterotopia, especially pg. 131.} I take the emphasis on circulation in Foucault’s late career thought to mean that heterotopias should also affect populations. As Warner’s own work on the normalization of counter-discourses and identities suggests aestheticized forms of resistance are easily incorporated into the regime of governmentality.\footnote{See Warner’s discussion of the campaign for same-sex marriage and “respectability.” Warner argues that a “post-gay” movement led by professional gays and lesbians have focused on marriage because they believe it confers legitimacy and public acceptance. What these activists fail to realize or choose to ignore, says Warner, is that the acceptance they seek trades on the stigmatization of other needs, desires, and relations within the larger queer community (Warner 1999, 41-80; especially 95-109).} Conceiving security in terms of probability renders these forms of resistance politically inconsequential. They pose low risks to the security of the state, its economy, or its individual subjects, which is why they can so easily be co-opted and commodified.

On one interpretation, Foucault’s turn towards ethics, specifically ancient practices of self-governance, would be open to the same criticisms. Namely, close
monitoring of the self represents either a retreat from politics or the re-inscription of
disciplinary power on the individual or perhaps both. But when read together with
Foucault’s discussion of architecture, circulation, and security in lectures from the same
period, another interpretation becomes possible. In this alternative interpretation,
Foucault is moving towards circulatory practices and heterotopias that work against the
principle of security by reintroducing risk and forms of encounter outside the grid of
hierarchical orders back into daily routines. I want to propose that the proliferation of
greenways in many cities and towns represent opportunities for ambiguous
juxtapositions that retain their capacity to unsettle ways of thinking about self and other.

Greenways are linear parks, often closed or partially closed to automobile
traffic, that sometimes follow former railroad easements through urban and suburban
communities. They are frequently multi-use, inviting a multiplicity of users including
dog-walkers, strolling couples and families, cyclists, runners, and skaters, who appear at
all times of day. They sometimes incorporate community gardens, public art, and parks
with playing fields and playgrounds. By re-appropriating pathways for purposes other
than the ones they were designed for, greenways offer the chance for the unpredictable
and even illicit uses that characterize Foucault’s heterotopic spaces. These new patterns
of external circulation can provoke new forms of internal circulation as individuals are
brought together in unfamiliar settings and activities that offer the possibility of
discovering difference.
Durham’s American Tobacco Trail (ATT) is one such greenway that knits together white and black communities severed by the Durham Freeway and exacerbated by subsequent construction. It begins just outside the downtown loop, underneath the NC 147 overpass where the Hayti neighborhood once stood (See Illustration nos. 9 & 10). Red banners proclaiming “Downtown Durham: Entertainment District,” fly at the intersection framed by the city’s new minor league baseball stadium and performing arts center on one side and the former Lucky Strike cigarette manufacturing facility, now a mixed-use development with offices and restaurants, on the other. The ATT runs ten miles south towards the Research Triangle Park and the Streets at Southpoint Mall, crossing many different neighborhoods and drawing many different users.

Departing from the gentrifying downtown district, where factories have been converted to residential loft apartments, the ATT travels immediately past a 1970s era apartment complex surrounded by parking lots, where elderly residents sit outside individually or in twos and threes in good weather watching the cyclists, runners, and walkers pass by. Crossing a narrow bridge over the road below, one sees a strip mall, whose laundromat, pay day loan office, and grocery, attract many from Durham’s growing Latino population. To the left are the rearwards facing sliding glass doors and concrete patios of attached multi-family homes, painted in fading pastels. In addition to grills and plastic backyard furniture, several patios are home to weightlifting sets whose
owners can often be seen in the warmer summer months completing their workouts outdoors.

The trail proceeds further, dividing the historically black Southside and St. Theresa neighborhoods from the upscale Forrest Hills neighborhood, where the narrow band of trees on each side of the trail are laced with narrow dirt paths that allow residents quick access to the ATT from their backyards. At the first of three intersections with the busy Fayetteville Road, several black-owned barber and beauty shops, a mosque frequented by mainly Arab and South Asian immigrants, and another grocery are visible. On the other side of the crossing, just next to the trail, the devoted line up every Saturday morning to eat barbequed pulled pork sandwiches from a revered vendor who sets up in the side lot of the mini-mall there. From there the trail passes a city high school, where during the school year students can be seen smoking off school grounds, taking refuge from the stress of the school day on benches that line the trail and sometimes even sitting in the trees, and beyond that the first of several areas zoned for light industrial use.

This middle section runs parallel to Fayetteville Road, screened by vegetation from traffic on one side and a collection of self-storage parks and warehouses on the other, before passing a large city park and elementary school. The final third of the trail is perhaps the busiest section of the ATT, attracting users from the newly-built nearby developments. These single and multi-family homes and apartments, with sylvan
names like Woodcroft and Morehead Hills, are exactly the repetitive structures fronting shared parking lots that annoy New Urbanists. On weekends enterprising children sell lemonade, cold water, and even smoothies, to the many walkers, runners, and cyclists on the trail. The users of ATT, who are as diverse as they are numbered, represent a cross-section of Durham by age, gender, race, and class. Compared with New Urbanist communities, greenways like the ATT are more porous and arterial. They draw in a constituency that exceeds the borders of any single neighborhood or community, allowing for a greater range of encounters that are unplanned and whose surprises, good and bad, cannot possibly be prepared for. Allowing for heterogeneous uses and unexpected forms of external circulation, exemplified by the dirt paths through the woods linking neighborhood yards with the ATT, these circulatory spaces are unlike the more secure milieus that our bodies and minds have been habituated to.

But there is also a familiarity among strangers on the ATT that orients them towards one another differently. Regular users of the greenway develop corporeal relationships to one another over time in that space that can inaugurate another imaginary of the public. If you are someone who runs or walks at the same time each week, for example, you may pass others who you regularly see and, with time, perhaps exchange a nod of greeting with on your weekly excursions. With the passage of time, there is a form of trust that develops in even what appears to be marginal relationships that enables further conversation. Inquiries that open up to something beyond
acknowledgment may be precipitated when something changes or is out of joint in the way the shared space has been experienced together so far. A prolonged absence, for example, may be commented upon, which can initiate a deeper inquiry. These interactions, in which an intimate truth is spoken publically to a stranger, happen outside the economy of power and exchange that might otherwise frame the dialogue between these two interlocutors. Urban sociologist Lyn H. Lofland categorizes such routinized public interactions as “intimate-secondary relationships” that are “emotionally infused.” The relationships that grow among individuals who come to know one another in these public settings, she writes, “seem especially capable of being transformed into connections of an intimate-secondary sort” in which they are able to exchange personal information about themselves and their families. They are relatively long-lasting in duration and are diffuse in purpose according to Lofland.53

53 Lofland admits a certain degree of fluidity among the categories of relationships that she outlines. She writes:

While it is, I believe, highly fruitful to view the public realm from the perspective of the indigenous (as well as exogenous) relational forms that are to be found there, it is also important to bear in mind that the forms are not static, they have the potential for and are often to be found in the process of transformation. That is, they are characterized by fluidity. As we have seen, quasi-primary and intimate-secondary relationships are often the end products of what began as mere fleeting or routinized connections; what we have not seen is that the two end products are capable of reversion to their original forms and that all four types of relationships may be metamorphasized into forms that are indigenous not to the public but to the parochial or private realms. Today’s brief encounter—
In these interactions, individuals can extend and build knowledge of others outside the communities that they know immediately. Seeing others who are different perform the same differently can be a discordant experience, but it also allows individuals to understand that their experience has a resonance with others. Foucault imagines that the self’s relationship to the self will change, that is, the internal circulation of an individual’s thought will change as a result of the external stimulus found in these new circulatory spaces. He writes that under these conditions, “The practice of the self links up with social practice or, if you like, the formation of a relationship of the self to the self quite clearly connects up with the relationship of self the Other” (HS, 155). Such circulatory spaces are planning elements that can bring individuals into the relationships of attentiveness that precede the receptive practices of the self, those of care and vulnerability, toward others yielding different understandings of self, place, and power.

Foucault distinguishes the relational forms of knowledge that develop in these encounters by the French le savoir, which he says requires “taking into account the relation between the gods, men, the world, and things of the world on the one hand, and ourselves on the other.” This mode of knowledge (technē) is contrast with a form that friendly or hostile—that transformed a fleeting relationship into a quasi-primary one may, tomorrow, simply be a fleeting relationship again. (Lofland 1998, 60-61; emphasis original)
Foucault terms *connaissance*, knowledge which purports truths which are “immediately translatable” and “prescriptive”—requiring none of the mediation implicit in the practice of listening (HS, 235). The development of *le savoir* within listening practices represents the slow erosion of the sovereign, isolated self. What emerges in vulnerable listening a tensional space where auditors and interlocutors are not liberated from the hierarchical powers that act upon them, but through listening to and speaking what had previously been registered as silent, can begin to recognize the institutions, techniques, discourses, and disciplines that have worked to de-legitimize the validity of some truths as abnormal or unnatural in the present.

In his lecture on the Christian pastorate Foucault mentions several revolts of conduct, describing them as moments when the subject declares a truth “that which I can no longer be silent on” (HS, 366). In the context of pastoral power, the articulation of these truths represents an intervention into a debate over daily conduct. Located as part of his discussion of neo-liberalism, Foucault attests that these practices have a “political dimension” that relates to the question of how we might be governed: how

54 See Nancy Luxon’s “The Art of Listening: Audience and the Proliferation of Meaning in the Late Work of Michel Foucault” *Paper presented at the annual meeting of the American Political Science Association, Hyatt Regency Chicago and the Sheraton Chicago Hotel and Towers, Chicago, IL, Aug 30, 2007.*

55 Foucault explains, “By this phrase ‘political dimension’ I mean an analysis that relates to what we are willing to accept in our world— to accept, to refuse, and to chance, both in ourselves and in our circumstances. In sum, it is a question of searching for another kind of critical philosophy” (PT, 152).
might we govern ourselves, how might we govern others, how might we be governed differently. Taken together with his remarks on circulation, Foucault suggests governmentality rests on a reflexive relationship between exterior and interior forms of circulation.

Foucault’s study of governmentality presents a genealogy of the modern subject in which architecture and urban planning are key elements. The purpose of Foucault’s study of sexuality, of which his analysis of governmentality is an outgrowth, is to reveal how the Enlightenment promise of individual freedom is chimerical. That freedom includes foreclosed possibilities of knowing, being, and doing. Architecture and urban planning guide the habits of external circulation that shapes ethical and political relations between individuals. Foucault’s study of governmentality, which identifies the isolated individual who is unaware (or perhaps only dimly aware) of the forces that have created and sustain the conditions of possibility available to her, helps explain how the spaces that citizens ostensibly inhabit together, nonetheless, keep them from achieving a sense of the common. This means that reanimating the possibility of a democratic politics, which turns on a sense of the common, will likely require a consideration of alternative forms of circulation. Rethinking external forms of circulation and encounter, I am suggesting, will spur new patterns of internal circulation and thought. In this way, expanding political possibility is linked to the spaces we design and inhabit. Given the way architectural design, according to James C. Scott, has
so often failed to support and even impaired the possibility of democratic politics, it is crucial to understand how architecture has functioned to influence the possibilities we have inherited, as well as, how better design might contribute to the development of better forms of democratic knowledge and practice.

Foucault, however, does not specify the normative content of the political associations that he implies may grow out of these alternative encounters. The heterotopic space of the greenway appears to approximate the ambiguous conditions of anonymity and familiarity that characterized contact within the spaces of the Athenian polis discussed in the last chapter. Just as in the workshop, the greenway presents a context where the visibility of those social markers is either less visible and/or less salient. I am suggesting that the encounters that occur over time here are qualitatively different from the encounters across various measures of difference that occur in most other late-modern spaces. In those other spaces, each actor is aware of his or her position in a social and economic hierarchy of power and the patterns of obliviousness and oblivion that I have described are propagated.

Yet while the encounters and forms of proximity that the greenway makes possible challenge individual isolation, these relationships are not necessarily oriented towards the cultivation of democratic forms of power or knowledge. While Foucault was famously wary of naming his political commitments for fear that they might mistakenly authorize new disciplinary regimes, at the same time he personally
advocated on behalf of peoples and practices that contested totalizing discourses.

Foucault’s overarching concern was for creating spaces of freedom within these regimes leaves the reader to conclude only that he was broadly opposed to domination.56 This implies, however, that he was indifferent to the nature of the deeper, oppositional truths produced in these relationships.

In Durham, the activities of Klu Klux Klan members and Civil Rights activists have at different points in time, been more or less oppositional to dominant regimes of truth. Foucault’s rich theorizing offers no way of deciding between these oppositional

56 Michael Warner explains Foucault’s reluctance to name his political commitments in terms of his use of the term problematization.

The term “problematization,” awkward enough under the best of circumstances, has become rather confused by its use among post-Foucaultian academics, for whom it means nothing more than taking something to be problematic. To problematize, in this usage, means to complicate. For Foucault, it has a much richer meaning, connected with the argument in volumes 2 and 3 of History of Sexuality. There, he treats a problematic not just as an intellectual tangle, but as the practical horizon of intelligibility with which problems come to matter for people. It stands for both the conditions that make thinking possible and for the way thinking, under certain conditions, can reflect back on its own conditions…

Despite repeated solicitations from gay journalists and activists, Foucault refused to be set up as the gay intellectual. Of course, he scarcely needed the outlet. But social movements have often been arenas in which professional intellectuals—journalists, lawyers, or academics—have found publics in which their intellectual role could be put to use… [Foucault] stands athwart both politics and the discourse game of polemic, no matter what the topic. In one sense, his argument returns to a traditional relation between intellectual and political work: because problematization considers the framing of politics rather than issues already framed as politics, it has the reflexive structure that has traditionally been the role of theory or philosophy. (Warner 2002, 154-156)
movements. They each enjoy equal status in his theoretical schema because they uniquely challenge hierarchical orders. So while Foucault’s reflections on governmentality and ancient practices of self government suggest an effort to identify a place from which to begin politics within seemingly totalizing regimes of power that infiltrate smallest features of human life, this political action is not recognizably in tune with the exercise of democratic political power. For this reason, it is necessary to look elsewhere for criteria for judging better and worse among counter-practices. I look to the work of Hannah Arendt in the next chapter for help with specifying architectures that preserve our individual and collective capacity for political action.
4: Judgment and “World Building” Power

Nothing in our time is more dubious, it seems to me, than our attitude towards the world, nothing less to be taken for granted than the concord with what appears in public which an honor imposes upon us, and the existence of which it affirms... Even where the world is halfway in order, or halfway kept in order, the public realm has lost the power of illumination which was originally part of its nature.

--Hannah Arendt, *Men in Dark Times*, p. 4

Arendt’s lament for a “world” receding from common view was made in an entirely different context, but she could just as well have been describing the conditions of oblivion and obliviousness that I argued in the last chapter were introduced with new forms of circulation in Durham. Having avoided the destruction of Hayti, Crest Street remains standing—albeit in a new location—but the neighborhood, its residents, and its history are largely unknown, forgotten, and untraveled by outsiders.

Crest Street represents the architectural manifestation of a form of oblivion peculiar to contemporary democratic regimes that is at once a political and ethical matter. In the last chapter we saw this directly: the existence of a two-in-one in which blacks and whites simultaneously inhabit the same but separate worlds. Physical proximity and cognitive distance co-exist. This oblivion is characterized by a paradox in which individuals enjoy full political representation but are, nonetheless, in their daily encounters, left uncertain of their individual and collective significance.
Arendt highlights this contradiction by questioning, despite its sheer facticity, the validity of the world and the objects appearing within it. The prominence of the “world” in her thought and her repeated claim that it was disappearing before “our” eyes complicates what, for most of her readers, is simply what is and what exists. Her inquiry into the status of the world begs the question of whether “we” share a common world today. By turning our attention to the background and moving it to the foreground, I will argue that Arendt highlights the importance of attending to space for politics and political possibility. The deterioration of the world, what she sometimes terms “world alienation” refers to its weakening hold on our attention and the possibility of sharing a political life.

For her, the constitution of the world is both a condition for and product of the political judgment suited to democratic politics. Arendt mentions architecture among the tangible objects of this world and, like Aristotle, suggests that it facilitates various relationships in the polis. As I explain, the world is the concept that integrates the many distinct categories that proliferate in Arendt’s work, yet discussions of specific places are absent from her theorizing. Arendt, then, leaves her readers at a loss to understand how to cultivate the “world-building” practices that are the subject of her sustained attention, inasmuch as these are, as I will show, reciprocally related to the constitution of the world.
In order to think about how actual and particular spaces cultivate these practices, I turn to the work of the mid-20th century urban planner Kevin Lynch in the second part of this chapter. I indicate how Lynch was also concerned about the loss of a common world and, by extension, body politic. In his best-known work, *The Image of the City*, Lynch outlines techniques by which planners can facilitate a deeper understanding and attachment between the city and its residents by making the former more “imageable.” Lynch and Arendt are united, in my analysis, by a shared concern for the aesthetic pleasure that only a world experienced in the company of others can offer. Both care about beautiful landscapes whose transcendence stimulates memory and lend human life a measure of permanence amidst change. Considerations of political judgment and action, however, do not figure into his designs like they do in Arendt’s reflections on the world. An examination of Lynch’s work, therefore, allows us to see how the lived experience of the built environment inflects Arendt’s understanding of the world, judgment, and action. In particular, Lynch’s focus on the way that space structures the experience of time distinguishes him from Arendt and complicates her notion of judgment’s relationship to the world.

I conclude by advocating for a concept of architecture that is informed by Arendtian insights. For the purposes of stimulating and enhancing the prospect of democratic practices, I suggest conceiving of architecture as both built space and activity that reflect and mutually augment one another. I use the insight from Lynch’s work to
suggest that if actions and practices of judgment are to possess a “world-building capacity” as Arendt maintains, they should be oriented to creating architecture that habituates users to slower tempos and greater human plurality. Given that it is not possible to assemble and visualize the body politic today, I suggest with Lynch that the local spaces in which citizens live and interact must inform the democratic polity they imagine belonging to as well as how they imagine being bound to that polity. The daily experiences of these spaces inform how democratic citizens will judge the appropriateness of whom and how to share the world with others. By filling out the neglected portion of Arendt’s account of the world, I hope this example of a space that at once enabled and was generated through practices of judgment will better clarify a concept of democratic politics that reciprocally relates action with attention to its conditions of possibility.

I contend that with these modifications, Arendt’s concept of the world—specifically, how it informs the judging activity that is part of action and how it is sustained through those practices—illustrates two concepts of architecture that illuminate my understanding of democratic politics. ¹ Recall that Arendt writes that

¹ I recognize the matter of Arendt’s democratic bona fides and therefore my attempt to identify her as an ally are and will be the subject of some debate. There are some, like Sheldon Wolin (see “Hannah Arendt: Democracy and the Political” in Salmagundi 60 (1983), 3-19), who argue that Arendt is an anti-democratic figure whose theory of action bears no relation to the lives of citizens and that she is, on top of this, an elitist. Jeffery Isaacs is among those who, on the other hand, have offered a defense of Arendt’s status.
archē refers to the practices of dominion, command, and sovereignty, as well as democratic practices of initiation and action—values which she observes have come to be viewed as opposites by moderns but which she wishes to reintegrate. Through her work, I develop a double-sided concept of architecture as built space and intangible actions that possess, in her words, a “world building capacity,” better suited to the development of democratic power, knowledge, and practice. Specifically, the two sides of democratic architecture are related through the practice of judgment and her notion of action. Both of these require creating and tending to a sensus communis that allows humans to appear in their full plurality in order to have any significance.

I.

Arendt’s effort to identify political spaces is performed in the shadow cast by the loss of traditional authority. In her essay titled “The Crisis of Culture” she writes that the “thread of culture is broken” (BPF, 204). Bereft of the stability of traditional religious or political authority, moderns must perpetually reconstitute authority and the

as a democratic thinker (see “Oasis in the Desert: Hannah Arendt on Democratic Politics” in American Political Science Review 88, no. 1 (1994), 156-168). As it will become clear, my position on this question puts me closer to Isaacs than Wolin.
semblance of stability it offers them, themselves.\textsuperscript{2} Her identification of architecture among the durable artifacts of material culture is then no accident (BPF, 202). The phenomenological commonality of the material world forms what Lawrence Biskowski calls the “enduring frame of reference” for her effort to establish a post-Nietzschean, anti-metaphysical foundation for politics.\textsuperscript{3} The world is the space in which human beings judge and act and is the object of those judgments and actions. It orients the development of political judgment and supplies it with a moral content that must be preserved at all costs which is, she says, with Bertolt Brecht that “on the day that you must leave the world it will be of greater importance to leave behind you a better world than to have been good” (MDT, 236).

But to claim, as she repeatedly does, that the permanence of the world is at risk from “social” forces originating in the biological needs that all humans share with each other and other animal species, strikes the modern reader as odd.\textsuperscript{4} Yet, as I will explain,

\textsuperscript{2} “Culture” Arendt says, refers to “the mode of intercourse of man with the things of the world” (BPF, 213). The implication is that humans must rediscover these modes of intercourse in the modern era. Broadly defined, this is Arendt’s task.

\textsuperscript{3} Biskowski 1993, 879, 882.

\textsuperscript{4} Arendt claims that the enduring status of architecture along with other products of the Western cultural inheritance was damaged by the bourgeois appetite for entertainment and desire for self-advancement. This growing appetite looked upon cultural products as novelty, consuming them quickly and grossly. The instrumentalization of culture (which she says “do(es) not constitute the proper intercourse with art”) is what robs cultural products of their permanence (BPF, 197-211). Arendt’s critique of the social realm and her effort to protect politics from social forces is indebted to Aristotle, who makes a similar distinction between the \textit{bios politikos} and \textit{oikos} in \textit{Politics}, Book 1.
the world integrates Arendt’s categories of labor, work, and action, and the divisions that designate what she calls the “public” or “political” realm. Judgment and political action stand, on the one side, in a mutually dependent relationship with the world on the other. Judgment and political action must preserve the world, which includes “tangible things” such as art, music, books, and especially architecture, which helps human beings realize the “objective status” or reality of the world in which human beings appear before one another (BPF, 202). Understanding the double-sided quality of Arendt’s world helps readers not only see past the oppositions in her work, but also the dynamic character of archē as both initiation and preservation operating in her braided invocations of judgment, action, and the world.

Despite its conceptual importance for her categories of public and private, Arendt sketches the world in only general terms. Arendt means two things when she claims that this world is public. First, it is public in that everything that takes place there can be “seen and heard by everybody and has the widest possible publicity” (HC, 50). Second, the world and its objects are public in so far as they are shared by all—unlike those things which are considered private. She writes, “To live together in the world means essentially that a world of things is between those who have it in common, as a table is located between those who sit around it; the world, like every in-between

5 Arendt is primarily worried about public rather than private spaces just as I am, but she acknowledges the importance of private spaces insomuch they offer shelter from the intense scrutiny of the brightly lit public spaces.

137
relates and separates men at the same time” (HC, 52). The “world of things” that constitutes the public realm refers to two related phenomenon, both of which suggest themselves as forms of architecture.

To begin, there are the tangible objects and physical spaces that comprise the built environment that humans hold in common. This first understanding of the world is rendered in explicitly architectural terms: it involves “developing nature into a dwelling place for people” (BPF, 213). Next, Arendt says, it is these objects—like the table that is between those seated around it—that hold humans in varying relationships of intensity and distance with one another. Arendt calls these the intangible “web of relationships” that are strung between humans and which develop out of the stories they tell about each other (HC, 181). These stories relate and are themselves forms of speech and performance that fall under the category of “action” in the three-point typology that defines Arendt’s account of human life.

Action, and the judgment which is part of it, relate the two sides of Arendt’s world. Action is what is particular to the public realm and, in Arendt’s words, the “greatness” of the political life that takes place there according to her reading of the “Greek” tradition. The ancient polis, she says, was the site of heroic speech and deeds. Although she makes few references to the tragedies (she prefers Plato and Aristotle),

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* Arendt’s selective and productive distillation of Hellenism has been the subject of frustration and fascination. See Peter Euben’s “Arendt’s Hellenism” in The Cambridge Companion to Hannah Arendt (2000) for an overview of this matter.
Peter Euben notes that her description of action performed by actors and spectators owes much to the “language and imagery of theatre.” Action is “boundless” but fragile and short-lived if it is not secured. It has its origins in the miracle of human birth, the moment in which humans appear and insert themselves in this world against improbable odds. Arendt calls this capacity to introduce new things into the world “natality” and she wants to prolong and preserve this capacity for action in each of us. This motivates her call for the care of the world and its monuments in the “Crisis of Culture” essay (BPF, 213). Or as she puts it elsewhere: “As long as the polis is there to inspire men to the extraordinary, all things are safe; if it perishes, everything is lost” (HC, 206).

