

Secure; free from anxiety; without care; certain.

Freedom from; the implication of another entity from which one can be freed. A will, an opposition, a separation, and a comprehensive understanding of the other.

In his essay ‘The Rights to Retreat and the Rites of Exclusion’ (*Translations from Drawing to Building*, 1997) Robin Evans tells us the story of Joris-Karl Huysmans’ fictional character, Jean Des Esseintes: a new hermetic man who isolates himself from all that he despises, by building walls and separations which further alienate him from the outside. A neurotic construction of an illusory sense of immunity prolongs the failure to discern what is going on and what is being kept inside these walls. The ultimate insecurity emerges from the character’s inability to discern, and therefore, to alter his mind:

“We build walls to block the outside world and then hang paintings of landscapes as preferred replacements.”

(IN)SECURITY

Implications of (ex)-(in)clusion aim to facilitate freedom through a sense of narrative cohesion, of confined certainty, of discernment of either an outer or an inner condition. This systemic understanding forms the basis for architectural coherence to emerge. We find our architectural narratives immersed in a whole set of containers, enclosures, networks – which pretentiously allow for deliberation to thrive, and for design decisions to attach themselves to a so-called ‘context’.

Should our projects keep developing their agency based on cohesive understandings? Should they seek to provide a certain degree of certainty? Could we paradoxically lose our capacity to strategise as we find ourselves a niche in which to situate and give meaning to our proposals? Are we hanging paintings?

The articles included in this issue suggest a different context, one which can be delimited in a non-holistic way – in the form of particular social aspirations intermingled with political strategies and ecological parodies alongside ideological constructs (for example). If we presuppose that there is no possibility of absolute exclusion or inclusion that would shelter our bewilderments, we might start to identify the artificial and anecdotal assumptions present within every form of confinement.



Walk Right by Me and
Never Know I'm There

BEST BEFORE: 01-07-2047

Calvin Hin-Long Po

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For Hong Kong's standards, a building standing at 113m tall (or 28 storeys), is diminutive, even quaint. But with its prominent central position on the waterfront, this particular building is a potent symbol of its territory's new reality. This is the Hong Kong headquarters of the Chinese People's Liberation Army, reflecting an increasingly authoritarian yet precarious way of life.

On the stroke of midnight on 1 July 1997, Hong Kong relinquished as a British Dependent Territory, becoming a special administrative region of the People's Republic of China. What was formerly named the Prince of Wales Building, housing the barracks of the British Armed Forces, was repurposed as the headquarters for PLA. The Union Jack was lowered and the Five-star Red Flag was raised. Its regnal name decolonised and replaced with the Chinese regime's typical calligraphic signage. A giant red star, the emblem of the PLA, now crowns the edifice and glowers over the neoliberal cityscape of Victoria Harbour. Overnight, the 1979 late modernism municipal symbolically changed into a pseudo-communist monument for the Hong Kong people's liberation from imperialism. At least, that is what we are told.

As part of the handover deal negotiated between Margaret Thatcher and Deng Xiaoping in 1984, Hong Kong was to become a Chinese territory but would retain its special civil liberties, common law system and its autonomy in all but few areas of governance: it would have the sole responsibility for the government of the People's Republic of China to deal with foreign affairs and military defence. Hong Kong, never with sovereign authority, had been dependent on Britain and subsequently China for its territorial security. The presence of the PLA is an inevitable consequence of this transfer, of both sovereignty and dependency. In the twenty-one years since the handover, however, Hong Kong has witnessed the gradual erosion of its rule of law, free speech, free press, and free and fair elections. Under the pretence of protection and the motherland's overbearing embrace, many citizens are left feeling asphyxiated. With discontent that culminated in 2014, which echoed established global traditions of revolt, the citizenry's ultimate act of civil-spatial disobedience was the territorial seizure and blockade of one of Hong Kong's busiest highways. This, the closest Hong Kong people got to a revolution, was unceremoniously quashed with tear gas and police brutality. Life carries on, but with its underpinning of autonomy gone.

All the while, the PLA and its monumental presence in Hong Kong has remained deafeningly

silent. Signs of activity are rarely visible from the outside. By a long-standing mandate, its personnel are forbidden to be in uniform when they are outside of the barracks – a shrewd management strategy of the optics of occupation. Instead, the PLA building continues to stand as an impenetrable bunker. With its cantilevered defensive mass repelling intruders, it simply endures as an immobile reminder for its protectorates of Deng's threat to Thatcher: the PLA 'could walk in and take the whole lot this afternoon'. Such provocative military theatrics have never become necessary, but it has served the role of the poised dagger, as Hong Kong's executive and legislature rubber-stamps its way into servitude. In the absence of any external aggressor in the past 21 years, it begs the question: what is it that the PLA are really defending against, and whose security are they really defending? In Hong Kong's rude awakening and while colonial-era flags ironically become symbols of independence, people are beginning to realise that their defenders and liberators are in fact the new occupiers.

Hong Kong's predicament is unique in the world in which its status quo as a liberal territory, in an illiberal country, is fated to be impermanent and insecure, predestined to end by a permanent international treaty. Hong Kong's very existence as a territory distinct from China has always been built on uncertainty, except that its relationship with China was certain to fundamentally change within pre-negotiated, predestined time limits. Although Hong Kong island and Kowloon were ceded to Britain in perpetuity, the New Territories were leased for only 99 years from 1 July 1898. In anticipation of Hong Kong's imminent planned obsolescence in 1997, the handover treaty, ratified by the People's Republic of China and Britain in 1984, guaranteed that Hong Kong's autonomy and way of life would remain unchanged, but, for only 50 years from the handover date until 2047. Hong Kong has already seen unprecedented changes far in advance of this date. With 29 more years of further encroachment still to follow, once again, Hong Kong's future is uncertain, except for the fact that it is certain to fundamentally change, again, by a predestined date: 1 July 2047.

As the countdown ticks on, China continues to build more monuments to Hong Kong's insecurity. It is no coincidence that the Chinese strategy echoes the building of Roman roads with its offensive intent, or with Haussmannian avenues with its military subtext; China is replicating both in tarmac and iron. On 23 September 2018, the new terminus, West Kowloon Station was opened, as the new high-speed rail link to mainland China. It connects Hong Kong

by high-speed rail to major Chinese cities, most symbolically including Beijing. More contentiously, part of the station has been annexed into Chinese territory, with extraterritorial rights, allowing Chinese law, Chinese courts, and Chinese police to reign supreme in this part of Hong Kong's territory. A situation not seen since before 1860. In close succession the month after, the Hong Kong-Zhuhai-Macau bridge, which connects its two Special Administrative Regions with mainland China, was due to open on 23 October 2018. This is an ambitious project spanning the entire width of the Pearl River Estuary. As one of the world's longest sea-crossing bridges, it allows one to drive directly from Hong Kong to mainland Chinese Zhuhai for the first time, with contrived economic justification. Crucially, it places Hong Kong as an obedient cog in its 'Greater Pearl River Delta Strategy' of further integration. Neither project was mandated by the Hong Kong people, but both were paid for by Hong Kong residents who have taxation with restrained representation. Unsurprisingly, both projects are subject to domestic scrutiny and protest, with the station's extra-territoriality being challenged in the courts, and irregularities in the bridge's construction being investigated. But these efforts are unlikely to succeed. Ultimately, if the constitution of sovereignty is

control over mobility, it is clear that the Chinese government's intention is for Hong Kong's remaining sovereignty to gravitate in only one direction: towards and into China.

Hong Kong, in other words, continues to be a city with an expiration date. But the Hong Kong people have not yet given up their rebellion against destiny. On 30 September 2018, the Human Rights Commission of the British Conservatives gathered three generations of Hong Kong democracy activists to speak at their party conference event. Martin Lee (80), Benny Tai (54) and Nathan Law (25), all children of Hong Kong's perpetual precariousness, have all sought to carve out some semblance of control over fate through democratic reforms and self-determination. But their endeavours have been blocked by an increasingly emboldened China, with every step doing away with the pretence of its treaty obligations, and while Britain enters a period of navel-gazing and mercantile deference in search of new trading partners. In its remaining 29 years, Hong Kong has precisely time for just one more activist generation, before its way of life is irreversibly extinguished. In the meantime, the PLA headquarters will continue to endure as a monument to our insecurity, watching and waiting for 2047.



