

Framing Indeterminacy

Part 1_Framing

A. Introduction of indeterminacy

Architecture is an ever-developing body of knowledge concerned with space: how the inhabitants dwell and occupy, establishing meaningful places and giving form to the world around us. How the architects build is informed by how they understand the world, and how inhabitants understand the world is framed by what they have built there.¹ There is a constant shift in the role of architects and inhabitants who both have intimate contacts with the built environment.

Architects' creativities and imaginations are confined within the given role and limited with operabilities. Given the roles of designers, architects keep outputting active forms for specific functions under the established rules. Programs, dimensions, functions and circulations are introduced into the design, not necessary for the needs of inhabitants, but the demands for well-functioned and convenient purposes. Similarly, taking the writers as an example, the readers' understandings of the articles are articulated by how the texts are organised. The languages signify a creation that proclaims and imposes its meaning onto the readers. The narrative of the novels, verbs formulate a well-defined, substantial act, closed effects. They become the rules and justifications that writers constructed with a serene reality to the society. The reality becomes slighter and more familiar, it fits within a style, it does not outrun language. Literature remains the currency in use in a society, apprised by the very form of words, of the meaning of what it consumes.²

Architects play the role of the 'creator' and create so-called orders such as the production lines and particular working modes to fulfil their desires of productivity. Meanwhile, they are like those politicians or educators who assume that people are numb and servile.³ Architecture designers have been continuously guided by how they as architects can manipulate the space. They try to read the cities and architectural space as a collective context. They tend to rationalise the thoughts through the understanding of totality. They calculate the space to be workable with the standard dimension of wall thicknesses, ceiling heights or circulation routes. They seem to be accustomed to these approaches. They sometimes expect the future inhabitants to use the space as their speculations or sometimes do not care at all. They as architects are dictators of the space. No matter what techniques or concepts are adopted, architecture that started from the first sketch until it was finally put into use is inevitably determined. Architects are unable to do anything else in introducing violent

transformations once they are assigned to a vacant space. They contaminant the territories into a fully functional space of productivities.⁴

While the other group which takes the majority of the population in the world are the inhabitants, in contrast to the role of architects, the inhabitants normally are the passive receivers of the world speculated by those politicians, educators, and architects, etc. The inhabitants perceptions and sensations are constrained within the frameworks set up by the architects. Their understandings of determinacy in space are always structured under the existing systems. Even though, there remains a certain extent of indeterminacy in these spaces which is hardly controllable by the 'dictators.' That is also the reason why 'form follows function' rather than the other way around. Spaces are continuously shaped by us, and in turn, their perceptions are further shaped by the spaces. However, the meanings 'functions' are essentially not the same thing as opposing to the principle of modernist architects on 'form follows function.' It purposes itself as an efficient and productive architecture for defined functions. Instead, the functions are not given by the designers or contractors but constantly shifting by the indeterminate interpretation of its inhabitants. The inhabitants never sense the spaces or cities around them from the panoptic view. They construct their understanding of the environments by composing fragmented pieces that they encountered by chance. In *Questions of Perception*, Steven Holl illustrates our perceptions on the nature of the cities and architectures, 'A city is never seen as a totality, but as an aggregate of experiences, animated by use, by overlapping perspectives, changing light, sounds, and smells. Similarly, a single work of architecture is rarely experienced in its totality (except in graphic or model form) but as a series of partial views and synthesized experiences.'⁵

Space never functions in a determined template by the architects' constructions. It is full of indeterminacy with unexpected incidences which offers possibilities to go beyond the constraint forces of desiners' constructions.⁶ It is time-based and composed of a series of events, and it is never predictable. Gage critiqued that 'Once we consider architecture to be time-based and enmeshed with the way that people perceive and use it, we find ourselves short of reliable conceptual tools that can be used to understand our craft.'⁷ The call for 'timeless' architecture is a vain one when designers propose a temporarily functional architecture or only for a limited period. Instead, 'for growth and change continuously occur, and to engage with them, architecture must be a social product, involving complicity with the inhabitants and feedback from use into building.'⁸ There is a necessity in reflecting upon the contradictory relation between the architects and the inhabitants. Architects should start questioning the meanings lying between the generating ideas, forms as architects and the nature and quality of perception as inhabitants.'⁹