Perhaps because Arendt writes as if the world of the polis is—and of course in many ways it must be—lost to moderns, she skips over the task of describing these places in detail. Arendt concentrates on describing how this loss might be repaired, taking it almost as given that her reader understands what it is about the world that requires repair. Arendt imagines the words and deeds of actors, specifically the promises and agreements that bind them together, to be evidence of action’s “world

7 Euben 2000, 152.
8 Natality refers to the conditions of one’s birth. Each birth, Arendt writes, is a miracle—the introduction of the new against improbable statistical odds. Human birth testifies to the innate human capacity to bring new things into the world. Natality is also defined by the conditions of similarity and difference that mark every human birth. Each person, according to Arendt, is at once like every single persons who has lived or will ever life and completely unique.
building capacity” (OR, 175). Arendt’s description of action is inspired by the words spoken by Themistokles to his fellow Athenians on the eve of the Battle of Salamis, “Wherever you go you will be a polis”.9 These words and the fact that “not Athens, but the Athenians, were the polis” (HC, 195) suggest actions are capable of creating and securing the space of appearance when, as in the modern period, those political spaces have disappeared.10

Although she neglects developing the first understanding of architecture as a physical space in her invocation of the world, this first concept of the world gives rise to

9 In 480 B.C.E Themistokles convinced the Athenians to spend the great profit they had earned from the Laurium silver mines to move the harbor from the Phaleron located close to the Asty to the superior deep water port of the Piraeus, 7 kilometers away, as well to see their future in becoming sea-farers which meant investing in their navy (Thucydides 1.93). Themistokles was credited, therefore, as the father of both the Piraeus and the Athenian navy.

10 Barry Strauss argues that the thetes (those belonging to the large class of propertyless citizens) gained their political education while serving in the Athenian navy—literally while they were out at sea, far from the polis itself. Specifically, he postulates that service on the triremes was the foundational experience for turning the concepts of demokratia (rule of the people) and isonomia (equality) and eleutheria (freedom) from the category of “social imaginary” to “living realities” (Strauss 1996, 316). Noting that rowing was a “largely communitarian and egalitarian effort”, he cites two contrasting episodes in Thucydides’s History of the Peloponnesian War as evidence for his thesis. In the first, Thucydides describes how the numerically disadvantaged Athenian seamen gathered together to discuss what they should do and that, noticing this, their commander Phorimo addressed them in order to persuade them to a course of action (Thucydides 2.18). In other words, Strauss concludes, the seamen “behaved like free men” (Strauss 1996, 319). In the second case, Thucydides describes the physical violence that followed grievances related to missed wages. The Spartan seamen, many of them eleutheroi, were made to serve out of fear, violence, and compulsion (Thucydides 8.84.2-3). Strauss’s argument lends credence to Arendt’s interpretation of Themistokles’s counsel.
and is sustained by the “world-building” activities of the second mode. The relationship between these notions of architecture in Arendt’s work is circular, with one begetting the other. What links the two is Arendt’s account of judgment. Specifically, it is the physical “world” which enables plural modes of appearance that is the condition for judgment and it is the exercise of judgment and the subsequent commitment to act on those judgments that create the world anew. Architecture, like all creative arts, testifies to the experience of bringing new things into the world and is a resource for subsequent efforts to do the same.\textsuperscript{11} This fact explains, in brief, Arendt’s concern that the world that provides for speech and action is passed on to future generations.

Arendt’s first use of the “world” refers to the durability and permanence of the built environment. Architecture lends human beings the semblance of stability amid conditions of constant change as humans are born into the world and depart it. Although they are the product of human hands, architectural works like bridges, buildings, and public art, transcend the life of any single individual. This transcendence has as much, if not more, to do with quality of materials and means of construction as it does the artifact’s beauty.\textsuperscript{12} “Beauty is the very manifestation of imperishability” writes Arendt (BPF, 218). The transcendence of works of art and the remembrance of speech

\textsuperscript{11} Benhabib 1996, 108.
\textsuperscript{12} There is truth in Arendt’s exaggeration. While less attractive structures endure, often in excess of the length of human lives, “beautiful” buildings last much longer and hold fast within the cycle of destruction and reconstruction that characterizes cities.
and deed both originate in our pleasure in their beautiful and distinctive qualities. The polis preserved a record of these “immortal” deeds as “a kind of organized remembrance...[that] assures the moral actor that his passing existence and fleeting greatness will never lack the reality that comes from being seen, being heard, and, generally, appearing before an audience of fellow men....” (HC, 198).

As Arendt ultimately indicates, worldly co-presence and acknowledgment are the grounds for the validity of the self and others. Confirmation of individual identity, Arendt explains, requires being seen and heard by others. The world consists of the structures that form what is in-between a population of persons who are at once subjects

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13 Curtis 1999, 95.
14 This is exactly the record of great actions that Pericles refers to in his Funeral Oration. Pericles tells his fellow Athenians that future generations will remember and will be reminded of their greatness whenever they see the monuments on the acropolis. These buildings carry the “premonition of immortality...achieved by mortal hands, [which] has become present, to shine and be seen” for posterity (HC, 168).
15 I use the word “ultimately” to acknowledge that Arendt develops the concept of the “world” across her works and that it gains its fullest ontological status only in her final research project, The Life of the Mind. Kimberly Curtis argues that Arendt’s account of the space of appearance, with its emphasis on the reversibility between actor and spectator, owes an unacknowledged debt to the “new ontology” presented in Maurice Merleau-Ponty’s The Phenomenology of Perception (1945) and The Visible and the Invisible (1964). But as Curtis notes, Arendt was hesitant to acknowledge the influence of Merleau-Ponty’s concept of “the flesh,” which describes how the gap separating subjects is crossed and encroached upon, in her theory. Her reluctance was two-fold. In first case, it stemmed from her wish to preserve the subject’s autonomy and guard against empathetic identification which would efface this distinctness. Second, Curtis writes that Arendt regarded Merleau-Ponty’s insistence that “man exists only in movement” too totalizing and universal a claim and one that clashed with the emphasis upon stability and durability in her account of the world of objects that humans are born into (Curtis 1999, 28-29).
and objects of one another’s attention. In other words, Arendt figures architecture as both the literal spaces in which we appear and the relationships that develop between actors and subjects within those spaces.\(^{16}\) Arendt describes how the lived experience of these spaces transform individual self-interest into “\(\textit{interesse}\), which means to be among or between,”\(^{17}\) that corresponds to a more relationally-oriented understanding of that interest.\(^{18}\) Our dual status as actors and spectators in this public realm is what sets humans apart from other species as political animals. These political spaces allow humans to realize what makes them simultaneously similar and unique. The source of each person’s unique identity is related to natality, that they are alike and completely different from any other persons that has or will ever live, and is realized through speech and action.

Just as individuals confirm their own being through their encounters with others, the world gains its validity by virtue of its publicity. Politics, which is the discovery of

\(^{16}\) Curtis 1999, 28.
\(^{17}\) Warren 2001, 224.
\(^{18}\) Arendt contrasts the worldly experiences that inform the development of self-interest in relation to others inherent in \(\textit{interesse}\) with the entirely subjective experience of pain. The latter is so private, she says, that it is difficult to articulate its experience to others. Arendt writes of pain, “There seems to be no bridge from the most radical subjectivity, in which I am no longer ‘recognizable,’ to the outerworld of life. Pain, in other words, truly a borderline experience between life as ‘being among men’ \((\textit{inter hominess esse})\) and death, is so subjective and removed from the world of things and men that it cannot assume an appearance at all” (HC, 51). As Peg Birmingham points out, \(\textit{inter hominess esse}\) is distinct from \(\textit{inter esse hominess}\) “‘being among men’”. As she says, “Only the latter is properly intersubjective and political” (Birmingham 2006, 85).
human plurality amidst the conditions of species equality, requires this common world or *sensus communis*. World alienation, according to Arendt, involves the decline of the innate human desire towards self-display and the corresponding response that appearance solicits from others. Kimberly Curtis terms this relay between the sensed object and the sensing subject “mutually sensuous provocation” and notes that it is central to sustaining the plurality that characterizes the common world. Here is Arendt:

>The only character of the world by which to gauge its reality is its being common to us all, and common sense occupies such a high rank in the hierarchy of political qualities because it is the one sense that fits into reality as a whole our five strictly individual senses and the strictly particular data they receive. It is by virtue of common sense that the other sense perceptions are known to disclose reality and are not merely felt as irritations of our nerves or resistance sensations of our bodies. A noticeable decrease in common sense in any given community...[is one of the] almost infallible signs of alienation from the world. (HC, 208-209)

Without the opportunity to act in public and thereby confirm their unique qualities, humans become quiescent and accept the conditions that condition their lives without resistance. According to Curtis, “Those relegated to oblivion suffer a loss of feeling for their own existence, their own reality, as well as for the larger world and their relationship to it.” Arendt’s deep worry about oblivion, “an elemental, widely

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20 Curtis 1999, 69. My insight into Arendt’s concern for what she refers to as the flight from anonymity and which I am calling oblivion in these pages is indebted to Kimberly Curtis’s sharp analysis of this dimension of Arendt’s thinking. The content of this...
suffered form of injustice that almost no one recognizes,"21 motivates her to erect borders around the space of appearance, purifying it of functions and motivation arising from the needs of the human body.22 But in doing so, Arendt underplays action’s dependence upon the conditions that enable its possibility. Action and judgment are at once world-building and world-dependent. The character of her world and the concept of architecture that it implicitly draws upon are two-fold. Architecture and the world are both fabrication, belonging to the category of work, and action.23 Their dual status paragraph reflects Curtis’ discussion of oblivion in her book on Arendt, Our Sense of the Real (see pages 67-69).

21 Ibid.
22 To many of her critics and admirers, this is the most frustrating part of her understanding of politics and political action. By removing from claims against economic injustice and rising concentrations of corporate power from “politics”, Arendt seems to ignore inequalities that persist despite their removal from the domain of “politics.” In Arendt’s thinking, these claims are not sufficient to distinguish human individuality. They are most closely associated with the activities that fall under her category of labor but extend to those that are also included in the category of work. Humans are too similar in their biological needs; they are imposed upon the species by nature. Since there is no choice in these similarities these cannot be the basis of a political community. They yield a sameness that is shared across all persons that makes speech for the purpose of discovering what is unique to each person superfluous.
23 In an unpublished manuscript, entitled “Architecture of The Human Condition”, Patchen Markell has argued that the boundaries between the categories between labor, work, and action exemplify two types of architecture. The first is what he terms the territorial architecture that establishes a strong division between labor and work. The second barrier between work and action is, however, relational. “Artwork,” which includes architecture among the products of “human artifice”, Markell observes, is described in terms that anticipate the layered and entwined character of action. In particular, Arendt considers the work of art (here architecture) the public manifestation
inadvertently renders the defensive walls that Arendt constructs around the “political”
more porous, allowing political action to originate outside the tightly ordered spaces
that Arendt imagines for them.

It also suggests that the alternative organization of these spaces can facilitate the
habits of appearing before a diversely constituted public appropriate to sharing a
political life. Architectural design that is conducive to sharing political life in Arendt’s
terms should aim to enable these forms of mutually sensuous provocation among actors
and spectators.24 By locating the commonality that pulls a political community into
being in political spaces rather than identifying it in what subjects share—whether
language, ethnicity, or citizenship—Arendt sets the terms of political and ethical life in
the broadest possible terms. Political community is not defined by legal status. It is
neither synonymous with the nation nor its citizens. Rather, by specifying politics and
the public in terms of the spaces in which everyone appears as both an actor and
spectator, Arendt indicates the ways in which every single person is implicated in the

of the artist’s (in this case, architect’s) private thought. In this act of anticipating and
then joining the world, the self is liberated from its isolation. Source: unpublished
manuscript in author’s possession; used with permission.

24 The next chapter, especially its discussion of Aldo van Eyck’s concept of the “in-
between” and the use of thresholds in the designs of architect Herman Hertzberger,
directly examines architectural designs that encourage dispositions that correspond to
these forms of appearance and action.
lives of others regardless of their status. In this way, Arendt contests those theories of governance that begin from legally sanctioned identities and relationships. Instead, political rule is a combination of what people do together, namely how their actions lend “density” to common spaces, which, in turn, helps nurture the capacity for action. The diversity of action and plural modes of appearance in these spaces—as opposed to the functional segregation typical of modern city planning that Foucault criticized—helps nurture judgment by present individuals with other humans in their particularity rather than as a category of persons and/or behaviors.

It is Arendt’s account of judgment’s relationship to this densely constituted shared world that helps us recognize the contingency of these legal arrangements and act to change them if necessary. Arendt develops her notion of political judgment based on an idiosyncratic reading of Kant’s theory of aesthetic judgment. She declares Kant’s writings on aesthetics to be his authentic political philosophy and, in effect, snatches this status away from his writings on internal relations, government, and

25 Mark Reinhardt defends Arendt from Sheldon Wolin’s charge that her theory of agonistic politics is suited for “actors and not citizens” (see Wolin “Hannah Arendt”). Reinhardt recommends this as a virtue of Arendt’s concept of action and political community. He writes, “Her actor is not always a citizen, and citizenship does not exhaust Arendtian political identity” (Reinhardt 1997, 166)

26 Maurizio Passerin d’Entrèves points out that there is a second literary model of judgment in Arendt’s writing separate from her remarks related to the judgment of political actors. This second sphere of judgment involves non-participant spectators composed of “poets and historians, who seek to understand the meaning of the past and to reconcile us what has happened” (Passerin d’Entrèves 2000, 246)
constitutionalism. According to Kant, the thinking peculiar to aesthetic judgment is done in reference to the world that we share with others. Arendt views these judgments to be political in nature because they do not involve applying or following a rule. Unlike determinative judgments, which follow from the application of the general to the particular, aesthetic evaluations of an object’s beauty are reflective in that they call for consideration of objects in their particularity.  

The absence of a rule from which to deduce the proper course of action is what distinguishes political thinking from other forms of thinking according to Arendt. Viewing objects in their particularity is tied to the experience humans have appearing in the world that they share with others. Arendt’s second definition of the world, one that is created through the actions of actors and spectators, acknowledges the expert as well as plebian character of the architects and builders of the common world. The latter group consists of those who gather together in the space of appearance, and bring into being through their speech and action (HC, 199). According to Arendt, “The polis, properly speaking, is not the city-state in its physical location; it is the organization of the people as it arises out of acting and speaking together, and its true

27 Kant writes: “[T]here can be no rule by which someone could be compelled to acknowledge that something is beautiful. No one can use reasons or principles to talk us into a judgment on whether some garment, house, or flower is beautiful.” We find these objects beautiful because we take pleasure in them, Kant continues. “[W]e want to submit the objects to our own eyes, just as if our liking of it depended upon that sensation” (CJ, §8, p. 59).
space lies between people living together for this purpose, no matter where they happen to be” (HC, 198). But speech and action are, in themselves, fleeting and destined to disappear without the various works of remembrance that reify them into “tangible objects.”

The stories told in the spaces of appearance form a “web of relationships” that binds together the persons within them. These “world-building” (OR, 175) activities form a world that is intangible but “no less real than the world of things we visibly have in common” (HC, 183). The world, which relates humans to one another, consists of both tangible structures and intangible narratives. “Without being talked about by men and without housing them, the world would not be a human artifice but a heap of unrelated things to which each isolated individual was at liberty to add one more object; without the human artifice to house them, human affairs would be as floating, as futile and vain, as the wandering nomad tribes” (HC, 204). By claiming that the world and the stability it offers are constituted through intangible activities as well as physical

28 The world, Arendt writes, depends for its reality and its continued existence, first, upon the presence of others who have seen and heard and will remember, and second, on the transformation of the intangible into the tangibility of things. Without remembrance, and without the reification which remembrance needs for its own fulfillment and which makes it, indeed, as the Greeks held the mother of all arts, the living activities of action, speech, and thought would lose their reality... and disappear as though they never had been. (HC, 95)
structures, Arendt suggests that architecture is not merely the setting for politics but is constitutive of political action.

In other words, political action and speech must involve a spatial and architectural dimension. Arendt’s actor does not simply speak. For her speech to have political consequence, she must create a place of relative durability and stability where she can be heard and seen by others. It is the spectators who judge her speech and deed, who properly speaking, create the public space of appearance.

[T]he judgment of the spectator creates the space without which no such objects could appear at all. The public realm is constituted by the critics and the spectators, not the actors and the makers. And this critic and spectator sits in every actor. (LK, 63)

As Linda Zerilli notes, Arendt’s spectator does not refer to an individual but “simply a different mode of relating to, or being in, the common world.” Zerilli writes

29 Don Mitchell’s The Right to the City (2003) contains a superlative account of how the Berkeley Free Speech Movement (FSM) had to fight not only for the right to speak on campus, but also places to exercise that right. Mitchell describes how the Berkeley Administration exercised its power through spatial strategies. By creating “designated free speech zones” in obscure campus locations, the Berkeley Administration ensured, in effect, that the message of the gathered protesters would lack publicity. Faced with this situation, FSM participants had to create, in Arendt’s terms, spaces of appearance in which they could exercise their free speech rights.

30 Zerilli 2005, 179. Arendt explains the relational character of “territory” in her criticism of the Israeli’s government’s failure to seek prosecution for Eichmann before an international tribunal. Israel could have easily claimed territorial jurisdiction if she had only explained the “territory,” as the law understands it, is a political and a legal concept, and not merely a geographical term. It relates not so much, and not primarily, to a piece of land as to the space between individuals in a group whose members are
that for action to be a world-building activity, that is, with some degree of permanence that keeps it from disappearing from the world without a trace, it requires spectators to imbue the objects of judgment with their meaning. Since “spectators exist only in the plural” (LK, 63), their judgment must take into account the perspectives of the other spectators. It is this thinking-in-the-round which distinguishes political or aesthetic judgment from other forms of judgment and it is this judgment that creates the sensus communis without which everyday references and claims become difficult, if not impossible, to share.31 Through the act of judging, spectators overcome their individual isolation and move from the darkness of oblivion to the brightly illuminated public realm. For Arendt, the political implications of these judging practices are very clear.

31 Andrew Norris criticizes Arendt’s use of Kant’s description of aesthetic judgment as a model for political judgment because the former is too formalistic and fails to adequately explain the genesis of common reason. Specifically, Norris writes that Arendt’s description of common sense as plurality does not necessarily imply communicability since in Kant’s schema, common sense is in effect, “a feeling caused by the harmonious play between our understanding and our imagination”. He continues, “For Kant, then, communicability is not so much the mark of something that is able to be communicated or made public, as Arendt suggests, as it is the necessary condition of communication” (Norris 1996, 182; emphasis original). In light of Norris’s criticism, let me clarify that I am arguing that practices which create and sustain the sensus communis are a necessary but not sufficient condition for politics.
She writes, with reference to the world of shared places and stories, judgment “decides not only how the world is to look, but also who belongs together in it” (BPF, 223). By extension, the absence of judgment or its deficiency destroys the world that we share with others.

Judgment calls upon, is informed by, and re-creates the experience of appearing and acting among humans in their full plurality. Moreover, as Arendt’s description of totalitarianism makes clear, the plural character of the world provides a substantive moral content for judgment and action suitable for democratic politics. Under totalitarian rule, according to Arendt, individual perspectives on the world are replaced

\[\text{\textsuperscript{32}}\text{ The arrow to Eichmann whose defense, according to Arendt, amounted to asking “who was I to judge?”}, and, by extension, mass society, in this remark should be very clear. Here’s what she says: “[A]bout nothing does public opinion everywhere seem to be in happier agreement than that no one else has the right to judge somebody. What public opinion permits us to judge and even to condemn are trends, or whole groups of people—the larger the better—in short, something so general that distinctions can no longer be made, names no longer be named” (EJ, 296).

\text{\textsuperscript{33}}\text{ Norris emphasizes the importance of common sense in \textit{Origins of Totalitarianism}. What is distinctive about totalitarianism in her account, writes Norris, “is the nature of its assault on the possibility of such revelation (i.e. the revelatory character of human action which depends upon a community to judge that action), which consists in the suppression of the judgments of common sense.” He goes on to note that Arendt strongly disagreed with theorists like Leo Strauss who believed that totalitarianism was a form of tyranny, observing the following distinction:}

Where tyranny leaves the nature of the private space untouched (though it may violently circumscribe it), totalitarianism destroys it. Most importantly, where tyranny does not disturb the \textit{sensus communis}, totalitarianism’s ideological thinking and the breakdown of political structures that allow for action in concert cripple common sense. This amounts to a loss of plurality, the basic condition for action. (Norris 1996, 174)
by a single ideology as the in-between spaces that separate and relate humans collapse. The result is an “organized loneliness” that isolates humans from one another, relegating them to live *inter hominess esse* rather than *inter esse hominess*, leaving judgment and action in a vacuum into which totalitarian ideology can insert itself (OT, 478). In order to preserve the conditions for democratic politics, judgment and action must cultivate a care for this plural world.

The thinking characteristic to judgment, Arendt notes, mimics the experience of bodily co-presence in this plural world. It is separate from the interior dialogue peculiar to pure reasoning. Even when one is entirely alone, this thinking represents, in Kant’s words, an “enlarged mentality” because it anticipates a dialogue with others, Arendt says, “whom I know I must finally come to some agreement” (BPF, 220). Judgment of an object’s beauty, for example, gains its validity and “impartiality” from the opinions of others, who may agree or disagree. The thinking process active in judgment involves “thinking in the place of everybody else,” something which requires “training one’s imagination to go visiting” these other positions in order to “see” and consider the common object from their perspective (BPF, 220; LK 43).³⁴

³⁴ Arendt says her interest in the problem and nature of thinking and judging was “awakened” by Adolph Eichmann’s 1964 trial before an Israeli court, which she covered for *The New Yorker* magazine (LMT, 3). Observing the trial, Arendt concluded that Eichmann, who claimed in his defense that he broke no laws and only followed the orders of his superiors, was guilty of thoughtlessness. In addition to Eichmann’s penchant for clichéd thinking, Arendt declares that he was incapable of thinking from
Arendt calls the inter-subjective relations that are mediated through their positions with respect to the common object in-between them, “representative thinking.”

This political thinking is connected to the individual’s actual memories and experiences of appearing as a subject and object in the world with others. The imagination “represents” these memories and experience to the mind. The result is not empathic identification with another’s point of view “but of being and thinking in my own identity where I am actually not.” Arendt goes on:

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the position of another. Eichmann, she notes in astonishment and frustration, spent months in self-absorption relating the high and low points of his Nazi SS career to a German-Jewish interrogator without any kind of self-awareness. Eichmann had no sense of judgment because he lived in conditions of isolation. This isolation was the result of the Nazi’s totalitarian impulse to efface difference from its population through a combination of extermination of Jews, Gypsies, Romanis, homosexuals, and intellectuals, and the imposition of routines that attempted to mould the remaining population in uniform mass. Capital punishment was appropriate in Eichmann’s case because he did not deserve to live in a world that he was unwilling to share with others. Such persons, she did not say but could have, merit capital punishment because their assaults against human plurality endanger and threaten the fundamental condition of the world, which must be preserved against all else.

Arendt elaborates the transformation these particular experiences must undergo in the mind:

Not sense perception, in which we experience things directly and close at hand, but imagination, coming after it, prepares the objects of our thought... we must repeat the direct experience in our minds after leaving the scene where it took place. By repeating in imagination, we de-sense whatever had been given to our senses...The Greek language has this time element in its very vocabulary: the word “to know,” as I pointed out earlier, is a derivative of the world “to see.” To see is idein, to know is eidenai, which is to have seen. First you see, then you know. (LMT, 86-87)
The more people’s standpoints I have present in my mind while I am pondering a given issue, and the better I can imagine how I would feel and think if I were in their place, the stronger will be my capacity for representative thinking and the more valid my final conclusions, my opinion.

(BPF, 241)

Judgments, in other words, are not subjective. More importantly, they depend upon spatial configurations that allow these habits of sensing and being sensed to develop. Only under these conditions can judgments gain the objectivity and impartiality that Arendt imagines. Of all the mental activities that Arendt details, only judging deals with the content of world in its particularity and requires the presence of other people. Judging turns our attention to the world and, more importantly, anticipates and solicits a response from others. Judgment and the ensuing action is the

36 Recall from the last chapter that New Urbanists seek empathetic identification (“A child growing up in such a homogenous environment is likely to develop a sense of empathy for people from other walks of life and is ill-prepared to live in a diverse society”), which involves seeing from the place of another as the other. For Arendt, empathetic identification replaces one subjective position for another and therefore fails to yield the “objectivity” that she is after. That objectivity involves maintaining a semblance of “distance” that separates judging subjects. She describes the loss of this distance in modernity in the following passage:

The public realm, as the common world, gathers us together and yet prevents our falling over each other, so to speak. What makes mass society so difficult to bear is not the number of people involved, or at least not primarily, but the fact that the world between them has lost its power to gather them together, to relate and separate them. The weirdness of this situation resembles a spiritualistic séance where a number of people gathered around a table might suddenly, through some magic trick, see the table vanish from their midst, so that two persons sitting opposite each other were no longer separated but also would be unrelated to each other by anything tangible. (HC, 52-32)
means by which individuals insert themselves into the world and gain a sense of their own significance.