Go Hasegawa

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House in Kawasaki

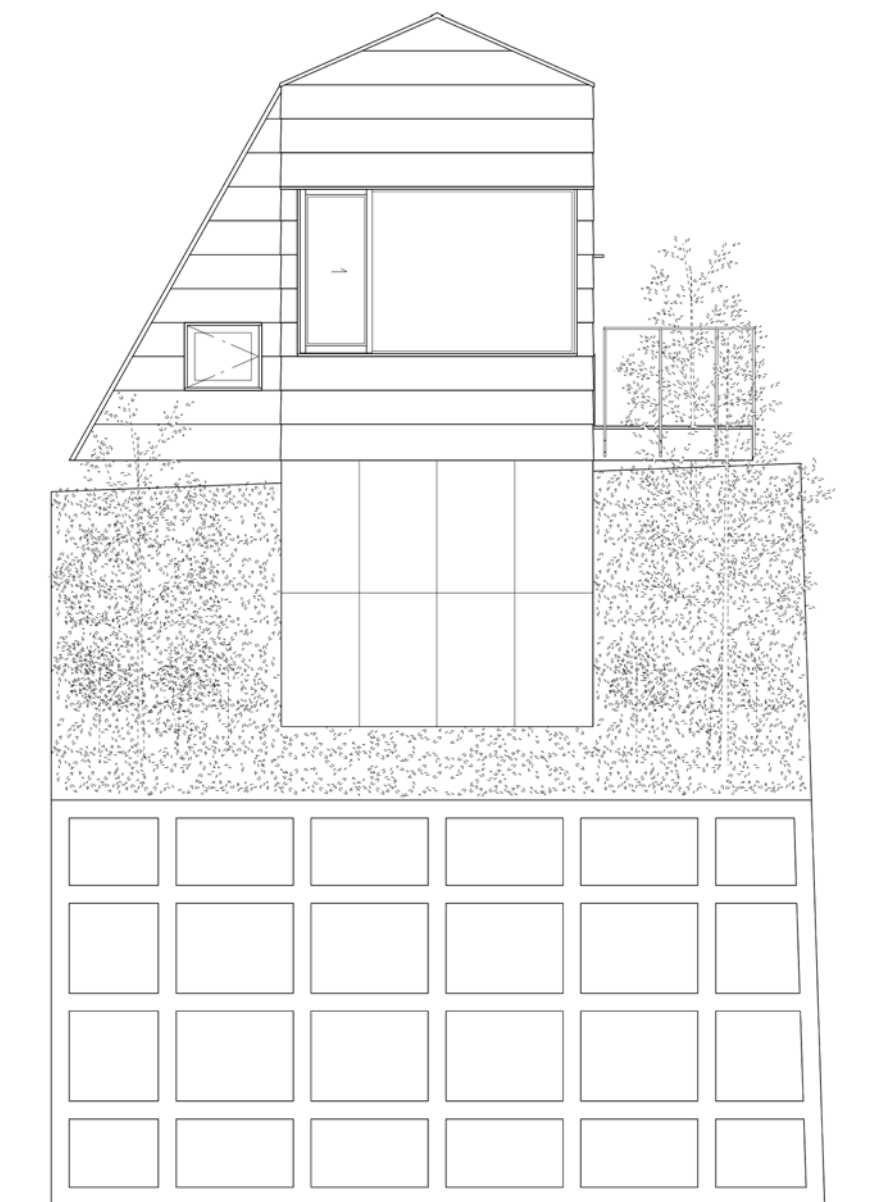
Humans have dealt with and contained their *anxiety* by building walls to define the interior and the exterior in various ways. Defensive walls were erected to protect cities from intruders, sturdy house walls have sheltered us from outer elements, and more recently, thicker walls with high-performance insulation are used to minimise our *anxiety* about climate change. These walls present a dilemma. By excluding the exterior, we may lose sight of this *anxiety*, but it is not dealt with in a way that will dispel it for good.

In the region hit by the Great East Japan Earthquake and tsunami of 2011, a 14.5m high breakwater is currently being built. The tsunami was a destructive force of nature that the Japanese witnessed, which raises the question: Would the construction of this large wall—that can be interpreted as the physical manifestation of a rejection of this natural disaster— engender a certain forgetfulness of the harmful effect of the Tsunami, and furthermore, should its effect be forgotten?

With this in mind, I designed the House in Kawasaki; in a way that would not reject *anxiety* and the exterior but would allow for negotiation. The house was designed principally for a couple. The husband, who is a gardener, passes his time in fulfilment and contentment by tending to plants. The environs surrounding the house are mountainous, with large steps supported by tall retaining walls. The site is above one of these slopes, rising more than 8.5m between streets. The original retaining wall would not have been able to support the weight of the new building, not even if the house had been sitting only partially on the slope; such a set up would have required large, expensive foundations.

The house volume is instead designed on top four piles, with an inclined plane hanging below, which follows the slope of the site without touching it. The gardens can be accessed and enjoyed from both sides of the lower floor, which floats above it. This low space is a pleasant place to sit down, read or take a nap, and maintains a comfortable distance between the two generations who share the house— the mother-in-law upstairs and the couple below. This approach to design enables the occupants to live with their exterior, instead of rejecting it. Only when we *invite* the exterior inside, can our conception and understanding of *security* be updated.





Emily Priest

Emily is an architectural assistant and writer in London. She graduated from the Architectural Association in 2018, having received the Dennis Sharp writing prize for her thesis, *Furnitures or the Choreography of the Interior*.

Opposites

Preface. A few words to explain. The order of opposites is a tricky one. Therefore, what follows is probably a little less than an essay. Perhaps what follows is what comes before the essay. These

3.0

are ruminations on the order of opposites. The pairing of the words such as security and insecurity are as far apart as they are close. As such, their proximity is as much as

4.0

Opposites.

their distance.

Mythology.

Oppositions,

In mythology,

o p p o s i t e

a crossroads

positions. Binary

2.0

may indicate a

opposition theory, as

crossing between

termed by the French

Theme. The reader is confronted with a similar, though

realms. A crossroads is

anthropologist, Claude

an opposing pair of lexicon. Security and insecurity

the point at which two

Lévi-Strauss suggests that

is a pairing that is familiar and even familial,

realms touch and is therefore

narratives, namely myths, use

though they act like strangers. The word

an example of liminality – a

binary opposition to form their

secure originates from sixteenth

place in between. As part of his

structure and to bear cultural

century Latin, it is a product

system, Lévi-Strauss listed that in

meaning. Whereby, the understanding

of *se-* (without) and *-cura*

language, North and South and East

of one term informs the other. For instance,

(care). The suffix –

and West, could also be termed binary

if we understand the term good, we will have

ity, denotes a

opposites. Lévi-Strauss' theory would then

a measurable understanding of the term bad.

state or

suggest that a crossroads is the point at which

The binary opposite is a pair of words

two binary oppositions physically intersect.

that together, create a totality and when singular,

provide a direct difference to the other. In *The Raw*

and the Cooked, Lévi-Strauss reduces myths to their

5.0

semantic field to find a structural order in the mythical

lexicon. These pairs, such as 'the categories of the

Sidedness. If we take inside and outside, or in and

raw and the cooked, the fresh and the decayed,

out. Or interior and exterior. Interior derived from

the moistened and the burned,'¹ have an

condition,

the terms inner, middle and more specifically,

opposition that Lévi-Strauss believes is

whereby *in-*

inter (within). The base of exterior ex-

understood across cultures ubiquitously

simply means not.

translates to out of. These two – let's say

– that is to say, the understanding and

The reader might then

– instances, gain resolution with the

preference between the words raw

infer that the prefix *in-* was

addition of the suffix *-erior*, which

and cooked to each given person

supposedly added to the original word

is used to indicate a position.

may vary, but the understanding

secure, to create a new term whose

of the opposite is what Lévi-

definition described a status that was something

Inter + erior

Strauss argues as the

other than secure. Just as antonym was made to serve

= *interior*

structure of myth.

as an opposite to synonym, it is other than, and therefore,

opposite to.

Exter + erior

An opposite sits on the other side of something that sits on the

= *exterior*

other side of the opposite. But this also means they sit next to each other

in direct resistance. If we were to call these opposites – thing one and thing

two – then we have already determined an order to the things. Hence, they must

be called they (and not things), and they must stand in opposite equilibrium at all times.

Interior. According to Charles Rice in *The Emergence of the Interior*, the 'interior' had come into use from the late fifteenth century to mean inside as divided from outside,'² but it was only from the beginning of the nineteenth century that the interior actually became denotative of

If the opposites are termed *A* and *B*. Then the doorway, or any other in-between position, are the infinite letters: *A1*, *B1* and *A2*, *B2*. These are a variation to the *A* and *B* binary opposition. Then, once two positions have been found, a preference can be made between the two points.

In the chapter, *The Interior*, *The Trace* from *The Arcades Project*, Walter Benjamin tells us about the stability and surveillance that came with nineteenth century Parisian bourgeois interiors. As such, the interior brought the security of private life. According to Benjamin, with the interior came style and with that, came bad taste. It brought spectacle and awareness of the spectacle. The interior, as opposed to outside, had resistance, 'Against the armature of glass and iron, upholstery offers resistance with its textiles.'³

This theory learns from Lévi-Strauss, but ultimately suggests that whilst we might agree – or at the very least understand – and navigate through such things as binary opposites, a non-binary spectrum lies between them, where there are infinite grades of possible positions in-between.

8.0

Sidedness. One might argue that we can only understand difference when we are aware of both or all positions. We can only know when the lamp is turned off, once we have turned it on. We can only know what it feels like to be insecure, once we have felt comfortable.

The armature being both physical, contained

10.0

Definitions. What is most peculiar about these opposites is when one (*A*) is used to describe the other (*B*). For instance, we often define the word off as the opposite to on, or, being outside as the condition inside to be no longer inside. Perhaps these opposites are mere tools of linguistic/cultural (not sure where exposed one ends and the other begins) navigation. The reader might ask: what happens between yes and no? Well, one would hope that there is an uninterrupted landscape of destinations in-between, where it is likely that both terms are needed to reach the coordinates of one's position, wherever that might be.

9.0

7.0

11.0

Shell. Position. Can a position only be in or out? Yes or no. Can both opposing positions be achieved at the same time? Yes and no.

A protective case. A protective cast. If there is a door between in and out, a person could stand in the door way. In which case, they would be both in and out at the same time. One might argue further that this person has entered into a new binary opposite – to be in or out of the doorway – but they also are neither in or out of the door and therefore they are both in and out of the door.

Epilogue. Opposite to preface.

1 Claude Lévi-Strauss, *The Raw and the Cooked*. (Jonathan Cape Ltd, first Edition, April 1970), p 1

2 Charles Rice, *The Emergence of the Interior: Architecture, Modernity, Domesticity*. (London: Routledge, 2008), p 2

Arcades Project. (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press), 2002, 218 [13,1]

4 Benjamin, 220 [14,4]

*'The Anthropocene can be framed as the global condition of being born into a world that no longer exists.'*¹

*'We are all 'being overtaken by processes that are unmaking the world that any of us ever knew.'*²

A Fortress of Multitude

The New Regime of (In)Security

The Trinity nuclear test was carried out at 05:29:21 Mountain War Time (ffl2 seconds) on July 16 1945. With the splitting of the Plutonium atom, approximately 931 milligrams (0.93g) of matter were transformed into energy with the force equivalent to 20,000 Tons of TNT in less than 0.001 seconds.³ The resulting fall out, and subsequently that of Hiroshima, Nagasaki and the global testing of approximately 2,100 nuclear devices between 1945 and 1992 began to deposit a very thin but detectable layer of Plutonium 239 (half-life of 24,110 years) into the strata of the earth. It will provide a long term stratigraphic signature, detectable for more than

100,000 years. This moment, which marked the beginning of the Atomic age according to stratigraphers and geologists, also marked the transition between the Holocene (an 11,700 year period of relative stability of the earth system) and the Anthropocene – a new geological epoch in which the agency of humans, coupled with technological apparatuses, has been impacting the earth system with the magnitude of a geo-physical force, permanently modifying its various atmospheric, hydrological and biological cycles.

