1. INTRODUCTION
2. SITUATION / PREMISE / CONCEPT
3. PROGRAM
4. PROPOSAL
5. THESIS
6. CONCLUSION / REFLECTION
In the research studio of the DSD Architectural Thinking course a special approach towards design is developed. The focus is on a theoretical approach to arrive at new and radical architecture. The challenge in this kind of set up is to arrive at a particular and developed design from a very far and distant abstraction. An idea often not directly related to architecture but more a phenomenon or conceptual apparatus. In this case, the subjects of the sublime and the heterotopic, both related to but not exclusive to architecture, are researched, explored and developed into a building that is at the same time a proposal for future development on an urban scale. The research has to show itself through the different stages of the design process and the goals have to be met. The very wide spectrum of available possibilities is therefore distilled to very specific characteristics, which are brought through in the design. Every decision up to detail level of 1:5 is fed by these parameters.

The research conducted has the main foundation in the writings of Kant, Burke and Foucault. Kant who took up the concept of the Sublime from Burke and Foucault for the expanding of this experience to a sense of place in the heterotopia. This research is conducted in the first half of the graduation program and resulted in the master thesis under guidance of Andrej Radman, dr.ir. This research formed the basis for an architectural exploration and intervention in the city of Hong Kong.

This second part of the graduation program results in a design for a university, which is located in causeway bay and explores the notions of morphology, city, sublime en heterotopia. It questions the city as a given and proposes a new way of what it could develop into. I like to thank my advisors who supported and guided me through this process. dr. ir. Gregory Bracken, dr. ir. Gerhard Bruyns, Ir. Ype Cuperus and dr. Tahl Kaminer.

Special mention has to be made towards the nature of the design. From a very early beginning it was clear that the building, however fictional 99,9% of all the work done at TUDelft, was never going to be constructed.
The initial idea resulted from the global situation of Hong Kong. We can speak, after looking at various statistics, that the world can be divided into two halves. One part can be determined as a regressive model while the other part is the developmental model. We see this model arising from the different statistical data, my claim is that Hong Kong occupies this unique position in the world where both of these models are overlapping. Thus the city of Hong Kong can profit from the place of potential exchange between the two. The whole city in itself creates a synergy on a global scale.

Taking the theoretical notions of the heterotopia towards the morphological scale of the city. Different urban ‘island zones’ are defined based on experience and morphological scale / character. Combining these two aspects leads to distinctive urban islands. The design breaks these islands open and bleeds into each other, forming a new overlapping zone and thus creating a new heterotopic experience inside of the city.

Considering the Pearl River Delta has a region of the global scale, it is zone that is quickly redeveloping itself into a highly urbanized and economic area within the previous discussed overlapping region. The question is then what Hong Kong can become this zone is completely functioning and the special separation status of Hong Kong compared to the mainland of China is equalized. The hypothetical approach is that with this increasing level of urbanization many of the population of mainland China is migrating to the coastal region, a movement seen in all developmental fases of economic prosperity in countries. Assumed as thereafter that the second generation of these migrated workers want a good education and will seek out a place which has this to offer. Still profiting from the exclusivity of the overlap in this time Hong Kong is in a unique position to redevelop itself into this knowledge city / center.

Accordingly, the development of Hong Kong as a city is mapped out in relation to where current universities are housed. Two conclusions appear, the first that campuses appear outside of the urban areas, thus requiring a lot of travel. Later on in the development, the campus is eaten up by the expansion of the city. The second is that already a high diversity exists of universities. Indicating that the demand for these type of facilities is already high, possibly because they are already profiting from the unique advantages the Hong Kong has to offer.

The final question that is asked is that of the possible new landscape of the future. Taking an analogy with an already heterotopic building, the unie by Le Corbusier, an arguably very sublime example of the metaphorical ship that has landed onto the ground of the earth, barely touching it with its pilotis. The building forms an enclave into the existing natural landscape. One has to travel towards it and go up in order to enter. The figure is driven towards the know phenomenon of the monastery, an on purpose closed and cut of building from the world. The usual layout of such a structure is, like La Tourette, an enclosed square. The wild world with all its untamed and uncultivated nature is outside of these walls while enclosed within the world of creation, of order, in short the taming of this wildness. What if the natural found landscape is the city? Can the same concept be applied to it and a specialized / favored zone developed on the level of morphology?

The design intends to explore this question with the help of the theoretical background done in the research part of the graduation track. The concept of the sublime is incorporated from the beginning of the design to provide a mental frame for the size of the structure to be designed and to reinforce the heterotopic aspects of the design. In turn, the sublime is reinforced by the heterotopia. This is because both concepts operate in the same spectrum but are applicable to different aspects. Heterotopia is applied to space, a special separation, a mirror back onto the real world by means of a difference. Sublime is working on the level of experience, the impression of overwhelming anxiety or fear in combination with beauty drives the concept.
In order to design a whole university first a study of precedents was required. One has to only look at his own university to be able to distill the different type of functions required. However, the first problem arises quickly out of this study, the faculty of architecture has different facilities which are specific to the needs of the faculty. To design a complete university with eight different faculties there has to be an account of the specific wishes of all the faculties. The second problem is the amount of support and personnel facilities a university requires. These are the aspects that remain invisible for most of the students. In order to get a good indication of these needs a study was conducted to existing universities, and competition briefs of comparable nature. Many of the common facilities are averaged out and taken together as a percentage figure. In this manner the size of the university as a whole is scalable to the desired need.

What is taken into account is the fact that all the different faculties are located in the same structure, thus they are able to profit from each other's facilities. In the manner different common administration or cantina functions are placed in such a manner that they serve more than one individual faculty. The same is done for the auditoria's. The occupation rate of these facilities is never one hundred percent, to increase the efficiencies of the facilities they are located in such a manner that occupation rate will near the ninety percent.

The other part of the programmatic study contains the relation of the university towards the city where it is located. In order to catalogue existing principles of organization and different synergies, the study conducted by Cristiaanse, the University and City was used. Here different universities across the globe are indexed with the amount of personnel and students, the money they receive, the surface in square meters the occupy, as well as statistics of companies working with the university and how much money is involved in their budget. All these different aspects are compared and divided into specific types of universities. This data was compared to the size of the city of Hong Kong and towards the most prominent types of universities that represent one of these categories. According to these two studies a proposal was made for a size and programmatic division.

To relate this part back to the theoretical study the concept of place, heterotopia, was again used. The functions of different faculties are related to their most comparable existing area in Hong Kong itself. So for example, the faculty of agricultural studies is related to Lantau. The morphology of this area is studied and accordingly abstracted to the different sizes and spacing of blocks that are used in the creation of the interior of the square. Likewise all faculties have their own comparable region in Hong Kong and thus create a difference in the morphology of the interiority of the design. The reference morphology is effectively used as a synecdoche for the city thus making the university a mirror city of the city.

The placement of the faculties is first according to direct relation of the environment of the design. To take again the example of the agricultural faculty, this is located directly above the Victoria park. Not all faculties have such a clear and direct relation to the direct environment however. The faculties are placed in a sequential order along the line of the design, every part thus belongs to itself. Only the borders of the different faculties are blurred into each other so that there is no direct separating line.

The common facilities and the services are primarily located at the corners of the square and serve as the main entrances. More service cores are added in between to provide for adequate circulation possibilities. Clustered around these cores are the most commonly used facilities that are shared with the city. These are, amongst others, the university library or the cafeteria / cantina.

