The Cunning of Architecture's Reason

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Foreword

This paper starts by asking a rather simple question about architecture and its modernity. In what way do we put these two terms together? I will not talk about Modernism-the-style, or about the history of industrialisation, but about the philosophical foundation of the question. When did philosophy define what we call the modern? This is usually answered by pointing to the Enlightenment, and to Reason and its instrumentalities, in science and capitalism (usually perceived in a negative way, if we can think perhaps of Theodor Adorno). Translated into architecture, this approach leads through Karl Marx to a separation between capitalist architecture and an architecture from below, on the assumption that the latter is more authentic - and here we could think of Henri Lefebvre. Manfredo Tafuri, who also proposed a theory of architecture out of a critique of Reason, pointed to the emergence in the late eighteenth century of a utopian impulse that together with a crisis of subjectivity redefined architecture in a way that would come to a head with the modernist movement.[1]

I will stay within the framework of the Enlightenment, but would like to commence with another type of Reason, namely with Hegel's cunning Reason, a starting position that has the advantage that Hegel deals extensively with architecture, allowing us to trace the detailed activities of this cunning in regard to architecture. To fit the philosophical needs, architecture had to be thoroughly redefined in relationship to then current humanist models, but once

architecture's position had been established philosophically, Hegel demoted architecture in the name of the dialectic's higher cultural aspiration. Architecture, a type of victim of the cunning of Reason, was given metaphysical content, but not a metaphysical purpose. In this paper I try to partially deconstruct the modernity that is disguised within this manipulation.

1.

In 1951 in Darmstadt when Martin Heidegger first gave the lecture, 'Bauen Wohnen Denken', the architects in the crowd, Hans Scharoun among them, could hardly restrain their enthusiasm, and when, in 1971, the text was published in an English translation, its success was a foregone conclusion.[2] The excitement it generated - and one cannot deny its lure even today - was based on the rather simple historical fact that this was the first time in over a century that a major philosopher had expressed himself directly on the subject of architecture. Though the sparkle of this philosophical engagement with architecture has waned in recent years, its after-effects are still felt today. It is not important in this respect who may or may not have been influenced by Heidegger. Rather, after Heidegger, *all* architecture, philosophically speaking, underwent a transformation. The question is not how did Heidegger change architectural practice, but what is architecture *as a philosophical project* after Heidegger?[3]

To answer that question, we have to turn to the

moment when architecture - and more precisely architecture's history - first became a philosophical issue to begin with, namely in Georg Friedrich Hegel's 'Vorlesungen über die Ästhetik' (1832).[4] It could easily be seen in which way Heidegger undermined the Hegelian tradition, but I will argue that instead he brought a type of closure to Hegel on the subject of architecture. What I mean by 'closure' - which has, of course, a specific architectural referentiality - is the subject of this paper since it was Hegel who made the theme of 'en-closure' so central to the question of architecture to begin with. But instead of interpreting Hegel's definition of architecture from the outside in, with the usual pronouncements about the status of Idealism and its remoteness from reality, I will work from inside out to show a sub-text that is, as I see it, a complex prefiguring – though certainly unintentional - of the modern architectural problematic.

2.

It is to be expected, given the time period in which Hegel was writing, that a discussion of architecture starts with a discussion of its beginnings, but these beginnings, for Hegel, are by no means simple, and certainly far more complex than imagining architecture's historical or mythical origins.[5] In fact, long before the chapter on architecture in his 'Vorlesungen', Hegel has engaged the subject of the philosophy, religion and art again and again, to interlace these issues and to avoid at all cost the appearance of 'storytelling'.[6] For this reason, he rejects the argument of Laugier - that 'newfangled French, philosophizing expert', (borrowing some choice words from Goethe) - pointing out that Laugier's claim that ramming 'four sticks in the ground' can in no way rise to the level of true philosophy.[7] He argues that we also have to look past the diverse fields of empirical particulars, and in this he was clearly resisting the archaeological tendencies of the age. And finally, he warns against the tendency to envision man and architecture as separate and distinct, with man, in the name of divinity, exercising his will over the material world.[8] This type of duality presupposes that architecture exists before its true purpose, so Hegel argued, has been determined.

Instead, to get to the true beginnings, we have to look, according to Hegel, not at the concrete world, but at a point in conceptual time where the 'difference between man and building did not yet arise',[9] namely when architecture first served 'to stimulate thought'.[10] He describes this unity as 'riddle-like',[11] for it appears akin to the unity with the divine; that unity no longer exists, however, since the divine has retreated [*zurückgezogen*] from reality, gathering its 'finitude into itself and elevating itself [*sich erheben*]' over baser reality.[12] It is as compensation for this *Negativität*, as Hegel calls it, that the dialectic launches itself on its inimitable course, creating as a consequence the impulse to art and architecture.[13] This conceptual - and a-historical - moment, once it had been established in the minds of mankind does not yield a simple series of art works as one might expect, but a protracted struggle between thought [*Denken*] and Imagination [*Vorstellung*],[14] form [*Gestalt*] and meaning [*Bedeutung*],[15] and interiority and exteriority. The first art 'to break a path' through these entanglements and to attempt at least 'an adequate representation of the God-head', so Hegel argues, was none other than architecture,[16] as it was the first art to attempt to 'purify' the inorganic from its rote materiality.[17] From this beginning, architecture develops into its own sphere, moving from the Symbolic Age to the Classical and then, finally, to the Romantic age, which Hegel equates with Christianity. In this way, Hegel dispatches with the conventional, centuries-old, distinction between theory and practice and elevates architecture into something quite different, namely into a trope for the beginning of mankind's history toward the self-determinant Spirit.