Our notions of security, and our social and political lives are irrevocably linked to geological time

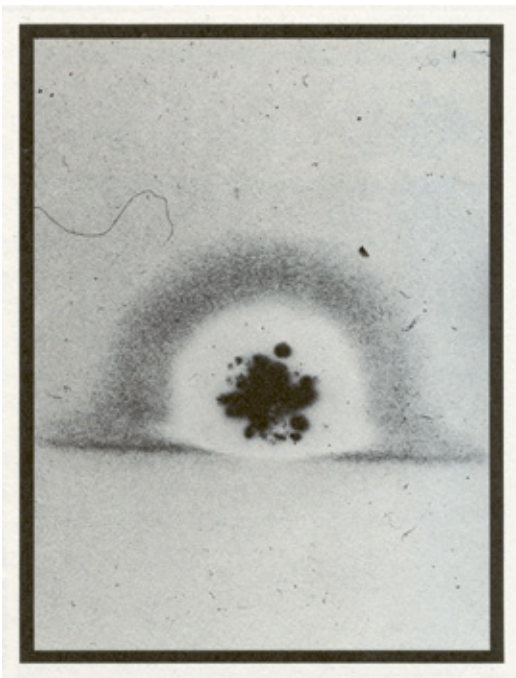
and the stability of the earth system. This paradigmatic transformation then, has implications for how we have come to think of (in) security in this century. The transition can be read and understood in the way that conflictual relations, contemporary forms of uncertainty, and (in) security have emerged and developed alongside nuclear devices. Devices which are not just explosives, but explosive cosmological practices, which have and continue to remap and rearrange how we experience life.

The development of the Cold War led to a situation of extreme secrecy, linked to the creation and maintenance of well-articulated and robust nuclear complexes. They were constructed as cultural and national projects, which would constantly extend and reinforce their initial logic. Nuclear weapons and

forms of organisation of the nuclear age would therefore not only act as markers of technological and social modernity, but also pose a set of conflictual relations that helped maintain a sense of stability and equilibrium during the Cold War. These markers continue to play their part in the formulation of a new regime of security, which we see emerging since the collapse of the Berlin Wall. Since 1945, the United States constructed its industrial, scientific, military and academic institutions through the nuclear bomb, channelling the fear of atomic annihilation to create major shifts in policy making. The terms 'state of emergency' or 'perpetual crisis' can be thought to have emerged with the nuclear age, and could be examined as constant cyclical effects caused by the threat nuclear technologies pose, and through the fear of escalation and mutually assured destruction.

Between 1940 and 1996, \$5.8 trillion was spent directly on nuclear weapons by the United States. Such disturbing facts, together with their subsequent invisibility to the citizens, reveal that the nuclear fetish is the third largest federal expenditure since 1940, ranking just after non-nuclear military spending and Social Security – representing 11% of all federal expenditure.³ ⁴ Although the idea of keeping 'state secrets' existed before the Manhattan Project, it did not reach the same scale. Massive infrastructures that were created for the project morphed into vast and impenetrable edifices whose 'sheer scale renders the security state largely invisible to its citizens who walk every day in its infrastructure, rely on its products, and unknowingly carry traces of its toxic effects in their bodies.'⁵

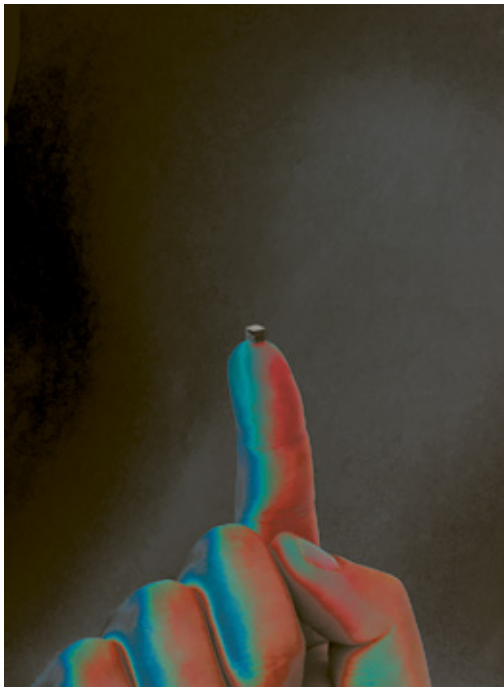
The origins of this infrastructure and its wide-scale effect on the organisation of the US began shortly after the introduction of the bomb. The permanently mobilised war economy was created through the signing of two documents by President Truman – NSC-68 – a blueprint for the containment strategy of the Cold War (1950), and a national policy for industrial dispersion (1951). Peter Galison in *War against the Center* discusses how, after the atomic explosions in Hiroshima and Nagasaki, American evaluation teams and later planners immediately became concerned with the impact of such events in the future of their cities. City planners and industry leaders were trained systematically to design scattered industry and population centres to minimise potential damage caused by a nuclear strike from the enemy.⁶ ⁶ As the Cold War escalated, the task of 'defence in space' became ever more frenzied, with various measures taken to protect American national interests. 'If nuclear war could not be won, it could, perhaps, be survived – if the nodal



Berlyn Brixner (Head photographer) for the Manhattan Project's Trinity test 9.14km from ground zero – 0.025 seconds after the detonation. The intensity of the radiation from the explosion burned a hole in the celluloid of the film. This forms the stratigraphical marker for the transition between the geological epochs.

points of the society could be broken up and scattered, redundantly, through space. Meshed satellite communities were joined by an interstate highway system and grids of phone nodes were joined by arrays of cables and radio links.’⁷ Through this, an atomic imaginary is attached to even the most banal aspects of American life and infrastructure. A scenario emerges at the start of the Cold War where the Americans learn to view themselves as the target, mimicking the way they had addressed their enemies in the previous war or, by anticipating how they would appear to the enemy.

Consequently, a symmetrical system emerged in the long war that encompassed the Second World War as well as the Cold War, predicated on the fact that both sides recognised that the enemy was constituted



0.931 g of matter was converted into energy in the Trinity test/ Nagasaki bombing. A similar device was used in both. 28 kg (approx.) was converted in the global testing by the detonation of 2086 devices between 1945 and 2018 (600 million tons of TnT). 351.4 kg (approx.) is the latent potential of conversion in the current global arsenal.

in much the same way. During the Cold War the spy systems, missiles, battle tanks, submarines, and satellites that were developed and deployed by either side were symmetrical. Terms like ‘missile gap’ were used to indicate disequilibrium. In this situation, both sides seemed ready to annihilate each other and there was widespread fear of nuclear war. Game theory and mathematical models were applied to the actors, which were pre-supposed to be rational decision makers and the world was conceptualised according to a reciprocal condition: the assumption that the actors would respond and behave in similar ways. This situation created an eventual stable equilibrium. Several countries were aligned on either side, and the few that weren’t had carved out spaces in between, as a configuration, the mirrored balance was reassuring.

This stability began to dissolve as the former Soviet Union started to disintegrate, and as these two massive poles began to lose their magnetism, things began to break down. As the end of history approached, alliances of countries also began to shift and change. Countries like Yugoslavia began to break apart, and the disciplinary structures that emerged, seemed to have reflected the change in the phenomenology of living in a world where every magnetic filing isn’t given an orientation by the two poles of the magnet.’⁸

Developments in various fields arose from the nuclear programme and the military industrial complex during this era, including the production and testing of warheads; the study of radiation; monitoring the earth for signs of nuclear proliferation, the need to maintain communications, and to deploy and respond to atomic war, led to new advancements in material sciences, satellite launching and communications, supercomputing, surveillance and remote sensing. ‘The minute-to-minute threat of nuclear war produced a totalling vision of American technology during the Cold War, a “closed world” of early warning systems and military technology linked by always-on computers, encompassing the earth in an always expanding techno-scientific form of American power.’⁹ These systems have since evolved and have come to dominate contemporary cultural and political forces.

The events of September 2001 lead the US to formally convert itself from a counter-communist state to a counter-terrorist state, now participating in an asymmetrical form of warfare. This war involved the invasion of another country to eliminate a non-existent nuclear threat. Nuclear fear resulted in the reorganisation of covert US military projects and a new concept of war. The United States

orchestrated the entire rearrangement of their foreign policy through the reconfiguration of its Department of Homeland Security and the passing of the Patriot Act, which allowed for a shift in citizen monitoring. The discourse of nuclear terror has since been hijacked by acts of terror being carried out in the past 17 years and by how the security state developed in response to this threat.

Therefore, the logic that directed the strategies for military analysts, academics and politicians were completely overhauled and transformed with the notion of the target being dramatically dispersed and disseminated everywhere. Since contemporary conflict no longer contains the concept of a winning and losing side, what has since emerged is a much more permanent set of conflictual relations. This is even reflected in the dissolution of the time of war where divisions of wartime and peacetime have dissolved into a realm of continuous securitisation. The world then, is experienced in a ubiquitous conflict: everywhere and all the time – there are no longer shelters, fortresses, or bunkers. The set of relations are simultaneously both aggressive and defensive.^{9 10} Even the new technologies of surveillance, be it CCTV cameras or the monitoring of the internet or of a space by autonomous drone systems, are technologies designed for continuous form of conflict.^{9 11}

Not just the time, but also the space of the conflict zone seems to have spread out everywhere. In previous wars, either in World War II or afterwards, there would be the notions of a front and a territory. What was contested was determined between sovereign entities, which meant that the lines on the map could move back and forth; even if the conflict zones were irregular and shifted around, they could be pinned down. The zone of contemporary conflict is low intensity but is spread out everywhere, from barricades on public squares to security checkpoints to enter a museum, a piece of unattended luggage on the street corner, automobiles used as projectiles, to armed personnel in various parts of major cities. The target is everywhere and everything. The condition we see emerging is not so much a form of surveillance which comes from the French word *surveiller*

meaning to watch, or oversee, but of a new condition more akin to that of monitoring which comes from the verb *monere*, which is to warn, admonish, remind. Securitisation, monitoring as direct results of the unfolding of our geological paradigm, are also reflected in how borders of sovereign states are increasingly formalised, guarded and monitored.^{9 12}

The Anthropocene is thus characterised by this perpetual crisis. This crisis (in this case a national security crisis), takes many forms and makes it possible to mobilise vast amounts of things and people using the apparatus of a nation-state, in a situation where power can be unregulated and flows freely – both in response to the unthinkable threat of nuclear war, or in the form of the contemporary war on terror. The massive spread of radionuclides resulting from the nuclear age, in time and space, dissolves our distinctions between cultural constructs and natural things. Anthropogenic radiation (something we cannot taste, touch, hear, feel or smell) as an entity that is released in microseconds and circulates through multi millennia, questions the categories we consider stable, balanced and permanent, rendering their incompetence in deciphering our multiple realities. Realisation of this moment of perpetual crisis – when the instability produced by climate change and ecological destruction intersects with our use of nuclear materials – produces a shift in our thinking about (in)security.