Even if buildings have significantly been distanced from social life through technical and bureaucratic processes, architecture still reflects society. The fast rate of social and technological change and an increasingly autonomous building process led in the same period to a widespread belief in loose-fit

between buildings and their contents, and a romantic desire for open-ended flexibility.¹⁰ Therefore, looking back to the conflicting role between architects and inhabitants. Architects should now rethink the 'indeterminacy' of architecture, in which it questions the determination in the architecture design process, and the flexibility or uncertainty demanded in using process.

In the Cambridge Dictionary, the term of indeterminacy is defined as the conditions or qualities of not being determined or established.¹¹ Not given with comprehensive explanations, but terms that share similar concepts like 'uncertainty, blurred, unclear, vague' etc. are suggested as the definitions of indeterminacy. The way how indeterminacy was explained in the dictionary points out the unclearly definable property and potentiality of relating to other similar terms. Any attempt intends to define what indeterminacy is, is a departure of the idea itself. Therefore, this essay tries to present the understanding of indeterminacy by elaborating with other assistant terms which have something in common and exploring its nature of being indeterminate.

The explorations in indeterminacy have been continuously developed in multiple territories. The 'uncertainty principle' formulated by quantum-mechanics physicist Werner Heisenberg in 1927, which had stated the impossibility of determining both the position and the velocity of atomic particles simultaneously. The emergence of quantum physics states the indeterminate essence of substances. It is always unknown whether the cat in the toxic box is dead or alive until the cat is seen by the observer. Indeterminacy can, therefore, be read as the degree of uncertainty, which in everyday experience, thought to be negligible, nonetheless, at the sub-atomic level, the principle opened up the possibility of systemic ambiguity, of a world based on probability rather than certainty.¹² While in the realm of art, the traditional forms of large collective performance which had been deeply rooted in every performers' and audience' notions were also questioned by indeterminacy. The experiment in music composition and performance by John Cage questions definite meanings that the composer imposes to the audiences. His music shows the ability to dissolve the control of composer and invites different interpretation by the audiences. Similarly, interactive theatre performance like 'Sleep No More' deviates from the traditional form of performance under strict scripts. It is regarded as a performance as an indeterminate process which allows the audience as a part of the performance with only limited scenarios as setting up. It breaks the wall between the precise definition of performer and audience and brings occurrences into the performance. The chance operation that not limited in the hand of controllers but being intentionally left open to the participants is another display of the quality of indeterminacy in this case. Not limited to science, music, performances, the theme of indeterminacy was also first adopted as the main topic of architecture design in the Fun Palace projects. It is a complex project of various moveable entertainment facilities, which enables self-participatory and education. The indeterminacy is a process of endless discoveries and inbuilt flexibilities.¹³ The highly technological and flexible programs state its indeterminacy to the known world.

Allowing indeterminacy into the design process provides possibilities for the self-determination of the occupants and enables a less mediated and more direct relationships with the different qualities.¹⁴ Also, the spaces no longer require complete understandings any more, but as fragments that can be interpreted by different perceptions of individuals. They can compose their own stories within an indeterminate architecture. In elaborating with Barthes understandings towards the indeterminacy, this term can be recognized as a media in reducing the hierarchy in the realm of facts. In indeterminacy, it does not try to presuppose a world which is constructed, elaborated, self-sufficient, but stretches the linear understandings of the temporality and causality into a thick, dense, spread unknowns which can never be captured within a certain moment of time.¹⁵ It is the indeterminacy to the unexpected world.

B. Framing architecture indeterminacy

'Experience showed, however, that the future is always unpredictable, and flexibility could only be achieved within set limits. Buildings in practice never seemed to prove flexible enough to resist the need for change. The desired neutrality which went hand in hand with flexibility also proved elusive, for 'neutral' architectures have also turned out in retrospect to belong inevitably to their time, sometimes becoming overbearing in their aloof presence precisely because their order is an abstract and independent one.'¹⁶

Since there is no straightforward definition on indeterminacy and impracticality of a flexible enough structure for changes, how could architects 'design' an indeterminate architecture? Moreover, how should architects understand indeterminacy in order to break the totality and temporality that framed inhabitants' perceptions and creation in the architectural spaces?