The building type that brings this history to a determining moment is the medieval cathedral, where the enclosure - *Umschliessung* - has been

placed in conceptual alignment with the building's interior.[18] The basic elements of this unification, for Hegel, were, of course, already present in ancient architecture. The Egyptian pyramids were all exteriority whereas the subterranean labyrinths that they also built, all interiority.[19] Even with the Greeks, exteriority and interiority were, according to Hegel, separate and distinct: the agora filled with people, on the one hand, and the temple with its cella, on the other hand. The open was all open and the closed all closed. By the time of the medieval cathedral, however, interiority had become fully architectural. It was no longer perceived as inhabited by the deity alone, but as a 'room for the whole population [*Volk*]'.[20] On the outside, the 'entrance halls and colonnades' that typified early Christian architecture and that cluttered its external image fell away, with the building rising 'freely into the heights',[21] allowing those on the inside, 'a concentration and elevation [*Erhebung*] of their thoughts',[22] an *Erhebung* that corresponds to the demands of the *Geist*. The result is what Hegel calls 'a total enclosure' [*eine totale Umschliessung*] - a world 'made by man and man alone for his worship and his pre-occupations with his inner life'.[23] In the broader scenario of Hegel's philosophy, the cathedral, filled with the pulse of life, serves as the jumping-off point for a discussion of a human interiority, or *Innerlichkeit*, filled with the productions of the Spirit, namely the sculptures, paintings, poems and music that constitute the principal expressions of the Spirit from here on out.

3.

The critical term, *Umschliessung*, or enclosure, appears throughout Hegel's discussion of architecture and is also unique in his text to the history of architecture. Hegel traces what he sees as its historical origins to ancient caves used in cult practices in the form of an enclosing of 'the image of the divine'.[24] Though these caves are pure *Umschliessung*, oriented to the interior with no externality to speak of, they are the dialectical predecessors of the walls and roofs that will eventually define

Umschliessung in more proper architectural terms.[25] It is no accident that the example Hegel mentions in this context is the Mithra cult where caves were used, so he points out, as the setting for the ritual purification or *Reinigung* of the soul. *Umschliessung*, in other words, has a *philosophical* purpose in the early development of the dialectic that far transcends the need for security.

But unlike the other arts, whose purpose in relationship to the Spirit was defined as obvious, the architecture of *Umschliessung* had a long way to go to find itself. It became, as Hegel phrased it, a *suchende Kunst*, a searching art. The main problem was that externality and internality lay in different geographical and temporal places. But as a gerund, *Umschliessung* ('an enclosing') has no fixed – and as we shall see no predictable - physical attributes, and thus exists as a force, or *Trieb*,[26] that can move from building to building and from material to material in a series of paratactic transformations, from the inside surface of a cave, to the mud and stone walls of the Egyptians, all the way to the refined complexities of the Gothic architectural system. As a gerund, *Umschliessung* also allows Hegel to break with the conventional discourse about the making of a building. There is, however, significantly, no specific craft unique to *Umschliessung*. This allows it to overcome the question of its disciplinarity in so far as it had to shake off its attachment to sculpture. For this reason it only came into its own after the Greeks. But from then on, starting with the Roman basilica, the root relationship between enclosure, interiority, and purification defines the principle narrative of architecture's development until it ends, finally, in the complex forms of the medieval cathedrals.

4.

The gesture of opening the doors of the history of philosophy to architecture turns out, however, to be an ambiguous one, for it becomes clear that even by the time of the cathedrals, architecture had still not achieved a *true* 'free-standing existence', but, as

Hegel clearly states, a mere impression [*Eindruck*] of it, that being all that is required at this particular moment in the development of the dialectic.[27] *Eindruck* is here not a Platonic reduction of metaphysical truth to representation. It is more optimistic and foreshadows the reality to come. Nonetheless, it is still only just a glimpse into the future. As a result, despite the advances one sees with these buildings, their interiors, for Hegel, were still deficient. 'Here there is a sermon; there a sick man is brought in. Between the two a procession drags slowly on.' As a result, 'nothing fills the building completely, everything passes quickly; individuals and their doings are lost and dispersed like points in this grandiose structure.' Worshippers wander around 'like nomads', whereas above them, 'these gigantic constructions rise in their firm structure and immutable form'.[28]

What Hegel portrays is not an easy alliance between form and meaning; on the contrary, the two are in a high degree of tension; architecture can frame interiority, but it cannot in itself bring forth 'the inner life as inner'.[29] It can at best 'symbolize it',[30] and thus Hegel's claim that even though architecture has a history that stretches into the Romantic - into the modern - it is an art form wedded to externality, to *Äusserlichkeit*.[31] As a consequence, the 'true objectivity of representation' that Hegel demanded of original art works is, in the final analysis, impossible for architecture.[32]

5.
The ambiguity of architecture's philosophical status is an unmistakable subtext even in the way Hegel frames architecture's beginnings. Architecture, Hegel writes in the opening lines of his chapter on the subject, 'is conceptually the beginning of art,' yet in asking where architecture has begun 'we must thoroughly exclude [*ausschliessen*] the empirical facts of history'.[33] The reason for this is that only when stripped of its scholarly and non-philosophical modalities, can architecture provide an environment that can operate in the name of philosophy's higher calling. Of all the arts, architecture is most clearly defined by the rupture between the empirical and the philosophical, since it is precisely at the beginning of history that empirical circumstances are at their most tenuous and yet potentially at their most meaningful. This rupture has undeniable implications. Architecture can never return to the empirical, even as a corrective. In order for architecture to be more than just a question of function, but part of the conceptual world of philosophy, it has to permit philosophy to strip it of empirical foundations. The fate of architecture lies completely in the hands of philosophy, and yet it becomes philosophical at the moment it becomes revisionist.

Another complication is introduced when Hegel argues that the first buildings are not architecture pure and simple, but an awkward blend, or *Vermischung*, of architecture and sculpture.[34] The pyramids, for example, are more sculpture than architecture. It is only in the Romantic Age, some three thousand years later, that architecture in the form of the cathedrals manages to purify itself of its sculpturality. The very moment architecture has matured into its proper sphere of activity, its history, from the *philosophical* point of view, at least, comes to a close.

And in a last and most cutting twist - compared to architecture that in all its long history 'labors to bring [itself] nearer to an expression of spirit' - sculpture, when it begins the next phase of the development of Spirit, can do the same instantaneously; no thousands of years of having to accommodate the troublesome problems of gravity, materiality and *Zweckmässigkeit*. When sculpture appears - in the first sentence of the chapter on the subject, after the chapter on architecture - it is described as nothing less than 'the miracle [*Wunder*] of Spirit's giving to itself an image of itself'.[35] A *Wunder*, according to Hegel, 'enters directly upon what is purely external and particular, breaks it up, inverts it, makes it into

something completely different.'[36] With sculpture, philosophy can finally, and spectacularly, distance itself from its messy, and, one should emphasise, self-created, entanglements with architecture.