Finally the percentile space that is allocated to each part of the university's faculties is mapped out in functional zones and divided according to nearest surroundings such as adjacent buildings or internal logistics. These zones are then divided into smaller individual blocks which size, shape and position relative from each other is based on the abstracted morphology study conducted. Thus creating
an spatially interesting labyrinthine second city inside of the square.
**HARVARD (US)**

- Employees: 14,866
- Students: 20,042
- Faculties: 10
- Companies: ≈ 15/20 startups.
- Floor space: 1,248,000 sqm

**FREE UNIVERSITY BERLIN (DE)**

- Employees: 4,340
- Students: 34,000
- Faculties: 14
- Companies: 30
- Floor space: 480,000 sqm
TU DELFT (NL)

Employees: 4,430
Students: 13,711
Faculties: 8
Companies: 50
Floor space: 600,000 sqm

Greenfield Type
## Proposal Percentage

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Facility Type</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Public / Common facilities</td>
<td>9%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Lecture halls / Auditorium</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Restaurant</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Library</td>
<td>5%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Research / Studio Spaces</td>
<td>27%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Laboratories</td>
<td>6%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Administration + Management</td>
<td>3%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Educational Facilities</td>
<td>10%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Café</td>
<td>1%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Archive + Storage</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recreational Area</td>
<td>3%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sports Facilities</td>
<td>3%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Workshop Spaces</td>
<td>4%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Supplies / Storage</td>
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<tr>
<td>Maintainance</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Technical Spaces</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student Club</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exhibition Spaces</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>97%</strong></td>
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</table>
Programmatic Study
Full Floor space usage: 920,000 sqm
Capacity: 26,000 people
Equivalent of marked buildings inside the square
Steel tube profile 4500 x 240 mm
Steel UNP 200 profile
Steel IPE 200 Profile
Rough black concrete panel 1500 x 2000 x 20 mm
Aluminium frame 2100 x 2100 mm
Aluminium posts and lintels
Aluminium free moving planes 300 x 300

Steel UNP 200 profile
Steel Tube profile
Wind gets deflected from the facade

Mechanical ventilation:
Preheated or cooled air gets blown into climatized area’s via climatization unit
Mechanical ventilation:
Air gets ventilated out and transported back to the climatization unit

Wind gets filtered through the facade
1. Ground hardening by injection
2. In situ cast concrete foundation
3. Steel cables injected into the ground and pulled tight by crane
1. Steel column base exterior
2. Steel post tension cables
3. Ground
4. Concrete foundation
5. Concrete in column
"Building up the Column"

1. Steel column exterior
2. Steel post tension cables
3. Concrete in column
Applying post tension

1. Steel column exterior
2. Steel post tension cables
3. Concrete in column
4. Facade panels
5. Steel cover pressure plate
Lateral stability through Cross-bracing

1. Steel welded plate
2. Tension applied cross-bracing
3. Steel column with post tension cables
4. Facade panels
1. Steel column with post tension cables
2. UNP 200 profile concrete 3x3m plates 80mm isolation
3. Steel cable cross-bracing
4. Steel tube profile
5. 25mm facade panels IPE 200 profile UNP 200 profile 80mm isolation
1. Steel column with post tension cables filled with concrete
2. UNP 200 profile concrete slab floor plates 80mm isolation
3. IPE 300 profile cross-bracing Concrete mounted wall plates 3 x 4.5 x 0.2m 80mm isolation
4. Double glazing steel window frame
5. 25mm facade panels IPE 300 profile UNP 200 profile 80mm isolation
Constituting Concrete Core and Coupling to Frame
"Installing Facade, Wall and Floor Panels"
"Structural Independence"

Jonathan van der Stel

ST.10
FORESTS OF THE SUBLIME
of Chaos and the Instant

Jonathan van der Stel

Student number: 1334328
Course: Architectural Thinking Thesis
Designation: Architectural Master Thesis
Studio: Delft School of Design (DSD) Architectural Thinking (AT) Hong Kong (HK)
1/7/2012
FORESTS OF THE SUBLIME
of Chaos and the Instant

Jonathan van der Stel

Frontispiece; Vija Celmins; Alliance (1982)
Typeset in Whitman and Gill Sans
Delft

Master Thesis in Architecture;
Under guidance of; ir. Andrej Radman
And assistance by studio tutors;
dr. ir. Gregory Bracken & dr. Tahl Kaminer
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PREFACE

What started out as an inquiry into the conditions of today, transformed into a narrative structure which tries to show how a society is representing itself implicitly trough time, a narrative constructed of course, but a narrative none the less. The condition as it existed (exists) for the city changes over time, in trying to show that it’s not only the city that changes but the whole understanding and viewing of the world as such I will give a summary of the different takes upon the concept (project) of the city. The city as an autonomous ideal unity, slowly transforming into a more amorphous mass and becoming the thing that it first set out to reject. These two extremes are tied together through the concept of entropy and are traced through different figures and proponents of the avant garde theories of their time.

Two concepts are inherently and intricately interwoven with the idea of unity and the concept of chaos, the other. These are the ones of the aesthetic of the sublime, which Boileau introduced via his translation of Longinus, which was slowly elaborated from the end of the seventeenth century onwards in Europe, of which Kant and Burke were the most scrupulous analysts, and which the German idealism of Fichte and Hegel in particular subsumed – thereby misrecognizing it - under the principle that all thought and all reality forms a system. And the other one that of the heterotopia, a concept which Michel Foucault introduced by coining the term in a lecture for architects in 1967, pointing to various institutions and places that interrupt the apparent continuity and normality of ordinary everyday space. Because they inject alterity into the sameness, the commonplace, the topicality of everyday society, Foucault called these places ‘hetero-topias’ – literally ‘other places’.

Published by the French journal Architecture-Mouvement-Continuite in October, 1984. Although not reviewed for publication by the author and thus not part of the official corpus of his work, the manuscript was released into the public domain for an exhibition in Berlin shortly before Michel Foucault’s death.

After writing the text of the introduction and the better part of the second chapter for a course of Architecture and the City, I decided to expand the text with the two concepts described above. For no other reason than that it seemed logical. The text is meant to further the research that I’m conducting for the design studio and has had the nature of an enquiry. In some way it is just about answering questions that I have had for some time during various design processes.

In connecting, throughout the work, two seemingly despaired concepts, or even totally opposite concepts with each other a certain narrative is constructed to indicate a line of thought, a feeling that things are related is explored and found to be true. Hopefully convincingly argued and presented. The city and nature are brought first into conflict but are later shown to be very similar in nature, reflecting a modus operandi of not only science but of a whole societies thinking. The two concepts, described above, of the sublime and the heterotopic seem not so different from one another and have different properties in common. This resides in the desire to form a place for oneself, a place that is not like nature, not like the city.

By making this comparison a need for an alternative emerged, the possibility of approaching the question from another direction and arriving, maybe somewhat different, at the same place. The one between the union of the sublime and the heterotopic. This is found in the Instant, a concept posited, trough writing and painting, by Barnett Newman and brought to the fore by Lyotard. By again introducing a third way, an alternative, the first ideas are brought into focus and become outlined against a different background and, in so doing, hopefully, more clear.

This conclusion, if I can call it that, raises the question of immediacy, the possibility of transference of thought, of feeling without any intermediary form of carrying. An idea and concept researched during meetings of a separate course on media, taught by Marc Boumeester with the help of Andrej Radman. I would here like to thank both of them for the possibility of integrating these, seemingly, much separated
concepts through the form of this thesis. The discussions during these sessions were of much help, not only to understand different directions and philosophy's that representation, of not only architecture, is following. But also to understand a 'different view' on the idea of design. Intended to be the solid background, a foundation of research this thesis has brought together many discussions I have had with both of them but also with both of my tutors for the design course, Gregory Bracken and Tahl Kaminer. I would also like to take the opportunity to thank them both for their invaluable input and suggestions during and around the design. It often provided many and good references for the research I was conducting for this thesis.