"We should, then, understand this 'indeterminacy' as a certain state of suspension of the precise meaning of the object, resulting from the re-questioning of the limits in which this is inscribed."¹⁷ In the exploration of the architecture of indeterminacy, architects should not take the outcomes as the design purpose. It should not be limited to the total image which tries to construct the urban environment and architecture qualitatively and quantitatively in order to make them functional. However, in creating an architecture of indeterminate, architects shift their perspectives to the process of questioning, hypothesizing and experimenting of the given meanings and contaminating them for indeterminate understandings.

It is the same as what would happen upon the inhabitants at a precarious terrain vague (or any places), in which 'an inexhaustible fertility for new tactics of struggle, stimulating a series of illegal activities, misalignments, strategies of appropriation and use beyond the functionalist predicament of urban planning'¹⁸ could always happen. Designers will engage themselves in thinking multiple viewpoints about the indeterminacy of place, and new possibilities for creating interfaces that allow

for a form of participation that turns spaces into places, and makes architects inhabitants, make inhabitants architects.

In other words, the conflicting role that one as positive output and the other as a passive receiver between performers and audience, architects and inhabitants or even writers and readers can thus be dissolved, because they are fundamentally the same group in indeterminacy. By hybridizing, juxtaposing, blurring, mirroring, contradicting, fragmenting, collaging, etc., the determinate forces, rules, and narrative linearity can thus be deconstructed into vague meanings which lead to an indeterminate understanding of spaces. Then, designers and inhabitants are both flâneurs in the process of explorations without expecting anything that is familiar to happen. Everything that was encountered in the past now become the bases for the new understandings, but it goes beyond its pre-defined limits.

The process of reconstructing existing into unexpectancies is more like dreaming. A dream as a mind activity usually happens involuntarily during the certain stages of sleep. It is constructed with a succession of images, ideas, emotions or sensations.¹⁹ Fragments that appear to be irrelevant among each other are recomposed into new scenarios. Those moments that introduce purposes of each action of daily lives by rational thoughts become fleeting clips of the abstractions. What these clips are referring to certain purposiveness instants in everyday life become less important anymore, but the process of reconstructing fragmented images fragments formulate different meanings. Thus, they go beyond any fragments themselves can tell, even if these abstractions make no sense at all. In this case, indeterminacy shares not much difference to the work of collage, in which 'A collage as a work of art consists of the assembly of various fragments of materials, combined in such a way that the composition has a new meaning, not inherent in any of the individual fragments.'²⁰ A natural ground which possesses complex, fragmented, and at times, contradictory meanings sometimes appear as leftover spaces that are difficult to categorize - from vacant lots and disused rail lines to urban wilds and a motley of interstitial public spaces. Solà-Morales described this seemingly paradoxical combinations of vacancy with freedom, of absence with possibility, and of limitlessness with mobility—central to comprehending the full range of the interstitial urban areas, ever in flux, neither clearly urban nor rural and always on the verge of disappearing as *Terrain vagues*.²¹ *Terrains vagues* provide potential outlets for unexpected or spontaneous encounters, informal events, and alternative activities outside the increasingly commodified, controlled, and privatized "open" urban spaces. They are always in flux, often in temporary suspension between former and future speculative developments. Indeterminacy in *terrains vagues* are inviting to a range of people to make creative, unintended, and unplanned use of them—becoming "animated 'indeterminate spaces'" or "free-zones".²²