Architecture's downfall - as the dialectic moves on to what it sees as higher art forms - is total. Architecture 'the most incomplete of all arts', as Hegel phrased it, remains, despite its vast history, and despite its prominent positioning at the beginning of the dialectic, a medium that in the final analysis is 'incapable of portraying the Spirit in a presence adequate to it'.[37]

6.

Architecture is a pawn in the cunning of Reason, a cunning that was meant to explain the transcendence of Spirit; but that is, in the context of architecture, the slippery ground on which architecture's modernity is based. Philosophy imparts to architecture a prominence that no Humanist theorist of earlier centuries could have dreamt of, but it also entails a break from the discourse of practice to the philosophical, from the scholarly to the theoretical and from the history-of-buildings to a history-of-ideas. To unravel the consequence of this cunning - to see the puzzle within the puzzle - that is to where we have to turn our energies.

7.

Let me first condense what I see happening. Architecture begins its life as a modern philosophical project by a series of alienations and forced detachments from its presumptive disciplinary realities, realities that have enclosed and trapped it, according to Hegel, in the narrow discourse of scholarship and ideology. Though freed to engage the philosophical, architecture is denied an ongoing role in the advancement of metaphysics, has its origins in a competing artistic medium, has a philosophical history that is not related to its empirical history, and, finally, becomes architecture at the very moment it becomes no longer relevant in the dialectic of

History, namely in the shift from work to miracle. In other words, Hegel makes architecture into something one can call 'not-architecture': not a real building, but an 'enclosure', not an ancient building, but a 'sculpture'; not a real history, but a conceptual one; not a free standing production, but the appearance of one, and not a miracle of representation, but a labour that ends in a mere simulacrum.

I would like to argue that these dislocations still today haunt the architectural problematic. It is not the specificity of Hegel's argument, nor even the trace of his considerable influence in nineteenth and twentieth century aesthetics that I am talking about, but a more substantial claim about architecture in general. The history of modern architecture - which is also the history-of-architecture-and-the-crisis-of-its-modernity - has the shape of a history of *not-architecture*, the history of architecture being *not itself*. It finds its first definition in this respect in the writings of Hegel. And finally, and most importantly, the history of post-Hegelian architecture - philosophically speaking - is the history of how architecture operates with and *within* the disassociations that were mandated by philosophy.

8.

Before I can elaborate on this historiographic premise - and attempt to bring to the fore the theory of modernity that is embedded within it - let me return to Heidegger, for he had hoped to dispense with the tradition of Hegelian aesthetics altogether. Unlike Hegel, who approaches the problem of beginning cautiously, on philosophical cat feet, Heidegger claims to see beginnings clearly. But it is not architecture that he is interested in but *bauen* (to build), and even though in sidestepping the problem of architecture he bypasses the question of its civilisational narrative, *bauen* has a history all its own, one that derives from nothing less than *ich bin*, or 'I am'.[38] To explain this, Heidegger employs an onomatopoeic word game in which *bauen* is linked backward in time to *buan* (notice the shift in sylla-

bles and missing e), then to *bhu* (note the lopping off of a syllabic unit), then to *beo* (note the shifting of the vowels) and then to bin. In this way, Heidegger arrives at the first words of creation, spoken by a mythological Black Forest farmer stomping around on his newly cleared field. Wife and children, and even the need for food, protection and clothing - some of the conventional arguments about the beginning of civilisation - are not yet in the picture. Nonetheless, out of the blunt syntactic eruption of *ich bin*, there emerges through its repetitions (this is, after all, the only thing the farmer can utter every time he needs to speak) a host of creative misspellings and syllabic slips that over time develop into words like *Bauer* (farmer) and *Nachbar*, (neighbour) - and, of course, *bauen* thereby creating a social and spatial web around Being's originary force.[39]

The historical development of Heideggerian 'Being' is, however, two- sided, for as it becomes ever more historical, it also undergoes a series of 'distortions and over-paintings [*Übermalungen*]' that ultimately 'trivializes' its presence.[40] In other words, as one moves from *ich bin* to *ich baue*, and thus away from Being and toward the potential for social life, one is also at the mercy of the forgetfulness of language. In making a link between *bauen* and Being, Heidegger thus asks us to realise in what way the word *bauen* had not only developed through time, in a positive sense, but had also been damaged by its eventual replacement, architecture, which had produced not places in which 'one dwells', but rather an endless continuum of housing, factories, and highways.

Despite Heidegger's attempt to construct an alternative to Hegel's civilisational history, his premise relies on Hegel in a very direct way. Following Hegel's critique of scholarship, Heidegger argues that his (philosophical) history does not need history in the conventional, empirical sense. That type of history, Heidegger argues, 'will petrify into fatelessness'.[41] From Heidegger's perspective, Hegel's

mistake, however, was that though he separated History from its empirical equivalency, he still had to adhere at some level to empirical verification, and this weighed philosophy down with disciplinary protocols that were not properly philosophical. Philosophy, thinking in Heideggerian lines, should use its critique of scholarship to invent a new type of history, one that could just as easily be a complete fiction. And what better way to prove the power of philosophy in this context than to show how something as hard and culturally grounded as architecture can succumb to something as ephemeral as a play on words.

9.
Hegel and Heidegger, when taken together, leave architecture without a place to go. For Hegel, modernity-as-history-of-Spirit becomes ever more metaphysically apparent, leaving architecture to become ever more entangled in the web of philosophy's cunning. For Heidegger, modernity-as-history is nothing more than background noise with architecture just another element in the inevitable downward slide. Articulated most cruelly, architecture's history is nothing less than the history of its erasure from the modernity-of-Spirit (Hegel) and its theory is nothing less than its equivalency with the negativities of modernity (Heidegger). If Hegel gave to architecture an internal struggle only to abandon it on the roadside of metaphysics, Heidegger sees architecture with not even the potential for dialectical redemption. It is a negative that like a cataract darkens ontological sight. It is difficult to tell - from an architectural point of view - which is the worst poison.