Narratives of the sublime and unthinkable have worked to mobilise the nuclear industrial complex, and normalise its politics. The uncanny nature of radiation and radioactive contamination then, confuses and baffles these notions. Ideas of containment, deflection and impenetrability that are endemic to nuclear discourse and architecture should be rejected. The proliferation and monitoring of nuclear weapons and materials can instead be thought of through notions that emerge from the chain reaction – that of arraying, of radiance, dissemination, and entanglement. This intersection then, forces us to re-engage with our nuclear world and formulate multiple dialogues with, and within, our current predicament.

1 Bill McKibben, *Earth: Making a Life on a Tough Planet*, (New York: Henry Holt & Company), 2010
2 Deborah Bird Rose, *Anthropocene Noir*, p 208
3 Zalasiewicz et al, *When did the Anthropocene begin? A Mid-Twentieth Century boundary level is Strigraphically Optimal*, 2015, p 200

4 Peter Galison, *Removing Knowledge*, 2004
5 Joseph Masco, *The Nuclear Borderlands: the Manhattan Project in Post-Cold War New Mexico*, Princeton University Press, 2006
6 'Industrial Dispersion, National Security Resources Board, Is Your Plant a 'Target'', in the National Security

Resources Boardm Washington DC, 1951
7 Peter Galison, *War against the Center*, 2001
8 'Everything Is a Target', thenewinquiry.com/everything-is-a-target, *The New Inquiry*, 18 April, 2017,
9 Paul Nedwards, *The Closed World: Computers and the Politics of Discourse in Cold*

War America, ACLS History E-Book Project, 2005
10 Peter Galison, *Removing Knowledge*, 2004
11 Ibid.
12 Barriers, trenches and walls around the world are getting longer, increasingly well defended, monitored and more ambitious each year since 1945 and increasingly so since 1989

and 2001. Of the 51 border walls constructed since 1945, half were constructed in the last 15 years. Europe will soon have more physical barriers on its national borders than it did during the height of the Cold War.

14-00000
SECRET

ANALYSIS

I. BACKGROUNDS OF THE PRESENT WORLD CRISIS

Within the past thirty-five years the world has experienced two global wars of tremendous violence. It has witnessed two revolutions--the Russian and the Chinese--of extreme scope and intensity. It has also seen the collapse of five empires--the Ottoman, the Austro-Hungarian, German, Italian and Japanese--and the drastic decline of two major imperial systems, the British and the French. During the span of one generation, the international distribution of power has been fundamentally altered. For several centuries it had proved impossible for any one nation to gain such preponderant strength that a coalition of other nations could not in time face it with greater strength. The international scene was marked by recurring periods of violence and war, but a system of sovereign and independent states was maintained, over which no state was able to achieve hegemony.

Two complex sets of factors have now basically altered this historical distribution of power. First, the defeat of Germany and Japan and the decline of the British and French Empires have interacted with the development of the United States and the Soviet Union in such a way that power has increasingly gravitated to these two centers. Second, the Soviet Union, unlike previous aspirants to hegemony, is animated by a new fanatic faith, antithetical to our own, and seeks to impose its absolute authority over the rest of the world. Conflict has, therefore, become endemic and is waged, on the part of the Soviet Union, by violent or non-violent methods in accordance with the dictates of expediency. With the development of increasingly terrifying weapons of mass destruction, every individual faces the ever-present possibility of annihilation should the conflict enter the phase of total war.

On the one hand, the people of the world yearn for relief from the anxiety arising from the risk of atomic war. On the other hand, any substantial further extension of the area under the domination of the Kremlin would raise the possibility that no coalition adequate to confront the Kremlin with greater strength could be assembled. It is in this context that this Republic and its citizens in the ascendancy of their strength stand in their deepest peril.

The issues that face us are momentous, involving the fulfillment or destruction not only of this Republic but of civilization itself. They are issues which will not await our deliberations. With conscience and resolution this Government and the people it represents must now take new and fateful decisions.

NSC 68

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UNCLASSIFIED



Re-reading the Ruins: Exploring Conditions of Insecurity and Uncertainty in Detroit



Eve Avdoulos

Eve Avdoulos has recently completed her PhD at the University of Cambridge's Centre for Urban Conflicts Research, within the Department of Architecture. Her dissertation, *Detroit in Decline: An investigation into the dynamics of two urban neighbourhoods*, examines two contrasting neighbourhoods to illustrate the dynamic ways in which different areas of the city have been affected by, and responded to, decline. During her time at Cambridge, Eve convened City Seminar, was editor-in-chief of *Scroope 25 – The Cambridge Architectural Journal*, and served as a supervisor for individual undergraduate dissertations and select courses.

The story of Detroit's decline and its severe population loss, physical decay and financial bankruptcy, have become increasingly more visible as magazines, photography anthologies, books, art exhibits and online news sources have produced and proliferated images of the city's decaying architecture. The materiality of Detroit's decline: 'the abandoned factories and skyscrapers; derelict hotels, libraries, schools, churches, and businesses; the acres of vacant residential lots dotted here and there with lone houses; and the derelict homes that run into the tens of thousands,'¹ captured and disseminated in national and international media, and as art historian Dora Apel reflects, casts Detroit as 'the preeminent example of urban decay, the global metaphor for the current state of neoliberal capitalist culture and the epicentre of the photographic genre of de-industrial ruin imagery.'² These representations of the city perpetuate narratives of decline by employing a particular aesthetic that focuses on the city's emptiness, decay and abandonment. Commonly referred to as 'ruin porn', 'a derisive label that demonstrates the extent to which these photographs are thought to be exploitative by Detroit residents and others who critically engage with them',³ these representations have come to define the city by contributing towards an imaginative geography⁴ that engages with particular empirical features and material conditions to construct a narrative of urban decline.

These images are often used by the media to create a narrative structure of the 'rise-and-fall' of Detroit, in which the vibrancy of the city as a centre for manufacturing, commerce and opportunity is proceeded by a collective nostalgia and sense of loss for what once was. The focus on Detroit's deteriorated landscape is part of a broader fascination with the picturesque decay that literary critic Andreas Huyssen

labels as a 'cult of ruins' which 'has accompanied Western modernity in waves since the eighteenth century.'⁵ He describes: 'the architectural ruin is an example of the indissoluble combination of spatial and temporal desires that trigger nostalgia. In the body of the ruin the past is both present in its residues and yet no longer accessible'.⁶ 'These images', as Millington reflects, 'help to construct a particular mythology of the city that is focused on emptiness, ruin, and picturesque decay.'⁷

An understanding of Detroit that is solely grounded in the picturesque qualities of urban decay obscures a genuine understanding of the city. Many scholars have engaged with the production and reproduction of images of Detroit's picturesque decay, producing a large body of literature that critically interrogates the meanings behind these images.⁸ It is generally agreed upon that, while representations of Detroit's decline allows us to explore the materiality of the city, we must be wary of the ways in which these images displace a more concerted attentiveness to the city's tangible problems. As Millington has commented, the focus on Detroit's physical decay works 'to naturalise the city's decline and erase its residents through a focus on the city's aesthetic appeal. By resigning the city to a ruin, Detroit's cataloguers help to create a break with the city's present in favour of overwrought pronouncements about inevitability and material decay.'⁹ John Patrick Leary echoes this sentiment: 'So much ruin photography and ruin film aestheticise poverty without inquiring of its origins, dramatises spaces but never seeks out the people that inhabit and transform them, and romanticises isolated acts of resistance without acknowledging the massive political and social forces aligned against the real transformation'.¹⁰ The criticisms and resistance to these images by Leary and others,¹¹ speaks to many of the ways in which the focus on the materiality of the

city fails to account for broader questions about the deeper political, economic and social processes which have helped facilitate the city's decline.

In Detroit, the physical condition of the urban fabric today, defined by these ruins and landscapes of decay, speaks to a much wider phenomenon. The materiality of the city is not simply a manifestation of years of urban decline and municipal disinvestment, but it is a present space, which both reflects and reproduces conditions of insecurity and uncertainty. After years of disinvestment and decline Detroit has experienced what Judge Steven Rhodes described as 'service delivery insolvency'.¹² Decades long population decline meant that Detroit reduced its fiscal capacity, resulting in the city being unable to provide basic municipal services to many of its residents. Among other issues, public parks were not being maintained, fire, police and emergency services' response times were unacceptably long, street lights were scarce, garbage and recycling collection were infrequent, snow plough services were non-existent, and the city's transportation infrastructure was inadequately serving the needs of its residents. While general improvements have been made in the last five years, public service provision in particular, remains poor and at times uncertain.

'It's a crapshoot' one resident explains of the garbage collection in his neighbourhood, 'you just get lucky.' There is a general assertion that infrastructural networks and city services are the key physical and technological assets of modern cities, for they provide the foundation to sustain the constant demands and fluctuations of contemporary society. In Detroit, however, the physical condition of the urban fabric visibly provides evidence that these networks do not

exist, or, exist in limited capacity insufficiently addressing the needs of the city's residents.

Figure 1 is just one example. Because the city's garbage collection is infrequent, residents often dispose of their waste in abandoned residential lots. As many are unsure whether or not the collection will come, they choose to dispose of their trash elsewhere. This sense of uncertainty and insecurity extends to other public services as well. In interviews with residents, there were repeated comments regarding the city's infrequent bus service which makes it difficult to rely on public transportation to get to school or work, others reflected upon the uncertainty of police and fire response times which leads many individuals to avoid calling the police all together, and some residents highlighted their concerns regarding the future of Detroit and what these conditions would mean for the retention of their property or finding future employment.