However, neither a dream nor a vacant terrain of indeterminacy can be achieved with a world full of unknown. It is important to distinguish between the notion of indeterminacy (a certain state of

suspension of the precise meaning of the object, resulting from the re-questioning of the limits in which this is inscribed) to the notion of unknown. Price made a clear statement on the unknown things is completely different from indeterminacy.²³ Unknown refers to certain facts which are not known yet, but they still exist as the essences of themselves without any extra understandings beyond its limits. Indeterminacy can only be achieved within a set of limits. Although a dream of indeterminacy is constructed freely with nonlinear narratives compare to inhabitants' routine lives, it is still under the frameworks of what are seen, experienced and felt in real life. Similar, terrain vagues are only forms of marginality that are not always welcoming, certain forms of innovative conceptual and design participation.²⁴ They do not escape from the world which is familiar to us. Although the architecture of indeterminacy is full of unexpectancies, flexibilities, or contradictories, it is still structured as the ordinary understandings of spaces. The Seattle Central Library project by OMA achieved a flexible ambiguity not purely by indeterminate definition of spaces, but by setting up five stable programmatic clusters with four unstable clusters. It allows the indeterminacy to grow within the frameworks.²⁵

C. Hypothesis

The upper part as a discussion on a very paradoxical theme 'Framing Indeterminacy' can now be summarized. Architecture indeterminacy bridge the gap between the designer and inhabitants. It enables the challenging of perception of dwellers' lives and makes designer and inhabitants all the same, which is why I use 'we' in the essay referring to both architects and inhabitants. Not attempting to define the term, but the essay tries to understand indeterminacy by introducing a series of terms such as fragmentation, chance operation and flexibility which show similarities to the topic. The linear logic of the essay is supposed to be a framework for understanding indeterminacy, since there is no pure indeterminacy without a framework, or otherwise it means nothing.

It might still be confusing on what is indeterminacy and how could it work eventually. How could the dream of reconstructing can be realized in architecture? The reason is that indeterminacy cannot be really defined or described clearly through linear and logic thoughts above. Not only as an architect, but also as a writer, the very idea of indeterminacy poses its objection towards a defined meaning. The 'Framing Indeterminacy' can only be a frame in making it sensible.

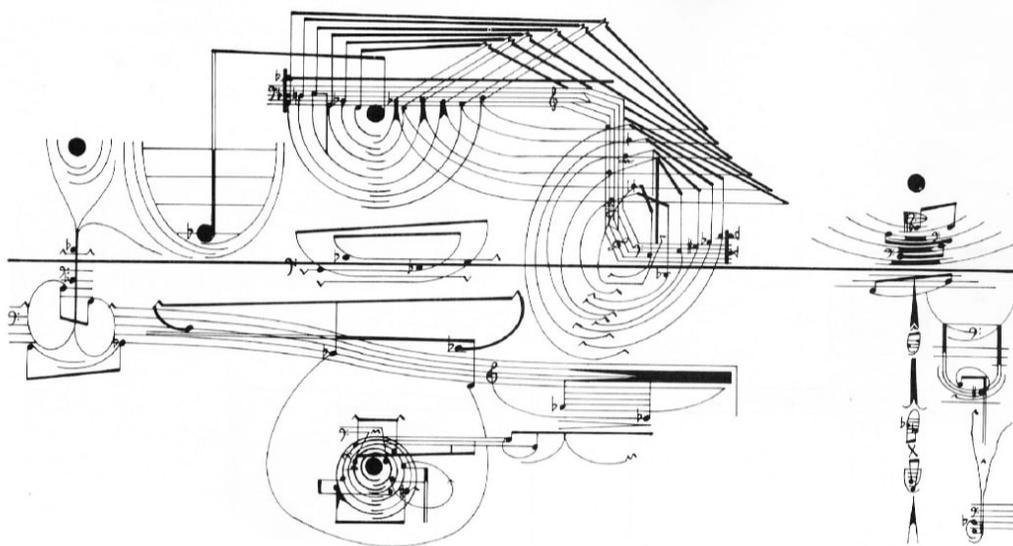
However, indeterminacy can be only understood by the inhabitants and reader themselves. I as the composer of the essay and the term of indeterminacy is the same as you as a reader. We are both keeping questioning the indeterminate nature of the essay and architecture of indeterminacy. To realize indeterminacy here comes to the second part which tries to reconstruct the ideas of the systems of languages. No matter what structures or styles being employed by the author, the texts cannot get rid of its primary function of reading. The compositions of the sentence, paragraph automatically invites the reading of the texts themselves. Each word only presents its existence as its

given meanings, but nothing more. Related to the understandings of indeterminacy, I started to question if there is a way to break the frame of the text structures and not limited to its basic uses as readings. Or if it is possible to structure the sentences in a way which seems to be unstructured, the understanding of texts need to be composed by its readers?