10.
Post-Hegelian philosophy has more often than not translated these implicit negativities into a project that can only be described as anti-architecture. The writings of Henri Lefebvre serve as an example.

On the surface, Lefebvre moves well past Hegel

in shifting the discussions from a historical-philosophical project to a social-philosophical one. For example, unlike Hegel's *Umschliessung* with its emphasis on closure, Lefebvre discusses a window 'as a transitional object', with 'two senses, two orientations: from inside to the outside and from the outside to the inside'.[42] Instead of looking at the wall, he looks *through* the wall; instead of seeing the separation between inside and outside as the mark of the philosophical, he sees the philosophical in the dynamic, social interchange between inside and outside.

And yet, even though Lefebvre wants to shift the terms to a social production of space, the lingering Hegelianism is all too noticeable. Lefebvre acknowledges, for example, that an architect can create such 'living spaces' as the Taj Mahal, but he notes: 'We are not concerned here with architectural space understood as the preserve of a particular profession within the established social division of labor'.[43] This elevation of a 'living' architecture from the strictures of practice - which is akin to the Hegelian notion of *Umschliessung* as an *Erhebung* over practice - quickly deteriorates into a polarity between what the philosopher can promise and the architect can deliver. He states, for example, that 'it is the architect's job to reproduce' a 'welcoming space',[44] but he goes on to claim that architects in actuality do little more than manipulate signs to create an 'impression of intelligibility'.[45]

His negativist reading of Hegel is also apparent when he argues that because the Bauhaus expressed the 'architectural requirements of state capitalism', it, therefore, 'fell to the painters … to reveal the social and political transformation of space'.[46] Lefebvre then picks up Heidegger - despite his disavowal of Heidegger - to drive the stake into the heart of the matter. He claims that by the 1920s, because of what he calls 'facadism', architecture opened itself up to 'total *spectacularization*' (his emphasis).[47] The medieval churches, by way of contrast, so he argues, were not 'produced in order to be read and grasped, but rather to be *lived* (his emphasis) by people with bodies and lives in their own particular context'.[48] Similarly, he praises the capitals of the Romanesque cloister (and note that these are sculptural), since even though they may be different in their details, these differences operate 'within the limits permitted by a model'.[49]

In encountering here these vaguely moralising pronouncements - tinted by an historical nostalgia that one finds in neither Hegel nor Heidegger - it is clear that the author has only taken into consideration the vacuation of philosophy from architecture in Hegel and not the more complex entanglements of the two disciplines in Hegel's writings.

11.
What is it about architecture that - philosophically speaking - degenerates into a discourse of its inadequacies? It is, as we have seen, not simply its association with capitalism, bourgeois professionalism, and industrial consumerism. These are just the modern-day predicates in an equation between architecture and modernity that begins somewhere else.

To answer the question more fully, one must return again to the issue of *Umschliessung*. At its root is the verb *Schloss*, which can mean something as small as a lock or as big as a castle, but in either case refers to a mechanical or quasi-mechanical object. This term, therefore, from the beginning, puts architecture at a disadvantage since it is the engagement with the human body that, for Hegel, allows the Spirit to find its interiority. Yet *Umschliessung* has an important quasi-philosophical meaning. In his *Vorlesungen*, Hegel discusses the word *schliessen* ('to lock' or 'to close') to demonstrate how philosophers can use a 'symbolic term' to designate the closure of an argument.[50] *Um-schliessung* could thus be translated as 'bringing philosophy to a secure enclosing.'

The play on (en)closure in Hegel is now clear. Only by having something removed from the discussion, namely its empiricism, could architecture - over a long period of time - overcome its *Vermischung* to turn inward - to 'a forgetting of external nature'[51] - to define the potential for a pure interiority and to complete and resolve the movement from one purification to another. Architecture encloses itself in the name of philosophy, and in reverse, philosophy encloses itself in the name of architecture. Philosophy and architecture bring each other to a close.

12.
Or so it seems.

It is not just *Umschliessung*'s gerundic nature that allows architecture to engage both its history and its philosophicalness, it is the striving by architecture to become a '*totale Umschliessung*', - 'a totally enclosed enclosing' - that parallels, and fulfils, the complete exclusion [*Ausschliessung*] of the empirical that took place at the 'beginnings' of architecture. It is this striving for completeness that results in the architecture of the Christian era having a space that is 'gripped together' and combined 'into the most secure unity and clearest independence', even if it is partially an illusion.[52]

Hegel, however, can't help but noting - as an aside - that *Umschliessung* has a history that transcends the philosophical. He states that unlike the medieval cathedral, some Protestant churches have regularised seating and placed people in boxes which look 'like stalls' [*wie Ställe*] in a barn.[53] The root of *Ställe* is the same as the verb *stellen*, meaning 'to place something,' or to immobilise it. Between the nomadism in the Catholic church and the stationariness in the Protestant church there is here replayed, for Hegel, that ancient shift from primitivism to civilisation - from migrant hordes to settled, agrarian communities. But it has, architecturally speaking, deteriorated into something negative - we might call it 'the modern' - the apparitions of which ghost through Hegel's book and his writings in the form

of barbs and asides against the 'superficiality', of the times.[54] Hegel was, of course, a Lutheran and his criticism of the stalls should not be seen as a criticism of Protestantism, but as a criticism of an architecture that fails to function according to dialectical needs. What can we make of his comment, therefore, except to claim that it is nothing short of a brief appearance of something unruly outside of the dialectic, a force that even the dialectic cannot fully control?

Umschliessung transgresses its mandate of purification. After all, the stalls are not made by an architect, but by a furniture maker, which means that architecture, in the closing moments of its dialectical history, and under the nose of the philosophical master, winds up *vermischt* with a lesser art and so becomes contingent on something as immaterial as a wooden plank. *Umschliessung* - which can take the form of everything from cave walls to stone buttressing - moves into its most radical paratactic dematerialisation. None of this was intended in the narrative of *Umschliessung*. It was supposed to end with the pre-programmed inadequacies of the cathedral (with its implied criticism of Catholicism), but what happened instead was that enclosing leaked out of the system and moved beyond philosophy to take on a life of its own, and, once purged of its historical, disciplinary, physical, and even, in the end, its *architectural* prerogatives, it did not listen to its philosophical instructions.