Finally, in chapter V, an example building by Perrault is analyzed, of which I think illustrates the discussed concepts very well. A world is created through the making of a wall, combined with a circulation system that separates an interiority from the city. Although the city penetrates this 'instant', that connects this heterotopy to the environments exteriority. Every part of the library can be read as going deeper into oneself, into the act of absorbing media (literature) and in doing so, the book stacks form the synecdoche of the spaces of the city.
What a strange illusion it is to suppose that beauty is goodness! A beautiful woman utters absurdities: we listen, and we hear not the absurdities but wise thoughts.

Leo Nikolaevich Tolstoy

I. INTRODUCTION

THE MACHINECLOUD

The condition we are in today is the one where we can no longer speak about knowledge as knowledge in itself. In a way we can state that knowledge has become meaningless; artificial intelligence has knowledge, the cloud that has become the world’s mining pool of data has replaced knowledge. The fight of today is against knowledge,’ we must contain, make indexable and make use of knowledge. Science is fighting to (in other words) control knowledge. The ‘knowledge revolution’ of today is the making meaningful of an amount of data that can only be comprehended by the (machine) computer. Art is emerging in the form of data visualization, in the aesthetics of data, this ‘infosthetics’ is aimed at making readable the data. In doing so it does the interpreting for us and projects it back at us. It is a mediator (media) of today, our only vestige of supremacy, our intelligence of interpretation and of acting.

Nature, traditionally, was the liminal, the boundary definition; it mediated, in the anthropocentric world of the enlightenment, the lost certainty of God. This shifting worldview is something which can be traced back by different artifacts. Capsular reproductions of a universe no longer existing, changed to be defined as something new, something different. Something Darwinians would indicate as evolution, highly contrived on the topic of society. Archeology as a basis for history can of course be only a reinterpretation of the ‘now’, but also as a source for (and conformation of) our shaping of it. Just as Darwin’s finches serve as the index for a process so does our build form. It is here where we must accept the phenomenological appearance of the artifact as the bringing out (bringing forth) of the truth. And this truth comes to us (primarily) in the form of art. Here we can follow a reasoning set before us by Heidegger in The Origin of the Work of Art;

“The nature of the art, on which both the artwork and the artist depend, is the setting-itself-into-work of truth. […] If all art is essentially poetry, then the arts of architecture, painting, sculpture and music must be traced back to poesy. That is pure arbitrariness. It certainly is, as long as we mean that those arts are varieties on the art of language […] Language, by naming beings for the first time, first brings being to word and to appearance. Only this naming nominates beings to their being from out of their being. Such saying is a projecting of the clearing”.[5]

The concept is elucidated by the coining of the Greek term *aletheia* (ἀλήθεια), explained as the unconcealedness of beings,

“where the work is being created so that its createdness is part of the created work”.[5]
ARCHEOLOGY

Metaphysics and science is part of the createdness of the created work today, interpreted as a language, it gives us signs, and in an archeological sense, indexes. The artifact of the build form, the perfect work of art considering aletheia, is to be interpreted (read) by our modern day archeologist, the philosopher. Where the scientist sets about to produce data, and if he can, form a theory on the basis of hypothesis, his primary goal is to never speculate. Improvability is the fallacy of science; something is or is not, until disproven of course.

If we take the influence of Darwin serious, then besides providing for an alternative metaphysics, he also gave us the notion of a process. A text, not as a closed system of absolutes, but of possibilities, and above all, direction. A process in itself provides one with an origin and an end, the difference being to the previous paradigm that god no longer fulfills all these parts as an absolute alpha and omega. This is where the notion of possibilities and unpredictability comes to the surface. The great rallying cry of Deleuze’s view of creativity, as a drawing on the virtuality of process by a yielding to it, is Spinoza’s slogan that "we do not know what a body can do." [6]

As Massumi was to describe it, it’s the final nail in the coffin of phenomenology and ends the Kantian notion of the underlying conscious self. This ontological emergence is the reflection of Deleuze on the current state of science, where the virtuality of possibilities is attacking the very notion of a universe. If our existence has an origin than logically it must come to an end, but the process yields an underlying structure that is no longer based on logical order but on possibilities. The rise of M-theory does away with the (relatively) static image of the molecule as building blocks and proposes a topology of strings and membranes, a disordered field that behaves and reacts according to different intensities. And with these possibilities comes the virtual, expressed through the Russian physicist Andrei Linde as the multiverse. Here we would float in a bubble in an ocean of similar such bubbles. [7] Not doing away with the idea of an end but giving, trough other dimensions, the possibility of the virtual.

BATTLE FOR THE VIRTUAL

In our great battle to free us from all preconceiving notions we did not stop with beauty, now it is being itself that has to vanish. Beauty as an element of unity represents the wholeness of nature, nature as close to ourselves as possible after the ‘supreme unity’ of a deity left us. In the same light we can understand the battle for abstraction, taking place in early modernism, to free us from representing this wholeness, so eagerly expressed in the preceding romanticism movement. Paradoxically the method being used was again that of representation, albeit now of an underling ‘realness’. Not the phenomenon itself but the ‘essence’, if you will, is taken as the basis for this representation. Something which we might link to the realization of the implications of the discoveries in chemistry, in the early nineteenth century, by Dalton’s laws of Definite and Multiple Proportions. Although not a new proposition, in echoing
(among others) Epicurus, Descartes and Newton, it was Dalton who got rid of Descartes’ hook-and-eye model and published an image of a ‘real underlying world’ and how it would be made up by different combinations.

Thus considering, almost a century later, we find Malevich writing in his From Cubism and Futurism to Suprematism;

“If all artists could see the crossroads of these celestial paths, if they could comprehend these monstrous runways and the weaving of our bodies with the clouds in the sky, then they would not paint chrysanthemums”. [8]

The difficult feat achieved here is the leap from a representation of the visible to the representation of the knowable. After all, the image we all know of a molecule is only that; an image, the freeing of an a priori image in favor of a conceived ‘diagrammatic’ representation of the idea. This move contains in itself already a prefigure for the abolition of the self, namely the one expressed in the collaboration of the International Union of Neoplastic Constructivists in 1922 in their sentiments on art as organization “which is not the result of some humanitarian, idealistic, or political sentiment, but springs form the same amoral and elementary principles on which both science and technology are based”. [9]

Socialist ideas on the basis of the masses being composed, and consisting of, the same providing an uncanny parallel to the equality of particles moving in unison without politics or ideals.

The next step in this process is the embrace of the virtual, where no preconceived idea can rule our creativity. We free ourselves from the last constraints by in effect ruling out any effect of a human contrivance towards an organized whole. After all, as Adorno would affirm in his statement;

“To write poetry after Auschwitz is barbaric”[10]

we can no longer go back, the events in WWII require a thorough reevaluation of culture and of being human.

CHAOS, EREBUS & AETHER

I would argue that we made, in fact, a full circle in our way of dealing with the world, where we began with nothing, or to be more precise, we began with chaos (χάος). Chaos as the opposite of what we should strive for, for have we not since ancient times linked the concepts of good/bad to the ones of order/disorder? We read accordingly in Timaeus;

“So whenever the craftsman (dèmiourgos) looks at what is always changeless and, using a thing of that kind as his model, reproduces its form and character, then, of necessity, all that he so completes is beautiful. But were he to look at a thing that has come to be and use as his model something that has been begotten, his work will lack beauty. […] Well, if this world of ours is beautiful and its craftsman good, then clearly he looked at the eternal model. But if what it’s blasphemous to even say is the case, then he looked at one that has come to be.”[11]
So the universe (kosmos) is made in the image of the demiurge itself, consequently, we read in some later pages, that

“he made it a single visible living thing, which contains within itself all the living things whose nature it is to share its kind. […] First, that as a living thing it should be as whole and complete as possible and made up of complete parts.”[11]