Part 2_Elaboration of Indeterminacy

By hybridizing, juxtaposing, blurring, mirroring, contradicting, fragmenting, collaging, etc., I tried to elaborate the reference texts (from the notes at the end of the essay) on indeterminacy with the famous piece. 'Treatise' by a British music composer- Cornelius Cardew. Written between 1963 and 1967, the composition is made up of a graphic musical score of 193 pages in a visual language invented by the author and completely distant from conventional music notation. Cardew never gave instructions on how to play "Treatise" and left its symbols, abstract forms, numbers and shapes open to free interpretation by the performers. Recurring graphic elements suggest the presence of a structure, but each interpretation of the piece is unique as the performer has to set his own rules when confronted with the notation. The graphic richness of the score and its resemblance to abstract composition allow the piece to exist also as a purely visual work.²⁶

Already being an attempt of departing from the existing forms of musical notations, the assemblage of the 'Treatise' and the texts on Indeterminacy suspended from their existing meanings. The reading of the texts does not rely on any preconceived skills, but by thinking and questioning of their existence, the reader can thus compose their own understandings of the work.



Original file is attached in the email

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Notes for part 2 (no need to read)

Not much difference to the work of collage, 'A collage as a work of art consists of the assembly of various fragments of materials, combined in such a way that the composition has a new meaning, not inherent in any of the individual fragments.' (Shields, 2014 p2)

The skin of the earth consists of layers with various properties: constant flux, unpredictable behavior, inexhaustible diversity, and incessant rise of new features. (Bunschoten et al., 2001 p17)

An extraordinary paradox evolves: to live within the substance of this wrapper, this metropolitan global skin, is to live permanently on one's horizons with their incessant shiftings, and yet remain tied with one's senses to the conditions of ground and space...the effect is a fluid urbanity hard to express through static models or identities. Increasingly, the city's only definable form, its only clear identity can be found in the manner in which its changes evolve.(Bunschoten et al., 2001 p21)

these media enable an archaeological density and a non-linear narrative through the juxtaposition of fragmented images deriving from irreconcilable origins.(Shields, 2014 p1)

A city has emotions, has behavior akin to collectives of human beings. This behavior is the form of the contemporary city, a form embedded in the organizational structures of its dynamics. Group dynamics can be diagrammatized in an exercise, game, shifted across to the city.(Bunschoten et al., 2001 p35)

Price intended the Inter-Action Centre to be part theatre, part commune, part school, and part creative-play place. Although the building included a non-traditional theatre with no distinct stage or audience space, the bulk of the enclosure was given over to unstructured spaces for various educational and creative community-based activities.(Mathews, 2007 p187)

While these contemporary discourses on indeterminacy and chance in art fired Price's imagination, as an architect his concern was in finding a practical means of integrating improvisation into architecture...he drives new architectural principles from the emergent fields of information technology, cybernetics, and game theory, which are, in essence, a means of modeling and systematizing chance and indeterminacy.(Mathews, 2007 p243)

"It wasn't about technology. It was about people."(Price, 2000)

There is vast range of human delight and understanding that at present is left to chance sensory encounters. The passing of time, the speed of seasons, the changes of weather, the growth of intelligence and the aging of the body are usually compensated for by architecture, rather than used as constituent parts of a menu for extending the value and usefulness of human life.(Price et al., 2002 p12)

His (Price) chief aim is to provoke and challenge by means of injecting systematized ideas that break clean away from existing notions. His method does not necessarily require utopian or monumental constructs, but rather proposes lightweight recombinations of disposal components.(Price et al., 2002 p26)

The design process means every designer has to find a balance, every time, between prescribing-defining-and letting go. What is probably new is the instability of the entire social, political, cultural and economical context in which spatial design projects come to be.(Francesco, 2014 p3)

Particularly with the contemporary conditions of rapid change and economic uncertainty, under which the future of an architectural or urban development project is uncertain, designers are forced to search for approaches in which the factor of time can play a role in the design.(Francesco, 2014 p8)