There are two places, Hegel intimates, where this is evident, in the debasing stalls of a Protestant church and in the gardens of the French kings where walls are formed by bushes. Both are mentioned in the lecture without any indication of how they fit into the broader discussion.

Trees are planted in a strict order besides one another in long avenues, they are trimmed, and real walls are formed from the cut hedges; and in this way nature itself is transformed into a vast resi-

dence under the open sky.[55]

Umschliessung - no longer a philosophical project but something that is applicable in more neutral circumstances - becomes *vermischt* with what we might today call interior architecture, on the one hand, and with landscape architecture, on the other hand. In these conditions, architecture, from a philosophical point of view, is condemned to irrelevance - and this was certainly Hegel's reason for finishing the history of architecture in this way.

However, perhaps something else has taken place. Architecture has escaped the confinements of philosophy and disguised itself - and thus learned to protect itself - in the thematics of its messy origins. Unlike the other arts, which are carried along by the dialectic into the ethereal realm of high culture and metaphysical purpose, architecture moves onward into a more vacuous history free from philosophical oversight. Architecture, existing in a state of philosophical abandonment, becomes an easy target for philosophical punishment.

13.
The desire to see *past* architecture, to charge it with a history that is for all practical purposes extrinsic to its assignment, but that threatens to become its very essence, imparts to architecture an energy that defines its philosophical credibility, but that also, in the end, confuses its philosophical host. *Umschliessung* - from the beginning - was, however, not pure philosophy, but a philosophy-in-historical-translation, given that it was designed as an embrace of the temporal, as a way to move the history of Spirit along and to bind together disparate realities. It is not connected to human effort, which are the traits associated with the higher arts, and as such it cannot be framed in empirical terms. It thus moves *past* its philosophically-mandated enclosures to become an autonomous force, to stand on a threshold between architecture and philosophy. *Umschliessung* is thus a 'not-architecture', but neither is it pure philosophy. It is *vermischt* with temporality, and this predicts -

from the beginning - architecture's transitoriness in a philosophical narrative.

14.
The history of *Umschliessung* has two tracks through Hegelian time. On the one, just discussed, it leaks past the boundaries set for it; its symbolic past erupts into new *Vermischungen* that guarantee its alienation and yet independence from philosophical mandates. It demarcates a space of activity that is part philosophical, part a-philosophical.

On the other side, when still locked inside the enclosures of philosophy, it turns against its master. *Schliessen*, as Hegel himself explains, is a word that when used by a philosopher, is not trapped by the literalness of the word. Its symbolic past has 'been forgotten'. This means that in order for the philosophical to come to a close, it has to force architecture to follow philosophy's footsteps - to forget its roots not only in nature, but also in its symbolic history. As a result the cathedral can only become a *totale Umschliessung*, when its exteriority is no longer relevant, and indeed the architecture of the great cathedrals 'give effect to the forgetting of the exterior world of nature and the distracting activities and interests of finite existence'.[56] At its beginnings, *Umschliessung* was one-sided, just the inside of a cave; at its endings, it is one-sided again. The long struggle to bring inside and outside into relationship is over; the outside, in essence, looses.

There is, however, a consequence of this forgetting; the exterior of the cathedral begins 'to have an independence of its own, because it has tasks of its own to fulfil'.[57] In the name of the dialectic, a new medium is born, the façade that signals architecture's inadequacy with respect to the philosophical; it also signals the end of philosophy's commitment to architecture at the moment it becomes urban.

This delamination of exterior and interior is, of course, predicted by the dialectic in which interiority

- becoming the subject of its own expression - develops an 'exteriorless expression' [*äusserlichkeitslose Äusserung*] which can be translated as 'an externalized expression with no externality as such'. In this sense, externality is released from its philosophical clamps. It 'no longer has content [*Inhalt*] or purpose [*Zweck*]'[58] and becomes, in fact, potentially 'indifferent and vulgar'.[59] It is this separation that is meant by a *totale Umschliessung*.

But the problem is that starting as an attempt to reign in *Äusserlichkeit* - to turn architecture, implausibly, inwards - *Umschliessung* winds up producing *Äusserlichkeit* as such. Architecture exists now as a double phenomenon, defining interiority in the name of the dialectic, but wedded to an exteriority that - though created by the dialectic - wants a history freed from philosophical management. Separated at the beginning from the empirical, architecture is now separated from the philosophical, and this means that it has, by definition, *no history*. The façade, a necessary by-product of architecture's dialectical advancement, lives its life as yet another symptom of the falsity that the dialectic can see, but is powerless to transform.

What began as a redemption of architecture in the name of history winds up producing an art form with no history. What began as a crisis of its materiality ends as a crisis of its superficiality. What began as a claim for a new context for the understanding of architecture ends up placing architecture in conflict with its urban potential. Form and meaning drift apart and can from now on encounter each other only as enemies.

15.

Though *Umschliessung* was intended to be seen in a positive sense as the production of a safe haven for the activities within, it is also 'a locking up' or 'a locking in' - in an eighteenth century dictionary its Italian equivalent was given as *chiasura* - and as such has no entrances and exits; it is, precisely,

total. In the early eighteenth century, when the term *Umschliessung* first became current, it was used principally as a military concept in the context of urban fortifications.[60] This inherent militancy is implied not only in the constraining stalls of the Protestant church, but also in the requirements placed on sculpture, which is, of course, all about stationary objects. Hegel begins his discussion on sculpture by noting that though sculpture has 'emancipated itself from its architectural purpose', it must retain 'a permanent relation with spaces formed architecturally'.[61] A sculpture, for Hegel, cannot be considered outside of its context. Sculpture begins its history by being 'put in its place'. Like a good soldier or good servant, it can only be comprehended when properly disciplined.