While many have captured and commented on the current material condition of Detroit's landscape, their interpretations do not read the city's physical fabric as a present and lived-in urban landscape. Often the interpretations of the city's materiality becomes separated from the everyday lived experience of the city's residents. Rather than focusing solely on the picturesque qualities of its decay, the city's materiality must be further considered for the type of environment and conditions it facilitates for the people living in Detroit. The ruins and the decay featured as part of the imaginative geography of Detroit are not simply a representation of decline and nostalgia, they signify the very real situations facing the residents, where a sense of insecurity and uncertainty are ever present.

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5 Andreas Huyssen, 'Nostalgia for Ruins', *Grey Room*, 2006, 6–21, p 7.
6 Andreas Huyssen, p 7.
7 Nate Millington, 'Post-Industrial Imaginaries: Nature, Representation, and Ruin in Detroit, Michigan' (University of Wisconsin-Madison, 2010), p 2.
8 Dora Apel, *Beautiful Terrible*

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9 Nate Millington, p 2.

10 John Patrick Leary, 'Detroitism', *Guernica*, January 2011, p 2 www.guernicamag.com/leary_1_15_11/
11 Thomas Morton, 'Something, Something, Something Detroit', 2009 www.vice.com/read/something-something-something-detroit-994-v16n8; John Patrick Leary; Gansky; Millington, 'Post-Industrial Imaginaries'.
12 Stephen Eide, 'Detroit Resurrected', Nathan Bomey,

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Alison Cheng

Alison Cheng is an architect working in London and Cambodia. She is also Programme Head for AAVS Cambodia and Executive Director for Project Little Dream (PLD), a charity that designs, builds, and runs village schools in Takeo province of Cambodia. Alison studied at the Architectural Association and the Chinese University of Hong Kong.

Oasis

Black tarmac became our only source of familiar comfort as we traversed through the winding contours of Atlas Mountains. Within the confines of the air-conditioned four-wheel drive, the landscape beyond appeared so hostile, to the extent that leaving the vehicle was simply unfathomable. The Moroccan sun beamed down relentlessly on the steel roof, and our lips were parched from dehydration. Concealed between tectonic folds, wedged deep in the crevasse of the valley, was a place that defied all odds.

On a patch of emerald green, life not only existed but thrived. Juxtaposed by the monotone plain of desert haze, every leaf and trickle of water glittered with a magical glimmer. While it was easy to be captivated by the lustrous vegetation and trickling streams, it was the sheer ability to live in silent defiance against a perilous fate, that struck the imagination.

Italo Calvino observed a similar literary dichotomy in Newton's theories: that beauty is in the eye of the optimist. When challenged with the problem of universal gravitation, we are transfixed not by 'the conditioning of everything and everyone by the inevitability of its own weight', but by the momentary equilibrium that allows for a 'balance of forces that enables heavenly bodies to float in space'. Perhaps it is only when faced with the heaviness of one's incapacity and mortality, that we are closest to discovering the oasis within our human condition.

















The expedited globalisation of society in the age of the post-digital has delineated pockets of tangential social limbo within our frame of urban reference. This has been, to a greater or lesser extent, controlled and compartmentalised by the intricate layers of constant surveillance that enable this paradigm. This system operates as a paragon of guesswork-taxonomy, which takes its systemic form in the administrative classification of factions: of what is today rationalised as a global community. The act of globalisation, which defines and guilds contemporary civilisation, simultaneously restricts the individual freedoms and

rights of its constituents to roam – to partake – which is credited to the notion of sovereignty.

The notion of sovereignty, enforces both territory and identity as a concept, and in a similar fashion, the sovereign has the right to exercise discipline and punishment – not only on those who reside within, but also without the established territory. The means by which to mitigate this levy, on individuals and groups targeted by a sovereign regime within the context of a global locality, varies infrastructurally and administratively, in as much as it does immaterially in a bid to secure a normative, westernised social order.

Freedom and (Im)mobility

Society Made Secure

Olukoye Akinkugbe

Olukoye Akinkugbe is, at the time of writing, on the cusp of consummating his architectural studies at the AA. With respect to architecture, he is predominantly concerned with matters pertaining to the urbanisation processes in which we as a society, strive to advance our civilisational status globally. He is also, among other things, an avid photographer who documents the various characters and inspirations – beautiful or otherwise – that comprise his immediate reality. He fervently believes that the materialisation of thought must be consolidated in written work, and enjoys jousting with like minds.

A – SOVEREIGNTY AND TERRITORY AS A CONCEPT

Freedom and mobility can be understood as a negotiation between an individual and their nation-state, decidedly enforced as a right of sovereignty within the territorial extents of a territory. Or, what can also be defined as the geospatial locale. The state is little more than an amalgamation of administrative entities, organised along the pretence of enforcing its own institutional legitimacy.³¹ The modern state, be it absolutist or within the thresholds of representative democracy, is at once concerned with the people over which it governs, as well as the physical assets within the geographic limits where it asserts its juridical influence.³² It is simultaneously a central place, taking into account its 'unified territorial reach,'³³ but is, furthermore, a physical occupation of an ideological symbolism. This symbolism persists because of the belief held by those who identify with it and conversely by those against it. Stemming from lived experience or rumoured representation of the state in its conceptual elaboration.³⁴

The creation of an urban sphere, or, social space,³⁵ within the context of globalisation, suspends the immediacy of an artificial hegemonic artifice of socially acceptable conventions and legal enterprise. This conglomerate of omniscient political outreach meters the two extremes of freedom and immobility, insofar as ordinary citizens are concerned. Encompassed in a singular figure who serves as a figurehead, or as the symbolic face of this type of institution – a political leader or a monarch for instance, whose will is intentionally reflected in the individual constituents, comprising the nation to which the figurehead is beholden.

Where globalisation is concerned, the state possesses an overwhelming conceptual and administrative capacity to impose its own prerogative of management on whom and what may operate, and when and where this operation may occur. The chaos of conflicting private interests within its population is regulated in accordance with the primary motivation of the state. It therefore suppresses any interests which are contrary to its own, insofar as it threatens the state's existence or hegemonic validity, or more importantly, the established 'stato-political' framework, in which its constituent community operates in.³⁶

The globalised space is characterised by an exchange of people moving from place to place perpetually, overcoming 'stato-political' separations and simultaneously homogenising all space by sullyng the frontiers of established state-space (i.e. the territorial extents of a state). The symbolic delineation of a state-frontier – geographic or otherwise – blurred in this modus of perpetual transition, becomes 'serial and discontinuous,'³⁷ as it spreads across the full breadth of the globe. The individual of our time (yourself and myself included), is an appurtenance of the contemporary nation-state. Today's individual is a resolute function of the state's material validation of power, which is ultimately concerned with the production and proliferation of capital. In this way, today's individual embodies the 'defamiliarising enormity of national citizenship and the exhilaration of its liberties,'³⁸ in as much as he or she is able to exercise unimpeded transit through any multitude of sovereign state entities.

B – BORDERS AS AN AFFIRMATION OF STATE-IDENTITY

The delineation and consubstantial proclamation of territory perform the task of administering an outcome within the boundary that coheres with the interests of the state. This act of mitigation, of what may or may not enter the state's territory, enables the content of the state to be moulded and manipulated to suit the intended character of whatever prerogative that suits the state.³⁹ Enforcing borders engenders the articulation of globalisation at its current scale,⁴⁰ while at the same time, it makes the spatial the

artificial classification of traits that determine who is legally capable or incapacitated within its boundaries,⁴¹ subjugating the freedom and mobility characterised by the advent and elocution afforded by globalisation.

This has the tendency to foster situations whereby symbolic politics (producing otherness by bordering) and real politics (producing borders), interfere.⁴² Such as the separation of radically different 'stato-political' prerogatives, wherein the

people whom they seek to divide share the same traits as the distinctions that are normally pertinent to the building of a nation; that of ethnicity, language, religious faith, and so on. In our current climate, the proliferation of diversified incorporeal methods of border enforcement, such as biometric and smart borders,¹³ further extends the reach of the state to effect its scrutiny to a greater and more potent degree as to whom may participate in the global articulation of a seemingly transient and mobile populous.

The ability for it to maintain its sovereignty is reliant on an infrastructure of 'regulatory entities that channel, correct, and scale human activities in order to produce effects of social order.'¹⁴ This necessitates a phenomenon whereby it becomes absolutely necessary for those within the jurisdiction of the state's confines to be known, situated and at once identifiable within a web of eternally shifting points of data-like controls. So that, each shifting inhabitant can be distinctly classified, and thus the proper authority administered, to afford hegemonic order. A higher degree of scrutiny is employed relative to the frequency of mobility within, into, and out of the state's territorial extents: in relation to migration, a wide scope of controls and technological protocols including – but not limited to – 'passports, visas, health certificates, invitation papers, transit passes, identity cards, watchtowers, disembarkation areas, holding zones, laws, regulations, customs and excise officials medical and immigration authorities.'¹⁵ All these play a part in reinforcing the immediacy of individual

accountability, to the all-seeing watch of the state.

The proliferation and consequent saturation of administrative space with 'various zones and experiences of waiting, holding, and interruption'¹⁶ are a facet of state sponsored reconciliation of illegality, whereby international borders are more fastidiously filtered so as to diminish the ripples created by this fluctuation of a transitory global body-politic. This is done in the interests of the more stable and situated inhabitants who comprise the state's metropolitan spaces.¹⁷ Structuring transitory spaces in a way which enables this filtration of people into distinct categories, affords the site of transit a unique privilege of being an enclave of non-space, or limbo, so to speak. The articulation then, which connects the globalised world, is effectuated.¹⁸ As a factor of regulating these instances of movement, holding areas – or non-spaces within the already established administrative non-space of international transit – take on a variety of forms within airports, harbours and the like. These forms range across all tiers of imprisonment and specificities of detainment, from 'regular prisons to special-purpose facilities,'¹⁹ depending on the level of scrutiny and determined offence. The cohesion and seeming ease with which the state predicates such stringent dissection of both the body-politic and the other-politic²⁰ from the normative space of public life creates a 'plurality of legal orders, labour regimes, patterns of economic development, and even cultural styles'²¹ that have become a staple of the globalised order.