As we ourselves are these living things which are considered whole and complete, in accordance with the kosmos, the optimal striving would be to fashion a creation likewise. The form of this creation would be the sphere, with its center equidistant from its extremes in all directions. The bringing into a “state of disorder into a one of order, because he believed that order was in every way better than disorder”[11] can be put into another term, that of decreasing entropy, with the entropy’s final state being the one eternal sphere. The contrary to this state would be the maximum of entropy, chaos, represented in its meaning as emptiness, vast void, chasm and abyss, in short the dark and unknowable. Paradoxically both these states are united in the using of the concept of entropy, for a maximum of entropy would also achieve a most homogenous state. Let’s not forget that Hesiod explains this dualism, this apparent paradox, most clear;

“From Chaos came forth Erebus and black Night; but of Night were born Aether and Day.”[12]

These states and concepts lie at the very heart of our understanding of Architecture, where the sole surviving piece of ancient treatise comes to us through Vitruvius, who as a product of a Greek revival, prominent in the last years of the Roman Republic, interpreted previous texts and synthesized them into a treatise of ten books. Where, maybe not so curious, a prominent emphasis exists on the concepts of order (taxis), arrangement (diathesis), eurythmy (eurythmos) and symmetry (symmetros or symmetria) concepts relying on the whole, parts of the whole and a module.[13] Hence we find as an origin in Plato/Timaeus;

“But it isn’t possible to combine two things well all by themselves, without a third; there has to be some bond between the two that unites them. Now the best bond is one that really and truly makes a unity of itself together with the things bonded by it, and this in the nature of things is best accomplished by proportion.”[11]

Which culminates, of course, in the drawing of Leonardo da Vinci’s the Vitruvian Man, around 1487, and becomes a cornerstone of Renaissance thought, based on the description in Book 3 On Symmetry: In Temples and in the Human Body by Vitruvius.

II. THE OTHER

FORESTS OF ECOLOGY

Now, to relate this discussion back to the city, we can delineate this to a terminus of projects emerging around the nineteen sixties and seventies, the so-called ‘radical architecture’ period. Here can be found the project of Constant
who, with his New Babylon, takes to a new extreme the possibilities explored by Candilis, Josic and Woods and there concept of the MAT-building. Also someone, les extreme, is Christopher Alexander, trying to define the perfect community size with the help of programming and patterns, echoing in many ways Yona Friedman’s Ville Spatial. And, of course, the Continuous Monument of Superstudio, who together with Archizoom take up a considerable proportion of the Tendenza movement in Italy. Whereof Archizoom’s No-Stop City best illustrates the discussion at hand, this because of the grounding of their utopian vision in the all encapsulating, all pervading and world enclosing capitalism. In their vision the city seizes to be a place and the metropolis enters a new phase, one where it becomes a condition.  

In defining the condition of the street as the universal negotiator between the interests of the particular and the general, as a feasible harmony, still considered as a fundamental antithesis. The problem then becomes the finding of a two dimensional network wherein these two unmixable units fit together. The street is then not only a ‘dissection’ but also an indicator for the particular and thus clears the way for an architectonic idiom. Here the skyline becomes the diagram of the historical and natural accumulation of capital itself.

EDDIES

As we have seen this is a condition of the metropolis radically different from the ideal created by Timaeus’s demiurgical sphere but maybe not so far removed from it. We left Da Vinci at his illustration of the Vitruvian Man, but not only does he embody a bridge to the ancients, or for that matter, a bridge, as Giedion would point out, between the medieval craftsman and the Renaissance artist, he also indicates a far flung possibility of the virtual. In his studies of the flow of water we see an attempt to capture, by illustration, all the possibilities hidden in the uncontrollable torrent. It may be clear that the purpose of the study was to control and bring into rational order the phenomenon of nature. This attempt being explicitly portrait in an earlier scheme for a cità ideale in the form of the city of Florence, where the city is remodeled upon a chess-board pattern and the river Arno becomes (as in the drawings of Francesco di Giorgio) as straight as a bow string. Marking the beginning of a transition in the thinking, and consequently, shaping of the world, we find in this plan the city as a whole, the shape close to the sphere, and a controlling of nature.

We have to keep in mind that for a long time nature was viewed as the opposite of the city, not everything was known and mapped, so the wild was something dark and dangerous, quite akin to the chaos. Even in the introduction to Timaeus we find a description of the city, founded by a goddess, inferring that the city must consequently be modeled upon the whole (presumably sphere). The youngness of the Greek people is accordingly attributed to disasters of a natural phenomenon (of fire and water). It was not until the mid-seventeenth century that the ideas posited by Da Vinci where taken up and nature was studied, it was only in 1735 that Linnaeus wrote his Systema Naturae, where living nature was, for the first time, captured into a rational classification system. This notion went simultaneous with a recognition that nature is a mirror image
of society, the building of the kosmos was represented through the state as a parliament democracy.\(^{(16)}\) Freedom and ‘naturalness’ became each other’s counterparts and in the arts became its teacher (natura artis magistra).\(^{(17)}\) We see a literal ‘capturing’ of nature in the form of the English landscape gardens, Pevsner called it the ‘Garden of Liberalism’ where

> “the free growth of the tree is obviously taken as the free growth of the individual, the serpentine path and rivulet the English man’s freedom of thought, creed and action, and the adherence to nature in ethics and politics.”  

Not much later (1753) we find Laugier writing in his essay on Architecture that

> “Such is the course of simple nature; by imitating the natural process, art was born. All the splendors of architecture ever conceived have been modeled on the little rustic hut I have just described.”

which was his method of defending and defining the rationale in architecture.

**CRITICAL POINT**

By grounding this ‘origin’ of architecture in the ‘primitive hut’ the critical point is reached where the architecture becomes part of the kosmos and is grounded in the chaos itself, the model is transformed from the city as a whole to the city as a forest, where the architecture is a part of, and makes up that forest. At this point, we can comprehend the criticism, retold by Tafuri, which Piranesi gives in his drawings of the Carceri. Identified by different people as an impossibility and a total domination of the object, not only through the subject matter, but above all by the purposeful distortion of different viewpoints and perspectives. The plates do not let us comprehend, by a condition of their scale and complexity, the space that the observer is in. This criticism is then carried further to the scale of the city by the renderings of the Campo Marzio;

> “In the Campo Marzio what is contested is the limitedness, the abstractness, the randomness of the hermetic “objects” that throng the plates of the Carceri of 1760. […] Clearly, however, the acknowledgment of these alignments serves only to heighten still further the “triumph of the fragment,” which dominates the formless tangle of the spurious organisms of the Campo Marzio”\(^{(20)}\)

The Campo Marzio becomes in effect a question of the representation of an active decomposition; the dissolution presented to us is the one of form.

Architecture has, from this point on, in order not to destroy itself, no choice but to split itself in two to legitimize itself. It becomes a question of Typology (social equilibrium) or that form, the architectura parlante (the science of sensation). These are exactly the ones that Piranesi brings into conflict with each other.\(^{(21)}\) Both of these different strands gets carried on to a point of extreme around the change of the century where Durand would present his Précis des loçons d’architectre in 1802, architecture as a form of grammar, assemblies of simple shapes form complex compositions. The other end taken up by one of the three
‘revolutionary architects’, Ledoux, form as the Sublime, *architecte parlante*, a remark by Vaudoyer made late in 1852 that was to draw attention to the poverty of Ledoux’s architecture. In more general, expressive architecture, buildings that express their intention, usually in terms of the program. This split, most notably identified by Tafuri, who had no doubt that architecture was a language, is not just one of meaning or structure but one of ideology.

Not so different from Simmel’s *Die Grossstadt und das Geistesleben*, for Tafuri the city is the civilizing machine, one has to pass from Munch’s cathartic Scream to Hilberseimer’s metropolitan machine. Architecture, and with it the subject, has to dissolve into the structure of the metropolis and in so doing become a pure object. Thus does architectural ideology resolve the contradiction between the internal, subjective resistance to metropolitan shock and the external, structural totality of the production system: this is its utopia.