Judgments make reference to this *sensus communis* and, in doing so transcend the individual without becoming a universal.\(^\text{37}\) “Judging is one, if not the most, important activity in which this sharing-the-world-with-others comes to pass” writes Arendt (BPF, 221). Judgments are generalizable but only within the context of the *sensus communis* in which they are made: “When one judges, one judges as a member of a community” (LK, 72). Standards of beauty, for example, will vary according to context, differing across time and place. Several commentators have noted the tension between the attention to particularity and experience that recalls Aristotle’s description of *phronesis* and the Kantian universalism embedded in Arendt’s appropriation of the term *sensus communis*.\(^\text{38}\) But the *sensus communis* that I have described in Arendt’s work suggests

\(^{37}\) Beiner notes that Arendt consistently translates Kant’s term *allegemein* as “general” rather than the more typical “universal.” Although *allegemein* can be translated as general, the substitution has obvious implications for her reading of Kant and for her theory of political judgment (Beiner 1992, 163-note 155). As Beiner indicates the validity of judgments never extends beyond those in whose place the judging person has put herself, yet as Kristie McClure notes Arendt revised her opinion on school desegregation after the initial reception of her “Reflections on Little Rock” essay. Such reversibility suggests that, as we saw in ancient Athens, the borders of the *sensus communis* to which judgment recurs and contributes is also open to revision. Moreover, McClure notes, “Reflections” demonstrates that judgment and common sense operative in Arendt’s understanding of political community were “not a matter of conforming to a common mind; much less was it a matter of submitting to the self-evident truth of a disembodied reason and of making the world over in its image” (McClure 1997, 79).

\(^{38}\) See Benhabib 1996, 175.
that the *sensus communis* originating in diverse perspectives does not rise to a Kantian universal.

If we consider this common sense in terms of architecture and politics, architectural design should promote common knowledge that facilitates understanding through communication across difference. Arendt presents a concept of *archē* suited for modern democratic politics based on her adaptation and elaboration of Aristotle’s notion of communicative power: Humans, she writes, appear as actors and spectators on “common stage” (LMT, 50) that relates them without rendering them identical. The *sensus communis* sustains the twin conditions of equality and difference because it promotes understanding of difference in its uniqueness. Kimberly Curtis elucidates this point by referencing Arendt’s remarks on understanding in her essay “The Concept of History”:

The Greek learned to exchange his own viewpoint, his own ‘opinion’—the way the world appeared and opened up to him...with those of his fellow citizens. Greeks learned to understand—not to understand one another as individual persons, but to look upon the same world from one another’s standpoint—to see the same in very different and frequently opposing aspects.

(BPF, 51; quoted in Curtis 1999, 35)

As Curtis notes, common sense can relate individuals in what separates them. That is, for differences in opinion to have any political valence they must touch upon what is common—otherwise they suffer from oblivion. Common sense can enable a
deeper understanding of another person or group’s argument. It does not guarantee a solution, but it does suggest potential political agreement is possible (BPF, 222).  

Arendt lists sites of judgment, including Rätes, councils, soviets, and communes (OR, 249, 262), that were the products of world building practices. Judgment produced common sense where it did not exist before. These sites represented a “new power structure which owed its existence to nothing but the organizational impulses of the people themselves” (OR, 257). This “new power” or archē has its origins in speech and action that are boundless, unpredictable, and fleeting unless a space for them is secured (HC, 190-191). This communicative power is present when humans can join with others to act on their judgments and its source is mutual promise-keeping. With promises, people pledge themselves to one another into the future, creating an island of security in the ocean of uncertainty. Extending Nietzsche’s discussion of promises in The Genealogy of Morals, Arendt recognizes that promise-keeping is a source of power. Specifically, a

39 Quoting Kant, “For if it is granted that we can quarrel about something, then there must be some hope for us to arrive at agreement about it,” (CJ, §56, p. 211). Linda Zerilli defuses the opposition between the two sides in this debate by noting that Kant allows for more agonism than his reputed universalism would suggest (Zerilli 2005, 169).

40 In Nietzsche’s work, Arendt identifies morality as the product of agreements, which although they evolve with time, offer humans a sense of stability and predictability in their world affairs. She views promise-keeping and morality (along with the ability to forgive and be forgiven) to be a non-transcendental source for human politics. In particular, she locates the ability to make and keep promises in the familiarity with the mores, traditions, and culture that is acquired through inhabiting a certain place over an extended duration of time.
promise kept testifies to the power of individual judgment and action. However, because promises require at least two people they also emphasize that successful action requires two or more persons to join together. Since one’s reputation depends upon the frequency with which one fulfills her promises, this gives promises a type of stability that she believes is necessary for political life. This fact leads Arendt to declare that:

There is an element of the world-building capacity of man in the human faculty of making and keeping promises. Just as promises and agreements deal with the future and provide stability in the ocean of future uncertainty where the unpredictable may break from all sides, so the constituting, founding, and world-building capacities of man concern always not so much ourselves and our own time on earth as our ‘successors’, and ‘posterities’.

(OR, 175)

Yet promises establish only a marginal degree of security and power. Promises, if they are to retain their strength, must be perpetually renewed. She writes that

Nietzsche, in his extraordinary sensibility to modern phenomena, and despite his modern prejudice to see the source of all power in the will to power of the isolated individual, saw in the faculty of promises (the “memory of the will,” as he called it) the very distinction which marks off human from animal life... In so far as morality is more than the sum total of mores, of customs and standards of behavior solidified through tradition and valid on the ground of agreements, both of which change with time, it has at least politically, no more to support itself than the good will to counter the enormous risks of action by readiness to forgive and be forgiven, to make promises and to keep them. These moral precepts are the only ones that are not applied to action from the outside, from some supposedly higher faculty or from experiences outside action’s own reach. They arise, on the contrary, directly out of the will to live together with others in the mode of acting and speaking, and thus they are like control mechanisms built into the very faculty to start new and unending processes. (HC, 246-247)
“Whenever people gather together, it is potentially there, but only potentially, not necessarily and not forever” (HC, 199). This power “springs up between men when they act together and vanishes the moment they disperse” and keeps the public realm in existence (HC, 200). The spaces that are the result of judgment make power—and the confidence people have in their own sense of power—a tangible and visible reality. Visibility and co-presence confirm that power and allay the persistent doubt of one’s own inconsequentiality that is the “price human beings pay for freedom” (HC, 244).

These political spaces literally shelter the individual and collective ego by securing “freedom” against forces that would endanger the capacity to actualize power, soliciting others to join and enjoy the sense of power that its participants enjoy. They sustain and protect action from the “infinite improbability” which all new things struggle against in making their appearance in the world. It is through witnessing the arrival of the new and telling stories about those episodes in the spaces that individuals have created together that Arendt believes humans re-affirm hope and, just as importantly, the capacity to initiate political action within them (HC, 244-245). The broken thread of tradition and the attendant disappearance of political space have led

41 If mutual promise-keeping adds to the stability of the world, forgiving and the ability to forgive, which Arendt lists as the second human faculty that depends on the fact of human plurality, is an act which “can never be predicted” (HC, 241). The unexpected character of forgiveness means that it is a reaction that nonetheless has the natal character of action in that it “acts anew” to break the cycle of vengeance (ibid). The presence of miracles also testifies to the “fact of natality” (HC, 247). Miracles, writes Arendt, occur despite their infinite improbability.
moderns to view stability and durability as incompatible with the introduction of new things into the world. This opposition, she says, “must be recognized among the symptoms of our loss” (OR, 223).

Arendt finds examples of political spaces that combined both of these elements in her investigation of the American founding. Although she notes that because the founders were preoccupied with permanence, they were only partly successful in maintaining these spaces as sites that preserved the spirit of the new (OR, 229). Nonetheless she observes that, like the Romans, who they consciously modeled themselves after, the American founders sought to preserve the revolutionary spirit of the founding within the Constitution. That is, within the written document of the Constitution they wished to maintain a space for the constituting act by which the people could re-constitute themselves into a public body (OR, 203). The founders anticipated that the amendment and judicial process would represent a form of innovation that augments, strengthens, and preserves the authority of the original founding (OR, 200-202). Like the Romans, who imagined their republic to be the continuation of the settlement at Troy and added “citizens” as their empire grew to encompass new territories, the Americans believed that they would affirm the authority of their founding act by repeating it anew.

The word “culture” and the concept of culture that Arendt seeks to repair, or better reconstitute, also have Roman origins. This notion of culture has its roots in
agricultural society, “in the sense of cultivating and tending nature until it becomes fit for human habitation” (BPF, 212). It connotes an “attitude of living care” towards the content of the world, something Arendt calls “the sense of taking care of the monuments of the past” (OR, 213). The web of relationships cultivates the collective memory of past actions that ushered new things into the world and these stories sustain this capacity with human beings. These memories add depth and dimension to the common spaces that humans share with one another (BPF, 94). These stories, as much as physical landmarks, orient our sense of judgment, serving as instructive examples. Just like the table that relates and separates humans, these stories can situate people in relation to one another.

Arendt’s focus on the force of these narratives has at least two implications for the practice of judgment. First, her insistence that “we must discover the past ourselves” (BPF, 204) is a call to change our relationship to the past in order to re-authorize our actions. These revised judgments can change our perspective on the past and relationship to the future. In this way, judgment approximates Foucault’s description of

42 Writing of the tradition of authority now lost, Arendt states: “But it cannot be denied that without a securely anchored tradition—and the loss of this security occurred several hundred years ago—the whole dimension of the past has also been endangered. We are in danger of forgetting, and such an oblivion—quite apart from the contents themselves that could be lost—would mean that, humanly speaking, we would deprive ourselves of one dimension, the dimension of depth in human existence. For memory and depth are the same, or rather, depth cannot be reached by man except through remembrance” (BPF, 84).
genealogy as a practice that can dislodge the force of a truth and open up the possibility for the introduction of alternative truths. The paradox of judgment is that it can revise the very spatial and political conditions it is dependent upon. These revisions permit the discovery of new selves and new relations. Like Rancière’s partition of the sensible, these “new power structures” derived from speech and action possess a miraculous quality. Just as miracles represent improbable yet regularly occurring disruptions in the existing order of things, the human capacity for action, while threatened, can never be extinguished completely. Despite the frailty of political action and space, for those who participate in their creation, these political spaces have the potential to change how actors view themselves and others as both subjects and objects. Judgment has the potential to transform not only spectators and actors, but also the world they create together.

Second, embedded within the description the relationships that bring this intangible in-between into being, is a reference to the tangible architectures that cultivate habits of mutual promising. Arendt regards Jefferson’s proposed ward system, which would have cultivated a class of political elites from “all walks of life who have a taste

43 Arendt writes: “Whenever people judge the things of the world that are common to them, there is more implied in their judgments than these things. By his manner of judging, the person discloses to an extent himself, what kind of person he is, and this disclosure, which is involuntary, gains in validity to the degree that it has liberated itself from merely individual idiosyncrasies” (BPF, 223).
44 See Footnote 40 for a longer discussion of morality, agreement, and tradition, in Arendt’s interpretation of Nietzsche.
for public freedom and cannot be ‘happy’ without it” (OR, 279), as foregone option which may have been able to preserve “the spirit of the revolution—a new spirit and the spirit of beginning something new” (OR, 280). Leaving aside her unapologetic endorsement of a political elite, Arendt’s appeal to the township-like dimensions of Jefferson’s wards suggests that action rests on the knowledge cultivated in these spaces and the habits they make possible.

Tocqueville discusses *moeurs* and habits of the township at great length, and if we compare his description of the dispositions shaped there with what he finds admirable in the panoptic prison design, the other architectural design that was the subject of his attention during his travels to America, the contrast is striking. Tocqueville found that township’s smaller scale prioritized direct and clear speech so that authority, when invoked, could be questioned. More importantly, the repeated experience of having to negotiate mundane matters and needs inflected and softened individual interests, transforming them into *inter-esse* in Arendt’s terms. “Self-interest, rightly understood” was linked to appreciation of the mutual relations that sustained the material and political conditions of the township. The ensuing limits on acquisition anticipate Arendt’s wholesale refusal to admit action based in economic claims and biological needs since these would violate the conditions of plurality that define political community.
Not only did regular participation in township life help temper the excesses of individualism, it also helped citizens appreciate their own power as well as its limits. Compared with the mutually supporting forms of inter-visibility available in the township, the cellular design of the prison isolated prisoners from society as well as one another. Cut off from the societal moeurs they had arguably violated in some way, prisoners were unable to sustain the better parts of those habits. Their incarceration left them without the stability of societal moeurs and made them more susceptible to the adoption of a new schema of rehabilitation therapies designed by state authorities. Isolation and powerlessness were instruments of obedience promoted through the prison’s design.\textsuperscript{45} When architecture facilitates isolation outside the context of the prison, as we saw in the last chapter, the effect is similar.\textsuperscript{46}

Seyla Benhabib is critical of Arendt’s account of the “enlarged mentality” engendered in these spaces of inter-visibility on two grounds. Discussing the mutual respect that Arendt presupposed would develop in these spaces of appearance, what Arendt described as a “kind of friendship without intimacy or closeness” (HC, 243),

\textsuperscript{45} The township and prison form a stark contrast that highlights the difference between two dispositions vis-à-vis visibility facilitated through architectural design. Tocqueville regards the township as the site of a mutually supportive, relational form of visibility, better suited to habituating democratic citizens. Following a similar logic but for different reasons, he views the more isolating model of visibility in the panoptic design of the prison as more appropriate for reforming offenders.

\textsuperscript{46} The contrast and political implications of Tocqueville’s contrary enthusiasm for the township and prison is taken from Sheldon Wolin’s Tocqueville: Between Two Worlds (2001).
Benhabib writes that “Arendt does not examine the philosophical step that would lead from a description of the equality of the human condition to the equality that comes from moral and political recognition.”

Benhabib is correct, but only because she is thinking of equality enshrined in liberal-democracies. Arendt’s radical democratic politics places no such limits around respect for individual rights. The respect that Arendt refers to is that given to the person as a political actor, not for who they are or what rights they are said to possess, and it is an acknowledgment of democracy’s potentially illiberal outcomes.

Second, Benhabib argues that like the example of the polis, there is something outdated in Arendt’s stress on the visible public and the materiality at the heart of her concept of the world. She argues, instead, for Habermas’s auditory notion of the public, one that is formed through various reading and literary practices. Yet, her invocation of Habermas’s account of these early modern reading publics misses their spatial dimensions—the journals which generated Habermas’s bourgeois public sphere were connected to coffeehouses and spaces for discussion—and the way that reading practices have changed in the intervening period. Today, with the proliferation of on-

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47 Benhabib 1996, 196.
48 Arendt’s description of the space of appearance stresses the non-sovereign character of self-presentation there while downplaying the way that the very ambition she praises often motivates efforts to manipulate one’s appearance. The space of appearance can generate self-deception and willful ignorance as often its does the respect that Arendt hopes for and which Benhabib is suspect of (See Curtis 1999, p. 34, for a longer discussion of distortion in modes of self-presentation).
line journals and blogs, reading may be considered more of an interior process and publics may be less auditory, more diffuse, and more separate than Benhabib imagines them.

To me, these technological shifts resemble the “three great events” that Arendt declares, “stand at the threshold of the modern age and determine its character” (HC, 248). The first, the discovery of the New World, spread world alienation among residents of the Old World. The suddenly crossable Atlantic caused attention to turn away from the immediate particularity of the known world (in the eyes of Europeans) towards the world-yet-to-be (HC, 251). The Reformation meant the seizure of church property and the expropriation of a mass of laborers from their place in the world (HC, 253). Finally, the invention of the telescope caused humans to doubt their senses, both in terms of their own reality and the validity of the world they shared with others (HC, 262). These three events propelled humans away from the objectivity of the world and towards the cultivation of their own subjectivism and interiority.49

The importance that Arendt placed upon physical spaces and a densely constituted world, even if Arendt’s attention to these spaces is marginal, remains, I

49 If we were to look at online reading habits, I suspect that despite the internet’s reputed horizontal architecture—anyone can enter and construct a website—for the particular, web use is defined by a few large portals that reaffirm rather than challenge our sense of ourselves. In other words, while the web may be wide our individual experience is frequently narrow. This is suggested by a recent survey conducted by the Pew Research Center. See “Most Online News Readers Use 5 Sites or Fewer, Study Says” in The New York Times, Monday, March 15, 2010, B2 (Carolinas Print Edition).
think, relevant today. Reading publics are no substitute to the sense of publicity that physical architectures, which invite and sustain modes of appearance connected to the experience of witnessing, provoking, and longing for other human beings, can provide. Action and judgment, our confidence in our ability to bring new things into the world, depend upon the existence of these forms of architecture: they represent a necessary but not sufficient condition for the democratic politics that I am describing in this chapter. The architectural spaces that I outlined in the previous chapter contribute to oblivion and dull our desire and aptitude to participate in public life.

Arendt writes that the space of appearance “predates and precedes all formal constitution of the public realm and the various forms of government, that is, the various forms in which the public can be organized” (HC, 199). The design of physical spaces similarly follows and cannot guarantee that a taste for public life will develop. However, architectural design and practice can facilitate the emergence of those capabilities and the durability of the spaces that encourage their emergence. Arendt’s remarks on these latter spaces are general rather than concrete. The reader is left knowing that it is vital to tend to the conditions that preserve the capacity for judgment and action but uncertain of how to do so—let alone trying to facilitate them through architectural design.

In the next section, I examine Arendt’s reflections on “world-building” activities more concretely by aligning them with the work of the urban planner Kevin Lynch.
Lynch was an American urban planner who shared both her worry for the loss of common spaces and the desire to create them. As a planner though, Lynch thought about spatial design in terms of circulation and movement, something Arendt’s almost exclusive focus on “world-building” activities kept her from fully engaging. My purpose is to examine the place of judgment in Arendt’s concept of the world through the lens of Lynch’s experience of negotiating real world design challenges. Finally, I conclude with an example of the “world building practices” that I described in Arendt’s work inflected with Lynch’s insight into the use and organization of the common world.

II.

Like Arendt, Lynch’s concern for the loss of a common world springs from a deep commitment to democratic politics. Lynch’s design philosophy and method is a direct counterpoint to the strongly constructed notion of the planner’s sovereign control that animates Le Corbusier’s and CIAM’s High Modernism. Lynch retains the latter pair’s salutary regard for a legible landscape, while rejecting its anti-democratic impulse. That Lynch is able to move with and against High Modernism by affirming its stress on simplified forms while divorcing them from a notion of archē grounded in domination and power underscores that, while certain types of architecture may be historically associated with particularly democratic or undemocratic political regimes, these forms
are not determinative. Lynch is clear that the meaning of architecture is a matter of use rather than intention.

His most important book, *The Image of the City* (1960) begins with a reminder that planning is not a matter of designing forms, but a consideration of the activities that will take place within those forms. Echoing Arendt, he writes that “Moving elements in a city, and in particular the people and their activities, are as important as the stationary physical parts. We are not simply observers of this spectacle, but ourselves a part of it, on the stage with the other participants” (IC, 2). Lynch’s purpose was to reorient the planning profession away from the Archimedean perspective it had long preferred and instead situate planners among the communities their designs were meant to serve.

For Lynch and his fellow planners, the status of the common world was no abstract matter, but one grounded in concrete realities, the achievement of which would be a measure of their talents. To Lynch, the pressures of almost a century of Jim Crow segregation and tremendous immigration and population growth during the same period meant the slow disintegration of common space in American cities. Increasing white flight, aggressive ethnic enclaving, and what Lynch considered to be thoughtless design that left the public unmoved had contributed an attitude of neglect for cities and city life. The accelerated development of the (non-inner city) suburb, which drew upon the romanticized pastoral elements in the American tradition and where regularly repeating designs formed a sharp visual contrast with the “disorder” of the historical
city, was especially damaging to the status of the city and the potential for common life that it offered.50

Especially with the end of Jim Crow, Lynch’s goal was to design common spaces that would invite all citizens regardless of race or ethnicity to use them as equals.

“Separate but equal” had meant, at best, publics that had developed alongside one another but with only minimal points of contact among members of different races as equals. Lynch was encouraged to “look for ways in which the transformations of the built environment through urban renewal could be used to transform these overlaps into public spaces for all citizen groups in the city…. [and investigated] what can serve as the spatial precondition for playing out the social diversity in American cities.”51 His response to these challenges was “to examine the overlaps among different citizens and groups in terms of their collective perception of the city.”52 He was, in his own words,

50 In my opinion, it is here that Lynch shows his debt and quarrel with his teacher Wright. Wright’s Usonia, seen in his plan for Broadacres, was intended to foster a distinctively American identity that was linked to his riff on the Jeffersonian pastoral tradition in American culture. Lynch, I think, understood how exclusive this was in practice even as he retained the desire for an American public as an ideal. George Baird insightfully summarizes the tensions in Wright’s efforts, begun a Taliesin, to articulate a new social organization that incorporated industrial technology within a pastoral setting at Broadacres. Baird remarks that Wright’s efforts to synthesize city and country “eerily foretell the suburb of our era” down to Wright’s prediction that in the future houses would not be primarily classified by the number of bedrooms but by the number of cars they are meant to accommodate (a “two-car garage home, for instance). See Baird 2003, 225-231.

51 Sarkis 2000, 97.

52 Ibid.
“motivated by the promise of the new world of vision inherent in our speed of movement, and by a desire to find a visual means for pulling together large urban areas” (VFR, 63).

Lynch (1918-1984), who had trained as an architect, first at Yale and then with Frank Lloyd Wright at Taliesin, before joining the faculty of The Massachusetts Institute of Technology’s School of Architecture and Urban Planning, developed a long-term survey methodology to study how users perceived their environment and how well they thought it served their needs. This revolutionary method, which would become the hallmark of Lynch’s research and teaching career, was intended to correct the errors of an earlier generation of planners who concentrated on the intention rather than effects of their works. Lynch was inspired by his MIT colleague, painter and professor of design Gyorgy Kepes, to think of the planner as an artist whose craftwork would be judged by the audience composed of its users (CD, 4). To understand how those who live in the city perceive and are drawn into meaningful relationships through the built environment, Lynch conducted five-year surveys of how the residents of Boston, Jersey City, and Los Angeles experienced and understood the cities they lived in. Compared with traditional planning, Lynch softens the controlling impulse of archē without ceding

\[ \text{\footnotesize 53 MIT is the oldest program for the study of architecture in the United States and the second oldest planning program in the country. Its students and faculty enjoy prominent influence in both fields. (Source: http://sap.mit.edu/about/history/ (accessed March 11, 2010)).} \]
the responsibility that attends to ruling that is inherent in the practice of architecture and planning. Instead, he opens the knowledge that animates archē up to a much wider audience. Specifically, he imagines that the meaning of the planner’s “performance” will be determined through the sense-making judgments of the audience in terms very similar to Arendt’s gloss of this process.

Attempting to further deform the planner’s desire for sovereign control, Lynch began by noting that the built environment belonged to the “many builders who are constantly modifying the structures for their own” (IC, 2). Additionally he writes that the city’s meaning accumulates and changes over time (IC, 1),54 which means that the planner’s power is limited and that planners should recognize the inherent limitations upon their profession. He reminds them that “only partial control can be exercised over its [the city’s] growth and form” (IC, 2). The planner’s challenge is to organize the manifold images of the city percolating in the individual and collective memory of its residents into a “coherent pattern” so that they can be recognized with ease (IC, 3). Lynch’s goal is to identify the “mental image of that city which is held by its citizens” (IC, 2). What does Lynch mean by the term “image”?

54 Image begins: “Looking at cities can give a special pleasure, however commonplace the sight may be. Like a piece of architecture, the city is a construction in space, but one of vast scale, a thing perceived only in the course of long spans of time...Every citizen has had a long association with some part of his city, and his image is soaked in memories and meanings” (IC, 1).
“Image” or “imageability” refers to “that quality in a physical object which gives it a high probability of evoking a strong sense in any given observer” (IC, 9).

Imageability is descriptively similar to the legibility (“a related pattern of recognizable symbols”) that Scott identifies with High Modernism. Legibility is achieved through the arrangement of paths, edges, districts, nodes (intersections), and landmarks that can be “easily grouped into an all-over pattern” (IC, 3). Lynch draws the image of the city and the self close together. That is, he links self-perception to the lived experience of the city, “Since image development is a two way process between observer and observed, it is possible to strengthen the image by either symbolic devices, by retraining of the perceiver, or by reshaping one’s surroundings” (IC, 11). As a planner, Lynch focused on the second part of this equation, believing that as a planner this is where members of his profession could have the greatest impact on the virtuous circle between architectural design and activity within the city. The reason that Lynch closely identifies the viewer with the environment is that, for him, imageability not only corresponds to memory, but our attention and participation is drawn towards the image of the beautiful city (IC, 10).

55 The imageable city, per Lynch’s description, is sensuous: “A highly imageable (apparent, legible, or visible) city in this peculiar sense would seem well formed, distinct, remarkable; it would invite the eye and the ear to greater attention and participation. The sensuous grasp upon such surroundings would not merely be simplified, but also extended and deepened... The concept of imageability does not necessarily connote something fixed, limited, precise, unified, or regularly ordered,
Less imageable cities are both poorly designed and lack beauty, according to Lynch. As a consequence, they enervate the senses and dissipate our enthusiasm for participating in the world. Inasmuch as individuals take their bearing from the world, in terms of how they understand themselves and their relations with others, imageability is a source of stability analogous to Arendt’s understanding of the world which humans are born into. For Lynch, clarity in environmental design is a measure of stability that helps orient city residents and visitors to the built environment, in both the short and long term. A well-imaged city helps foster the sense of civic togetherness and belonging. The design of the city, according to Lynch, has implications for the short and long term psychic health of the individual and community. He writes:

To become completely lost is perhaps a rather rare experience for most people in the modern city. We are supported by the presence of others and by special way finding devices: maps, street numbers, route signs, bus placards. But let the mishap of disorientation once occur, and the sense of anxiety and even terror that accompanies it reveals to us how closely it is linked to our sense of balance and well-being. The very word “lost” in our language means much more than simple geographic uncertainty; it carries overtones of utter disaster.