C – IMMOBILITY: DETENTION

Enforcing border authority, as previously stated, is reliant on a high level of technical proficiency and integration, the likes of which cannot be matched or entrusted to the pure cognitive assessment of agents who are given the task of enforcement. In congruence with the technological application of risk assessment, government staff work to evaluate the likelihood of an individual's undesirability with regards to the prerogatives of the state and its corresponding body-politic. The consequence of implementing this judgement is an imposition of a hegemonic paradigm of conjecture, whereby the rules of association with respect to the perceived appearance of how 'certain phenotypes, citizenships, signs of poverty, and intentions correlate.'²² These associations inform a speculation based on 'religious, racial, social or legal taxonomies' as a preconception of ulterior or

contra-state motives. This affirms – not only in the context of transit but more generally of society – the notion of policing as a restraining mechanism within ordinary life, in an age where this type of encroachment is the new norm.

The regulatory routine of transit facilitates the continuum of free movement among the global-politic who are immediately made identifiable through a biometric catalogue of their irises and fingerprints matched against their names, transaction histories and official travel documents, therefore maximising the ability of the various surveillance systems put in place to statistically determine and pre-empt the likelihood of an individual's intentions prior to transit.²³ The prevalence of this *modus operandi* seeks to minimise the potentiality for human discretion, and subsequently error in the efficient administration of

state-defined prerogatives with respect to interstate securitisation. The interstice of trans-nationalisation among unequal economies in contemporary globalisation characterises a dynamic of unequal civilities extended towards the other-politic which comprises the lower socio-economic classes of contemporary cities. Consequently, sharp increases in socio-economic inequality would adversely polarise notions of citizenship among those not native to the nations within which they presently reside. This polarisation provokes social antagonism and fosters social alienation.²⁴

Immobility at a national scale, removed from that of the international transitory space, is tantamount to the notion of punishment. This is a 'punishment of a less immediate physical kind, a certain discretion in the art of inflicting pain, a combination of more subtle, more subdued sufferings, deprived of their visible display',²⁵ contrasting to that in the age prior to globalisation. The physical human body has ceased to be the main target of punitive justice, wherein the restriction of freedom of movement – among the denial of other liberties – so as to construct an extra-societal zone of exception where conceptions of space, time, and a sense of interaction with the rest of society are virtually suspended, in order to inflict a psychologically overwhelming administration of

justice. The deterrence of punishment is a prerequisite to enforcing the discipline necessary to ensure the smooth functioning of the state's agenda, with respect to every avenue over which it exercises control. This juridical relation between state and populous is paramount to the proper 'distribution of individuals in space ... [it] requires enclosure, the specification of a place heterogeneous to all others and closed in upon itself. It is the protected place of disciplinary monotony.'²⁶ Enclosure, so to speak, is willed into effect through the notion that in this administration of state-justice, 'each individual has his own place; and each place its individual.'²⁷

With respect to Europe, and more specifically the European Union, the ratification of the Schengen area accelerated and diversified intra-migration between its member states through the virtual dissolution of internal borders, which effectively encouraged an inter-determinate relation between liberalisation of economy, mobility and the security of its citizens.²⁸ The border area, which encompasses the aforementioned zones of exception, is mitigated by controls which render very tangible experiences of the state and nation, 'through the physical intrusions of technologies and the overt classification of people according to politico-legal complexes.'²⁹

D – THE PSYCHOLOGY AND PRACTICE OF DETENTION: PRISON

The collective identity and societal mannerisms that galvanise the state as one synergised cultural entity are beholden to certain prerequisite forms of operations that are differentiated across boundaries of cultural identity, depending on where an individual has formulated his or her identity. Globalisation has, in effect, proliferated the cosmopolis to the extent wherein the *demos* at present constitutes complex forms that underlie, or relate to the notion of state-identity. Furthermore, globalisation has actuated a new cosmopolitan state, whose identity can never be fully resolved. Nevertheless, the state cannot function without a semblance of societal norm and order, however implicit it might be. The basis of administering order is predicated on forging obedience among subjects of governance: an essential prerequisite for prosperity in any instance where people live together. It is a psychological mechanism which serves as the link between 'individual action and political purpose. It is the dispositional cement that

binds men to systems of authority.'³⁰ In short, the advent of social life affords benefits to all who partake in the composition of society; primordially from a survival point of view. This view posits that the continued prosperity of a society is based on its functioning as an autopoiesis, wherein society is a complex, self-regulating system possessing the inherent qualities necessary for its survival while also encompassing the hierarchical social structures prevalent in any society. This in turn ensures that any insubordinate individual action contrary to that of the established social order is stifled, so as to maintain the progression of the society to greater and greater echelons. As a consequence, any other individual entering into a society, be it a city, a nation or a state, is ineluctably realigned to comply to the society that they have become a part of.³¹ This ensures that previously prevalent notions of individuality and state-identity have been made obsolete by the advent of globalisation and the cosmopolitan – the

contemporaneity of identity has developed into one that is fluid, dynamic and complex.

Nevertheless, Globalisation, grounded in modern Western values, functions as a safeguard for modern democracies, in that 'free choice is elevated into a supreme value [conversely] social control and domination can no longer appear as infringing on a subject's freedom.'³² In this day and age, dominion over the *demos* persists under the guise of freedom of individuality; an elusive freedom that paradoxically entails societal obedience and consequent punishment as deterrence to reinforce this instilled obedience. The brutal immediacy of a deterrent that underlies the day-to-day illusion of freedom and individuality that members of society perceive they have, communicates and highlights 'excessive, non-functional cruelty as a feature of contemporary life,'³³ this feature is ubiquitous in all regions of Global society.

As such, the antitheses of freedom, of mobility, is that of confinement – imprisonment. Penal justice in the era of globalisation is not so much concerned with the reformation of offending individuals, as it is with retributive justice and social incapacitation.³⁴ The prison, similar to the airport, or more specifically the Terminal, constitutes a zone of exception: wherein notions of time and place become irrelevant. In this case, the prison is a societal heterotopia, insofar as the prisoner is concerned. The differing levels, or intensities of imprisonment, to some extent, functions as 'a benign laboratory of human desires and deterrents, a system for testing a central Utilitarian principle; those calculations of pleasure and pain, unique to each individual, govern all human interaction.'³⁵ The administration of retributive justice necessitates 'impersonality and uniformity'³⁶ as a function and expression of social exclusion.

Having stripped a number of individuals of the capacity to fend for themselves through the condemnation of imprisonment, the state then assumes responsibility for those under its custody for the duration of their judicial sentence.³⁷

As a form, the built assemblage of the prison, and of prison systems, is dictated by its primary function to efficiently economise security and control.³⁸ This in itself implies a basis for repetition and institutional uniformity and in this way, spatial conceptions of the prison environment are standardised to suit and reinforce the impersonality and anonymity of this zone of exclusion; an extreme form of otherness which houses ostracised remnants of society. Retributive justice in contemporary globalisation asserts 'confinement in psychologically bleak circumstances,'³⁹ whereby imposed isolation from society and the denial of civic freedom induces sensory deprivation within individuals, precipitated by 'monotony and boredom, caused by enforced idleness [and] lack of variety'⁴⁰ during confinement.

In one form or another, the increasing security in our dense social spaces – themselves mediums that facilitate forms of globalisation – mirrors in many aspects, the concept of retributive justice. To feel safe and secure in our homes and as we go about our daily lives, we – residents of the globalised locale – close one eye and are thus complicit in the state's questionable surveillance, detention and punishment of others, who are perceived as unsafe. The actions of said 'others,' constitute any form of disruption within the established norm of administrative hegemony, and are thus neutralised through the seemingly pre-emptive, dissolution of their freedoms to be mobile. More movement: more select.

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Sebastian Tiew

Sebastian Tiew is a recent graduate from the AA. His work has focused on the ways in which our lives are mediated through the technologies embedded in everyday life, questioning what it means to design across multiple realities. Through the application of a variety of digital processes, he has developed interactive experiences, video games and films. He has taught a unit in the AA Summer School and continues to be involved in a variety of academic and research projects in London.



Angels Alone



Set in the year 2035, *Angels Alone* (2018) envisions a prison where prisoners are rehabilitated through virtual and simulated realities. It proposes the creation of a third space: to facilitate a rehabilitation programme inspired by models of open-world role play games, simulation training and virtual therapies.

Second Life is a virtual world that was started in 2003; intended to physicalise a space of the inter. At its height, it attracted millions of people from all over the world that voluntarily immersed themselves in this second reality. Today it has altered, contrary to its founding utopian ideals, into an imprisoning mirror of society.

Over time, Second Life began to lose sight of its early ambitions of freedom and expression, rather, it became a landscape crafted by capitalist mechanisms, political ideals and class hierarchies. It comes as no surprise that today, Second Life is a digital wasteland, held together by its loyal community of early adopters, pioneers and trolls.

Standing in 2018, about 30,000 users still inhabit Second Life, however they are isolated in each of their individual territories, or segregated in their virtual chat rooms and members' clubs. It becomes clear that the future of virtual worlds is

in jeopardy. A possible way in which it might be saved is through the careful repurposing of some its very fundamental values.

What is the role of virtual worlds today? If taken seriously, it can start to give answers to questions regarding rehabilitation and treatment in prisons such as what is the fate of rehabilitation and treatment in the real prison, in an increasingly imprisoning digital future? But to answer this question, we must first ask, what is imprisonment today?

Imprisonment in the most literal sense is a 6x9 prison cell. It defines the life of the prisoner and is perhaps the single most important space of the prison. Within it, outdated television screens or old books are used to pass the time and sometimes even a video console makes an appearance, but only as an odd occurrence. And so, the prisoner awaits the long sentence ahead, continually isolated and imprisoned in a cell, all the while the 'real' world shifts in an increasing rate to a digitised future, one which they might themselves rejoin one day.