**CIVILIZING MACHINE**

What then is the role of the city? In becoming the totality, it has to integrate everything, man, nature, politics, economy and art alike. The first step is the slums, the machine’s buffer zones for the new (information?), followed closely by the welfare state and its social utopia’s of mass housing projects. Economics as exchange between layers provides for fluidity in the process that is becoming bourgeois, with the final step as the elite, the connoisseur.

Of course one understands that the process, that is the machine, cannot have an terminus, not unlike the desiring machines of Deleuze and Guattari, the city has to make the system (the process) perfect. Machines connecting machines, waste of the one becomes the product for the other, self-sustaining and ever going. At first art found itself at a loss and could only reflect what it encounters.

“The painter can only analyze this reality. His supposed dominion over form merely covers up something that he does not want to accept: that henceforth it is form that dominates the painter. [...] This is why the canvases of Braque, Picasso, and to an even greater extent Juan Gris adopt the technique of assemblage, give form to the linguistic universe of the civilisation machiniste.”

Later on art realizes, much like architecture, it can only legitimize itself by playing a part in the process. It inserts itself into the apparent terminus and with the invention of the *objet trouvé* connects itself to the other loose end, the one of production. The new, ones internalized cannot, by itself, become re-internalized, thus the new has to be created. Here is where art plays its role as the *avant garde* of production, literal waste is given value again and reinserted into the system, the artist (as does architecture) becomes the producer of desire, where;

“Schizophrenia is like love: there is no specifically schizophrenic phenomenon or entity; schizophrenia is the universe of productive and reproductive desiringmachines, universal primary production as ‘the essential reality of man and nature.’ [...] The productive synthesis, the production of production, is inherently connective in nature: “and ...” “and then ...” ”
The assemblages of Braque are the reflection of the postmodern condition and the internalization of the multiplicity, an essential condition of the schizoid. Incorporation of the other is already at the beginning of modernism a given, colonization of different continents is one of the earliest examples, a superimposition of the self-incorporates the new. The great feat of modernity is playing out this incorporation and the constant production of the new, with as an inevitable result the multitude that we experience now. Bloating as we are but ever insatiable we become more and more schizoid and incorporate, like the buildings inside of buildings, the city inside the city, every new instance.

Koolhaas redefined Piranesi in his retroactive manifesto for New York. First by identifying the schizophrenic nature of the colonization of Manhattan by the Dutch. Which would manifest itself in Coney Island, the playground, an synecdoche of the city to become. And what would later be identified in the buildings themselves, separated from their surroundings by the grid, bowing to the need of the entertaining madness of Coney Island, playground of the city where the world gets collected.

In the same way as Tafuri defined the grid as separating architecture from the city, so this grid, turned 90 degrees, separates interior from exterior (and interior alike) in a process Koolhaas designates as lobotomy. Architecture becomes a shell defined by the size of the plot which can be indefinitely multiplied in direction $z$. Interior lobotomized becomes a schism of whatever it wants (need to) be. In effect becoming the islands that Piranesi defined in the city of Rome and later Ungers (with, among others, Koolhaas) in Berlin. These Islands have the two fundamental properties, earlier defined as the legitimization of architecture, the one of form and the one of typology. The later epitomized by Hilberseimer, the basic unit (the apartment) infinitely multiplied becomes the building block for the civilizing machine. The other introduced by Boullee in the form of the sublime, provides an entry point for exploring the concepts of the islands further.

The need to organize oneself in the forest that has become the city, the new, supplanted, utopia’s (cita ideale) starting to form their secluded zones against one another, ready to incorporate and internalize, becoming other spaces, as Foucault would term them, heterotopia’s. Not all succeed, not all are ready, but the ones who have the program for it easily manifest themselves into the ship and manage to sail between the multitudes of post-modernity.

III. SUBLIME

LIGHTNESS OF THE GRID

Of course, the schism is not inherent to the grid; it can perfectly exist without it, as can the islands exist without this grid, take any contemporary Asian city as an example. Likewise, the grid is not a prerequisite for the archipelago, the grid is the great equalizer, and by this, it takes on some of the inherent properties of money and promotes its (abstracted) exchange value. The city takes on the shape of the farmer’s plantation, easily definable by multiplication of surface times $x$ (whatever tree, crops he has and its current value). In the
Netherlands, one finds an abundance of these ‘artificial’ forests, where the parallax that occurs when passing them at high speeds never ceases to amaze. Here it is that we find a couple of important features that Burke defined as aspects of the feeling of the sublime. The most important (operating at the most powerful) being that of astonishment;

“and astonishment is that state of the soul, in which all its motions are suspended, with some degree of horror.”

The horror of which he speaks is the one of terror suspended, the perceived fear of death, a power greater than you, inflicted upon you, but then suddenly averted. Often related to the subject of scale, sublime entails the concept of the unknown, something is so vast one cannot perceive its borders. A suggestion of the infinite is therefore a terrifying (and highly sublime) idea, one that is, according to Burke, better achieved through prose than painting. This because the suggestion of words leaves a higher degree of the unknown than the exactness of a painting. A succession of uniformity, not unlike the grid forest, leaves then a suggestion of the infinite but it is only a conceptual infinite. For without unreasonable doubt we can ascertain that by repetition, a border somewhere has to occur and it therefore belongs to the liminal. For if we consider a natural grown forest, in all its darkness and unknown shapes, we have no conception of the scale it commands. The forest becomes like the ocean, everything is vast and deep, how deep exactly we do not know and cannot even imagine, for imagining the infinite is still one of the impossibilities of the mind.

In Kant’s retake on Burke’s notions of the beautiful and sublime, we find the excellent distinction between the two concepts.

“Finer feeling, which we wish to consider, is chiefly of two kinds: the feeling of the sublime and that of the beautiful. The stirring if each is pleasant, but in different ways. The sight of a mountain whose snowcovered peak rises above the clouds, the description of a raging storm, or Milton’s portrayal of the infernal kingdom, arouse enjoyment but with horror; on the other hand, the sight of flower-strewn meadows, valleys with winding brooks an covered with grazing flocks, the description of Elysium, or Homer’s portrayal of the girdle of Venus, also occasion a pleasant sensation but one that is joyous and smiling. In order that the former impression could occur to us in due strength, we must have a feeling of the sublime, and, in order to enjoy the latter as well, a feeling of the beautiful. Tall oaks and lonely shadows in a sacred grove are sublime; flower beds, low hedges and trees trimmed in figures are beautiful. Night is sublime, day is beautiful.”

TRANSFERENCE
Night is sublime, day is beautiful. This is how we can best comprehend what it is we are dealing with, a state of unknown, infinite darkness. The imagination is free to project whatever it will onto it, often resulting in images of power and fear of the unknown.

Our attempts to imitate nature ended at this critical point of separation between the artificial and the natural, science and emotion, at the dawn of modernity, when Kant wrote his three Critique’s (1781, 1788, 1790). Not totally
by accident, around the same time as Laugier, Piranesi and Boullee made their observations and critiques, the Zeitgeist was very much focused on cutting lose all our ties with the natural and the superstitious. Paradoxically this resulted in developing a parallel line, one where understanding was imitating.

All the descriptions so far as to the beauty and the sublime have been on the natural, an overwhelming power contained by nature at which we are all at its mercy. Ocean’s, able to swallow whole boats and even countries, storm’s capable of destroying whole cities, forests filled with unknown monsters of fairytales, mountains able to rise higher than anything known. In addition, there is the world of the night, with its blue and black shadow games and unclear edges and definitions. However, as the city assumes the same aspects of the natural, then the sublime can be transferred to architecture (our build environment in general), and we find like descriptions in both Burke and Kant;

“Because too great a length in buildings destroys the purpose of greatness which it was intended to promote; the perspective will lessen it in height as it gains in length; and will bring it at last to a point; turning the whole figure into a sort of triangle, the poorest in its effect of almost any figure that can be presented to the eye. […] Designs that are vast only by their dimensions, are always the sign of a common and low imagination. No work of art can be great, but as it deceives; to be otherwise is the prerogative of nature only.”