(IC, 4)

although it may sometimes have the qualities” (IC, 10). Most of all, the imageable city represents a site overflowing with potential erotic attachments that stimulate the user’s curiosity: “At every instant, there is more than the eye can see, more than the ear can hear, a setting or a view waiting to be explored” (IC, 1). One is pulled in to engage with and form memories of the city: “Nothing is experienced by itself, but always in relation to its surroundings, the sequences of events (i.e. paths, landmarks, nodes, etc.) leading up to it, the memory of past experiences” (ibid).
The planner’s task, according to Lynch, is to manipulate the built environment to produce a semblance of stability for the city’s entire population in order to avoid this sense of being lost and/or disconnected. A sharply rendered, vivid physical setting, he says, “plays a social role” by linking together disparate groups into a public (IC, 4). The “presence of others” referred to in the above quote gives the city an objectivity that is meant to keep residents from feeling “lost”, i.e. falling into the condition of political oblivion and meaninglessness. Lynch does not believe it is possible to legislate this shared political identity. He writes, “The observer himself should play an active role in perceiving the world and have a creative part in developing his image” (IC, 6). The planner facilitates the development of this public by coordinating patterns of circulation and perception that stimulate activity and memory. For him, just as for Arendt, stability and activity can be mutually reinforcing rather than oppositional. He remarks, “a planned model may elicit spontaneity rather than suppress it” (WTP, 88).

In order to solicit this activity, the city’s design must stimulate awareness and attention. As he puts it, “A landscape which is ordered in precise and final detail may inhibit patterns of activity. A landscape whose every rock tells a story may make difficult the creation of fresh stories” (IC, 6). Instead, Lynch states that “what we [planners should] seek is not a final but open-ended order, capable of further development” (IC, 6). He imagines that observers will complete the task of generating the public that the planner initiates. Above all, the stories they narrate about the city
and themselves should be public. The planner can guide the development of these stories by sites and images that will be the focal points of these stories and memories. States Lynch, “the environment must make us aware of living together in a common present” (WTP, 88).

It is important to pause here to note that, while Lynch describes the world in terms very similar to Arendt—namely as both structures and narratives that lend users a sense of its stability, objectivity, and validity—he does not explicitly theorize these in terms of judgment or action, as she does. Despite the lack of these terms in his writing and work, he nonetheless appears to be operating with an understanding of these categories. The “image of the city” that users form through their activities and habits of circulation entail a myriad of judgments that must be guided and organized by the planner’s work.

Time, more specifically the experience of time, is the variable that enables the planner to manipulate the character, image, and stories told about a place (WTP, 75).56

56 Commenting on the complex relationship between space, time, and place, David Harvey echoes Lynch when he writes that “place” represents the intersection of time and space and that the word carries a great amount of metaphorical freight. Here is Harvey:

Concepts of space and time affect the way we understand the world to be. And they also provide a reference system by means of which we locate ourselves... It is therefore impossible to proceed far with a discussion of space and time without invoking the term “place.” This in turn has implications for how we “place” things and how we think of “our place” in the order of things in particular. But the word “place” carries a surfeit of meanings. To begin with,
Lynch admits that managing the perception of time—both historical time and the appropriate rate to move through the environment—is the most difficult part of the planner’s task, but that “social coordination depends on it” (WTP, 80). Although time figures more prominently in Lynch’s understanding of what constitutes a common world than Arendt’s, as I will explain, it begs for further complication. Lynch believes it is not simply seeing others that confirm the validity of the world and our presence within it, but that our sense of inhabiting a common world also turns on the coordination of sense data from that world since “We build our image of the world from data from our senses” (WTP, 83). Since the image unfolds in time, it is the nexus of time and space that give the world objectivity (in Arendt’s terms) and without which meanings would remain heterogeneous and unconnected. “So various are the individual meanings of the city, even while its form may be easily communicable, that it

There are all sorts of words such as milieu, locality, location, locale, neighborhood, region, territory, and the like, which refer to the generic qualities of place... “Place” (like space and time) also has an extraordinary range of metaphorical meanings. We talk about the place of art in social life, the place of men in society, our place in the cosmos, and we internalize such notions psychologically in terms of knowing our place or feeling we have a place in the affections or esteem of others. We express norms by putting people, events, and things in their “proper” place and seek to subvert norms by struggling to define a new place (“on the margin” or “on the border,” for example) from which the oppressed can freely speak. Place has to be one of the most multi-layered and multipurpose keywords in our language. (Harvey 1996, 208).
appears possible to separate meaning from form, at least in the early stages of the analysis” (IC, 9).

“Meaning” is one of the three parts of an object’s “image”, with structure and identity comprising the other two. Identity refers to the recognition of the object’s visual distinctiveness (in the quote above, this is “its form” which is “easily communicable”) and structure connotes its spatial dimensions. Meanings are generated by the observer, may be connected to memories originating in habitual use or arising from emotional attachments, or may be part of inherited discourses like family memories or stories. According to Lynch, these memories are most directly connected to the “strong sense” imparted and invoked by the object’s image. Yet, because meaning represents the viewer’s judgment upon the object and these judgments are as potentially diverse as the number of viewers, the image’s “meaning” will be difficult to center.

On the one hand, Lynch understands that individual action and decision are heterogeneous and the planner cannot control the structure, identity, and meaning of sites. He acknowledges this point, writing that “The image should preferably be open-ended, adaptable to change, allowing the individual to continue to investigate and organize reality: there should be blank spaces left where he can continue the drawing himself” (IC, 9). On the other, he insists that the meaning of the image should be “in some measure be communicable to other individuals” (ibid). Lynch’s comment on form’s contribution to meaning captures this tension:
A city is a multiple purpose, shifting organization, a tent for many functions, raised by many hands and with relative speed. Complete specialization, final meshing, is improbable and undesirable. The form must be somewhat noncommittal, plastic to the purposes and perceptions of its citizens.

Yet there are fundamental functions of which the city forms may be expressive: circulation, major land uses, key focal points. The common hopes and pleasures, the sense of community may be made flesh. Above all, if the environment is visibly organized and sharply identified, then the citizen can inform it with his own meanings and connections. Then it will become a true place, remarkable and unmistakable.

(IC, 92; second emphasis mine.)

Unlike Arendt’s insistence on the sheer plurality of perspectives upon the common world, however, Lynch desires a consensual understanding of the common world that is achieved through the shared experience of time. Tempos within the city vary according to location but different users should experience them similarly. The resulting patterns of movement produce images that should coalesce to create “a public image of any given city” or “a series of public images, each held by some significant number of citizens” (IC, 46). Lynch emphasizes that there is no “single comprehensive image for the entire environment” but that interviews indicate that “there seemed to be sets of images, more or less overlapped and interrelated” (IC, 85).

Hashim Sarkis writes that Lynch’s description of imageability bears a passing resemblance to the overlapping consensus that Rawls puts forward in A Theory of Justice and anticipates that work by more than a decade (Sarkis 2000, 97). The comparison is imperfect, but it highlights the contrast between Arendt’s identification of Kant’s true “political philosophy” in his writings on aesthetic judgment, with its attention to particularity and context, and the Enlightenment-era universalism that Rawls draws from Kant evidenced in the abstract and ahistorical “veil of ignorance”. It is worth...
How exactly does Lynch imagine that the planner’s manipulation of time will form this desired consensus? He tells us that the goal of the planner is to create an environment that invites viewers to “join a common vivid present” (WT, 88). The word “vivid” derives from the Latin *vivere* (to live), which is also the root of the English word “quick”.58 On the one hand, this suggests that Lynch uses spatial design to quicken the collective pace of the city. On the other, Lynch does not consciously set out to accelerate the experience of time. Rather he takes the increased tempos of the modern city as given and unquestioned. Without intending to do so, Lynch’s work sheds light on the practice of judgment in the modern city that are absent from Arendt’s reflections. Lynch joins together time, space, and judgment to illuminate their mutual tensions, injecting an important missing variable into Arendt’s understanding of the operation by which judgment and the world augment each other.

Lynch enumerates a combination of techniques that are designed to orchestrate movement and images along pathways, edges, districts, nodes, and landmarks.59 The associated analysis “begins with the differentiation of the data into categories, [but] it must end with their reintegration into the whole image” (IC, 49). Images are to be

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remarking that Lynch titles his book *The Image of the City* rather *An Image of the City* and captions the maps generated from survey data the “consensus image” (VFR, 55).

58 Oxford English Dictionary.

59 See *Image*, p. 47, for definitions of these terms.
arranged as “landmarks, space changes, dynamic sensations...organized as a melodic line, perceived and imaged as a form which is experienced over a substantial time interval” (IC, 99). These images are to be vivid, with clear, vigorous, and well agreed upon meanings that bind viewers into a body politic despite their differences (“the community made flesh”). By reducing the time available for judgment, the increased tempos of these spaces implies a collapse of the diversity of meaning attached to sites within the city. The highly imageable city is “well formed, distinct, and remarkable” where the “sensuous grasp upon such surroundings [is]...simplified” (IC, 3 & 10).

Lynch’s plan for the design of Boston’s Government Center and the redevelopment of that city’s waterfront is guided by the principles articulated in Image (see Illustration no. 11). It also illustrates Lynch’s considered but ambiguous treatment of time. The plan for the 64-acre parcel addressed two major challenges, both of which involved problems related to imageability. Critic Charles W. Millard noted Boston’s

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60 Among Lynch’s technical innovations is the development and implementation of the “space-motion and view diagrams” which planners use to schematically render the experience of motion and space when travelling. These diagrams consist of a series of “snapshots” in which objects progressively appear or recede. Space-motion diagrams are important tools in the planner’s arsenal: “This space-motion combination tends to direct the eye, and when the intended views are linked up to the objects seen, a more complete idea of the experience is given” (VFR, 47).

61 The final master plan was completed by I.M. Pei, Cobb, Freed and Partners in 1961 (see http://www.pcf-p.com/a/p/6102/s.htm), and was based largely on Lynch’s original design. Lynch strongly opposed Pei et al.’s decision enlarge the Government Center Plaza from the original two hundred fifty by five hundred foot dimensions, one of the major elements that critics of the design focus upon (CD, 667-668).
acute lack of overall character at the start of his favorable review of the Government Center plan. Millard writes that:

Boston’s essential architectural character is lack of character. This is not to say that there are not individual buildings and neighborhoods without pronounced character, or that there do not exist streets and entire districts with such character, but that Boston, unlike New York or Washington, leaves no overall architectural impression on the mind… the city as whole is typified by the chaotic heterogeneity of the North End and State Street areas, where buildings of every style, size, and vintage are crowded together along narrow and irregular streets, described as early as 1665 as “crooked, with little decency and no uniformity.”

(Millard 1968, 687)

The first problem of imageability had to do with the declining importance of sea commerce in Boston, which had left many warehouses and industrial buildings on or near the wharves empty. From the surveys that had furnished the insights detailed in Image, Lynch knew that many Bostonians had little sense of Boston’s waterfront. Blocked off by the newly built Central Artery and surrounded by a confusing tangle of streets that lacked visual markers of direction, the waterfront was not accessible to most residents and the first goal of the design was to reintegrate the waterfront back into the life of the city. Second, Lynch had discovered that many Bostonians had only a fragmentary understanding of the city as whole. Many had difficulty imagining how its separate districts (especially the Downtown, West End, North End, Beacon Hill, and Waterfront districts distributed around the Government Center location) related to one another, something Lynch identifies as a major problem at the start of his report to the Greater Boston Chamber of Commerce and Boston Redevelopment Authority:
Boston itself has a scale and quality that transcends the sum of its individual historic buildings or sentimental locations. The scale of structure and open space, this intimate mixture of historic symbol and busy commerce, must be maintained and acknowledged in the new plan.

(Lynch's plan for the new civic buildings would link these various parts of the city together by creating a chain of public open spaces and automotive and pedestrian pathways along the axis of Government Center. According to Lynch:

The fundamental objective of the plan has been to provide for the functional and economic requirements of the Government Center, and to do so in such a way as to enhance the beauty of the city, and to provide pleasant places for Bostonians to walk and to congregate.

The new spaces and pathways would focus attention upon Government Center and make visual links between the new development and the city’s historic districts. Commuters, who had previously made their way between Downtown and North Station along many narrow streets and alleys, would be funneled down a pedestrian arcade along the east side of Congress Street, which was to be re-directed along a north-south axis. This path would be visually anchored by the new City Hall Building (a modernist structure completed in 1961) and historic Faneuil Hall, situated at the edge of the Waterfront district, across the street. East-West foot traffic linking Beacon Hill to

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62 The proposed city hall would also clear out the “seedy” businesses, including several burlesque theatres, and bars that had cropped out around Scollay Square to serve dockworkers (Scollay Square had been known as Mount Whoredom as early as the early
Government Center and the Waterfront would be oriented along a new pedestrian axis that would run from Pemberton Square through the Southwest Corner of the square at Government Center (also the location of the proposed subway or "T" stop) along Cornhill Street, terminating in front of Faneuil Hall. Millard is enthusiastic about how well the plan accomplishes its goal of visually integrating different parts of the city:

The only axis in the entire complex is a directional sequence rather than a vista. It begins in the State House on top of Beacon Hill, runs through Suffolk County Court House and Pemberton Square, under the Center Plaza Building, across the south end of City Hall Plaza, over New Congress Street on a pedestrian bridge, alongside Faneuil Hall and Quincy Market, under the Expressway and out to the piers. In a short distance it touches on the most important governmental, commercial, and historic areas in Boston. It epitomizes the entire Government Center area in that it can be experienced only by someone moving through it, and not instantaneously as an organized visual entity.

(Millard 1968, 689; emphasis added)

Drivers from different parts of the city would also be visually focused on the new square, a nodal point where three major arteries intersected. Cambridge Street would enter from Beacon Hill to the northwest, meeting Court Street, which would provide quick access to the Waterfront, and Fremont Street, which would speed drivers Downtown along the length of Boston Common. These three major roads would ease the motor congestion on the last remaining section of the city’s 17th century street grid, allowing these streets to revert back to intensive pedestrian use better suited to tourists 17th century), and replace them with shops and restaurants aimed at tourists and Bostonians (Millard 1968, 688).
and shoppers. Lynch took his cues for the intended character of the North End and Waterfront from what those surveyed indicated to be the most well known or imageable features of these districts.\textsuperscript{63} His design would preserve the area’s historic structures and squares and encourage specialty food shops and restaurants like the popular Union Oyster house to multiply and fill the district. Additionally, he argued for the protection of the long standing covered push-cart market near Haymarket Square, noting that “An attempt at restoration which displaced the present retail activities would not only be historically false, and cause economic loss to the city, it would destroy an essential ingredient of the area’s life and character” (CD, 671). Similarly, Lynch called for the demolition of buildings out of scale with the surrounding environment and strict zoning rules that would preserve the appearance of the Waterfront.

The goal of the re-design was to make Government Center and the character of the adjacent districts more imageable or legible by establishing clear lines of sight from Government Center to landmarks in the other districts. So, for example, the area around Faneuil Hall was cleared so that its cupola and façade were more distinct against the

\textsuperscript{63} “What might be developed here is a quarter characteristic of Boston, but unusual in its intensity: where the symbols of the past stand in close contact with a lively present. Here the tourist would come to see the historic sites and the colorful market activity; the Bostonian would come to buy or to dine in intimate surroundings. The shops would thrive on the presence of both. Here could be the principal spot in the city for the retail-wholesale dealer in food, for specialty food and drug stores, for push-carts and fine restaurants. The area could provide unique services for Bostonians and visitors of many classes and interests. Most of these services are already here: it only remains to capitalize upon them” (CD, 670).
skyline. These modifications were also intended to strengthen the links between these districts and enhance circulation among them in order to create an image of Boston that would be more than the sum of its parts.\textsuperscript{64} Lynch hoped the new design would provide dramatic vistas that stimulated viewers and helped them form a strong sense of connection to Boston as a whole. Millard marvels at this aspect of Government Center:

> When one stands in the middle of City Hall Plaza new buildings seal all the visual escapes, although one is hardly conscious of the fact because the buildings are such different distances and of such different characters. The moment when one moves towards the periphery of the area older buildings come into view, so that the Center is simultaneously self-contained and open to the surrounding neighborhoods, trailing off in various unexpected ways into the 18\textsuperscript{th}, 19\textsuperscript{th}, or earlier 20\textsuperscript{th} centuries.

(Millard 1968, 690)

Too many renewal projects, Lynch believed, fail to integrate the city in historical time and space. Rather they result in “bright new developments, completely divorced from the fabric of the existing city” (CD, 673). Planners must study the effect of every

\textsuperscript{64} Referring to the chain of public spaces that the plan would open up in a wedge-shaped pattern from the “valley of lower buildings” in Beacon Hill ascending to Government Center and onto the Waterfront, Lynch emphasizes the resulting visual linkages between these districts:

This would enable the City Hall and the structures at Pemberton Square to look out to the sea and to be visible from the Central Artery, and would visually connect the North End and the harbor to the center of the city. Moreover, it would retain the present dramatic sense of a “wall” of buildings along State and Court Streets, which marks the beginning of the city’s business center. Finally, it would prevent any further intrusions on that part of the skyline where they would destroy the silhouette of the State House dome as it crowns the crest of Beacon Hill.

(CD, 672)

187
pedestrian and automobile approach in terms of the images they convey. Even the exit from the subway at Government Center, Lynch asserts, must underline the tight relations between that site and the surrounding historic districts. “Each space” he writes “was thought of, not by itself alone, but as part of a sequence which would be seen by people in motion” (ibid).

Lynch writes of his hope that, in combination, these new spaces might “run like a river” (CD, 672)—that is, that pedestrians and drivers would be ushered along the designated paths so that they might form strong images and meanings for the landmarks framed along them. These river-like arterial streets would drain foot and automobile traffic from the lattice-work of Boston’s smaller historic side streets. Lynch does not directly say whether he expects the resulting “river” will run fast or slow. But when he identifies easing automobile and pedestrian traffic congestion as the by-product of the redesigned patterns of circulation around Government Center, he suggests that the prior organization was disorganized because its tempos and paths were too heterogeneous. Neither exclusively fast nor slow, hurried North Station commuters were funneled along residential and commercial streets that kept a different sense of time. On these side streets shopkeepers, fishmongers, and restaurants opened not for customers, but to take morning deliveries, and whose evening hours stretched passed the evening commute.
Lynch chose to manipulate the sense of time in these spaces along a more uniform axis. By straightening and widening streets, he intended to ease congestion and to accommodate what he believed to be the accelerating tempo of modern life. While the faster tempos in these spaces helped coalesce those who passed judgment upon objects in the city into a single body, they could have also been arranged to encourage slower habits of circulation. But this may not have yielded the consensus image that Lynch sought. The common world resulting from Lynch’s design for Government Center therefore appears quite different from Arendt’s. It is comparatively speaking less plural than hers and it suggests that the acceleration of time reduces judgment’s fullest potential. Rather than possessing a dense plurality of memory and meaning, Lynch’s Government Center plan scripts these meanings tightly: to organize the city itself according to a narrative that builds image upon image into a unity that yields the image of the city.

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65 Evaluation of Lynch’s plan for Government Center is ultimately complicated by Pei et. al’s modifications. Anecdotally, Government Center appears to unite Bostonians through their distaste rather than affection for it. But Millard argues that this has more to do with the architecture of the buildings that compromise Government Center, which he describes as an “agglomeration of the acceptably inoffensive” (excepting Walter Gropius’s Federal Office Building which Millard says “leaves one with serious reservations about Gropius’s ultimate stature as an architect”), than its overall spatial design. Millard notes that Pei had specified the volumes and dimensions of the buildings around Government Center while leaving the detailed designs to the architects awarded the public and private commissions for them (Millard 1968, 691-692).
III.

Sharing Arendt’s concern for judgment and the plurality of the world upon which it depends, I conclude with an account of space, time, and place that facilitates the slower tempos required for democratic judgment created as a result of “world building” practices. My purpose is to indicate how practices of judgment can bring a political community into being and offer its members meaning and identity if those practices are attentive to their spatial dimensions. I am interested in giving an embodied account of Arendt’s world and its relation to judgment. I call these “place-making” practices rather than use Arendt’s “world-building” term to distinguish their attention to time and cultivation of place.  

I borrow the term place-making from geographer Doreen Massey. Her description of “place-making,” in terms of inaugurating social processes and relationship, is similar to my interpretation of Arendt’s second understanding of the world constituted by the web of relationships. She observes that, “The spatial in its role of bringing distinct temporalities into new configurations sets off new social processes. And in turn, this emphasizes the nature of narratives, of time itself, as being not about the unfolding of some internalized story... but about interaction and the process of the constitution of identities...” (Massey 2006, 71; emphasis original). For Massey, this means regarding the spatial in terms of the ethical relationships and identities that are collectively produced in those spaces. While Massey writes that this requires “insisting on spaces as the sphere of relations, of contemporaneous multiplicity, and as always under construction,” she is short on specifics (Ibid, 148).

So, too, is Richard Sennett’s description of “narrative spaces” which are “full of time when they permit certain properties of narratives to operate in everyday life” (Ibid, 190). Sennett identifies narrative spaces in the novels and criticism of Dostoyevsky, Balzac, Bakhtin, and Baldwin as well as the painter Fernand Léger. According to
As I have said, for politics to be “authentic,” in Arendt’s view, it must be purified of claims arising from bodily particularities that might contaminate it and which constantly threaten to undermine it from within. Arendt renders the polis as site of action restricted to human beings freed from the demands of mere existence analogous to the division Aristotle draws between citizen and non-citizen in *Politics*, Book 1.

Despite locating action in the polis, as I have shown, Arendt’s understanding of politics tends to discount politics as a normalized, settled activity. She more commonly sees politics in terms of natality. But the appearance of the new occurs in spaces whose order and stability must be assiduously tended to. Unlike the generative ambiguity of Foucault’s heterotopias, Arendt’s radical democratic action depends on maintaining the plural conditions that sustain these capabilities within each actor. As she notes, while the *archē* of initiation has the potential to be “world-building,” it frequently remains eruptive and short-lived rather than gaining an institutionalized form. She is fully

Sennett “narrative space” offers a textured portrait of the intersection of characters and specific personified places that lend “emotional color” where the character’s self-understanding and awareness of change in others “occurs when suddenly a person becomes aware of crossing boundaries” (Sennett 1990, 201). Urban planning, Sennett asserts, should learn to incorporate narrative spaces and stop “treating borders as though they were walls” since “recognition scenes that might occur at borders are the only chance people have to confront fixed, sociological pictures routinized in time” (Ibid, 201). While suggestive, Massey, Sennett, and Arendt offer few specifics and make no references to actual spaces or practices. I am interested in demonstrating how Arendt’s equal regard for stability and action can co-exist, albeit only with great care and attention.
aware of the paradoxical relation between these two strands in her work, but she does not try to reconcile them. Without specifying the sites that preserve these capacities, they remain in productive tension in her thought. Arendt’s ambiguity on how the structure of the world enables the actions that facilitate its own becoming keeps her theorizing strange. That strangeness unsettles and provokes thought, but it can also stymie it. Her polis and concept of action can seem too idealized and therefore too unapproachable.

My example of how the Muslim Students Association at Duke University (MSA) formed a “political” community through the establishment of regular Jummah prayers is one that Arendt would surely want to deny on the grounds that it is not sufficiently plural and that it relies too heavily on a prior shared consensus to be considered “political.” Arendt’s judgment may ultimately be correct in terms of her theory. My purpose, however, is not to accord her theorizing a respect that puts it up on a pedestal to be admired for its elegance but to see what insights into the human condition it can yield today. This involves extending Arendt’s concepts of the public and the political outside the narrow boundaries which she imagined for them by showing how, despite a broad shared identity as Muslims, the members of the MSA forged a community that cultivated plurality, depth, and stability through practices of judgment.

Arendt might not consider the activities of any religious organization sufficiently public. I, however, want to argue that not only is MSA’s efforts to establish a place to
pray an example of a public activity, but that it is so in a distinctly Arendtian fashion.

The Arabic word “jummah”, in addition to referring to the day of the week that designates Friday in English and the congregational mid-day prayer on that day, also refers to a gathering or the act of gathering. In the Islamic tradition, the Jummah prayer is meant to bring together and embody the larger community of Muslims. In Arendt’s terms, the public gathered together for the Jummah prayer represents the conditions of equality and difference that distinguish the relationship between individual and community in Islam.