Vacant lots, city outskirts, abandoned buildings, undefined spaces may exert an extraordinarily positive influence on the imagination, but by the same token they are a denialism of all the opportunities offered by a well-functional urban environment. Fixed frameworks and a broad range of use options are antithetical, but they are also interdependent. Between indeterminacy and over-indeterminacy there is a broad spectrum of spatial registers in which to play the game of giving and taking space.(Francesco, 2014 p17 - 18)

The uncertainty regarding the rise in sea level requires flexible strategies for interventions that reflect the movement of the water and that can be adjusted over time.(Francesco, 2014 p36)

When architecture provides the space for an activity to occur, it tends to become prescriptive; practical architectural components become legible so that their presence can turn a provision into an instruction. One way to

address this is to provide neutrality, which denies any predetermined behaviors. We are more interested in provocations that may at first appear to make sense, but upon further exploration, require the viewer or inhabitants to make sense of the architecture and all that gathers.(Chard & Kulper, 2014 p7)

Drawings are world-building rotes of wonder-visual curiosity cabinets materializing thought to imagine what is possible. (Chard & Kulper, 2014 p20)

The ‘uncertainty principle’ formulated by quantum-mechanics physicist Werner Heisenberg in 1927, which had stated the impossibility of determining simultaneously both the position and the velocity of atomic particles. The degree of uncertainty was, in everyday experience, thought to be negligible, nonetheless at sub-atomic level the principle opened up the possibility of systemic ambiguity, of a world based on probability rather than certainty.(Hughes & Sadler, 2000 p97)

Even if buildings have been greatly distanced from social life by technical and bureaucratic processes, architecture still reflects society. The fast rate of social and technological change and an increasingly autonomous building process led in the same period to a widespread belief in loose-fit between buildings and their contents, and a romantic desire for open-ended flexibility.(Peter, 2007 p7)

Mapping as a tool to speak about the indeterminate relationship between humans and space, but also as a means to operate with this indeterminacy.(Doina, 2007 p88)

Describing leftover spaces that are difficult to categorize—from vacant lots and disused rail lines to urban wilds and a motley of interstitial public spaces—terrain vague possesses complex, fragmented, and at times, contradictory meanings. Terrain vague’s seemingly paradoxical combinations of vacancy with freedom, of absence with possibility, and of limitlessness with mobility—central to comprehending the full range of our interstitial urban areas, ever in flux, neither clearly urban nor rural, and always on the verge of disappearing.(Mariani & Barron, 2014)

spaces of confrontation and contamination between the organic and the inorganic, between nature and artifice” that “constitute the built city’s negative, the interstitial and the marginal, spaces abandoned or in the process of transformation.

Often terminally temporal, terrains vague can be seen as shifting assemblages of contradictory nuances, especially in terms of particular sites’ layered, frequently violent histories of displacement.

Terrains vagues provide potential outlets for unexpected or spontaneous encounters, informal events, and alternative activities outside our increasingly commodified, controlled, and privatized “open” urban spaces.

Terrains vagues are inviting to a range of people to make creative, unintended, and unplanned use of them—becoming “animated ‘indeterminate spaces’” or “free-zones”.

Terrains vagues are always in flux, often in temporary suspension between former and future speculative developments, and are host to forms of marginality that are not always welcoming, certain forms of innovative conceptual and design participation, in addition to restoration and reclamation, beg our attention.

In this situation, the role of the architect is inevitably problematic. Architecture’s destiny has always been colonization, the imposing of limits, order, and form, the introduction into strange space of the elements of identity

necessary to make it recognizable, identical, universal. In essence, architecture acts as an instrument of organization, of rationalization, and of productive efficiency capable of transforming the uncivilized into the cultivated, the fallow into the productive, the void into the built.

architecture of dualism, of the difference of discontinuity installed within the continuity of time, can stand up against the anguished aggression of technological reason, telematic universalism, cybernetic totalitarianism, and egalitarian and homogenizing terror.(Mariani & Barron, 2014)