“The sublime must always be great; the beautiful can also be small. The sublime must be simple; the beautiful can be adorned and ornamented. A great height is just as sublime as a great depth, except the latter is accompanied with the sensation of shuddering, the former with the one of wonder. Hence the latter feeling can be the terrifying sublime, and the former the noble. The sight of an Egyptian pyramid, as Hasselquist reports, moves one far more than one can imagine from all the descriptions; but its design is simple and noble. St. Peter’s in Rome is splendid; because on its frame, which is large and simple, beauty is so distributed, for example gold, mosaic work, and so on, that the feeling of sublime still strikes trough with the greatest effect.”

Avid readers of Laugier, were the young revolutionaries, according to Blondel’s (one of the teachers of Boullee) report. And judging from their designs, especially the tomb for Newton, also of (at least) Burke. The maximizing of difference (not the least of which is the interior lighting) with the surrounding, the simple shape, the darkness and of course its sheer size. All direct indicators of the transference of these aspects, taken from nature and transposed into buildings. Evidence of this is most clear when we see Boullee drawing clouds in the domes of his sections, buildings start to capture the environment, simulate them perhaps (the fire and the starry night sky in Newton’s cenotaph) and thus are becoming worlds within themselves. Familiarity with the Piranesian world is shown in other renderings where it becomes apparent that different buildings exist inside of the outer building.

Significant here is the distinction we can determine of the concept of beauty. Beauty exists on the surface, a decoration, never penetrating to the deep feeling that is the sublime. St. Peter’s splendidness comes from the combining of the two

Figure 15
Boullee, Metropole section (1781)
The drawing of clouds in the dome of the section suggest the capturing of natural elements inside the artificially created world of the vast building. Not by accident are the clouds elements that obscure our vision of what is really there and in so doing making the project closer to the sublime.
Kaufmann, three revolutionary architects p 459 - 469

Figure 16
Boullee, Cenotaph façade & section (1778)
The purpose of the section here is to make explicit that the shape of the other volume is not the building experienced inside. A distinct other shape appears which connotes the emergence of the building within the building concept.
Kaufmann, three revolutionary architects p 459 - 469
concepts where the surface is the beautiful but the deep and unknowable shape indicates the sublime.

**SEMMBLE IN WAR**

What of course the number one property of sublime is that can be used very effectively in propaganda and such is power. Master manipulator of the feeling of dominion and imposing of the sublime is Alert Speer. Where in the outstretched, and folded upon itself, halls of the new Reich Chancellery one was made to journey such a length to be in the end, diminished to just the surface of the office where the desk of Hitler stood.

Here can be identified a point where people as such start to take on the properties of the sublime, natural elements are taken over, brought in, assimilated, to further the cause of increasing darkness and chaos everywhere, except in the little new world where a new order would be created. The crowd is assembled in an all-out display of semblance to the pine forests of the German land. Imitation to the feeling of uncertainty and the belonging to something bigger than yourself, not knowing what exactly makes for people to commit themselves to the landscape, one that is formed by themselves, their presence and the knowing of the terrible darkness of war.

The crowd was one of the great obsessions of the nineteenth century, the joining of so many people making up the masses. For the first time in history, crowds of people were to be experienced in the metropolis. After the first impressions of shock wore off the need for semblance set in and the want to become one with crowd becomes ever increasing. Just as in the short story of Poe, the man of the crowd, where we follow feverish an old man who seems to be searching for the crowds as a drug addict for his fix. Becoming one with the many, as being a drop in the ocean, maybe the ultimate experience for the schizophrenic?

"It was still brilliant with gas; but the rain fell fiercely, and there were few persons to be seen. The stranger grew pale. He walked moodily some paces up the once populous avenue, then, with a heavy sigh, turned in the direction of the river, and, plunging through a great variety of devious ways, came out, at length, in view of one of the principal theatres. It was about being closed, and the audience were thronging from the doors. I saw the old man gasp as if for breath while he threw himself amid the crowd;" [60]

**DETAILS**

It is here that we become one with the natural element, the next step, also propagated by war, is conquering it. If the city replaces the landscape to form a new, becoming a world in itself, than war is focused on conquering this world. The most radical example is the harnessing of the power of the atom. Not only does a detonation of this bomb resemble in the first few seconds the wholeness of a universe in the perfect sphere that it forms. The destruction that it leaves behind is, however eerie, reminiscent of a great power. A power that destroys everything and levels all to the same, the level of nothingness.
Where the buildings of Boullee and the islands of Koolhaas only capture the other nature in a sort of simulacrum, the city as a phenomenon has harnessed the same power as that of the atomic bomb, it conquers nature and replaces it. A building as such can of course never become all and conquer everything, Hilberseimer came close but his was a multiplication. The continues monument still left places of difference next to it. The closest thing it can do is become like Poe’s man of the crowd, one with everything. Exemplary here is the story of the pool by Koolhaas, where Russian architects must escape communism by swimming towards it only to find that in America capitalism has become communism. The pool was a Manhattan block realized in Moscow, which would reach its logical destination.

It is in the vastness of the ocean that the little patch of water, encircled by the pool makes all the difference. Physically inside the pool, it is no different than outside except for the people swimming in it. We can experience the sublime in the synecdoche of the closed-off world, a simulacrum of the rest of the world. Here it is where the sublime can become small, self-contained, referring to other spaces and providing a reflection for them, in short heterotopic. The sublime becomes the Manhattan Island, the lobotomized schism of a skyscraper. It is the same effect that Graafland identified in Koolhaas’s kunsthal, where, in a lyrical description, a detail is identified as a conceptual reference towards the sublime.

“In some places—the lighting—is installed in the column, rather than on it. The light-fitting is hidden as is the wiring. The opening is finished crudely and has no brass bezel or other decoration. It appears unfinished but in fact it is a difficult detail. The light is literally in the way, because of the steel reinforcement. It seems as though the light has been fitted into the column more or less randomly, without much attention. But nothing could be further from the truth: quite a lot is involved in its construction.”

As we have seen, the apparent prerequisite of bigness as originally posited by Burke can be circumvented and the possibility arises in the heterotopic for a smallness of the sublime. Terrifying can be the concept behind the small synecdoche of the gun, being the part of the greater whole of war, of fighting. Where beauty exists in the surface, the sublime can reside in the depth of the concept.

IV. HETEROTOPIC

DES ESPACES AUTRES

In the critique of ideology, Tafuri gives us a great example of a project by Antolini in 1802. It is a project for the foro Bonaparte and consists of a fundamental critique against the existing city. Instead of trying to ‘repair’ the urban fabric, Antolini replaces the city with a new structure, one, of which can be said that trough its ‘simple’ shape and bigness in scale has some of the properties of the sublime. However, at the same time it posits an ideal place in reality, something that will most likely (and of course never did) materialize, in short a no place, a utopia. One could argue that architects, in planning always for
the ideal, and planning for a fantasy that is not there yet, they always strive for a utopia. Utopias are sites that have a general relation of direct or inverted analogy with the real space of Society.

“They present society itself in a perfected form, or else society turned upside down, but in any case, these utopias are fundamentally unreal spaces. There are also, probably in every culture, in every civilization, real places, places that do exist and that are formed in the very founding of society-which are something like counter-sites, a kind of effectively enacted utopia in which the real sites, all the other real sites that can be found within the culture, are simultaneously represented, contested, and inverted. Places of this kind are outside of all places, even though it may be possible to indicate their location in reality. Because these places are absolutely different from all the sites that they reflect and speak about, I shall call them, by way of contrast to utopias, heterotopias.”