Appreciating this example requires a brief review of the MSA’s history on the Duke Campus, a task made more difficult by the organization’s lack of institutional memory and the rapid turnover of its membership. When I arrived as a graduate student in the fall of 2004, the MSA had a small but energetic membership. Despite the efforts of four or five undergraduates to organize weekly activities such as the Jummah prayer and a Friday evening meeting attendance at these events was light. Often no more than five or ten students on average attended either of these weekly events and their number rotated from among a much larger population of Muslim students. A larger turnout for either would perhaps see double that number of students in attendance. The lack of a consistent location for Jummah and the Friday evening meeting was an important factor.
Without a dedicated space, many students found it difficult to follow the last minute announcements detailing the location where Jummah prayers would be held each week, much less plan their class schedules so that they would have time to attend the prayers consistently. Only the most dedicated students would attend and the constant variability pushed faculty and staff away from participating. For many, the experience was frustrating. Even if they had initially wanted to be part of the campus Muslim community, many were turned off and driven away with a mixture of annoyance and exasperation. For their dedication, the small number of regular congregants (an almost entirely male body) were widely perceived (especially by women on campus) as being more observant and, therefore, judgmental of those who attended prayers less regularly. As a consequence, the MSA’s active membership was ideologically, ethnically, linguistically, culturally, politically less diverse as well as less diverse in gender, than the larger population of Muslims on campus.

The lack of a consistent Jummah prayer space and the MSA’s smaller active membership proved to be a liability in other ways. The group’s officers had difficulty negotiating a more permanent space for Jummah because its attendance numbers were slight compared to other campus groups. Efforts to organize around the issue of securing space was hampered by not having space to meet, see, and realize the number of students who might be more involved in the life of the organization if it were easier to do so. In other words, students had no sense of their numbers or power. They had
difficulty imagining what might be because they had not been able to conceive of themselves as a larger community. Communication among students and efforts to develop a larger shared identity were inhibited by the MSA’s homelessness. Importantly, the students could not constitute a “polis” in word and deed without the prior experience of having occupied a polis or shared a common space together.

The situation changed after five years with the appointment of Duke University’s first Muslim chaplain, who was able to negotiate a regular prayer space in the centrally located Divinity School Building for the 2008-2009 academic year. Students were given use of the second-floor York Reading Room each Friday from 12:45 pm to 2:00 pm for Jummah services. The York Reading Room is an impressive, if underutilized space. A long narrow room, which is often used for bi-annual trustee meetings, the York Room is wood-paneled, with a vaulted ceiling, high windows, and long wooden reading tables. This room must be transformed for Jummah prayers and then returned to its original state at the end of the period reserved for prayers. There is regularity to this process and what happens during the Jummah service has been a source of stability that has helped shape members into a community. The transformation of the York Room to accommodate Jummah prayers solicits an active care from members for both the space and the activities it envelops.

The earliest to arrive must move the tables and chairs towards the north end of the room off to the side so that they can put down several sheets on which others can sit
during the khutba, or sermon, and then offer their prayers. There are no reserved spots. Everyone must sit on the floor during the khutba and stand next to whomever they find themselves seated next during the prayer itself. One’s spot does not correlate with arrival time; it reflects, rather, personal preference with some who arrive early taking positions towards the rear and others who arrive late pushing through those seated to take a place close to the front. The sheets are laid down to form two seating areas, adhering to the separation of genders during prayers mandated within Islam. Since the York Room is long and narrow and the mihrab, which indicates the direction towards Mecca, Islam’s holiest site, is located at the far end of the room length-wise, the room is not thought wide enough to accommodate separate but parallel areas for prayer for men and women. Instead, the area for males is positioned closer to the mihrab, from which the khateeb, who will lead the prayer for that week and deliver the khutba, sits.

Male graduate and undergraduate students, faculty and staff members, as well as the university’s Islamic chaplain and other guests rotate this responsibility, with no single individual appearing more than once a semester. Khateebbs prepare their sermon individually or, if they wish, in consultation with the chaplain who offers instruction on how to write and deliver a khutba for those doing so for the first time. Men and women may write Khutbas. At Duke, many women regularly prepare khutbas and ask male friends to deliver them. As a result in subject, tone, content, and theology the khutbas are as diverse as those who deliver them and, now with a dedicated prayer time and
place, those who now attend have swelled to a rotating group of between 50 and 65 men and women on-average each week.

The relationship between the khateeb who speaks and the congregants who listen to the khutba constitutes a space of judgment has helped establish a community that is more plural and diverse. In these sermons and during the half-hour lunch of take-out pizza that follows the conclusion of the prayer at 1:30 pm, those in attendance discern the khateeb’s words and his claims on behalf of this particular community. Lunch is a time for many to catch up with one another during the week, but it also allows congregants to discuss their immediate responses to that week’s khutba together and with the khateeb if they like. The interval that marks the end of the prayer and the start of lunch is time for announcements of upcoming events or activities on and off campus. These may be sponsored or under the aegis of the MSA. Often, however, individuals who want to publicize events they are involved with initiate the announcements.

More often than not, lunch is also an opportunity to have public conversations about what the MSA’s position or activities should be. In the past year, students, faculty, and staff discussed how to respond to an “Islam is Terrorism” week planned on campus by groups sponsoring the visit of David Horowitz to give a keynote address; they debated what kind of statement to issue in response to Israeli military incursions into the Gaza Strip in light of the MSA’s on-going volunteer activities with the campus
Hillel group; and complaints from some congregants and those outside the community, at the surrounding mosques and universities, who felt that the Duke MSA is either too liberal or insufficiently inclusive or not welcoming enough to a variety of minorities within the community: African-Americans, Shi’ias, Ahmadis, Ismai’ilis. A khutba delivered by a noted theologically conservative scholar and guest khateeb prompted a raucous discussion about the place of homosexuals and homosexuality in the Duke Muslim community. Again and again, the individuals gathered in the space that they created to discuss who they were as a community. At the end of each discussion, the York Room would return to its original configuration, with only a stack of pizza boxes by the waste can as evidence of the intervening gathering. By their place-making, the MSA was able to constitute a community whose edges are open and openly questioned, yet also has permanence it lacked before.67

Indeed as news of the establishment of prayers in this space radiated across the campus and beyond its borders, alumni and Muslims on campus now and in the past wrote, called, and visited, to share their stories. The institution of this space, which linked the present to the past, quickly became something to be cared for. Alumni spoke of their own difficult experiences to establish and feel a fragile sense of community

67 The community that was realized during the Jummah prayer spilled over to other parts of the weekly calendar. Out of the space of the Jummah prayer, students, faculty, and staff organized regular events and activities, such as Qur’an reading groups, interfaith meetings, and meeting times for five daily prayers, that had not existed before.
among Muslims at Duke. Whether they had come with student visas from majority
Muslim nations, from Detroit’s suburbs, or worked folding laundry at Duke’s medical
campus, they told of their isolation on campus. Denied the opportunity to express this
important part of their identity, these individuals reported feeling anonymous and
isolated. As word of Jummah in the York Room spread through articles in the campus
newspaper and magazine, drawing in students, faculty, and staff currently on campus
and the memories of those who had left, the space acquired a layer of meanings for
those involved.68

Although the congregants’s actions did not permanently alter the York Room,
the knowledge and memory of their activities, the way the orientation of their bodies
briefly create and sustain a place in time and space, has given the York Room and, more
importantly, the Muslim community at Duke a particular density and volume that it
lacked before. Slower tempos and the repeated experience of transforming the York
Room have enabled the exercise of judgment there. The resulting place enfolds a
community, which through its action and its memories, is able to constitute itself in a
way that was previously impossible. Responsibility for this campus space helped the

68 As the complaints about inclusiveness indicate, the formation of community through
the cultivation of place and meaning are wrapped up with normalizing pressures as
Foucault’s work would suggest. At the same time, however, the formation of this
community gives complaints about its appropriate constitution significance. Without
this disputed sensus communis, these complaints would lose their raison d’etre falling
back into the void they previously occupied.
community establish its own moeurs and traditions. Like the township, the active care of the York Room is an action-oriented site of habit and education for members.

One might argue that the purchase of the example I have offered is limited. After all, one could say that the Muslims on Duke’s campus share a prior identification as Muslims. Yet, without an in-between place where this identity could be realized in the company of other Muslims that individual identity remained indistinct. The place created each Jummah required congregants to take account of their plurality, to negotiate their individual perspectives in light of others, as they deliberated the activities and agenda of the MSA. Participation in the Jummah prayer activities, which are observed each week by invited guests and the occasional drop-in visitor who enters through the open rear door, helped to dispel the perception that Muslims on campus and beyond shared a singular identity. Instead, Muslims at Duke have discovered the jagged edges, rips and tears in the fabric of their community that require practices of listening and attention to address and mend. While the outcomes of these encounters have been far from uncertain, the fact that this associational life needed a place in which to initially take hold is unquestionable.

The space that the students, staff, and faculty created each week existed only through their actions. It represents a form of architecture that corresponds to Arendt’s second definition of the world. “Taking care of monuments” involves judgments about how the shape and content of a space, who is to appear in it, how they appear in it, and
what it is they do together in that space. The regularity of their appearance—that Muslims on campus, in effect, make a promise to see one another in the transformed space of the York Room each week—gives their actions and the resulting political community the depth of memory, density of experience, and on-going durability that helps constitute it as a “world.” Yet, as stable a space it is or appears to be, it remains vulnerable since it is sustained by the focused attention of its members. Without their participation, it falls apart and loses its ability to bind community members in their plurality.

Indeed less than one-year after the Jummah service in the York Room began, Duke University Student Affairs moved forward on a long-standing request to establish a permanent home for Muslims on campus.69 Citing the success of the Jummah service and an alignment with the university’s efforts to increase its profile, in terms of recruitment, partnerships, and fundraising, in Muslim-majority nations, the Center for

69 A small group of students had proposed the establishment of such a center in a presentation to university administrators in March 2006. The submitted proposal was a response to a general solicitation for student participation in the re-design of Duke’s Central Campus. The proposal submitted at that time called for the construction of a combined mosque and campus eatery that would serve Halaal food, prepared in accordance with Islamic dietary requirements. The students hoped to find an outside vendor to operate the restaurant, believing that a Halaal restaurant would appeal to the larger Raleigh-Durham Muslim community, who had few options of this kind, and that these revenues would fund the Center’s operational costs.
Muslim Life (CML) officially opened on April 10, 2009. Located across the street from the campus Hillel in a former single family residence converted to accommodate student groups (the building was previously home to a university scholarship office), the establishment was not without some controversy. Several prominent donors to Duke’s Divinity School wrote that they would withhold their financial support in order to protest the Dean of the Duke Chapel’s leadership role in advocating for the establishment of the CML. The university, however, remained steadfast in its support for the establishment of, in the words of the then-associate director of the Chapel and Director of Religious Life, a “true home” for the formerly nomadic campus Muslim community. The building would offer stability to Muslims on campus, giving them a central location to “host dinners, lectures, and prayers that would unite the Muslim community.”

One year on, the CML is home to a Muslim community whose activities are, paradoxically, much diminished from what they once were. In this case, the establishment of a permanent home has been attendant with a decline in the world-building activities that the Center was meant to house. Participation in the Jummah services has fallen from sixty regular but rotating attendees to thirty members on

70 Students unofficially began using the building for meetings in January 2010, but the official opening ceremony for the Center for Muslim Life, complete with a ribbon cutting with Duke President Richard Broadhead, was not until April of that year.
average. Attendance for the MSA’s regular meetings and activities has similarly declined, seemingly confirming Arendt’s statement that the experience of introducing the new and concerns for stability and durability have come to be popularly regarded as opposites in the modern era (OR, 223). With the establishment of the Center for Muslim Life, the building intended to house the activities of the community has been mistaken, both inside and outside the community, for the community itself.

The experience reveals how the architecture of built spaces can often supersede the architecture of activity—Arendt’s world building capacity—that brought them into being in the first place. Students I have spoken with say that the building signifies their presence on campus and that they no longer have worry about themselves. “It is there if I need it” one student told me. But what is “it” that is there? The four walls of the Center for Muslim Life do not make a community; they require world-building actions to give them the depth and density of experience and memory. From within that community, I would say that it is less active and more ideologically uniform than at any point during my six years as a graduate student at Duke.

The popular story of Muslim Life at Duke, the one that appears in the university’s official publications and is rehearsed again and again at public events, hews to a familiar narrative that begins in vulnerability and marginality and ends in establishment and official recognition that bestows full status on Muslim students,
faculty, and staff.\textsuperscript{72} Undoubtedly, this is true. Officially, Muslims at Duke now enjoy the same level of recognition as other faith groups. But that official status and the granting of a building in accordance with that status has, in the minds of students and administrators, had the effect of assimilating Islam to the contours of identity politics. The assimilation vitiates Islam, which presents itself as holistic "a way of life" rather than an ascriptive identity.

There are surely many factors that have contributed to the change in the community, not all of which have to do with the space that the community inhabits: key leaders of the community have graduated and moved on, the excitement over the arrival of Imam Antepli may have faded, and the CML’s location on Central Campus, which is geographically central but otherwise perceived as inconveniently far from Duke’s true gravitational center on West Campus. Nonetheless, there is something distinct between the lived experience of the York Room and CML. Both are repurposed spaces. The CML had formerly housed office space and meeting rooms for a university scholars program. But the transformations to the CML were relatively permanent whereas the York Room had to be transformed and reconfigured for the Jummah prayer each week.

The CML does not call forward the same awareness between action and community that the York Room does. Through transforming the York Room, the

participants transform themselves, completing a virtuous circle between action and the conditions that reinforce those actions. The York Room enables these capacities because the plastic quality of its space calls forth attention and care. In its use, the York Room cultivates a different mode of habitation than the CML. The York Room offers a semblance of stability that is the product of action and which underlines that its character depends upon tending to the conditions of its production that the CML does not. Both spaces require MSA members to work with an inheritance that is not their own. The knowledge of that fact is inescapable in the York Room and the contingency of the community that originates from the Jummah activities remains at the surface instead of being concealed and made residual.
5: Threshold Dwelling

What kind of architecture might develop structures of power that enhance democratic practices and allow them to flourish today? The previous chapters have prepared us to ask this question. Even as I insisted on thinking of architecture in terms of material space and lived experience, I concentrated on elaborating how space is inhabited and can be inhabited differently. Indeed much of my task until now has been deconstructive. As I explained in the introduction and subsequently, the impact of Le Corbusier and 20th century High Modernism on democratic politics has been especially damaging. In Brasília, the city’s construction went hand-in-hand with state action against the candangos and in Saint Louis’s Pruitt-Igoe housing project, the principles of Le Corbusier’s architectural modernism resulted in dangerously unsafe conditions for residents. Architects and political thinkers look back on High Modernism’s legacy of injustice and inequality in the hands of the powerful as a disaster. Rather than fulfilling the promise of better living conditions for all people intended by its designers, modern architecture became an instrument for securing privilege.

The response to the failures of High Modernism from both architects and political thinkers has been to separate architecture and politics and designate them autonomous activities. In doing so, they have chosen to ignore the political impact of architecture on modern subject formation and habit. Part of the reluctance to pursue the
connections between them is related to the increased complexity, scale, and diversity of modern polities. Under these conditions, making causal claims about the relationship between architecture and politics is impossible, if not foolish, given the myriad of other factors at play. At best, most are willing to acknowledge the unwieldy influence architectural design on political life. Yet I have tried to show the effects of architecture on the everyday conditions of citizenship and ethical relations are incredibly subtle and profound. In particular, I have argued that the possibility of achieving a sense of the common that preserves conditions of equality and difference depends on changing daily patterns of external circulation since these correspond to the internal circulation of thoughts that I identified through Foucault’s work on governmentality. Architecture design shapes habit but not entirely. For this reason, I turned to Arendt’s twin concepts of the “world” and “world-building” practices in order to propose thinking of architecture in terms that marry and form a virtuous circle between architectural structure and democratic practice.

Like Aristotle and Arendt, I have argued for seeing politics and architecture as mutually constitutive activities. Beginning with Aristotle’s criticism of Hippodamus, I have refused to accept the current bifurcation between these two disciplines. Addressing contemporary political scientists directly, I have argued for treating architecture as a sustained matter of political concern by demonstrating how architecture and urban planning have been important instruments in late-modern forms
of governing. In particular, I suggested that Foucault’s concept of circulation is critical
to his understanding of governmentality, the productive power that aligns the interests
of late-modern subjects with the regime of neo-liberalism. By situating my study of
Foucault within the context of race and class in Durham, North Carolina, my aim was to
demonstrate the difficulty of speaking of a common political and ethical world, even at a
local level. I wished to explain how it is that racial and ethnic difference can be seen on
a daily basis but nonetheless remain strange, foreign, and, at bottom, threatening.

With Arendt, I indicated how she considers preserving the plural character of the
world to be both a condition for and end of political judgment and action. She offers an
account of judgment as a world-building practice that is indebted to a diversely
constituted world but also responsible for reproducing that world. Judgment’s
interdependent relationship to the world illuminates the dynamic quality of archē in her
work. For her, archē provides a form of stability that enables radical democratic action.
The two are complementary, rather than opposing, concepts of democratic governance.1
It is this notion of democracy, which is neither simply an artifact of a closed, continuous
constitutional order nor just democratic practice variously conceived in terms of
ephemeral rupture, playfulness, or fugitivity, that I wish to recover and promote. To

1 Arendt sees the twin concerns for stability and radical politics in Jefferson, who
proposed the ward system in order to preserve tradition and promote hierarchy as well
as called for revolution every generation in order to renew the spirit of the founding.
this end, I have turned to architecture in order to emphasize that democratic practice has
a spatial dimension that must be attended to if democracy is to flourish.

In my first chapter, I argued that the ambiguous spaces of Athens’s workshops
and barbershops which blurred public and private purposes, created conditions which
helped citizens and non-citizens realize the contingency of the sense of the common put
forward by Aristotle and that knowledge of this contingency was a source of the
democracy’s vitality. In the second chapter, I argued that the ambiguous forms of
appearance made possible by Durham’s greenway and similar circulatory spaces could
animate forms of association currently inhibited by habits of external and internal
circulation typical of modern city planning. This is the positive side of my project. In all
of these chapters, but especially the last one, I have tried to conceive architecture with
greater plasticity. My hope is that by re-thinking architecture in terms of both structure
and activity, my corresponding attempts to think about architecture and democracy in
terms of the other will result in less reified notions of democracy.

In order to fill out this account of democracy, I wish to identify structural forms
and designs that facilitate the bodily and cognitive dispositions best suited to the
development of the Arendtian concepts of democratic power and practice that I
developed in the last chapter. I have only intimated what I consider to be, better and
worse forms of architectural design until now. Part of my reasoning has been
pragmatic, recognizing that tearing down existing structures to replace them with
“better” forms of architecture is an unthinkable and impossibly foolhardy idea. Instead, I have focused on articulating ways these structures and spaces can be inhabited differently, both intellectually and practically. Yet, I also recognize that to stop short of being prescriptive as Foucault’s genealogical approach does, in terms of naming architects whose work I consider to be salutary for the cultivation of democratic habits, undercuts my credibility among architects who deal with these decisions every day, and, ultimately, the force of my argument.

In this chapter, I make a case to architects to rethink the political consequences of their designs and practice and to political theorists to reconsider how space, once again, influences political possibilities. I do so by finding allies in three late-20th century architects working at the end of High Modernism. Italian Aldo Rossi (1931-1997) along with Dutchmen Aldo van Eyck (1918-1999) and Herman Hertzberger (b. 1932), follow Le Corbusier’s footsteps in terms of how they view their responsibility for the potential political and social consequences of architecture. Unlike many of their more celebrated colleagues (although Rossi was the recipient of the 1990 Pritzker Prize), who resist thinking about their work in political terms—Rem Koolhaas’s comment to The New York Times, “Do you have the right to work on this scale [referring to the building boom in

2 According to its website, the purpose of the Pritzker Prize is “To honor a living architect whose built work demonstrates a combination of those qualities of talent, vision, and commitment which has produced consistent and significant contributions to humanity and the built environment through the art of architecture” (Source: http://www.pritzkerprize.com/).
cities like Dubai and Shenzhen] if you don’t have an opinion about what the world should be like? We really feel that. But is there time for a manifesto? I don’t know” is typical—in the wake of High Modernism’s failures, these three architects have refused to give up this important responsibility.3

In their separate ways, with the Italian Rossi on one side and the two Dutch architects grouped together on the other, this trio of architects continues Le Corbusier’s belief that the practice of architecture has a political and social impact on the development of human habit, knowledge, and power, even as they contest its limits. Le Corbusier had expressed this belief in his dictum that the “house was a machine for living.” The statement posited not only an intrinsic circularity between architecture and human capability, but by identifying a mechanical process of reproduction, Le Corbusier emphasized that architecture was a matter of human artifice and, therefore, subject to revision and redesign. Whatever form it took, humans were responsible for designing the “machine” that was supposed to enhance their flourishing. These architects recognize that so long as architecture remains the product of human artifice, responsibility will always partly be bound up with the actions of the maker. Broadly speaking, what these three do is shift the architect’s focus from her intention, an aspect that Scott explains was privileged by the stress on aesthetic formalism in Le Corbusier’s

work, to how her designs are received and inhabited by their users. In other words, they do not think of architecture not as offering potentially fully-realized political solutions as Le Corbusier did when he posed the question towards the end of *Towards a New Architecture*, “architecture or revolution?” Instead, they hold fast to the potential of architecture to invite and to instruct the development of political habits while recognizing that any such efforts will fall well short of being determinative. Where they depart from Le Corbusier is in their criticism of CIAM’s principles of functionalism and segregation—van Eyck was instrumental in precipitating first the splintering and then ultimate demise of CIAM—and their alternative pursuit of lived spaces that hold together the city as a set of evocative, interrelated parts in the imagination and experience of its inhabitants.

All three are pursuing forms of relational architecture that underscore awareness of difference by nurturing recognition of either contingency and plurality (Rossi) or mutual vulnerability (van Eyck and Hertzberger). In particular, their work contributes new understandings of the connections between public and private, on the one hand, and time and space, on the other, to democratic theory. Compared with Aristotle and Arendt, who build boundaries around the “public” and “politics” like defensive city walls, van Eyck and Hertzberger’s threshold concept renders public, private, and political in terms which are at once more complementary and permeable. Notably, they are able to do so without dissolving the differences among these separate
domains. Their work retains useful distinctions and respects what is particular to each
category of experience, avoiding the implication, present in Foucault’s theorizing and
that of some feminists, that *everything* is political.

Rather, threshold spaces are meant to habituate an orientation towards politics
and public matters by designating structures that facilitate the capacity for Arendtian
natality by, as I will indicate in the case of Hertzberger, calling upon them to complete
the space. Furthermore, threshold spaces are not only meant to invite varied norms of
behavior, but the style of van Eyck and Hertzberger’s theorizing, which lacks the often
polarizing defensiveness of the term “politics” that characterizes the work of Aristotle,
Arendt, and Foucault in their separate ways, is equally solicitous. The Dutch architects,
in other words, model the sensibility that they hope their designs will help develop in
others and which I will speak to more directly in the conclusion.

I.

Aldo Rossi’s urbanism, which is espoused in his 1966 *L’architettura della città*
(revised and published in English in 1982 as *The Architecture of the City*), is indebted to
Kevin Lynch’s concept of the image. For Lynch, cities should be organized in terms of

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4 Rossi’s *Architecture of the City*. (Translated by Diane Ghirardo and Joan Ockman.
Cambridge, Massachusetts: The MIT Press, 1984), which echoes the title of Lynch’s 1960
their imageability—their power to evoke certain memories in common among their residents—and images should tend towards consensus. Rossi’s concept of the urban artifact has a similar tendency towards monumentality but not as conventionally understood. Most often, Rossi conceives of artifacts in terms of ruins rather than new

*The Image of the City*, and contains multiple references to the American, also evokes Leon Battista Alberti’s earlier fifteenth century manuscript, *On the Art of Building in Ten Books*. Alberti’s exegesis is the second known extant book written entirely on architecture and is written as a challenge to the first work on the subject, *De architectura*, which was also written in ten books nearly 1500 years earlier by Vitruvius. Vitruvius was an Augustan architect whose purpose was to record the building techniques and design principles of Hellenic temples that were then found in the Roman world. Vitruvius has no mention of either the technical innovations of his own period, such as the Roman concrete vault or aqueduct, or the new building types pioneered by the Romans, for example the steam baths, in *De architectura*. While Vitruvius was entirely nostalgic, calling attention to the glory of the past that was still available in the form of Greek temples found across the Roman Empire, Alberti worked in a post-mnemonic context and looked to the future. Alberti wrote at a time when the architecture of antiquity and the building techniques that Vitruvius took for granted had been ruined and forgotten. Working from the remaining fragments of Imperial Roman architecture, Alberti functioned as a philologist and archeologist. He draws from the histories of Pliny, Plutarch, and Thucydides and the works of Plato and Aristotle to recall the ancient world and to re-imagine the relations between fragmentary buildings, the size and scope of which far surpassed all then known cities in size. Alberti’s work represents the recovery and reconstruction of a remembered city for the purpose of prescribing how buildings of the future are to be built. See Alberti, Leon. *On the Art of Building in Ten Books*. Translated by Joseph Rykwert, Neil Leach, and Robert Tavenor. (Cambridge, Massachusetts: The MIT Press, 1988), at ix-x. For Rossi, like Alberti before him, the investigation of the past is undertaken to anticipate the future. In his introspective and dreamlike *A Scientific Autobiography*, a work which is fragmentary and elusive in its vision, Rossi writes that, “a past without a desire for the future is sad.” See Aldo Rossi’s *A Scientific Autobiography*. Translated by Lawrence Venuti. (Cambridge, Massachusetts: The MIT Press, 1981), at 78.
structures in part because monumentality, in both classic and modern architecture, had been a hallmark of construction during the period of Italian fascism. Instead of Lynch’s consensus, Rossi’s urban artifact is the site to which competing and fragmentary memories adhere so that the identity of the city remains partial and open to contestation.