The reason is clear, unlike architecture which has a history, according to Hegel, devoid of craftsmen, sculpture is the first art where the Spirit demonstrates the skill of making. The real story of the Spirit thus begins here, and there is much at stake. Architecture, because it is conceptual and without agency - is thus called on to enforce the contextualism of sculpture. Hegel tries to carry the positive aspects of this exchange forward, but it is clearly driven more by the compulsion for the logic of enclosure than by the nobility of Spirit. *Umschliessung* has to be 'total' so that sculpture cannot escape the gaze of philosophy. What philosophy allows architecture cannot be permitted the presumed higher arts.[62]

16.

Unlike philosophers who can 'forget' the symbolic underpinnings of what it means to 'lock up an argument,' the architecture-of-*Umschliessung* cannot. Its root violence is never far from mind. The word thus points to both the consciousness of its association with the philosophical *and* to its literalness. Separating nature on the outside and art on the inside, it does not allow the Spirit out of its protected containment. The church entombs the dialectic; it becomes nothing less than *die Umschliessung des*

Geistes.[63] It becomes not an ephemeral substance that floats elegantly through history transforming mud, stone and bricks into various philosophical 'enclosures', but an agent in its own right. It marches across the borders of the chapter on architecture to assist the dialectic in mastering sculpture, whereas back home, in the cathedrals, it forcibly purifies itself of sculpture, by 'breaking ornamentation apart and rendering it into little pieces [*zerstückeln*]', and spreading it over its surfaces.[64] In that sense, architecture at its most remote and dispassionate - standing back from the play of metaphysics, and having seemingly exhausted itself in its grandiose forms - becomes cruel and inhibitory.

17.
The dialectic produces architecture as the alienated subject - one that is either unhinged from the philosophical or untamed by it.

Architecture, touched by the wand of philosophy, can still continue, however, to claim for itself a civilisational cause, but only by disguising its philosophically - or repressed - predicted inadequacies in this respect. Of all the arts, architecture is the only one that is post-metaphysical. It had once been enclosed within the horizon of the metaphysical, but now exists stripped of metaphysical purpose. Here lies the problem of where to locate the 'theory' of modern architecture.

18.
In Hegel, architecture or rather its equivalent, 'not-architecture' survives as part fiction, part fact, part freedom-creating, part freedom-denying, and part church, part prison. The theme of enclosure that binds this history to philosophy and that imprisons it in its own cunning carries through in Heidegger, but in reverse. On the surface, there is an uncanny similarity between, on the one hand, Hegel's Protestant churchgoer, contained in his stall, and its dialectic opposite, the 'nomads', wandering about in the nave of a Catholic cathedral, and, on the other hand,

Heidegger's onto-centric *Bauer* and his dialectical opposite, the 'rootless' truck driver. In both cases, the philosophical fights against the spectre of motion and staticness while at the same time having to establish itself purposefully - and cunningly - as a discourse that itself moves through an illusory and artificial history in search of the stable.

On the surface, however, Heidegger had intended to go past Hegel given that his philosophical *Destruktion* was meant to bring us into sight of a *bauen* that produces a new unity of the physical and the social. Architecture was not seen as the frame - and (en)closure - of philosophy, but in direct lineage with Being itself. However, since it was many times removed from Being, the redeeming force of language - as it slips and slides its way into the present - turns out to be a slow-acting poison that dooms *bauen* at the very moment it becomes not quasi-historical but empirically historical. The fiction that was meant to show that there was an alternative to architecture, namely *bauen*, embeds within it - albeit unwittingly - the legitimacy of architecture itself, which, like a virus, has learned to survive in unfriendly conditions; it infects and ultimately undermines Being, entering the system unnoticed already at the first linguistic break from *bin* to *bhu*.

Architecture, though ostensibly that which is a negative associated with urban life - note that the philosophies of both Hegel and Heidegger are anti-urban - begins a type of production in the form of an alienation from the philosophical, but the philosophical *bauen* has a history that ends only with bauen and thus can never be anything with physical attributes. It is the very opposite of *Umschliessung*, which has any number of material embodiments.

One must remember, in this respect, that whereas Immanuel Kant defined *agere* (to make) as separate and distinct from *opus* (a work), Heidegger's *bauen* (to build) never becomes *der Bau* (the building). It never becomes a thing in dialogue with its making.

For Kant *opus* lay at the core of social existence. It allowed judgment to take place and with judgment the potential for social advancement and enlightenment. Heidegger dispenses with this argument. *Bauen* can never become anything more than an activity endlessly reproducing itself. Despite all its purported positivities, *bauen* - cut off from the principle of judgment - is at its core afraid that it could produce something that could potentially become a mere sign of its presence; in other words, *bauen* can never produce an actual building. And in reverse, the built object cannot refer back to its maker. 'When we are facing a cathedral', Heidegger writes, 'we are faced not just with a church, a building, but with something that is present, in its presence'.[65]

   Though architecture as such, for Heidegger, is insufficient to explain the presence of buildings *philosophically*, *bauen* – by its own devices - is unable to explain the not-architecture that it hopes to produce. It can do little more than push its production in front of it and *away* from it, reinstating again and again the very thing that it purports to challenge, namely architecture. But because the gulf between *bauen* and *der Bau* is unbreachable, and because architecture can, in fact, produce things regardless of how we evaluate them, bauen remains unrequited. Like a ghost, it can haunt the system, but it cannot touch it, much less bend it to its ambitions. *Bauen* is locked out - the word *Ausgeschlossen* comes to mind - from any viable contact with architecture. In other words, *bauen* and the prosaic empiricism of architectural objects stand on the same ground of exclusion.

19.
Bauen and *Umschliessung* close each other off. Both, in different ways, can only produce their own activity without referentiality. *Umschliessung*, however, moves from material to material, and is, in comparison to *bauen*, an unwanted - or perhaps one can say 'accidental' - dialectical manifestation of the unsettled modernity. *Bauen* has no material-

ity at all, and thus, though it avoids the problem of insubstantiation, can only levitate as an unrequited desire, inflicting pain onto everything that it is not.