The definition that Foucault gives us makes the illusion to real utopias, and he gives us examples of such places. The criteria are that not only the place is physically different from the surrounding but also that it conceptually transports you to another place. So we can think of a university, a graveyard, a prison, a ship. Important is that there is always a system of opening and closing, of a controlled access, so we can even think of gated communities (residences) as a heterotopia.

SYNECDOCHE

The ship is the place of leaving and reflecting, an example par excellence of the heterotopia concept, where on board of the ship a community in itself (a world) exists. It is the part that is used to refer to the whole, a microcosm that reflects the world at large, and literally is attached nowhere. Close to the pool of Koolhaas we find Foucault’s description of the carpet, a colonial instance of the garden.

“We must not forget that in the Orient the garden, an astonishing creation that is now a thousand years old, had very deep and seemingly superimposed meanings. The traditional garden of the Persians was a sacred space that was supposed to bring together inside its rectangle four parts representing the four parts of the world, with a space still more sacred than the others that were like an umbilicus, the navel of the world at its center (the basin and water fountain were there); and all the vegetation of the garden was supposed to come together in this space, in this sort of microcosm. As for carpets, they were originally reproductions of gardens (the garden is a rug onto which the whole world comes to enact its symbolic perfection, and the rug is a sort of garden that can move across space). The garden is the smallest parcel of the world and then it is the totality of the world.”

It is the same phenomenon that occurs when Boullee captures the clouds inside of his domes, a microcosm inside of the buildings. Interesting to note here is the fact that most of the designs of the revolutionaries are highly heterotopic, not only in shape but also in program. Museums, libraries, cenotaphs and the like.
By capturing this element of nature inside it becomes the colony, a synecdoche of the outside, epitomized by Piranesi’s building inside the building. It helps the city propel its movement towards a natural ecological state. Here the heterotopic is the logical reaction, if the city becomes nature, we make a new ‘cita ideale’ inside of the city. Nevertheless, can we really make an ideal city if we keep referring to the surrounding environment? Are we not falling for the trap of the Droste effect? The answer can only lie in abstraction, without becoming a utopia, the city in itself must become empty, filled again with the substance it in essence is, like the pool. Ones the sky reflects on the water the heavens are captured inside of the walls of the pool, becoming an ‘instant’.

THE INSTANT

It is a part of the sublime explored by Newman and as we have seen, the sublime is often inseparable from the heterotopic.

“...The subject matter of creation is chaos.’ The titles of many of his paintings suggest that they should be interpreted in terms of a (paradoxical) idea of beginning. Like a flash of lightning in the darkness or a line on an empty surface, the Word separates, divides, institutes a difference, makes tangible because of that difference, minimal though it may be, and therefore inaugurates, a sensible world. This beginning is an antinomy. It takes place in the world as its initial difference, as the beginning of its history. It does not belong to this world because it begets it, it falls from a prehistory, or from an a-history.”

In the instant, the direct transference of emotion can take place, the prolonging of the time towards an infinite. A long duration is sublime, is what Kant notes of the prolonging of the inevitable. It is of the time that is now at the same time it is everything and it is nothing. An absoluteness of sensation which has no words to explain, you have to be taken by it. There is no pictorial representation, no message that comes across from the painter to the observer, it just is.

In a paradoxical move of giving over everything instead of almost nothing that is the darkness which was posited earlier, the night. A new flatness is created that in its all-encompassing nature refers us to everything and takes the observer in; it swallows one up into a semblance of the event. This jump allows, just as the ‘deeper concept’ to present the sublime without scale. A constant postponing of the instant absorbs one and creates Kant’s anxiety.

“Hence the use of flat tints, of non-modulated colors and then the so-called elementary colors of Who’s Afraid of Red Yellow and Blue? (1966-7). The question mark of the title is that in Is it happening?, and the afraid must, I think, be taken as an allusion to Burke’s terror, to the terror that surrounds the event, the relief that there is.”

The sublime becomes the instant of absorption; it can take everything but at the same time nothing. It becomes something very close to the conceptual but not quite. This in the sense that the conceptual (usually) has a clear definition, to bring it out as a concept one needs this. The instant is instead closer to the diagram. Deleuze says of the diagram;
“the diagram, in so far as it exposes a set of relations between forces, is not a place but rather a non-place: it is the place only of mutation.”\[33\]

And when we think of dance, as a form of absorption, of the semblance with the event, to dance a storm. Then the body becomes the diagram for the event it is becoming one with. The universe of dance in which the event of the body’s self-abstraction nonsensuously occurs is not a “space.” It is a non-place, made only of forms of gestural change, bodily forms of transition, in a state of perpetual nascency.\[34\] Thus, the diagram becomes the ‘other place’ and ‘the sublime’ at the same time. This is not to say that Newman’s instant is a diagram, however, they both possess the quality of absorbing anything and transporting one to the other place, into infinity, in short, into the sublime.

V. CASE STUDY: PERRAULT’S MEDIATHÈQUE IN VÉNISSIEUX

OF MODELS AND DIAGRAMS

The diagram is the first direct link a building can make into the realm of the sublime. Open to interpretation and at the same time an expression of the conceptual idea that is leading a design, the diagram is the tool that can bring many different aspects from many different viewpoints together. Different architects, building experts, calculators and users can project their ideas and interest into the all absorbing abstractness of the diagram. As noted before, the diagram is of another place, a heterotopic where ideas and opinions can meet and converse.

The outer membrane that constitutes the instant is in itself a reflection of the whole site that Perrault took to designing. Although the building itself is maybe 10 percent of the total area, he has managed to anchor, not only the surroundings, but a whole city into the surface of his building. We can extrapolate a similar (outline) shape in the given area, for further project documentation under appendix b. The slight inclination of the outer façade corresponds with an abstracted curve generated by the surrounding urban fabric. The north façade has a curious angular cut in the predominantly rectangular layout; this corresponds to the direction of the Rue J. Mace bordering the project area. And although, if we have to take everything exact, the ‘road’ running through the building does not correspond exactly with the position of the road on the site.

The lifting up of a volume above the thoroughfare signals not only this position of entrance but signifies a struggle in the diagram. Inevitably, the diagram is an abstraction; ideas are abstracted into shape in order for them to become generators again. Incidentally, this is why we see in the most right model in figure 23 the road assuming a north south direction instead of the almost mandatory east west.

Figure 23
Research models of different layouts for the building composition. Note that the outer shape, the instant, is already determent, it is inside that different elements are arranged. Besides being a study into composition these models are (together with the sketches) the first diagrams to open up the world of the building.

\[87\]
OF MIMESIS AND THE PLAN

If we take a better look to the final floor plan, we notice that the inclination in the east façade has disappeared and that no part of the lifted up volume penetrates the curtain wall. The almost literal reference of the road ‘passing through’ the building has been abdicated and confined to the outline itself.

The perimeter, in the complete site defined by the road, is here reduced to a fine line. The line is the membrane that makes up Newman’s instant, by being there, but not posing any message or meaning onto the ‘special’ location of the library. From inside the colored glass panels provide the barest of filters to the ‘real’ world outside. A slight shimmering of light is amplified and distorted into intense colors, but still being very much recognizable as outside, as intensity.

This effect is enhanced by placing a literal circle of circulation along this membrane of light. The visitor is allowed to navigated the new found world first from the perimeter. Still in contact with the place from where he came and adjusting to the absorbing of the instant he is constantly exposed to both. Only at the breaking point of entry the façade imposes itself by the sliding doors. In the most northern part of the circulation there is time to meet and reflect in a lowering of the levels, stepping outside of ‘limbo’ a preliminary experience is created for the more and more becoming heterotopy of the inside library shelves.

The other feature the circulatory route provides an obstruction to the world of the inside, of the stacks of books, shelves of librarians and tables of the students. The instant stays the instant through the help of this buffer, never is a table shoved against the membrane to break it, never is a rack of books allowed to impose itself on the world outside.