Rossi’s *La Tendenza* movement and his concept of the urban artifact emphasize the richness and plurality of memory in the city rather than, pace Lynch, its overlapping consensus. *La Tendenza* reflects Rossi’s opinion that architecture is fundamentally tied to culture and tradition. Morris Adjimi notes that while Rossi’s work is modern in terms of its materials, structure, and style, it is distinguished from the universalism of High Modernism through its concern for local traditions. According to Adjimi, “Rather than approaching each project as an imposition of some ideal image or utopian solution, Aldo tries to understand the specifics of the site and the cultural spirit of the city and country.”

There is a conservative instinct inherent in Rossi’s fascination with tending to culture, but because he sees multiple cultures existing alongside one another, preservation for Rossi becomes an instrument for protecting plurality and with it, implicitly (given the way fascism represented an attack on human diversity according to Arendt) the possibility of more radical politics. In his 1990 Pritzker Prize acceptance speech, Rossi described his understanding of architecture’s relationship to culture:

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5 Eisenmen 2008, 179.
I have never believed that any profession could be disjointed from culture... I am fascinated by the possibility of building in different places and countries. It is as if all the cultures of these diverse countries make up my architecture and come to form a whole—a unity that has the capacity to recompose the fragments of those things that were originally lost.\(^7\)

Rossi’s urban artifact is meant to achieve the paradoxical unity that makes difference possible that Arendt sought by serving as the common object to which heterodox memories inhere. The urban artifact gains its identity from the activities and memories that originate in the lived experience of the city’s inhabitants, past and present, since it is these experiences that define members of a particular class. They include the ordinary experiences of eating, socializing, shopping, praying and caring for others. These are memories born in moments of rest and motion Rossi emphasizes, as if to recall Walter Benjamin’s observation that architecture is perceived in a state of distraction.\(^8\) But if these memories are generated in a distracted state, they retain an intense particularity that allows them to keep from falling out of memory.

*La Tendenza* refers to the habit of tending to these particular moments as well as to memories and to the individual’s experience of having to reconcile their own


\(^8\) Benjamin 1968, 239.
memories with those of others. This experience, Rossi envisions, keeps the meaning of
the urban artifact and, by extension, the city alive. The urban artifact remains dynamic,
maintained by an interconnected set of memories that help residents understand their
mutual relations under conditions of similarity and difference. As Rossi writes,
“Specificity cannot exist without memory, nor can memory that does not emanate from
a specific moment: only a union of the two permits the awareness of one’s own
individuality and its opposite (of self and non-self).” Tending to the specificity and
heterogeneity of memory travels hand-in-hand with the task of nurturing political
judgment since, for Arendt, this is informed by the world—in its physical form, which is
a repository of culture and tradition, as well as the intangible web of relationships it
makes possible.

Rossi anticipates this second dimension, adding another layer of complexity to
the identity of the urban artifact by imagining that the memories that attach to various
sites in the city form a chain. The city becomes a palimpsest of collective memories that
recall past actions and are pregnant with future possibilities. Individuals and groups
consciously preserve and elaborate those memories through the stories they tell. As
they recollect people and places in the past, they make and remake the city. Rossi insists

\[^9\] Tendeza is related to the English cognate, to tend, a participle describing the process of
being “drawn to or towards in affection.” See Oxford English Dictionary, 2nd Edition

[^10]: Rossi 1984, 62.
that the urban artifact does not discriminate against memories that are fragmentary and incomplete. In fact, Rossi underlines this fact by pointing to ruins as exemplary artifacts. In the ruin, Rossi finds a source of permanence, stability, and continuity that functions analogously to Lynch’s idea of the image. The ruin evokes the past and what is in danger of being forgotten. Its persistence, moreover, reflects the “irreducibility of the city to any of modernism’s totalizing visions”¹¹ or the idea, according to Scott, seen in Le Corbusier’s plans for Paris, Buenos Aires, Brasília, and Chandigarh, that the past—or at least those recollections which are evoked in the specificity of memory—either can be wiped away or ignored completely.¹² High Modernism’s attack on the past, threatened to cut off the ability of current generations to imagine a future according to Rossi.

Without access to the pasts that are connoted in the artifact, human beings are unable to imagine differently since the urban artifact reflects the “dialectic of permanence and growth...[and] records diachronic moments and histories.”¹³

Rossi’s Cemetery of San Cataldo (1971-1978) physically embodies many of the political and architectural critiques of modern architecture put forward in The Architecture of the City, beginning with the idea that a ruin, in this case a newly constructed one set in a graveyard, could serve as an urban artifact. As Eisenman

¹² Le Corbusier’s proposal for all four imagines cities de novo. In the case of the first pair, his plan called for razing the existing cities entirely. Brasília, and Chandigarh, on the other hand, were both planned capitals.
¹³ Eisenman 2008, 182.
explains, in his drawing for the site Rossi employs the same simple, repetitive geometric forms that he uses in designs for domestic architecture (which includes objects like tea pots, cups, etc.). By varying the scales, but repeating the same shapes, Rossi demonstrates a link between architecture and urban design, between the individual and collectivity, between action and tradition.\(^\text{14}\) Rossi figures the cemetery as another type of city, whose use and scale distort familiar forms, which is meant to question the status of the past for the present. Eisenman elaborates:

In the drawings that Rossi submitted for his competition entry, the conception of the cemetery as a series of parts becomes clear: rows of columbaria and objectlike ossuaries are the locus for the symbolic burning of bodies. The “town square” occupying the center of the cemetery houses the artefacts culled from the interchangeably urban and domestic realms: the conical shrine the coffeepot as well as the industrial tower, and the columbaria and ossuaries blend the typologies of house and memorial... In the project’s columbaria blocks, Rossi maintains the formal condition of the house through the use of a pitched roof and windows, yet strips the windows of the elements—the frames, the mullions, and glass—which signify occupation. As an emptied opening, the windows and the columbaria instead register absence.

(Eisenman 2008, 185)

In the symbolic gesture of the cemetery, Rossi wishes to turn attention to the way in which almost all buildings that are realized serve and reflect the interests of the dominant class, which works to secure its own position by managing and corralling heterodox memories which pose potential threats to its power.\(^\text{15}\) By granting ruins the status of artifacts and by assigning them a degree of permanence, Rossi believes he has

\(^\text{14}\) Ibid 183-184.  
\(^\text{15}\) Rossi 1982, 113.
found a point of resistance, in the ability to provoke heterogeneous memories, to the operation of power which wishes to give history a single narrative. Eisenman points out that at San Cataldo, Rossi’s use of repetitive geometric forms is borrowed from the critique of narrative and origin in minimalist sculpture where “the repeated series lacks beginning, middle, and end… [it is] a critique of origins, as the individual or starting unit is subsumed by other identical units.”

Fellow Pritzer Prize winner and critic Rafael Moneo observes that Rossi recuperates monumentality as the basis for more radical political movements, but identifies the highly aestheticized character of Rossi’s work as a risky liability. Although he does not enumerate its cause, the weakness he names has to do with the way that Rossi appropriates Lynch’s idea of the image without bothering with the anthropological methodology that informs it. Recall that Lynch developed the concept

16 Eisenman 2008, 183.
17 Moneo’s admiration for the way in which Rossi has redefined monumentality and permanence in architecture from their historical associations with conservative political movements to more radical possibilities is evident in the following passage:

The monument… is restored by Rossi who understands the role [it] has played in giving structure to the city. Faced with such a conservative view of the past, Rossi also achieves vindication of the presence of monuments insofar as they also embody the current moment—the city’s present.

The recovery of monuments then is far from a merely archeological devotion to the past. Monuments from the perspective proposed by Rossi, acquire a real dimension and an immediacy that disturbs any conservative vision of the city described in terms of immobility and inalterability.

(Moneo 1976, 6; quoted in Baird 2003, 161).
of the image by surveying the memories and experiences of residents in Boston, Jersey City, and Los Angeles. Rossi skips this step and, in Moneo’s judgment, his work suffers because it only gestures to the lived experience of the inhabitants in whose name it is done. Moneo objects,

not so much with the theory, but rather with the results of Rossi’s projects and proposals... his estrangement with the real, understood as the everyday occurrence.... Rossi’s imposition of a deliberate distance between the image of reality, trivialized and banalized through use, and the perspective that proposes what an architecture of the city might be, also points out a certain attitude which says something about the possible future of architecture in our present society. (Moneo 1976, 18; quoted in Baird 2003, 162)

The risk of such an aestheticized notion of architecture, Moneo presciently worries, is that it allows the architect to “carry out his work... as pure game.”18 Without close attention to the dynamics of power outlined in Foucault’s discussion of probability and circulation, the idea of an urban artifact which all populations engage and to which all memory has the chance to adhere is naïve. Additionally, the way that Rossi equates the urban artifact with an almost anarchic flood of memory presupposes, as Foucault ultimately does, too dyadic a notion of power. Such a position forsakes the difficult task of cultivating modes of hierarchy and power that are particular to democratic governance. In the next section, I turn to Dutch architects Aldo van Eyck and Herman Hertzberger in order to articulate a concept of architectural design and practice that is

18 Ibid.
more attuned to Moneo’s call for an architecture that fits an “image of reality, trivialized and banalized through use.”

II.

Like Rossi, Aldo van Eyck’s architecture originated in response to the dramatic simplifications that had come to define architectural modernism. These simplifications included CIAM’s embrace of a comprehensive analytic framework that classified all projects according to a 4 by 10 category grid and the division of town planning, architectural expression, and industrialization and building techniques into separate and exclusive domains of research and practice. Frustrated by these moves towards more technocratic, rationalist, and, above all, functionalist approaches, van Eyck and his Team 10 colleagues sought to shift CIAM towards a concept of architecture that was pluralistic and relational—an effort that led to the ultimate demise of CIAM.

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19 Strauven 1998, 121.
20 Team 10 formed around Van Eyck and included his countryman Jacob Bakema and the English husband-wife team of Peter and Allison Smithson, among others, at the 1954, 1956, 1959 CIAM conferences. Although the members of Team 10 varied in their design preferences and sensibilities, all found in agreement in their opposition to the functionalism and abstractness of the CIAM principles (Strauven 1998, 256). Begun as a reform movement within CIAM, Team 10 would splinter into opposing factions led by Van Eyck and Bakema and the Smithsons, respectively, but not before provoking the dissolution of CIAM entirely at the 1959 Otterlo conference in The Netherlands (Ibid, 256-279; 346-354).
For van Eyck architecture or what he called “the story of the other idea” (a description that hints at van Eyck’s sympathy with insurgent claims) had to reflect the complexity of human experience and human relationships that, given its record in cities like Brasília, he believed the simplistic functionalism of High Modernism denied.21 Van Eyck instead proposed forms that could hold—meaning they would lend structure to—the greatest number of possible forms of human activity and expression.22 Van Eyck expressed this complexity in terms of a union of contraries that joins together inside and outside, public and private, and structure and freedom in the Otterlo Circles diagram that he presented at the 1959 CIAM conference (see Figure 2). Titled with the heading “For ‘Us’, By Us” and composed of two distinct but related circles, one representing the spatial form of architecture, and the other, the relational character of human society, the Otterlo circles suggest van Eyck viewed the relation between architecture and political culture as reciprocal, not causal or deterministic. In a version published after the conference to which more text was added, the left circle representing architecture encloses three images, classical, medieval, and modern, and three phrases,

22 Van Eyck’s interest in the threshold was initially prompted by the concept of “the doorstep” proposed by his Team 10 colleagues Peter and Allison Smithson. Van Eyck was disappointed with their perfunctory take on the threshold, since they saw its potential largely in terms of as “the spot for the milk bottle.” Challenging them, van Eyck insisted on his prolonged version as something like a form between forms. This intermediary form was inspired by the combination of van Eyck’s study of Martin Buber’s philosophy, Paul Klee’s painting, and the confusion of interior and exterior in Surrealism.
“immutability and rest,” “vernacular of the heart,” and “change and movement” that van Eyck believed architecture should reconcile, on the one hand, and express, on the other. Inside this first circle are two phrases “concepts of the mind” and “extensions of collective behavior” that convey the relationship that Arendt describes between the architect-as-artist who anticipates responses to her work and the audience who, in giving meaning to the artifact through their activities and memories, represent the open-ended character of artistic objects.

Figure 2: Aldo van Eyck’s Otterlo Circles diagram

The second circle contains the image of people forming a corkscrew-like pattern while performing a line dance, with the words “For each man and all man” written at
the top. Below both circles, van Eyck poses a question (When is architecture going to bring together opposite qualities and solutions?), considers what might be a potential response (We can discover ourselves everywhere— in all places and ages—doing the same things in a different way, feeling the same differently, reacting differently to the same.) and offers two incomplete thoughts (to discover anew implies discovering something new/get close to the center—the shifting center—and build) as comments on the relationship between the circles. 23

The idea that architecture should hold together continuity and newness that Van Eyck suggests in his Otterlo Circles, means that, despite seeing our attachments originating in the household rather than in the public, van Eyck proposes a concept of order that mirrors Arendt’s appreciation for both preservation and natality in politics. In the question that he poses Van Eyck is concerned for bringing together oppositions without resolving them, believing that knowledge is gained through sustaining this tension rather than dissolving it. And, yet for all the hesitancy that these statements, especially the indeterminacy of locating the shifting center, might imply, there is the command, the responsibility, and the commitment to build. This is the architect’s inescapable fate. Mistakes are plain to see, costly to correct, and endure. Van Eyck believed that the buildings of his CIAM predecessors had failed because they reflected overconfidence in technical expertise that undervalued ordinary experience and local

ways of doing and knowing. CIAM’s growing specialization and fragmentation was manifest in its designs, which simplified and isolated spaces so that they would only support a single purpose or task—presuming that allowing space for specialization would promote technical progress and, by extension, human flourishing. The invocation of uncertainty (“the shifting center”) suggests architects should commit their work to critical scrutiny.

Van Eyck’s concept of Homecoming rejected CIAM’s overconfidence and aesthetic and functional simplifications. Like Alberti, Van Eyck insists that each house is a small city and each city is a large house.24 The two are linked by a threshold, which complicates the relationship between the intimate and familiar and the public and the strange. Van Eyck’s idea of home, however, is radically different from the strict separation between public and private (*oikos*) presented by both Aristotle and Arendt.25 The latter pair assiduously strives to erect a wall between public and private, purifying politics from the needs of the body and making it an activity reserved, seemingly, for the

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24 Coleman 2003, 206.
25 This generalization deserves qualification, at least with respect to Arendt’s treatment of art in *The Human Condition*. As Patchen Markell has insightfully argued in an unpublished manuscript, the category of art, which Arendt discusses at the end of the “Work” chapter and immediately prior to the “Action” chapter, serves as a bridge between the two categories since artworks (and built architecture) display the same transcendent qualities typical of action. Nevertheless, this connection appears to be one that Arendt herself did not intend since it defies the strict tripartite division between the categories of labor, work, and action that she defines in *The Human Condition*. See Markell’s “The Architecture of the Human Condition” (unpublished manuscript in author’s possession).
leisured, aristocratic classes. In contrast, van Eyck imagines “home” as both shelter from the public as well as the start of one’s connection to it. Threshold, that is, represents the place where private interests meet the public and begin to be transformed by the individual’s awareness of her implication in a larger world. Van Eyck sees a trace of the public in each domestic dwelling and understands that public recognition is not limited to “heroic” action but originates the more modest desire to have a say about what lies immediately adjacent to one’s home, often the physical site of many of their intimate concerns. According to van Eyck:

Now the object of the reciprocal images contained in the statement make a bunch of places of each house and every city; make of each house a small city and of each city a large house is to unmask the falsity which adheres to many abstract antonyms: adheres not merely to small versus large, but also to part versus whole, unity versus diversity, simplicity versus complexity, outside versus inside, individual versus collective, etc., etc.

(Coleman 2003, 207)

Thresholds are meant to signal the mutual relations among spaces and the people who occupy them and they proliferate in van Eyck’s designs where they promote the discovery and formation of new habits of relating to others. As Liane Lefaivre notes, “[T]he distinguishing feature of Van Eyck’s works is not their elevations or material image, but their well-structured plans. The plan, to him, was a work’s most important dimension because it was a means of ensuring that people would meet, and thus build
connections.” Van Eyck refined his idea of architecture, which appears embryonically in his 1962 essay “Steps Towards a Configurative Discipline” over a lifetime, but many of the important precepts were developed in the more than 700 playgrounds he designed in Holland, both during and after his five-year (1946-1951) stint working in the Town Planning Section of the Amsterdam Public Works department (see Illustration nos. 12 & 13). Designed to foster spontaneous playfulness in children, the playgrounds are paradigmatic for understanding the behaviors and habits Van Eyck’s tries to elicit through his designs as well as the compositional techniques by which Van Eyck tried to realize these purposes.

Called “people’s parks” because they were sited in neighborhood pockets at the request of local parents and open to all residents, unlike the closed play gardens reserved for paying members of the Amsterdam Speeltuinverbond, the playgrounds are composed of the same basic structural elements. Almost all were anchored by the sandpit and repeated the same modest features: the climbing arch of tubular steel, benches, and a large area for open play. The sandpit was always the focus and related

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26 Lefaivre 1999, 82. “Rebel with a cause.”
27 As an instructor in interior architecture at the School for Applied Arts in Amsterdam, Van Eyck worked with students to develop compositional techniques which suggested spatial forms which were simultaneously open and closed, stable and dynamic. These exercises explored the use of color and texture patterns that extended the space of the threshold linking and confusing inside and outside, as well as the snail-like occlusions like to one below that lend spaces the feeling of being both exposed and sheltered (Strauven 1998, 200).
each frame of reference (climbing arch, benches), but Van Eyck uses the axis to “contradict the established or extant hierarchy; not to help subordinate a number of secondary matters to a single central matter, but to interrelate things as elements of equal importance, regardless of their different sizes, weights and characters.”

The axial arrangements of the playgrounds do not direct the eye towards the same object or train it to see the same things from all viewpoints. Rather, the viewer is made aware of seeing the focal point of another observer from her location.

R. Blijstra describes Van Eyck’s playgrounds as pregnant forms that invite new conditions of possibility rather than confining them. They welcome children to exercise their imaginations just as they do their bodies and to discover new spontaneous modes of play, rather than prescribing a particular mode of use. He writes:

The sandpit, always furnished simply and practically with a broad edge on which sandpies can be ‘baked’ and also with long oval or sometimes round

\[\text{(Strauven 1998, 168)}\]

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29 Ibid, 167.

30 Strauven describes the interrelation of viewpoints at the Jacob Thijssseplein playground:

A parent resting on one of the benches sits face to face with the child playing on the small climbing arch marking the eccentric focus of the sandpit. The entrance of the sandpit coincides with the line of their meeting gazes. The same applies to the relation between the next bench and the climbing arch. The benches in the intervals are moreover not arranged exactly in line with the trees but are shifted slightly backwards so that the trees to the immediate left and right fall within the angle of vision, making palpable the ‘in-between’ where one is sitting. This is incidentally a principle that recurs in practically all the playgrounds where benches and trees are combined.

(Strauven 1998, 168)
tables within its margins, allows a large number of children to enjoy themselves separately or together. The edge wall always includes a few lowered sections so that even very small children can enter the sandpit without difficulty, and bigger children often use the edge as a runway. The somersault frames of various heights are especially popular with girls, who try to perfect the most wonderful gymnastic tricks on them. Round slabs of cement like Gouda cheeses lie in a right with just enough distance between them to tempt boys to test their leaping skills to exhaustion... The best invention of all is however the climbing frame of semi-cylindrical shape, on which half the children swing and the rest climb, or perch absorbed in their weighty conversation.

(Strauven 1998, 167-168)

The compositional techniques of the playgrounds and the awareness of others in their complexity and difference are repeated in Van Eyck’s most famous work, the Amsterdam Municipal Orphanage (completed 1960). The symbolism of the Orphanage, which exemplifies “homecoming”, was not lost on van Eyck. The building is distinguished by its concern for providing spaces for care, friendship, and association. In an interpretive essay about the Orphanage authored by van Eyck titled “The Medicine of Reciprocity Tentatively Illustrated” the architect explains the balance between individual and collective life he was trying to strike in this institutional building, which, it becomes clear, is a stand-in for making a larger point about the architectural and planning discipline as a whole.

One the one hand, van Eyck wanted to avoid instantiating the bureaucratic paternalism that characterized other centralized social welfare institutional buildings of the same type. Representing the confidence of Le Corbusier’s high modernism alloyed with centralized state power, this architecture treated its human material indifferently:
as wards identical in their needs for expression and play and thus routinizing their care.\textsuperscript{31} On the other hand Van Eyck is critical of those architects or planners who equate opposition to this kind of power with either anarchy or professional quietism. Van Eyck dismisses these opponents, who he calls “flexophiles,” because they refuse to submit to any constraints,\textsuperscript{32} arguing that their endorsement of “extreme flexibility” represents “false neutrality, like a glove that fits no hand because it fits all.”

Although van Eyck would seem to be following Aristotle’s preference for the mean, van Eyck explains that his intention was to pair these two contending sides without reducing their tensions.

The plan attempts to reconcile the positive qualities of a centralized scheme with those of a decentralized one, while avoiding the obvious pitfalls that cling to both: the concentrated institutional building that says: ‘get into my bulk up those steps and though the big door there’, with children heaped up close around a well-oiled service machinery, as opposed to the loosely knit additive sprawl of the false alternative to which contemporary planning still sentimentally adheres (a number of small scale units for individual groups, strung along spaces of an even smaller scale, connecting them with some marked communal elements).\textsuperscript{(Ligtelijn 1999, 88)}

In this larger argument, Van Eyck uses the concept of “in-between” space to position himself in the middle of these two sides. He admits the criticism of architecture’s ruling impulse by those who believe it limits expression and freedom but,\textsuperscript{31}\textsuperscript{32}

\textsuperscript{31} Foucault’s critique of the clinic shares a similar sentiment with van Eyck’s text even if the latter publication predates Foucault’s work on the subject.\textsuperscript{32} Perhaps van Eyck would include Rossi among this group; he does not, however, identify any members by name.
like Arendt, Van Eyck is unwilling to give up on the need for or the salutary effects of limits altogether. Unlike the “flexophiles,” Van Eyck believes that architects are responsible for providing the physical spaces conducive to the development of a robust public sphere. He describes his mediating plan for the Orphanage as follows:

The plan attempts to provide a built framework—*to set the stage*—for the dual phenomenon of the individual and the collective without resorting to the arbitrary accentuation of either one at the expense of the other, i.e. without warping the meaning of either, since no basic twin phenomenon can be split into incompatible polarities without the halves forfeiting what they stand for. This indicated the necessity of reconciling the need of unity and diversity in architectural terms or, more precisely, of *achieving one by means of the other.*

(Ligtelijn 1999, 88; emphasis added)

The Orphanage illustrates the call found in van Eyck’s Otterlo Circles for architecture to bring oppositions into dialogue and confuse the relation between them. The Orphanage is defined by its windmill pattern, which frames interior and exterior volumes, and what Van Eyck, continuing his idea that the house was a small city, called the internal street. As the aerial plan indicates, the building is composed of two bisecting interior streets which create an interlocking series of interior and exterior spaces, the latter in the form of courtyards and patios. Van Eyck filled the courtyard and patios with many of the same elemental forms that defined his playgrounds, which were proven to sustain attention and association among the building’s young residents, to ensure that the exterior spaces would be used regularly. Van Eyck emphasizes the continuity between these interior and exterior spaces by using the same materials across
the transitions. For example, the exterior brick and paving are continued inside the building. Furthermore, the walls facing the courtyard and patios are transparent glass shielded from direct sunlight by a deep portico defined by slender columns (see Illustration nos. 12 & 13).

These sheltered areas are meant to extend and delay the transition between interior and exterior. They represent a threshold “in-between” the interior and exterior forms. The depth of these thresholds was meant to confuse the boundaries between zones and corresponding behaviors, breaking down the intended segmentation of the spaces designed according to the CIAM principles as well as the correspondingly hierarchical relations that Foucault ascribes to them. The thresholds are sites where one is worked by the difference— in voice, activity, and norms of behavior that, like the heterotopic space of the greenway, with its multiple forms of circulation and appearance—they sustain. The patios on the building’s south side, which receive the most sun during the long Northern European winter and which it stands to reason are the most popular during this same period, are bounded on three sides with the fourth open to the horizon. The effect resists calling these spaces outdoor “rooms” and adds the activity of the pedestrian and auto road to the immediate tension between these indoor and outdoor volumes.