Architecture is an ever-developing body of knowledge concerned with space: how we dwell and occupy, establishing meaningful places and giving form to the world around us. How we build is informed by how we understand the world, and how we understand the world is framed by what we have built there.(Lucas, 2016 8)

In the face of both aesthetic diversification and a porous dispersal of information precipitated by technology such as the internet, it is no longer possible to consider language as a centralized body. As language increasingly gives way to code, it is our responsibility to question and rediscover language's significances and dimensions. What are the origins of language and writing within the framework of a body? Does information possess a body, or does it manifest within vessels? Let's consider the notion that writing relates to the body in such a way as writing itself constitutes a body.(Barthes, 1968)

Thus under the name of style a self-sufficient language is evolved which has its roots only in the depths of the author's personal and secret mythology, that sub-nature of expression where the first coition of words and things takes place, where once and for all the great verbal themes of his existence come to be installed.(Barthes, 1968 p10)

...the preterite, which is the cornerstone of Narration, always signifies the presence of Art... Its function is no longer that of a tense. The part it plays is to reduce reality to a point of time, and to abstract, from the depth of a multiplicity of experiences, a pure verbal act, freed from the existential roots of knowledge, and directed towards a logical link with other acts, other processes, a general movement of the world : it aims at maintaining a hierarchy in the realm of facts. ... Allowing as it does an ambiguity between temporality and causality, it calls for a sequence of event, that is, for an intelligible Narrative. This is why it is the ideal instrument for every construction of a world; it is the unreal time of cosmogonies, myths, History, and Novels. It pre- supposes a world which is constructed, elaborated, self-sufficient, reduced to significant lines, and not one which has been sent sprawling before us, for us to take or leave... The world is not un-explained since it is told like a story; each one of its accidents is but a circumstance, and the preterite is precisely this operative sign whereby the narrator re-duces the exploded reality to a slim and pure logos, without density, without volume, without spread.(Barthes, 1968 p30)

The narrative past is therefore a part of a security system for Belles-Lettres. Being the image of an order, it is one of those numerous formal pacts made between the writer and society for the justification of the former and the serenity of the latter. The preterite signifies a creation : that is, it proclaims and imposes it. Even from the depth of the most sombre realism, it has a reassuring effect because, thanks to it, the verb expresses a closed, well-defined, sub-stantival act, the Novel has a name, it escapes the terror of an expression without laws : reality be- comes slighter and more familiar, it fit within a style, it does not outrun language. Literature remains the currency in use in a society apprised, by the very form of words, of the meaning of what it consumes.(Barthes, 1968 p32)

On the contrary, when the Narrative is rejected in favor of other literary genres, or when, within the narration, the preterite is replaced by less ornamental forms, fresher, more full-blooded and nearer to speech (the present tense or the present perfect), Literature becomes the receptacle of existence in all its density and no longer of its meaning alone. The acts it recounts are still separated from History, but no longer from people.(Barthes, 1968 p32)

Poetry is a quality sui generis and without antecedents. It is no longer an attribute but a substance, and therefore it can very well renounce signs since it carries its own nature within itself, and does not need to signal its identity outwardly: poetic language and prosaic language are sufficiently separate to be able to dispense with the very signs of their difference.(Barthes, 1968 p43)

The Word, here, is encyclopedic, it contains simultaneously all the acceptations from which a relational discourse might have required it to choose. It therefore achieves a state which is possible only in the dictionary or in poetry - places where the noun can live without its article - and is reduced to a sort of zero degree, pregnant with all past and future specifications. The word here has a generic form; it is a category. Each poetic word is thus an unexpected object, a Pandora's box from which fly out all the potentialities of language; it is therefore produced and consumed with a peculiar curiosity, a kind of sacred relish.(Barthes, 1968 p48)

With any difficult text, the reader, in order to understand what the philosopher or critic is arguing for, must grasp what or whom he is tacitly arguing against.(Barthes, 1968)

A critical concept in Heidegger's writing is that of the bridge: a thing, not an object experienced and used rather than observed. Like a building, the bridge alters the relationships between individuals and their environment; it changes patterns of everyday life. Dwelling informs building and vice versa. 'A place comes into existence only by virtue of the bridge.'(Heidegger, n.d.)

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