Two of three offenders who leave prison return within three years and three out of four within five years

It is clear to say that rehabilitation programmes and the prison system at large are failing. In the lack of



funding and with an inability to deal with the ever-increasing prison population, rehabilitation programmes lack the necessary support and resources in order to function at its full potential. This might have something to do with the fact that prisoners aren't treated like individuals. Partly due to the failure of such programmes as a consequence in the generalisation of offenders, partly in the total disregard for their personal characters, histories, skills and desires.

At a time of a sorely needed reinvention, can rehabilitation become a process sustained between simulations, emerging multi-sensory technologies and the physical walls of the prison itself? Can aspects of open-world video games be deployed as new platforms, in which a third space is designed in order to accommodate for the prisoners of the future? This reinvention would turn the very infrastructure of the current prison model inside out; through examining and then later subverting the model's existing mechanisms and frameworks, in can in turn accommodate the simulated rehabilitation of a criminal, 20 years from now.

The prison can be considered as the purest manifestation of architecture and control. At its very essence, the prison cell is a room stripped and removed from any sign of comfort and familiarity.

The reinvention of the prison provides an alternative model of incarceration. Incorporating rehabilitation through the application of simulated realities and its associated technologies within the confines of the prison cell, the cell is no longer the embodiment of control – a fortress – instead it transforms into an interface, or a portal that transports the prisoner to other places beyond the prison.

Filled with multi-sensory haptic technologies, the cell silently observes its users while sustaining the virtual spaces that they occupy. Omni-directional treadmills are installed to enable movement, facilitating the prison cell's expansion beyond the boundaries of its four walls. Its climate system manipulates temperature, weather and atmosphere. The cell brings together the technologies to work in tandem as a multi-sensorial machine, transforming the space to sustain and facilitate a multitude of simulated environments.

Virtual reality therapeutics is a recognised strategy for psychological rehabilitation processes that utilises fully immersive and engaging simulations; the efficacy of which can be objectively measured through empirical data that the technology simultaneously obtains while operating simulations. This data can be analysed and used to identify







cognitive behavioural patterns, which in turn could be used to determine a prisoner's psychological state. Numerous studies have found this approach to be effective in treating a number of psychological disorders, some of which include phobias, post-traumatic stress disorder, anxiety and obsessive-compulsive disorder. Further developments could give potential to the tailoring of much more precise and personalised programmes, to cater to the individual personalities of prisoners.

These same technologies are already being employed in classrooms all over world to facilitate education and learning – signalling that society is fast approaching the need of such technologies – and it could be used in prison contexts as well, as a tool to educate inmates. Indeed, some prisons are currently in the primitive phases of such possibilities, testing out virtual reality as a strategy for reintegration of ex-inmates back into society. For now, prisoners are just beginning to feel the effects of such technologies, experiencing such actions which range from the everyday tasks of visiting home or connecting with a loved one, progressing into more profound proposals such as personal, psychological healing. This is accomplished through the 'release' of a prisoner into environments designed using the language of therapy and psychology, which activates the introspection of the body and mind.

Psychologists have advocated that while most people engage in their capacity for empathy by default, most criminals by contrast do not have the natural tendency to do so, and were instead instructed and taught to do so. In a similar manner of instruction, virtual environments can be used to place criminals within situations that had previously triggered the desire to offend. As an example, virtual reality can simulate an environment filled with criminal opportunities or traumatic experiences, which could then be used to determine the environment's ability to elicit subjective craving and certain reactions that can be analysed in data such as emotional response, heart response and skin conductance. Conversely, the inmate can practise and train their responses to the situational triggers of their cravings in a safe environment, and the simulation can be paused at any given moment to allow for immediate reinforcement or feedback to the inmate's responses; facilitating processes of understanding impact of their actions, or experiencing some form of remorse for their actions.

Virtual worlds originally offered us the ability to escape and leave the boundaries of our rooms, but the very application of it, within the prison context, might actually offer the opportunity for normality, providing access to a reality closer than it has ever been allowed for prisoners. But this begs the question: what role can we play as architects in this process



of transformation, through the design of space, environments – real or digital – and through the architecture of user experience and interaction?

Despite the fact that virtual worlds like Second Life are slowly disappearing, it is its very components that can, and already do, possess the potential – that has already been partially harnessed – to continue to explore, and to improve, the harsh realities of current prison models; shifting the focus of imprisonment over time from the disciplining of the body to the rehabilitation of the soul.

Angels Alone can be watched here:
vimeo.com/297514641

DEAR EDITOR,

I was already in the process of writing something on Technical Studies when you asked me for some words on certainty and uncertainty.

Last June several external examiners asked me how Technical Studies (TS) was taught at the AA. As I do with most experienced (and intelligent) teachers – who by the way, sounded genuinely interested – I went straight to the core of what makes TS what it is at present. I gave them my favourite definition of architecture, which I think can be applied to many other aspects of creative design: ‘architecture is the materialisation of an idea’ and one should add, more specifically, ‘for human habitation and relation’. I started there because from this definition, it follows that TS should therefore be offering the students the wherewithal to materialise their ideas, concepts, dreams and even ambitions.

From this initial response came the obvious follow on questions from the curious external examiners: ‘Is TS then, a collection of axioms? A kind of compendium of technical knowledge? Is it not the passing on of well-tested experience? Surely, it is training, is it not?’ One might be tempted to say, yes, it is all of that. And yet, that is exactly what TS is not. Not in the AA, or at least, not as I see it.

On one hand, TS is an attitude towards learning – an attitude which never ends. It has an identifiable beginning, but it does not have a culmination point. Learning enables you to study more and once you finally leave school the TS attitude is a part of you. Maybe the most beautiful thing about TS, is that we are all in it, staff and students alike.

On the other hand, what is patently clear to me is that the TS learning process is very personal. Essentially personal: because it is I who studies, it is I who listens, I who reads, I who researches, I who reflects and I who ultimately learns. Once TS learning gets institutionalised it becomes rigid and driven by rules. It becomes organised. Some of this is obviously inevitable and, to some extent, perfectly tolerable,

at least if arranged in such a way that it does not interfere with the real learning. One understands that in the culture we happen to be immersed in, institutional protocol is essential when many people are attempting to navigate through any organised outfit, or who try to share an educational experience. We come to have lectures and courses and seminars and workshops and we have collective learning as well as the one-to-one learning, which is the predominant characteristic of the AA experience.

Allow me a word about the value of knowledge, because of its deep relationship to certainty. The difference between the knowledgeable person and the wise person is that the wise person knows what that knowledge is for. If you know for the sake of knowing, you will become a collector of knowledge, an insufferable pedantic know-it-all and never an architect: that kind of knowledge will thwart any creativity. This is so deeply engrained in our modern Western civilisation that for many people, retaining facts in one's memory is what education is all about. And yet, I heard a very wise teacher say that 'culture is what is left when one forgets all that one has ever been taught'. Personally, I prefer his version to Einstein's 'Education is what remains after one has forgotten everything he learned in school'. We need knowledge in order to aid our creativity. With a healthy hunger for knowing through their ultimate causes comes certainty, clarity of thought and, above all, discernment. On this sort of knowledge, one can build understanding.

Perhaps a comment on abstraction may come handy to tackle the next question. By and large, thoughts are abstract notions which we form from particular things. But universal concepts that embrace the common denominator to all cases. And so, when one reaches a conclusion, one is able to travel back from the abstract to the particular. This is what happens in TS learning all the time. In trying to understand, to know things according to their ultimate causes, one abstracts from the particular in order to research a certain entity – weighing up the results of that research in an analysis and finally reaches a conclusion, at which point one is able to descend back to the specific and apply a personal and unique design for a definite problem.

Uncertainty appears when our knowledge is superficial, when it does not reach the ultimate cause of things. Obviously this applies to all knowledge, including, and above all, self-knowledge. But I suppose, as you asked me to write about certainty and uncertainty without setting limits to the subject, I have chosen to write about it in the context of TS only. I can see you shaking your head and wagging your finger at me as if complaining because I am taking the easy way out and reducing it to TS only, but I will argue that for me, to speak about certainty and uncertainty in the context of TS, is just simply being consequent with what I am saying. I will explain.

The greatest enemy of certainty is superficiality. It is in the nature of human beings to want to know. Even before we are aware of it, we are already knowing and learning. I am so amused when I see babies looking at their own hands and moving them or grabbing their feet and even sucking their own toes. They are, so the experts tell us, getting to know themselves. The desire, or the hunger for knowledge is in our nature. But we need to foster that hunger for knowledge. If we don't, it gradually disappears: our creativity starves.

Therefore, let's return to the type of knowledge which materialises the ideas and concepts over which we base our designs and projects. How do we direct our interest – that hunger for knowledge – to something very specific? Sometimes I hear students saying that they are stuck and cannot go forward. More often than not, the reason for this is simply the lack of a direction. Knowledge is directed – through study, research and consultation, and not necessarily in this order, nor in all cases – where there is direction, there is great progress. Sometimes we have to consult in order to arrange the interdependent aspects of our study and to establish priorities. A balanced view on a subject enables us to direct our research and to see more clearly where we are going. This usually brings about clarity of thought and, of course, certainty.

How can we be certain? By allowing logic and common sense to guide our study. The most critical stage in the process of TS3 (Technical Design Project) and TS5 (Technical Design Thesis) is, in my opinion, the evaluation of the results of our research. When we look for the knowledge needed to make 'informed design decisions'. In the realm of informed design decisions, where does the application of certain knowledge come in?

Some schools of architecture divide Technical Studies into four parts: Structural Design, Environmental Studies, Materials and Construction. I think this approach which inevitably stagnates learning. It leads us to consider construction as a series of dos and don'ts. Can you imagine? Dos and don'ts in an abstract world, totally unrelated to the design and the idea we seek to materialise? 'A damp-proof course shall be like this!' Instead of being the conclusion of a study it becomes an *a priori* rule. Construction for me is the meeting of the structural, environmental and material demands, a conjunction which defines the playing field where the unfolding of the idea takes place. A well-crafted balance in the meeting of the three disciplines (structures, environment and materials) is necessary in order to bring about an economy of means. Construction is the act of materialising the idea, which implies that it is a process with a beginning, a development and an end. A process that is both intellectual and manual, as it originates in the mind but eventually evolves into reality, which requires experimentation.