The Orphanage’s internal street was modeled on the organization of the casbahs that Van Eyck had seen during his various travels in North Africa. The casbah wove
together the publicity of the street and intimacy of interior spaces, commercial and residential, together. Its organization represented a form of circulation—in Foucault’s sense of being a physical as well as mental exercise—less to be moved through undisturbed than to be experienced interactively, at a very human scale. The intimate dimensions of the internal street and casbahs on which it is based privileges local forms of power and knowledge that are formed in relationships, knowledge that Foucault termed le savior rather than connaissance, the knowledge that is ascertained and exercised abstractly. One cannot move through Van Eyck’s buildings without acknowledging, interacting, and engaging with others. The visitor and resident are always implicated in relationships with others in the Orphanage so that the image of the isolation of the security-minded individual that Foucault identifies as central to neo-liberalism weakens with time. Both visually and, more importantly in the relationships and memories it fosters over time, the Orphanage’s casbah-like structure, which repeats a pattern of thresholds between inside and outside, yields something like Rossi’s interrupted order in an unusual institutional building.

34 Van Eyck’s choice of the casbah as a model promoting this kind of relational rationality carries an echo of Socrates’s charge that democracy resembles the experience of a bazaar. See Republic, Book 8.
35 See Chapter 2 for full discussion of these terms.
Beginning with the entry, which delays the transition between inside and outside, Van Eyck extends the use of exterior paving materials inside and into the first interior courtyard so that the transition from “interior and exterior [blend] into a place that offers coming and going the space and time they need to become an experience.”

In the Orphanage design complex color patterns confer continuity by drawing the eye across spaces. These linkages are enhanced by the structure of the building’s internal street, which use semi-open and closed rooms and large interior and exterior glass walls to enhance visibility. Just as in the playgrounds, residents and visitors are aware of the activities of others that are contemporaneous to their own because they can be heard or seen. Van Eyck explains his intention in an essay written about the Orphanage:

This interior street is yet another intermediary—there are many more, in fact the building was conceived as a configuration of intermediary places clearly defined. This does not imply continual transitions or endless postponement with respect to place or occasion. On the contrary, it implies breaking away from the contemporary concept (call it sickness) of spatial continuity and the tendency to erase every articulation between spaces, i.e. between outside and inside, between one space and another. Instead, I tried to articulate the transition by means of in-between places which induce simultaneous awareness of what is significant on either side.

(Ligtelijn 1999, 89; emphasis original)

The task of rendering van Eyck’s ideas concretely and translating his central concepts of the threshold, reciprocity, and internal street into terms intelligible to architects—namely, technique, structure, and materials—fell to his one-time student

Herman Hertzberger. As one commentator put it, “More than van Eyck, who was often fascinated by the poetic quality of his own statements, Hertzberger started elaborating the architectural potential of his ideas.” Additionally it was left to Hertzberger, who would later join his teacher on the faculty at the University of Delft, to spell out the political implications of these concepts as well as the architect’s responsibility for producing designs that encouraged habits which disposed users towards the public explicitly.

III.

In Lessons for Students in Architecture, a text based upon lectures given by Hertzberger at Delft in 1973 and which, since its publication, has become widely read by architecture students during the first year of their master’s curriculum, Hertzberger addresses the issue of political responsibility directly. Hertzberger even refers to this as the architect’s “duty” at one point (25). Here is how he lays out the issue of responsibility:

The question whether architecture has a social function is totally irrelevant, because socially indifferent situations simply do not exist; in other words, every intervention in people’s surroundings, regardless of the architect’s specific aims, has a social implication. So we are in fact not free to go ahead and design exactly

37 Van Bergeijk 1997, 12.
38 Unless otherwise specified, all references in this section are to Lessons for Students in Architecture by Herman Hertzberger (translated by Ina Rike), Rotterdam: 010 Publishers, 1991.
what we please—everything we do has consequences for people and their relationships.

There is not much an architect can do, which makes it all the more important to make sure that few opportunities there are are not be missed. If you think you can’t make the world a better place with your work, at least make sure you don’t make it worse. The art of architecture is not only to make beautiful things—nor is it only to make useful things, it is to both at once... Everything we design must be adequate to the situation that arises, in other words, it must not only be accommodating but also stimulating—and it is this fundamental and active adequacy that I would like to call ‘inviting form’: form with more sympathy for people. (174)

Without exaggerating the architect’s power over social life, Hertzberger identifies something at stake in each project that the architect takes up and the choices she makes.39 As he explains in the introduction to Lessons, the text is informed by what Hertzberger has learned through his own practice. The book makes constant reference to practical experience and is organized not by specific works but in such a way “that transforms practice itself into theory” (5). As the critic Kenneth Frampton writes, Hertzberger’s engagement with the practical side of architecture, in terms of its uses, is reflected in the fact that “his buildings are rarely, if ever, photographed without people, as opposed to the photogenic purity which is so evidently sought after in a great deal of current architectural photography.”40 Frampton goes on to note that, “For Hertzberger a

39 On the matter of choices, he writes that “whatever an architect does or deliberately leaves undone—the way that he concerns himself with enclosing or opening—he always influences, intentionally or not, the most elementary forms of social relations” (214).
40 By contrast, Le Corbusier’s drawings and renderings of his work display an aggressive fidelity to the aesthetic purity of his vision. Not only are people absent from the
building is primarily a context for life… architecture must ultimately be based on the tactile appropriation of the environment by the user.”

Hertzberger’s designs recast and develop van Eyck’s concept of threshold in terms of structures that offer users incentives to take responsibility for their world. Hertzberger names designs that cultivate this disposition towards a shared political life to be the responsibility of the architect. In his remarks on a section titled “Public Domain” that covers two of his most important built works, the Montessori School at Delft and the Centraal Beheer Office Building, Hertzberger asserts that the influence of users towards public space can be stimulated. He writes that, “It is important to bear in mind that in this case it was only because the responsibility for the arrangement and finishing the spaces had been so explicitly left to the users that such an exceptional commitment to invest love and care on their working environment was able to come about” (24). In essence, Hertzberger physically renders van Eyck’s in-between in terms renderings he prepared as part of his plans for Paris and Montevideo, they are never seen in the photographs of his finished works. The lack of human presence in these domestic scenes is an indication of the consideration Le Corbusier gave them in his work: they were an afterthought. Even the wishes of his private commissions were routinely ignored. Rather Le Corbusier believed his clients should consider themselves fortunate to live in the works of art he created for them. As James C. Scott observes Le Corbusier was so compelled by the need to realize the objects of his vision that he was willing to build for anyone, including Stalin (whose commissars rejected Le Corbusier’s plan for Moscow, which he would later recycle for Paris, as “too extreme”).

\[41\] Frampton 2002, 289.
that match up with Arendt’s understanding of the world which solicits forms of judgment and care that value and preserve its conditions of plurality. Yet he does so, as I indicated before in my earlier discussion of van Eyck, without the rigid wall between public and private that Arendt and Aristotle use to preserve the “in-between” that related individuals as political beings. Van Eyck and Hertzberger’s space of appearances depends on less durable distinctions between public and private. Together, these architects imagine the line between public and private as revisable rather than immutable prior.

By sustaining the merging of interior and exterior to create “in-between” spaces, Hertzberger’s designs exhibit variations on the thresholds that bring together public and private while maintaining their distinctiveness. These include his frequent use of exterior walkways rather than interior hallways to link rooms and external rather than internal stairs. Ideally both of these external elements should be placed on the outside surfaces of the building visible from the street rather than in an interior courtyard or more sheltered location, with the idea that frequently moving across public and private areas will connect and complicate these two physical and metaphorical areas in the minds of those who routinely do so.

Like Aristotle and Arendt, Hertzberger believed that residents or office workers in such buildings would claim these publicly visible spaces as their own, caring for them, perhaps by adorning with potted plants or benches, and developing a positive
sense of appearing before and for a public. Hertzberger incorporated these elements into his designs for publicly-owned multi-family housing in Amsterdam, Berlin, and Kassel, Germany (see Illustration no. 15). Noting its success in Amsterdam, he remarks: “Much more love is lavished on this exterior space, which has thus come under personal care, than is usual in the case of public spaces, and the quality will thus be fantastically increased notably in the common interest.”\(^{42}\) While Hertzberger blurred the boundary between private and public by extending the concept of the thresholds to the communal spaces in these buildings, neither Hertzberger nor van Eyck collapse the difference between these domains as Foucault does. Rather than politicizing every human experience—even the most intimate ones—the Dutch pair preserves what is separate to each. They do not, however, close off of the possibility of politicizing matters that spring from and are wrapped up with bodily concerns as Arendt and Aristotle do. The physical thresholds extend and complicate the borders between public and private. In as much as these spaces can shape users, they habituate workers and residents to cultivate and to care for definitions of the public and political that are more malleable than those presented by Arendt and Aristotle.

These buildings, Hertzberger writes, attempt “the translation into architectonic terms of hospitality” (35). By making, for example, the staircases more prominent and locating them on the exterior of the building to accentuate their public profiles,

\(^{42}\) Van Bergeijk 1997, 66.
Hertzberger wished to make them more than “a source of aggravation where accumulation of dirt and cleaning are concerned—they should also serve, for instance, as a playground for the small children of neighboring families.” He goes on to indicate how the design of the staircases and the rest of the building promotes an orientation towards its public spaces.

They have therefore been designed with a maximum of light and openness in mind, like glass roofed streets, and can be overlooked from the kitchens. The open entrance porches with two front doors, one after the other, show to the communal territory a little more of their inhabitants than traditional closed doors usually do. Although care has naturally been taken to ensure adequate privacy on the terraces, neighboring families are not fully isolated from one another. We have aimed at designing the exterior spaces in such a way that the necessary screening detracts as little as possible from the spatial conditions for contact between neighbors.

Such in-between places are an example of how we might practice a care for the world that respects Arendt’s concerns for privacy without adopting her well-known divisions or having to limit ourselves to fixed and unalterable concepts of the public that she and Rossi identify with “monuments” of the past. For them, the boundaries around the public designate the “in-between” within which individuals can behave as political beings.

In contrast, Hertzberger believes the in-betweenness of the threshold elicits activity without prescribing its use or function. Like Foucault’s heterotopias, the threshold is ambiguous. By definition it is a hybrid form that is combination of forms that is meant to invite us to linger and regularly associate in those spaces, as in his
Amsterdam Student Housing (1959-1966; see Illustration no. 16). This building is distinguished by its elevated “living street” which is intended to animate patterns of circulation that bring residents into greater contact with one another. Located on the fourth floor and open to the elements, the street features concrete-cast horizontal surfaces that function as tables or benches and views of the surrounding city. Of this particular space, Hertzberger has said, “however the designer takes a building, it is the occupants who go on making it after they have taken it over, constantly changing and renewing. They interpret it in their own way, and the more diverse in which the building allows for completion, the more people can feel at home in it.” Echoing Rossi, he continues, “The more differing marks of identification a building can obtain, the more it will be a home that every occupant makes into something else, something more of himself.” Here Hertzberger suggests, in a sentiment that is in-line with Rossi, that the in-between of the living street is meant to support plural forms of appearing and attachment.

Like Arendt, Hertzberger believes that the regard for public life is under threat in modernity. Hertzberger traces the decline of this sense to the diminishment of the threshold, in both numbers and kind, and specifically the way that the threshold (van

43 Van Bregeijk 1997, 27.
44 He states, “The concept of the living street is based on the idea that its inhabitants have something in common, that they expect something from each other even if only because they are aware that they need each other. This feeling, however, seems to be disappearing rapidly from our lives” (55).
Eyck’s “homecoming”) has historically connected the private life of the home to the public life of the street. The loss of thresholds has been due to “inconsiderate organization of the access areas to the dwellings, in particular that of the front doors vis-à-vis each other owing to indirect and impersonal access routes such as galleries, elevators, covered passages, (the inevitable by products of high -rise constructions) which diminish contact with the street level” (49). One could add the proliferation of garage entries in many post-war American suburban homes to the list of occluded thresholds. Hertzberger ascribes the transition to more privatized thresholds to the same increased concerns for individual security that Foucault identifies as central to the regime of neo-liberalism (33).

In Hertzberger’s opinion, the loss of not only thresholds that link private and public, but also places to sit, linger, and tarry—as benches become modified to prevent homeless persons from sleeping on them and ledges are covered with spikes to dissuade loitering—under the pressure of security has had a profound effect on our habits of and capacities for deliberation. He writes that “The threshold provides the key to the transition and connection between areas with divergent territorial claims and, as a place in its own right, it constitutes essentially, the spatial condition for the meeting and dialogue between different orders” (32). For Hertzberger, the threshold is a space of border-dwelling, home to a unique culture marked by ambiguity, attunement to difference, and conflict between two or more contending orders of power and
knowledge. Like the Athenian workshop and barbershop, which shared qualities of public and private, and was itself a type of liminal spatial form, Hertzberger’s threshold is the place where citizens not only encounter difference but come to experience it more meaningfully. That experience, of course, can be salutary as well as harmful or even dangerous.

Threshold spaces are intended to form habits that orient residents and workers towards the public but without specifying the boundaries around what constitutes the public. In this way, Hertzberger and van Eyck’s threshold represents a radical revision of Arendt’s understanding of the care of the world. Arendt imagines those boundaries in much more fixed terms. For her, Jefferson’s plan for the ward system is the unalterable prior condition for natality. Hertzberger, however, opens up the foundations of those plans for questioning. At its limit, the threshold implies cultivating the ability to renegotiate the place and identity of what constitutes the edges of the political.

Indeed, Hertzberger advocates that architects “make space” for residents to choose how thresholds are to look in order to draw them into contact with a larger public. He points to the example of the use of removable concrete pavers that linked the doorways to private homes to the street in his Diagoon Dwellings project (Illustration no. 17). The removable pavers covered the small privately owned front lots in front of each home. Residents could make choices about how to use the space. Some added
planters or potted plants, some left it as is or parked their cars there, and others removed the pavers entirely and planted gardens. Hertzberger explains that the opportunity to make decisions about the use and appearance of this space had two consequences. First, it helped connect private residences to the public street, forcing residents to think about how they wanted to present themselves to the public. Second, their decisions about the appearance of the space promoted conflict and debate about the proper constitution of the public sphere. In the intermediary merging of the private area of the house and the public area of the street, Hertzberger says “individual and collective claims can overlap, and resulting conflicts must be resolved by mutual agreement” (41).

It is in the practice of inhabiting such threshold spaces, that Hertzberger believes that citizens learn to dwell with and negotiate particularity and complexity and that architects are responsible for designing spaces which offer these opportunities. Addressing architects-in-training, he states that “The point is therefore to create intermediary spaces which, although on the administrative level belonging to either the private or public domain, are equally accessible to both sides, that is to say that it is wholly acceptable to both what the ‘other’ makes of them” (40). Hertzberger challenges the assumption, made by architects who object to his efforts to draw people into public

45 This is very different from the New Urbanists neighborhood, where homeowner’s associations often use restrictive covenants to reduce the universe of choices about the appearance of their homes and, by extension, open conflict about the appearance of public spaces. See Kohn 2004, 117.
relationships with one another, that occupants of a house are not really concerned with the space outside their house. Hertzberger admits that this may not be their primary concern but that, at the same time, they cannot ignore it either. According to Hertzberger, if architects do not accommodate this latent interest, however slight, in their designs, the risk to residents is “alienation from your environment and—in so far as your relations with others are influenced by your environment—also to alienation from your fellow residents” (47).

Architects must design spaces that encourage, in Hertzberger’s words, “users” to think of themselves as “inhabitants” or participants in lived space. That is, they must design architecture that make people care about the world they share with others and to think of that experience as a mutual endeavor. Like Arendt, Hertzberger imagines that appropriating public space—acting in public—is transformative for both the actor and others who witness that action. He claims that, “Wherever individuals or groups are given the opportunity to use the public space in their own interests, and only indirectly in the interest of others, the public nature of the space is temporarily or permanently put into perspective through that use” (17). He emphasizes that this disposition will not generate automatically if architects get the form “right.” Architects must, “make space and leave space.” In other words, they must leave their buildings partially unfinished so that its users must make decisions about how the space will best suit their individual and collective needs.
Hertzberger approvingly recounts how, after being shown images of Los Angeles’s Watts Tower, which was built by locals, residents of the LiMA Housing estate worked with the supervising architect to leave certain parts of the project for them to finish. They chose to decorate the play area in the central courtyard with mosaic tiles and pieces of old ceramic cookery that they contributed to the purpose. Hertzberger writes of their enthusiasm that, “A better way of responding to the incentive is hard to imagine. But more important still is that is has become their own sand-pit and their own concern: if a fragment of the mosaic falls off or proves to be too sharp, for instance, something will be done about it without it being necessary to hold special meetings, write official letters, or to sue the architect” (43).

The resistance or inability of architects to imagine how their designs might enable practices of making space that Hertzberger identifies broadly parallels the opposition that Arendt observes in the minds of many moderns between revolutionary action and constitution-making. In On Revolution Arendt speculates that the root cause of this confusion is the predominance of the French Revolution over the American Revolution in popular memory. She acknowledges that perhaps the source of the confusion is the term constitution. The word, she notes, refers to the political act of constituting that generally precedes the establishment of a new government as well as the founding legal document often regarded, retrospectively, as the source of stability and authority of the resulting regime (OR, 144-145; 203-204). Only in America, she
believes, did these two notions of constitution align. Americans, Arendt states, established a new form of power, one that had its origins in the pre-revolutionary self-governing constituent bodies in each colony and frequent town-hall meetings, that was additive. The concern of the American founders, according to Arendt, was not to limit power but to avoid impotence (OR, 152).

Yet despite the intentions of the founders, Arendt observes that moderns have come to view the two parts of constitution as separate rather than mutually reinforcing phenomena. Contributing to this loss was the proliferation of constitutional design by experts after the First World War and the imposition of those constitutions upon the people from “above.” Today, she writes, the body politic has difficulty conceiving of “a beginning except as something which must have occurred in a distant past” (OR, 198) and constitutions are thought to have been intentionally written to frustrate the actions of the body politic (OR, 126). As a result, the idea of constituting action has fallen out of the definition of constitution.

Sheldon Wolin’s recent characterization of constitution as the end of democracy exemplifies the hostility between the values of stability and action that Arendt names. Wolin contests the accepted understanding of revolutionary action that culminates in
the founding of a constitution.⁴⁶ These do not represent, he writes, a “seamless web of two complementary notions.”⁴⁷ Rather than realize democracy, he believes that the constitutionalization of democracy represents the transformation and ultimate suppression of democracy. Democracy, as Wolin defines the term, originates in the demand for a “’share’ of power in the institutions of making and interpreting the laws.” Referring specifically to Athenian democracy, he writes, “It culminated in popular control over most of the main political institutions.”⁴⁸ The introduction of the Athenian Constitution, however, represented the “institutionalization”—by which Wolin means

⁴⁶ Wolin explicitly identifies constitutions with the idea of “form” and makes a metaphorical connection between constitution making and architectural design, at least that which is animated by the definitions of archē that prioritize control and rule:

> Since antiquity the idea of a form has often served as a metaphor of control signifying mastery, hence superiority, over “content.” Implicit in the metaphor were political questions such as Who designed the form? Who had knowledge of the design? What or who was destined to be content, and were they naturally receptive to the impress of that form...

> Adapted by Plato and Aristotle to political discourse, form was made into a justification for various distinctions, each of which implied subordination... a form symbolized a structure that contained the distinctions allowing the actions of the few to direct the activities of the many.

> From there it was but another short step to employing form as synonym for “constitution” and for constitution to mean a “pre-form,” and a priori shape, the articulation prior to content and defining of it. The form was assigned a monopoly over the political and became the locus of legitimate politics.

(Wolin 1994, 48-49; emphasis mine)

⁴⁷ Wolin 1994, 32.
⁴⁸ Ibid, 36
the settling of norms and rituals but also “routinization, professionalization, and the loss of spontaneity and those improvisory skills that Thucydides singled out as an Athenian trademark”-- of democracy.49 Instead of associating institutionalization with stability as Arendt and other classical scholars have, Wolin regards constitutional forms as entirely incompatible with democracy. Democracy, argues Wolin, is “inherently unstable, inclined toward anarchy, and identified with revolution.”50

Given the resonances with architecture in Wolin’s remarks on the antagonism between democracy-as-structure and democracy-as-action, perhaps Hertzberger’s remarks on these matters can serve as a suggestive guide for reopening a dialogue on the relationship between the two. Hertzberger insists that architects should regard their work as a catalyzing agent that stimulates a virtuous circle of actions which express an active responsibility for the preservation of the diversely constituted public world. Architects can invite or prompt this behavior through their designs: “The point is then for the inhabitants to create their environment themselves, and in this process architects cannot do otherwise than to hand the inhabitants the important tools” (113).

Hertzberger encourages architects to think of their work as “great containers” that can support a great variety of activities and warns against specifying too much functionality.

49 Ibid.
50 Ibid, 37.
within a plan. He likens the structure of a building to a “generative spine” onto which action is woven into. Architecture is the sum of the spine and the warp and weft created through the actions that people fill in. But Hertzberger’s container is less confining than the way that Arendt contains the content of public and political. Like her, he imagines forms of structure and architecture that can promote and enable natality, the ability to open up the “world”. Instead of the walls she builds around politics in order to preserve it, however, he chooses to define using the more permeable and ambiguous space of the threshold.

Although he notes that it is painful for architects to see their designs altered by users “beyond recognition,” he admonishes them to see structures that invite users to question what they are and how they can be used as a “kind of triumph” (132). His

51 In language that could have easily been written by Scott given their almost uncanny resemblance, Hertzberger offers these words on the risks of adhering too strictly to a plan:

the lesson that we learned from this experience was that if you adhere so strictly to such a specific and explicit organization of the main form, your plan is doomed to failure, and that it would in fact be far better to start out from a more open and more flexible basic structure that is accommodating adjustments as they become necessary (131).

52 “The basic structure is an interpretable zone in its entirety thus awaits complementary filling in, while remaining essentially the same; the building as a whole derives its identity from the complex of different interpretations” (134).

53 Hertzberger makes an explicit “plea for revisibility”:

the neighborhood center should be planned in such a way that it can evolve over the years, by virtue of its adaptability to specific needs, in other words it should always be possible to add new elements and to alter or even demolish them in accordance with changing needs. (112)
statement can also be taken as a rebuke to theorists like Arendt and Aristotle who, in their devotion to the politics, are unwilling to yield their definitions of politics and political activity to others. Hertzberger manages to hold onto the salutary benefits of structure with his architectural designs without adopting the inflexibility of the other two’s definition of what constitutes politics or political action. Again, neither van Eyck nor Hertzberger view architecture and action deterministically or regard them as a set of necessary oppositions. Instead, they revolve in a relationship that radicalizes the double-sided understanding of arche that Arendt develops. Architecture, Hertzberger writes, imposes an enabling constraint that has the potential to enhance the development of more spontaneous capacities.

If there is anything that comes to the fore out of all these examples it is surely the paradox that the restriction of a structuring principle (warp, spine, grid) apparently results not in a diminution but in an expansion of the possibilities of adaptation and therefore individual possibilities of expression. The correct structure then does not restrict freedom but is actually conducive to freedom!

(120)

A lack of constraints—the position advocated by van Eyck’s “flexophiles”—fails to provide the order that is particular to the development of democratic forms of power. Again, these forms of power begin with the cultivation for the care of the world in Arendt’s terms. For both Arendt and Hertzberger, this means a respect for the limiting
conditions that make those dispositions possible. As Hertzberger puts it, “when the nature of a particular space is so public that no one will feel inclined to exert any influence on it, there is no point in the architect to make provisions of this kind” (25).

By marrying together concerns for structure, on the one hand, and developing the capacity of users to “make space”—that is to become architects of their own political possibilities—van Eyck and Hertzberger offer a suggestive approach for bridging the gap that separates democratic theorists that I identified earlier. This encapsulates those like Madison and Dahl who prioritize order and stability, which they identify with governing systems, formal decision-making bodies, and principles of constitutionalism, and those like Rancière and Wolin who depict democracy as a disruptive and ephemeral phenomenon. Each side in this debate is, in effect, struggling to identify the spaces and tempos appropriate to democratic politics. In its own way, each side has generated a distorted or exaggerated image of democratic life. The history of democratic power—whether in ancient Athens, 17th century England, or modern America—has not been either revolution or stability, but both.

Hertzberger’s threshold closes off the false binary between stability and action that van Eyck identified with flexophiles and which Arendt thought symptomatic of the modern political condition. This tendency appears in various guises: William Connolly’s advocacy of “fast time” which dismisses a regard for rooted forms of knowledge as a form of nostalgia, Wolin’s concept of “fugitive democracy,” and Gilles
Deleuze and Felix Guattari’s praise for nomadism,\textsuperscript{54} which itself draws from Foucault’s invocation of Nietzschean resistance. Yet, as John Schaar noted some years ago, democracy is not another form of anarchy.\textsuperscript{55} That is, democracy is not freedom from authority, hierarchy, or structure but rather depends on a very particular configuration of stability that enhances the capacity for more radical action. Democracy draws on the deep knowledge of place, tradition, and culture that Arendt and Rossi imagine as well as the agitation and energies present at the origins of democracy. These are dynamically related and van Eyck and Hertzberger suggest architectures and, by extension, tempos that habituate individuals to appreciate and tend to the cultivation these forms of knowledge and power. Their idea of threshold invites the performance of diachronic tempos that Rossi’s design for the San Cataldo cemetery in Modena only gestures towards symbolically.