20.
A philosophy today that critiques architecture fails to realise that architecture is a self-constructed projection of the Enlightenment fascination with an alienation that it cannot explain. Post-Hegelian philosophy can thus chastise architecture for its superficiality - as an extension of its philosophical beginnings - while also taking it to task for its cruelty, the cruelty of enclosure itself - as an extension of its philosophical endings. Post-Hegelian philosophy thus always wants to either set limits for architecture - in response to the former - or continue to deform it - in response to the latter. Even Adorno relishes the double trap in which architecture - after Hegel - is destined to fall again and again.

If out of disgust with functional forms and their inherent conformism, it [architecture] wanted to give free reign to fantasy, it would fall immediately into kitsch.[66]

This sentence is not about architecture. It is philosophy (mis)recognising its failure to incorporate the a-dialectical in its discursive machinery.

21.
But now (i.e. after Heidegger) there is no hidden external concept that can be called upon to redeem architecture from its travail. The trap has been closed. The battle is over. Architecture cannot escape the humiliations and dialectical negativities that have over time come to define it. Nor can philosophy now bring it to heel. Architecture exists as a reconstituted negation of itself, meaning that there is simply no further depth to which criticism can reach. Jean Baudrillard can write that the Beaubourg in Paris is 'a monument to mass simulation', 'a carcass', 'a mausoleum', and 'a cadaver'.[67] But the last laugh is on him. Is this not the nightmare

that haunts Hegel's cathedral, replete with its 'empty interior' and 'space of deterrence'?

One comes to the conclusion, as awkward as it may be, that architecture comes into view at the very moment that its detachment from the progress of Spirit in Hegel - enclosed in a philosophical dialectic and yet ungrounded both in the history of the past and in the history of the present - becomes its alienated re-attachment to itself. The double bind of architecture has become a double negation. What was meant to be a harmless by-product of the dialectical imagination now tortures Being into powerlessness. Architecture becomes the fetish of philosophy.

22.

All in all, the story of architecture (and its associated 'history' and 'theory'), when viewed from this perspective, is a desperate one. From the early nineteenth century onward, it was seen philosophically as a limited form of consciousness that has been transcended by the other arts. But it was, in actuality, working in a *post*-philosophical status (unbeknownst to the philosophers), subsuming its lack of importance into the body of its production. This was the pathology that was to play itself out again and again, and that unifies all architectural production to this day. Not even modernism, despite its anti-historicism, could redeem architecture from its accumulated negativities. Functionalism was not a liberation, but all that was left over in the dying days of the Hegelian spectre, its premise already contaminated by the Hegelian demotion of architecture to the extended labours of *Zweckmässigkeit*. And yet, like a force of nature, architecture, first abandoned and then maligned, first given over to its passivity and then to its pathology, managed to survive, but now - and as long as there is philosophy - as a double negation. Perhaps the Beaubourg attracted so much ire from Baudrillard because it is a building that actually provokes the naïve negativities that are latently possible in the Hegelian-Heideggerian

world to enclose enclosure, while at the same time *fulfiling* the very premises that Hegel put into play, namely that of an architecture/not-architecture.

Architecture - after Heidegger - is a negative tautology.

23.

And so today, we stand before the uncertainty of what architecture is and, more specifically, of architecture's singularity, where the word 'architecture' when written alone in a sentence survives to indicate a space of practice that obscures something that is neither a singular nor a plural. To solve the problem, architecture - in a state of dialectical abandonment in philosophy - needs to be paired with architecture *itself* in the equation: 'architecture/architecture'. This equation is not a demand for a new type of architecture, but a *description* of architecture as it exists today in the lost intersection between time and space, between an uncertain history and an uncertain future. The duality of the words points to architecture's various tautological multiples. And, because it is split against itself, the equation points to the repression of one word by the other, and to the latent history of not-architecture. Unlike the deforming energy of the translation from *bin* to *bauen* that left one at best with an ephemeral 'poetics' with its pretences of science and rigor, a more properly 'deforming translation', to use the words of Jacques Derrida, starting with Hegel's architecture of cunning ends at a point where architecture can bring out of hiding its underlying dialectic of impossibility.[68] In this way we can protest against the attempts to erase, forget, deny, if not overtly obliterate architecture's historical and theoretical unsituatedness in post-Enlightenment thought.

This doubling of architecture - this building on and inversion of the double negative - allows architecture to *re-enter* the philosophical, but in a way that protects it from the philosophical compulsion to begin the discussion through a replication of

the negation. Kant asks how do we judge judging. Hegel makes it clear that it is not history that he is interested in but the history-of-history. Similarly Nietzsche asks not what value is, but what is 'the value of value?'. Heidegger asks, what is the being-of-being? This doubling - an architecture all its own - brings both criticism and its object into alignment, thus reflecting both the strength and weakness of modern philosophy. Would it not be right to integrate this architectural ideogram into architectural speculation - the architecture of architecture - for it would allow us to see architecture's history as a signifier of philosophy's cunning in the context of architecture's modernity.

24.

My interest in these remarks is to reinvest critical discourse about architecture with something more than an appreciation of architecture's numerous disciplines, its technical masteries, its design virtuosities, or even the assumption that a presumed avant-garde holds the key to architecture's purpose. Rather, I claim that architecture cannot escape from the cunning that gave it the complex set of rules-of-engagement by which it came to develop its cultural activities. I want to re-establish the primacy of that particular history to architecture, awaken it to its hidden dialectic, by which I mean, once again, not that architectural history (the discipline) holds the key to understanding architecture, but that architecture exists *only* by means of a historical function that is equivalent to the complex terms of its *lack* of historical relevance as a philosophical project. Having been attached to - and indeed made equivalent with - philosophy's higher aims and then, simultaneously, detached from these aims, architecture had to situate itself as best it could within the frameworks of existing disciplinary structures; it also gave itself over to the mandates of its philosophical (dis)associations. And yet today - located in the shadow of both Hegel and Heidegger - that which we call architecture exists in a limbo of not being truly alive and yet not ever being quite dead. It is in this context that we should seek both a theory and practice (and even the history) of architecture.

Notes

1. Perhaps as an aside. A critique of the 'worn out idealist historicism' (Manfredo Tafuri) points us in the right direction, but does not go far enough. It only rejects the linearity and over-determinism of the Idealist project, but does not account for that part of the Idealist project that has transcended its own location in the history of philosophy. It is the *residualness* of Hegel's de-positioning of architecture, not his philosophy as such that is the problem at the core of architecture's relationship to its self.