Experimentation, which is so characteristic in the AA teaching process of TS throughout the five years, allows for the testing of design decisions to matter, which does not necessarily mean putting together the materials already available in the market. We start from a target we want to achieve, whether it exists or not. If it does not exist, we invent it, we test it and we improve it. In this process, there comes a crucial moment when the informed design decisions allow for the initial concept to be present at all scales and permeate all aspects of the design. One resolution follows another effortlessly and, under the same rationale, they eventually become specified in the architectural project and taken to their ultimate logical conclusions. Now you will understand my insistence on the need to make TS3 and TS5 intimately related to the unit work, to the project, or to the portfolio – call it what you will. I always say that the relevance of the Technical Design Project (TS3) and the Technical Design Thesis (TS5) is proportional to its integration into the unit project or portfolio project.

When we focus our attention in the ultimate causes, those informed design decisions we were talking about earlier flow naturally.

Uncertainty, in the lack of certainty, is often the result of a deficiency of discernment. When we observe physical phenomena and if we rush to conclusions, the decisions are very often superficial and imprecise. It has been said that the fastest way to cause confusion is to take the exception and proclaim it as the rule.

'And just as scientists do not reject intuition, artists cannot disregard the reflection to which they are led by the desire for intelligibility that moves them towards art. Contrary to the attitude of so many pseudo-artists who present themselves as celebrants in an esoteric ritual or the recipients of divine inspiration; true artists are recognisable as individuals who have accumulated a body of objective knowledge, mastering the rules of their craft. This leads to the production of works that stand out for their capacity to resist passing time and remain relevant.'¹

This statement by Carlos Martí is a gem. It encourages our need for reflection, demands the accumulation of a body of objective knowledge and stresses the importance of mastering the rules of our craft. About the first two: I think I have said enough for the time being. But with the mastering of our craft, I think I would like to prompt this in the space of an architectural school, where we run the risk of forgetting that architecture is in fact, manual work. Our designs are made, fabricated and constructed either by human beings (often, other than ourselves) or by machines.

Herein lies the importance of drawings and other means of communication. The drawing that the fabricator looks at ought to be the clear and accurate: outlines which convey the complete idea. Take my idea of sandwiches as an example: throughout my life, and I don't want to disappoint you, but, when it comes to sandwiches, I have always preferred the bit inside than the bread, and when it comes to TS submissions, I go for the inside first too. I am often impressed by how well some students present their TS3 and TS5. And this goes for fabricators too, they get won over, appreciating the care and patience taken in producing good drawings. Drawing then, I may add, embodies craft, just as the language embodies wisdom.

I think it is time to sign off but allow me one last thought which I think you will be expecting by now. Architecture should also be a reflection of our time.

'If you make architecture but you are not committed to your time, to the music of your time, the art of your time, the fashions of your time, you simply cannot speak the language of your time. And architects must be capable of speaking the language of their time, because architecture is a public art, an art for the people. Paradoxically, that is the only way to endure, only then can there be more than momentary creation.'²

Enough! This is getting too long for a letter. I look forward to seeing you next Tuesday when I visit your unit and introduce TS5 to Fifth Year students.

My very best wishes for you and your co-editors,
Javier

1 Carlos Martí Arís, *El Arte y la Ciencia: dos modos de hablar con el mundo*. Inedit Text.

El Croquis 60+84 Continuidades.
Interview by Alejandro
Zaera Polo Ed, *El croquis*,
Madrid 2000, p 22

2 Jacques Herzog, *Herzog & de Meuron, 1981-2000*

See it Say it Sort it*

*Text transcribed by Eddie Farrell from the back of a toilet door somewhere within the invisible university in October 2018. lawun.blogspot.co.uk





A person in a high-vis jacket with the word security across the back stands guarding the gangway to the ark.

The person is there due to their own insecurity. Having fallen through the disintegrating security net, they became destitute and take any work available in order to survive.

Their job as a security agent offers little in terms of their own personal security. The job entails keeping the likes of you and me away from the security and shelter of the ark.

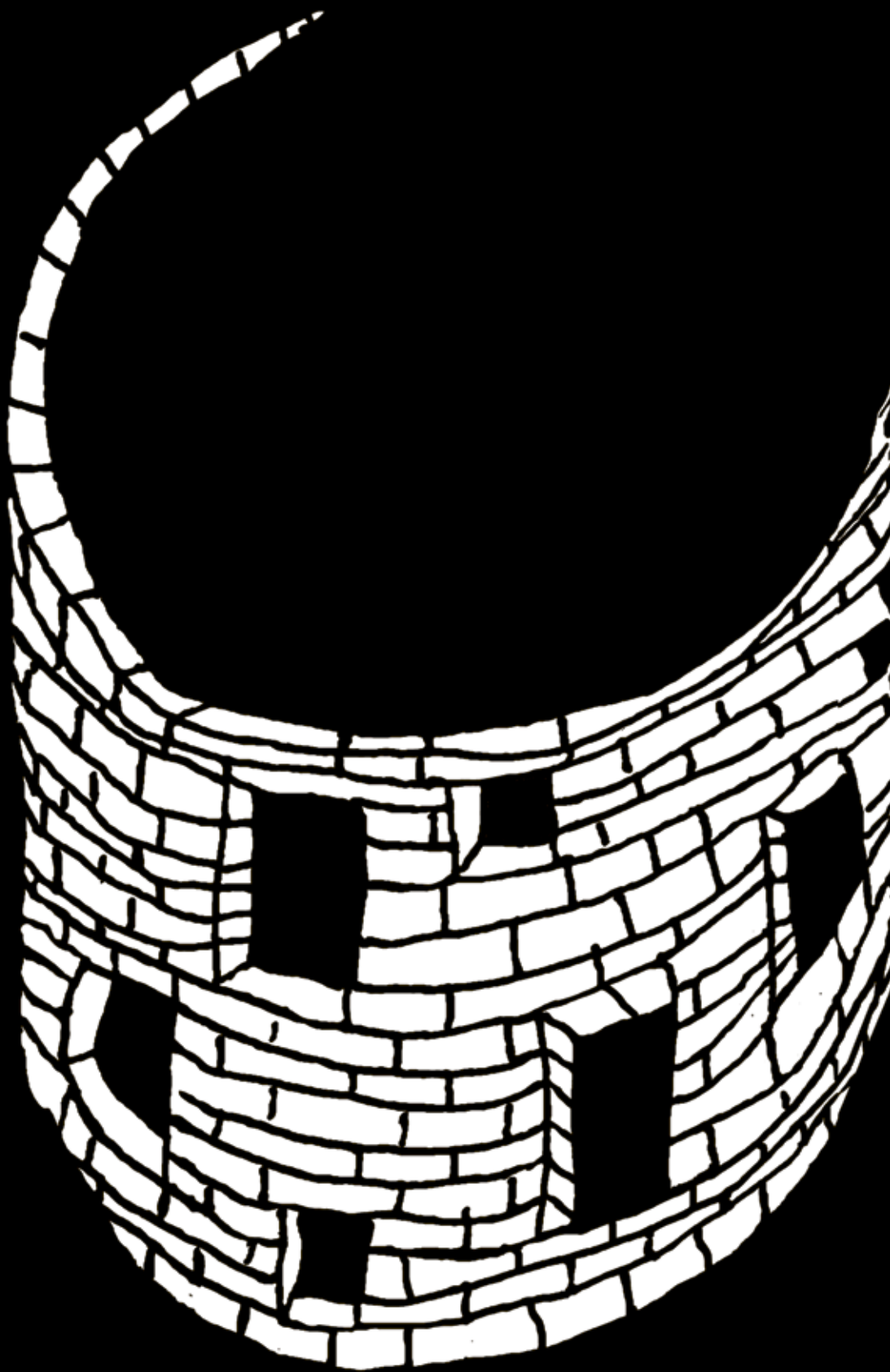
Although a considerate person, the job requires them to use force, especially at times when we got too close to the ark.

Then comes the rain:

Our panic and their violence increase as levels rise.

The gangplank is pulled up leaving the security agent, you and me outside together.

Secure in our fate.



Recognition

A hypothetical source of evidence of an existence is identified through recollection of previous encounters or knowledge.

Recognition is the conciliation of an object and its corresponding subject in the form of a memory drawn up. It relies on the degree of complexity of the subject and the object's internal organisation; on their ability to be affected in many ways at once and on their inherent dispositions towards registering variations.

As Freud noted in *Civilisation and its Discontents*, once an object is formed in the imagination of a subject, it never perishes. Instead it remains preserved in memory until it can “once more be brought back to light.” This process defines and informs recognition, requiring an association in time; a situation in the present which calls for a past reference in order to build up a particular knowledge or response.

Issue 37 aims to bring to the foreground what informs or induces moments of recognition on the level of the individual or within a particular milieu. How do different forms of acknowledgement (of existence, validity, or legality) build up into principles of reciprocal trust and liability?

We invite our community to interrogate different endeavours for recognition, delving into the stability of our affiliations to re-evaluate and redefine current and incoming grounds for civic identification.

In this issue

Calvin Po opens the issue with *Hong Kong, Best Before 01-07-2047*, ^{Page 2} a portrait of perpetual precariousness set in a city with an expiration date – Go Hasegawa proposes *House in Kawasaki*, ^{Page 6} an alternative to the celebrated wall – Emily Priest considers the order of *Opposites*, ^{Page 10} – Sahir Patel questions assumptions of impenetrability and obscurantism present within nuclear discourse in *A Fortress of Multitude*. ^{Page 13} – Eve Avdoulos examines the material effect of decay and decline within the urban landscape in her piece, *Re-reading the Ruins*. ^{Page 18} – Allison Cheng documents the Atlas Mountains in *Oasis*, ^{Page 21} pondering over mortality and comfort within the human condition – Olukoye Akinkugbe tackles social order, freedom of movement and sovereignty, in his essay *Freedom and (Im)mobility*. ^{Page 30} – Sebastian Tiew envisions a reinvention of conventional incarceration models and rehabilitation programmes in *Angels Alone*. ^{Page 35} – Javier Castañón writes a letter addressed to students at the AA, containing a few of his formulations on certainty and uncertainty within the architecture project ^{Page 42} – LAWuN leaves us: ‘Secure in our fate’ with *See it Say it Sort it* ^{Page 46} – And Patricia de Souza Leão Müller concludes it.