Hertzberger gives a picture of this world and the capacities he wants to cultivate in his design for the Centraal Beheer Office Building, which is organized as a series of thresholds. The Centraal Beheer Office Building (completed 1972) pays homage to the Municipal Orphanage in its cellular structure, but it also innovates in several important ways (Illustration no. 18). To begin, Hertzberger incorporates the casbah structure into the building’s external as well as internal form. With its roofs of differing heights and its

\begin{itemize}
\item Deleuze and Guattari 1987, 351-423; 474-500.
\end{itemize}
segmented edifice, the building is meant to present itself, like Moshe Safdie’s Habitat Montreal, in the architect’s words, as a “frayed edge” where inside and outside “never truly blend together.”\textsuperscript{56} The inter-penetration of public and private as well as the relation between the building’s irregular walls and the intervening spaces that they create is meant to be on “equal footing.”\textsuperscript{57}

The blending continues inside with the use of a multi-story atrium throughout the building. Hertzberger uses glass blocks at the entry to minimize the visual barrier differentiating the building’s interior and exterior and glass partitions rather than solid opaque walls to demarcate “private” meeting rooms. Most of the office space is, however, undifferentiated, without walls or cubicles, and divided by the building’s full-height atrium. Office workers can see and hear not only their immediate seatmates and those on their floor, but they are also aware of the activities in other parts of the building— including the clinking of dishes in the cafeteria and coffee break areas— just as

\textsuperscript{56} Hertzberger 2000, 218.
\textsuperscript{57} In Lessons, Hertzberger cites Le Corbusier’s use of columns in the Ministry of Education and Health Building in Rio de Janeiro (1936-37) as a conceptual precursor to the confusion of boundaries found in the Centraal Beheer. In Rio de Janeiro, Le Corbusier placed a conventional high-rise on a base of columns which allowed pedestrian traffic and the liveliness of the street to penetrate a formally private and otherwise inaccessible space so that the “borderlines between outside and inside become less explicit, but also the sharp division between private and public domain is softened” (79). The effect of the columned canopy was to extend the threshold to the street. Unlike solid curtain walls, whether they are used in exteriors or interiors, columns give definition to space but do not closely bound its possibilities. The spaces they define lend themselves to adaptable configurations as different uses demand.
one is aware of other activities in the city when traveling its busy streets (see Figure G, Appendix). The incorporation of the internal street into the Centraal Beheer (the corridor was originally supposed to link the public street to the nearby subway station, but these plans were overruled by the building’s owner out of concerns for security) was to promote new forms of circulation—as I invoked this term in my discussion of Durham in the context of Foucault’s understanding of the inter-dependence between physical and mental habits of circulation (81). The openness of the Centraal Beheer was intended to facilitate the awareness and experience of plurality one would have walking a diversely constituted street. Hertzberger made a similar choice in his design for the Vredenburg Music Center and he explains his decision with reference to the Centraal Beheer in Lessons.

The point is to draw the attention of people who work in the building to the visitors and vice versa. A similar situation is to be found in the Centraal Beheer office building where you can see into the dish-washing area and watch your plates being cleaned, while the people doing the cleaning—not the most attractive of jobs need not feel banished and excluded from contact.

(210)

Indeed, the interior spaces of Hertzberger’s non-residential buildings, which include government and private office building as well as factories, are surprisingly open and are intended to promote, “maximum visibility for those working there, not only of the world outside but more particularly of each other.”58 In his plan for the

Ministry of Social Welfare and Employment in The Hague, Hertzberger uses elevated walkways to enhance the urban qualities of the building’s interior spaces. While he acknowledges this design appears, on first glance, inefficient because so much interior square footage is left open, devoted to the atrium and elevated walkways, he explains that this is not the case. Rather, the goal was to move as much of the purposes and activities that the design brief designated to “official” spaces to the building’s informal interior circulatory spaces.

The building’s design eliminates the square footage normally reserved for corridors, and multiplies the social contacts that can occur among staff and visitors. This choice breaks down the barriers built around expertise, the cordon of private office for managers and private conference rooms. Furthermore, it suggests an understanding of technē that stresses the importance of knowledge produced in collaborative relationships rather than one that prioritizes maximizing efficiency in terms of cost-per-square foot. Hertzberger explains that, additionally, the decision to populate the building’s internal streets with multiple activities also admits a place for chance back into the experience of everyday life otherwise governed by concerns for security: Hertzberger’s structures operate according to a mutually supportive form of visibility that softens the instincts around security and risk mitigation rather than continuing the panoptic visibility that is ascendant in High Modernism design. As a result,

In most buildings, you have rooms and corridors and little besides. The only place for accidental encounters is the restaurant. Here by contrast the central
zone that breaks down the division into floors and spatially fixes the entire internal organization is typical of the building as a whole, triggering social encounters and encouraging everyone to not stick to their own department. Informal social contacts are not only important in terms of breaks or relaxation but also serve an intellectual purpose. This is familiar to everyone who has spent far too long trying to solve a problem, only to find that the colleague they inadvertently bumped into was the very one who could have helped them to sort it out long ago... This is where a building’s spatial organization can offer positive conditions.

(Van Bergeijk 1997, 158)

As compared with a conventional office building that is segregated by floor, the experience of the Centraal Beheer and Ministry for Social Welfare and Employment are closer to that of the polis—or perhaps small city—in which the encounters are more fluid and less colored or guided by hierarchical patterns of circulation. Like the workshop spaces of ancient Athens I described in the first chapter, where there was a certain openness which allowed citizens and non-citizen makes to encounter and interact with one another within a certain level of ambiguity, the interior streets of Hertzberger’s Centraal Beheer and Ministry buildings enable a similar experience. By virtue of their open interior structures and emphasis on common spaces that promote visibility and support multiple activities, these buildings are by comparison louder, more bustling.

As microcosms of the larger city, these buildings represent an alternative to the panoptic spaces of the modern city. The designs of these buildings resist the segregation of persons, ideas, and activities that characterize Foucault’s description of late-modernity. In their openness and emphasis on shared space, these buildings promote
the development of common rituals and knowledge, foster mutually supportive forms of visibility, and introduce chance back into daily experience. They “set the stage” for local practices that interpellate links between individual and collective life. These buildings represent architectures which represent archē as a form of command that are nonetheless constitutive of the conditions for what Arendt calls the archē of initiation. Specifically, these buildings utilize the concepts of threshold and homecoming to provide the opportunity for association amid diversity and difference, which Arendt suggests support and are supported by democratic practices of initiation.

By pluralizing intermediary spaces that are visible and open to other activities but at the same time remain distinct, van Eyck and Hertzberger hoped that the complex interaction among these spaces would add depth and richness to both the smaller and larger places as each would become recognizable in the other.59 At the level of the city, there would be an arrangement of in-betweens and articulated thresholds which linked individuals to larger associations. As van Eyck says “The associative relationship between the various levels of clusters and sub-clusters will moreover be at every level in the city. He will experience the city, both its parts and its whole, as a huge house.”60 Both architects believe that the “in-between” encourages this relation by shifting frames of reference in their designs so that, as in the inward-facing circles of ancient Athens,

60 Ibid.
each viewer realizes that her perspective is one among many equally situated around common objects of concern.

The in-between is a “bunch of places” that carries “multi-meanings” in Van Eyck’s words. That is, the in-between is an architectural form that is simple and stable, yet does not impose a fixed function or meaning. Rather, it is a form between forms that elicits the imagination while also reinforcing the ambivalence and complexity of human relations. Van Eyck believes that the bodily experience of such paradoxically multiform spaces, which are both closed and open, inculcates an understanding of the ‘labyrinthine clarity’ of those and surrounding spaces and human experience more broadly. When multiplied and incorporated into the designs for a range of structures, the proliferation of threshold spaces has the potential to radically shape the disposition of the people who inhabit those spaces regularly.

If Arendt’s worldly in-between were populated with van Eyck and Hertzberger’s thresholds perhaps those spaces would facilitate the development of beings who habitually “make space” for other persons and ways of being and doings. In other words, the regularly experienced heterotopic ambiguity of these spaces could attune inhabitants to the limits on possibility that each judgment and action forecloses. Armed with a reflexive understanding of their own activities, such threshold beings might be better positioned or more inclined to create thresholds that nurture similar possibilities from which new, unimagined threshold practices and possibilities could emerge. In
short, thresholds have the potential to create more capacious and generous selves who may be conducive to rebuilding the world in ways that are responsive to attending to the thresholds of political possibilities not yet recognized. I believe that this kind of structure, when combined with the place-making and “world-building” practices that I described in the last chapter, which the in-between and threshold are intended to promote, offers the best strategy for addressing the security-driven strategies of isolation at the center of neo-liberalism which is threatening democratic practice today.
6. Conclusion

I closed the last chapter by suggesting that van Eyck’s and Hertzberger’s thresholds represent an architectural form that is in-between forms. I argued that thresholds signify a form of order that could generate the radical possibilities contained in Arendt’s concept of natality. Individuals habituated in such spaces might develop sensibilities that could allow them to tend to forms of plurality and thresholds of difference that remain on the horizon. Certainly Arendt, Lynch, and Rossi imagine that such individuals would tell stories about the cities they inhabit and have known. Each believes that the act of telling and listening to such stories is political. Such discourse represents the negotiation of who “we” are, just as the construction of monuments in the Asty and Piraeus were instrumental in contesting the aristocratic and democratic character of Athenian society. In Arendt’s words, these kinds of stories reflect and influence how “we” imagine the world is to look and whom “we” will share that world with. For this reason, these stories and the design of the spaces that they are, to some degree, tied to concern the exercise and development of political judgment.

In this conclusion, I would briefly like to turn to one such account about the cities “we” design and inhabit, Italo Calvino’s short novel Invisible Cities. My argument is that Calvino’s narrative, in which the young Marco Polo reports on the many cities he has visited in Kublai Khan’s territory to the Emperor himself, suggestively models the concept of architecture I have tried to develop using Arendt’s understanding of the
reflective relation between world and world-building action. Although Polo is supposedly speaking of cities of the ancient world, here I am less interested in the particular details of those cities than how he talks about them. I am interested in what you might call the architecture of Calvino’s novel because it bears important parallels to the values and orientation, in terms of the habits of democratic subjects, that architectural design should motivate. In short, the structure of *Invisible Cities* shares a resonance with the forms of architecture that represent conditions of particularity, plurality, and ambiguity that, in turn, enhance democratic judgment and practice.

The novel is set in the court of Kublai Khan, where the young Venetian traveler sits recounting the many cities that he has visited in the aging Emperor’s lands. Polo’s reports are almost fables, filled with descriptions of cities that are crumbling with time, layered with time and history, whose appearances shift in the falling light or vary according to whether the traveler approaches by land or water. During their meetings, Khan listens, reflects, and sometimes interrupts to ask for details or clarification about the cities he hears about. Khan is, importantly, the interpreter of Polo’s narrative within Calvino’s text. Calvino makes the readers privy to Khan’s efforts to comprehend what it is he is being told about the cities Polo has visited. The reader is allowed to listen in as Polo offers Khan an architectural tour of the cities in the sovereign’s empire. Polo is, in effect, communicating the lived experience of these cities to his patron and Khan’s response is another form of that experience rendered from a distance. So while Kublai
Khan is not a democrat, I contend that the structure of the narrative models a form of architectural design that facilitates the form of judgment most appropriate to democratic politics. In particular, Calvino uses geometrical order to create conditions that support the generation of possibilities that are not limited by that order. In other words, Calvino has designed a form for the novel that calls on the reader’s active engagement in making sense of Polo’s text with Khan and which augments her ability and, by extension, authority to do so.

The novel consists of fifty-five short descriptions of cities, which are divided into nine chapters, with ten cities in the first and final chapters and five cities in the intervening chapters. The cities are classified into eleven categories¹ and these categories are distributed across the chapters in a mathematical series.² The chapters are not thematic but each contains two exchanges between Marco Polo and Kublai Khan. The purpose of this structure, however, is not immediately apparent to either Khan or the reader. The reader finds Khan listening attentively to Polo, trying to rationally

¹ The eleven categories include: Cities and memory, Cities and desire, Cities and signs, Thin cities, Trading Cities, Cities and eyes, Cities and names, Cities and the dead, Cities and the sky, Continuous cities, and Hidden cities.
² Carolyn Springer summarizes the numerical structure governing the chapters:
   The first chapter sets up the series by introducing four times “Le citta e la memoria,” three times “Le citta e il desiderio,” twice “Le citta e i segni,” and one time “Le citta sottili.” Each of the following chapters begins with the completion of one category and ends with the introduction of another, thus establishing the descending numerical pattern of 5-4-3-2-1 and creating the illusion of an autonomous narrative machine, capable of generating new combinations in a potentially infinite mathematical series. (Springer 1985, 291)
organize and classify the cities based on Polo’s descriptions. But the reader discovers
with Khan that Polo’s stories reflect what Carolyn Springer calls a “combinatory game”
that is mirrored in the descriptions of cities in which social roles rotate, evolve, and
recombine with the passage of time. Polo’s descriptions are multiple and demonstrate
an awareness of their contingency. Polo, for instance, observes that there were “two
ways of describing the city of Dorothea” (9).

The Ventian’s stories draw the city in profoundly human terms. Not only are the
measurements Polo uses intensely related to human experience (the height of a railing is,
for example, described in terms of the “leap of the adulterer who climbed over it at
dawn” (10)), but they also insist on understanding architecture in terms of the
relationships that it makes possible. Just as for Arendt, Calvino considers the city in
terms of the dynamic circularity between structure and the actions that augment those
structures, in turn. But if Polo’s stories represent an effort to make the city and its
experience legible to Khan and, by extension, the reader, he falls short of achieving the
type of clarity Le Corbusier pursued or the consensus that motivated Lynch’s design for
Boston’s Government Center. Here is how Calvino describes the city’s legibility:

The city, however, does not tell its past, but contains it like the lines of a hand,
written in the corners of the streets, the gratings of the windows, the banisters of

3 Unless specified otherwise, all references are to Italo Calvino’s Invisible Cities. New
the steps, the antennae of the lightning rods, the poles of the flags, every segment marked in turn with scratches, indentations, scrolls.

(Calvino 1974, 11)

The initial indecipherability of Polo’s travel reports have to do with a language barrier between the two men that disappears as Polo becomes familiar with the court language. Though before he does, Polo and Khan manage to communicate using a system of signs, drawings, and gestures. These symbols, Khan is aware, could carry multiple meanings. A clutch of arrows drawn by Polo, he reflects, could mean either plentiful stocks of game or a threat to his armies. Polo’s use of ambiguous symbols, as well as the confusing structure of his narration, with its starts, stops, and repetition, creates a “space” for Kublai Khan and the reader to fill in, much like Hertzberger’s intention to design a space to solicit the user’s participation in completing his architectural design. If Polo’s speech and Calvino’s words can be said to articulate a space as an architect might, they also leave space in which the reader or user can and must still exercise his or her own judgment and authority. The experience of Calvino’s internal reader, Kublai Khan, in the space created through this design is rendered in the following description:

But what enhanced for Kublai every event or piece of news reported by his inarticulate informer was the space that remained around it, a void that was not filled with words. The descriptions of cities Marco Polo visited had this virtue: you could wander through them in thought, become lost, stop and enjoy the cool air, or run off.

(Calvino 1974, 38)
Khan’s ability to let his mind wander through the cities enfolded in Polo’s stories is transferred to the reader as well. As Khan and the reader gradually realize that the similarities among Polo’s various cities suggest that he is, in fact, speaking of only one city, in this case the city of his birth, Venice, the reader is free to wander in the text and read sections out of order. The architecture of Calvino’s *Invisible Cities* therefore models the complementary relationship between order and spontaneity that is at the heart of the Arendtian conception of democracy consisting of the mutually complementary relations between democratic practices that tend to the conditions responsible for reproducing and sustaining those practices that I have tried to articulate in this dissertation. Calvino emphasizes Khan’s interpretation involves judgment and, indeed, that the world, which often appears disaggregated and awaiting the order that we will impose upon it, prompts our judgment. Towards the end of the novel, as it becomes clear that Polo will one day return to the city from which he started his journey, Khan asks the traveler if Polo will tell those who he meets in his homeland stories of cities similar to ones that he has told Khan. Polo replies that he will continue to speak of those cities, but the meaning of his stories will inevitably be interpreted differently since “It is not the voice

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4 Springer argues that the structure of *Invisible Cities* dramatizes the role of the reader in contemporary fiction. According to Springer, the structure of Calvino’s novel enables the reader to break out of traditional structure of the novel which so often works to enforce authorial control over how the text is to be read and interpreted. See Springer 1985, 290.
that commands the story: it is the ear” (135). What Calvino’s narrative structure suggests is the co-existence of unity and difference made possible by acts of judgment that are tied to and developed through their engagement with the text, and, by implication, the city Polo is describing.

The city of Venice is an apt metaphor for describing the reflexivity between order and natal action in Arendt’s description of the term archē. As Calvino noted in the catalogue for a Paris cartography exhibition, Venice was the center of map-making during the Renaissance. Calvino writes that maps from this era were a fundamental to the attempt to impose a rational structure on the world and that often this knowledge was in the service of imperial ambitions. By contrast, Polo’s Venice is informed by his memories and close knowledge of the city. The difference between these two modes of order and knowledge correspond to the distinction that Foucault makes between the categories of savoir and connaissance. As Kerstin Pilz puts it,

[H]is [Polo’s] subjectivity thwarts objective knowledge. He knows that the navigator and explorer, or better, observer, is always part of the map he or she intends to draw.

(Pilz 2003, 234-25)

Calvino dramatizes the tension between these two contending modes of order and knowledge in the penultimate chapter in which the Great Khan tries to engage the

5 Cited in Pilz 2003, 234.
Venetian in a chess match. The game of chess exemplifies the imperative of conquest motivating much of Renaissance cartography and the board’s geometry illustrates the Khan’s desire for order and control over the narrative. Polo, however, thwarts Kublai Khan’s attempt to impose his mastery over the situation, what Calvino calls Khan’s desire to reduce each part to its essential and perform “the definitive conquest” (131):

Then Marco Polo spoke: “Your chessboard, sire, is inlaid with two woods: ebony and maple. The square on which your enlightened gaze is fixed was cut from the ring of a trunk that grew in a year of drought: you see how its fibers are arranged? Here a barely hinted knot can be made out: a bud tried to burgeon on a premature spring day, but the night’s frost forced it to desist.”

(Calvino 1974, 131)

In Polo’s reply, offered to Khan over the chessboard, Calvino draws our attention to the fact that the architecture of his novel is one that not only bears the reminders of prior attempts to bring new objects into the world, but also is meant to prompt similar efforts. The subsequent section depicts Khan sharing with Polo an atlas that contains maps of all the cities of the world, from the ancient cities of Jerico, Troy, and Jerusalem, to those that are unknown to Khan, like Amsterdam, and those that are yet to founded like New York and Los Angeles. The Khan’s atlas reflects the experience of the interpreter who has dwelled in the space left for him in Polo’s narrative. Like

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* My interpretation of this part of Calvino’s text is influenced by Springer’s comments on the same passage (see Springer 1985).
Hertzberger’s threshold dweller, Khan’s sensibility is guided by a formal order that makes space for other beings, times, and places that have yet to appear. The atlas that contains maps of cities inhabited by unknown and unnamed people manifests its own incompleteness—the fact that it awaits others who will add to its knowledge. As Calvino writes, “The catalogue of forms is endless: until every shape has found its city, new cities will continue to be born” (139).

As I suggested in Chapter 3, if democracy involves sustaining the capacity for the new and receptiveness to emerging forms of difference, then architectural designs that attune individuals to these habits matter profoundly for “our” democracy especially since modern architecture and urban planning, as we saw in Chapter 2, so often work to not just inhibit but obscure our sensitivity to difference. In Brasília, architecture and urban planning were instruments in enforcing and contesting political exclusion and their entanglement with the sovereign power of the state was clearly visible. In Durham, however, patterns of external circulation operate more subtly to shape ethical and political habits. These forms of circulation are informed by and naturalize the calculations of risk and reward that typify the political rationality of neo-liberal thinking, a disposition that aligns the individual’s sense of her own interests with state and economic forms of power that prize stability and security, that Foucault terms “governmentality.” These modes of circulation bring individuals in contact under circumstances that are most often defined by hierarchical relations of power in which
calculations of risk and reward can be performed without difficulty. Indeed, the categories of aesthetic order or disorder serve as visible shorthand for such calculations. Engagements across such social and economic hierarchies involve only minimal exposure to risk and the difference that another represents. Statistical calculations guide where one expects to be and what one expects to hear, see, and experience there. Cumulatively, these patterns of circulation close off our knowledge of others and their differences.

Most troubling from the perspective of our democracy is that these patterns of circulation produce the condition of political oblivion—what Orlando Patterson called social death—as well as the ethical obliviousness to that condition. These patterns of circulation naturalize inequalities of power by enforcing conditions of powerlessness for certain populations while making the privileged less sensitive to claims arising from those inequalities of power. In Rancière’s terms, the fact of inequality becomes part of the realm of the sensible and efforts to ameliorate those inequalities through the administrative action of the state become part of the police. For Rancière, actions that address the conditions that sustain those inequalities are the preserve of “politics” by which he means the claim of equality put forward by those who have no right to make such claims. Rancière essentializes and reduces democratic politics to this moment of disagreement. Democracy has certainly been associated with moments of agitation, disruption, and revolution over time but that is not the entire history of democracy. To
reduce democracy to these interruptive moments as Rancière and other radical democrats have done in their recent works forsakes the idea of democratic culture, with its deeply ingrained values of participation and political equality, that de Tocqueville admired in *Democracy in America*. Just as the polis and township were fundamental contributors to the democracies of Athens and early America, respectively, I am suggesting that architectural forms like Hertzberger’s thresholds can similarly enhance democratic power and knowledge today.

It must be acknowledged that many of the conclusions of this work are preliminary and raise as many questions as they attempt to answer. Of particular concern are questions having to with the limitations associated with the political thinkers and architects examined in this work. Without exception, all of them are working in the Western European and/or North American intellectual and cultural tradition although a few, like van Eyck draw inspiration from non-Western cultures. While architectural modernism has been adapted to many different locations around the globe, questions surrounding those adaptations remain. For example, how has the introduction of these “Western” architectural forms changed notions of public and private in the non-Western contexts where they have been introduced? What new habits have emerged in and around these spaces? If, as Habermas has argued, the development of deliberative practices in the West can be traced to certain configurations of the public sphere, what does and what will this architecture mean for the
development of democratic practices in the emerging cities of the Middle East and China, if anything? After all, critic Kenneth Frampton ascribes the concern for reciprocity and attention for the presence of the Other that animate the work of van Eyck and Hertzberger to the “long-standing Dutch collective tradition, of their capacity as a people to act in unison to an equal degree against the rapacious inroads of the sea and the acquisitive proclivities of men.”

Frampton raises the question of how successfully their values might transfer to new contexts while sounding optimistic about its potential to transcend the boundaries of Holland (and Western-Europe) given the “uniquely anti-European cast” of Dutch Structuralism.

It is my hope that political theorists will take up these and many other questions situated at the intersection of architecture and politics. What I have offered here is far from a definitive statement on these matters. Rather, this dissertation represents an effort to spark a new dialogue on the relationship between architecture and political practice, which, so long as there is an activity that goes by the name politics, will, for better or worse, always be with us.

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7 In *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere*, Habermas argues that the deliberative practices associated with the public sphere emerged through the circulation of printed journals that were connected to “table societies” that met in salons, coffeehouses, and taverns in cities such as London and Vienna.

8 Frampton 2002, 297.

9 Ibid.
Illustrations

Note: Unless indicated otherwise, the source of all illustrations is Flickr.com, used under the Creative Commons licensing agreement.

Illustration 1: Brasilia’s Plaza of the Three Powers
Illustration 2: Pruitt-Igoe
Illustration 3: Pruitt-Igoe (Note broken windows)
Illustration 4: Herzog & Meuron’s Bird’s Nest Stadium, Beijing
Illustration 5: Rem Koolhaas’s CCTV Tower, Beijing
Illustration 6: Panoptic Prison, The Netherlands
Illustration 7: New Urbanism’s “Neo-Traditional” Design
Illustration 8: Start of American Tobacco Trail greenway, looking north towards downtown.

Illustration 9: View of American Tobacco Trail
Illustration 10: Boston City Hall, Government Center
Illustration 11: Aldo van Eyck’s playground, Amsterdam
Illustration 12: Aldo van Eyck’s playground, Amsterdam
Illustration 13: Aldo van Eyck’s Amsterdam Municipal Orphanage

Illustration 13: Aldo van Eyck, Municipal Orphanage
Illustration 15: Herman Hertzberger’s Public Housing, Berlin
Illustration 16: Aldo van Eyck’s Student Housing, Amsterdam
Illustration 17: Herman Hertzberger’s Diagoon Dwellings
Illustration 18: Herman Hertzberger’s Centraal Beheer Office Building
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pp. 2–11.


Biography

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