2. The lecture was published in 1954 in Martin Heidegger, *Vorträge und Aufsätze* (Pfullingen: Neske, 1954). It was published in English as 'Building Dwelling Thinking' in *Poetry Language Thought*, ed. by J. Glenn Gray, trans. by A. Hofstadter, (New York: Harper, 1971), pp. 143-63.

3. The question could be what is the architecture-philosophy project 'after Derrida'? But I want to remain with Heidegger and not jump ahead to more contemporary positions; in order to work deconstruction into the system, I believe we have to be more precise about the 'after Heidegger' question first.

4. There is not enough space here to deal with the question of Immanuel Kant, except to point out that though he does treat architecture in his philosophy and though his philosophy, as Derrida has made clear, engages architecture metaphorically, he does not deal with the history of architecture as such, except in the most rudimentary way.

5. Hegel uses the words *Architektur* and *Baukunst*. The differences are subtle yet important, but are not a primary concern in this paper.

6. G.W.F. Hegel, *Vorlesungen über die Ästhetik, 1835-1838* (Suhrkamp: Frankfurt am Main, 1986), I, p. 127.

7. Ibid. II, p. 316.

8. Ibid. II, p. 268.

9. Ibid. II, p. 632.

10. Ibid. II, p. 273.

11. Ibid. I, p. 412.

12. Ibid. I, pp. 113, 130.

13. Ibid. I, p. 108.

14. Ibid. I, p. 136.

15. Ibid. I, p. 430.

16. Ibid. I, p. 117.

17. Ibid. I, p. 117.

18. Ibid. II, p. 334.

19. Ibid. II, p. 289.

20. Ibid. II, p. 340.

21. Ibid. II, p. 350.

22. Ibid. II, pp. 335, 336, 332.

23. Ibid. II, p. 333.

24. Ibid. II, p. 307.

25. Ibid. II, p. 290.

26. Ibid. I, p. 453.

27. Ibid. II, p. 332.

28. Ibid. II, p. 341.

29. Ibid. III, p. 224.

30. Ibid. I, p. 117.

31. Ibid. I, p. 123.

32. Ibid. II, p. 352.

33. Ibid. II, p. 26. Here, we could discuss Hegel's rather contentious relationship with the academe, but I prefer not to stray too far from the arguments themselves.

34. Ibid. II, p. 279.

35. Ibid. II, pp. 351, 362.

36. Ibid. II, p. 168.

37. Ibid. III, p. 130.

38. See: Martin Heidegger, 'Building Dwelling Thinking', *Basic Writings: From Being and Time (1927) to The Task of Thinking (1964),* ed. by David Farrell Krell (San Francisco, CA: Harper, 1993) pp. 348-9.

39. Ibid. It is quite possible that surrealist poetry that was all the rage in the 1950s influenced Heidegger in this, for there is something Dadaistic in the way words are being rubbed against each other in the Heideggerian world that produce the illusion of a history far more profound than what can actually be proven by historians of etymology.

40. Martin Heidegger, *Sein und Zeit* (Tübingen: Max Niemeyer, 1993), p. 2.

41. Martin Heidegger, *What is called Thinking* (New York: Harper & Row, 1968), p. 166.

42. Henri Lefebvre, *The Production of Space* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1991), p. 209.

43. Ibid. p. 211

44. Ibid. p. 210.

45. Ibid. p. 144. He can't resist using the pejorative word 'designers', which he places in italics.

46. Ibid. p. 304.

47. Ibid. p. 143

48. Ibid. p. 125.

49. Ibid. p. 150.

50. Hegel, *Vorlesungen über die Ästhetik,* I, p. 397.

51. Ibid. II, p. 333.

52. Ibid. II, p. 332.

53. In English these partitions are called pews or box pews.

54. George Friedrich Hegel, 'Objective Spirit: Human Conduct and Philosophic Truth', in *Hegel: The Essential Writings*, ed. by Frederick G. Weiss (New York: Harper and Row, 1974), p. 261.

55. Hegel, *Vorlesungen über die Ästhetik,* II, p. 350. Hegel is, of course, describing Versailles, which he visited in 1827.

56. Ibid. II, p. 333.

57. Ibid. II, pp. 342-43.

58. Ibid. II, p. 144.

59. Ibid. I, p. 140.

60. See the entry *Umschliessung*, here in its Old German spelling, in the dictionary by Jacob and Wilhelm Grimm; http://germazope.uni-trier.de/Projects/DWB (April 2007).

61. Hegel, *Vorlesungen über die Ästhetik,* II, p. 352.

62. Sculpture encounters 'the modern,' in Hegel, on the question of clothing. If one wants to portray a contemporary, the sculptor is not allowed to portray fashion, but must dress people in generic costumes.

63. I interpreted here from the following sentence: 'Zugleich erhält die romantische Architektur das Geschäft, in der Gestalt und Anordnung ihres Gebäudes den Inhalt des Geistes, als dessen Umschliessung das Bauwerk dasteht, soweit dies architektonisch möglich ist, hindurchscheinen und die Form des Äusseren und

Inneren bestimmen zu lassen.' (Hegel, *Vorlesungen über die Ästhetik,* II, p. 335)

64. Ibid. II, p. 345.

65. Heidegger, *What is Called Thinking*, p. 98.

66. Theodor W. Adorno, *Aesthetic Theory*, trans. by R. Hullot-Kentor (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1997), p. 32. Adorno is also quite Hegelian in his praise of Hans Scharoun's Philharmonic Hall in Berlin. 'Its purpose is expressed in and through the building' (p. 44).

67. Jean Baudrillard, *Simulacra and Simulation*, trans. by S. Faria Glaser (Ann Arbor: The University of Michigan Press, 1994), pp. 61, 63.

68. Jacques Derrida, 'Deconstruction in America: An Interview with Jacques Derrida', Interview with James Creech, Peggy Kamuf, and Jane Todd, *Critical Exchange*, 17, Winter (1985), 22.

Biography

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