The route of the road is a direct line, a tight rope strung taut over the abyss, like a fragile bridge composed of wooden planks and two ropes over some torrent river in the (rain)forest. Both sides of the path are sheltered of by ‘closed’ functions like the front desk, stairs leading to the upper offices, maintenance ducts, elevators for the serving floor directly above and toilets provide the handrails for the visitor.

OF WORLDS INSIDE OF WORLDS

All the offices of the staff of the library are moved into the extra volume marking the road through the building and the entrances. They have to go through an extra rite of passage in order to go to the floating world above the one created by the membrane façade. Not quite the same references are being conjured up as with the floating sea of glass of Stirling’s Leicester university building but nonetheless can the intended separation on the ‘bubbles of air’ be discerned in the sketches. On the planar level of the library itself there is no need to ascent or descent a narrow and dark stairs. Right through the instant of the outer membrane the visitor enters the heterotopic world of the library.

One is first posed to a hierarchical organization in density of the ‘urban fabric’ composed of study tables, book shelves and reading rooms. As far one can speak of ‘rooms’, in the strictest sense rooms do not exist for there are no doors to separate the interior of an urban island from it surrounding islands.
A gradient runs from north to south getting denser the farther south one goes. On the upper north corner, where the façade breaks the uniformity, an overlapping zone into the world of the archipelago and the world of limbo can be made out in the form of the sunken square. Gradually going south through the building leads to an intensification of the spaces, stacks and shelves are placed subtly slightly closer together and more and more reading rooms start to appear. A system of controlled entrance exists in the form of narrow gaps between the shelves. They lead to relatively secluded islands meant to retread even deeper into the world of books, media, and the self.

As mentioned, separated from the ‘outside’ the inside world is progressively divided into islands of seclusion. Shelves can be read as social housing slabs, spaces in between, where one is to quickly read the book before borrowing, are the neutral zones of the modernist grass. Chairs are single houses, maybe tower flats? Whereas the study room island forms a New-Town with more little islands inside of it, in the form of tables. Moving through this synecdoche of an urban fabric the visitor can wander, rest, search, meet and play in the heterotopic world of the library.
APPENDIX A

FILAMENTS OF GALAXIES

Through the reading of the introduction, the impression might appear as though the city and thinking as such has gone through a straightforward path. This is a reoccurring phenomenon in the describing of a historical process and is caused by the linear experience we have of time, and as a consequence extrapolate for- or backwards in the same fashion. In trying to remedy this linearity, hoping through break the line, by switching back and forth through time on multiple occasions. My understanding of the working of a process is that its development always occurs in a cyclical manner. The problem that then remains is to describe the size of the oscillations between the dialectical oppositions, and finding, if possible, the intersecting occurrences with the other oscillating processes, however differing in amplitude from each other.

On this premise, I would like to add a curious and a somewhat comical side note. Studies have shown, if we assume that, the universe started with a big bang, all the available matter now existing in the universe had to be there from the beginning, straightforward extrapolating from the first law of thermodynamics. Because of this condition, the initial temperatures when big bang ought to have occurred where of such a high degree that the decimation of matter and energy was extremely fast and, more important for us, extremely equal. Trough expanding and cooling down, other, weaker, forces took over, amongst which is gravity. Stars are assumed to have formed by a slow but gradual process of matter accumulating through the simple fact that gravity attracts the bigger/denser the object the higher the gravitational pull). Through friction creating higher temperatures and in this process creating new forms of matter, which on their turn attracts material which goes into orbit and consequently forms a star system and then a galaxy. This galaxy in turn assures a gravitational pull upon other galaxies and over time they will collide with each other to form a new structure.

We can see that entropy, on this very big scale, is actually decreasing. Structures are forming where there were none and, when we logically concluded the outcome of this process, we would end up with the extreme end of a minimum of entropy, a perfect, spherical, mega galaxy, made up of all the matter of the universe.

(Please be aware that in the above account, none of the influence, of the as yet unknown but only theoretically posited and sporadically observed (through gravitational lensing), existence of dark matter and dark energy is taken into consideration).
APPENDIX B

MEDIATHÈQUE, VÉNISSIEUX DOCUMENTATION
Front elevation and longitudinal section
Plan
FOOTNOTES


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Figure 5 – Wenzel Hollar (1607–1677) – Chaos state I. University of Toronto Wenceslaus Hollar Digital Collection at https://secure.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/en/wiki/File:Wenceslas_Hollar_-_Chaos_%28State_1%29.jpg retrieved at 24/10/11.

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Figure 7 – Leonardo Da Vinci. Water eddies (ca. 1513) at https://portfolio.du.edu/pc/port.detail?id=186256 retrieved at 30/10/11.

Figure 8 – Plate IX from Piranesi’s Carceri series. Tafuri. The Sphere and the Labyrinth p. 91

Figure 9 – Piranesi’s Campo Marzio. Tafuri. The Sphere and the Labyrinth p. 97

Figure 10 – Braque - Le Portugais 1911 at http://www.wikipaintings.org/en/georges-braque/portuguese-1911 retrieved at 13/12/11

Figure 11 – Duchamp – Bicycle wheel 1913. at http://2.bp.blogspot.com/-6rbS1iwogYk/Tm4S5EB2UwI/AAAAAAAAAFs/i3y4p7NUFU/s1600/da danyduchreadymadewheel13.jpg retrieved at 13/12/11

Figure 12 – Vriesendorp M. in Koolhaas R. Delerious New York p. 294, 295

Figure 13 - Ungers & Koolhaas Cities within the city Lotus International p.99

Figure 14 - William Turner, Water and Clouds Museum de Fundatie, retrieved at 08/12/11

Figure 15 – Boullee, Metropole section (1781) in Kaufmann, three revolutionary architects p 459 – 469

Figure 16 – Boullee, Cenotaph section (1778) in Kaufmann, three revolutionary architects p 459 – 469

Figure 17 – Deutsches Bundesarchiv (German Federal Archive), Bild 183-1982-1130-502 at http://www.bild.bundesarchiv.de/archives/barchpic/search/1325523115?search[view]=detail&search[focus]=I retrieved at 02/01/12
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Figure 19 – Gert Jan Knocken Y-3, Q-3, B-2, C-1 (2011) Exposition Meer Licht, 2 oktober 2011 - 8 januari 2012, Museum De Fundatie, Zwolle

Figure 20 – Anolini foro Bonaparte, 1802 at http://italianpiazza.blogspot.com/2009/10/giovanni-antonio-antolini-foro.html retrieved at 28/08/10

Figure 21 – Lous Haghe; Interior of the Crystal Palace during the world exhibition in London (1851). London, Victoria and Albert Museum

Figure 22 – Barnett Newman, Who’s Afraid of Red, Yellow and Blue? II, (1967) at http://www.friendsofart.net/en/art/barnett-newman/who%27s-afraid-of-red-yellow-and-blue-ii retrieved at 03/01/12

Figure 23 – Perrault, Research models/diagrams

Figure 24 – Computer simulation of galaxy distribution. Rich Murray at flickr.com via http://scienceline.org/2009/12/a-new-test-for-gravity/ retrieved at 31/10/11
**Aspect 1: the relationship between research and design**

It was for the specific reason that the studio is focused on Architectural Thinking, e.g. design by theoretical research, that I choose it. It meant that for the better part of the graduation track investment in literature study was encouraged. In my specific case, this meant that after the initial location/site analysis I was invested with research into the sublime & heterotopic aspects of a city but also those of an individual architecture. The specific focus was the liminal of these aspects and the distortion thereof. What is the inter-relationship between architecture and the city and is architecture able to influence morphology, if so, on what scale?

These questions drove my design in the sense that I wanted to explore and develop these aspects. I combined my findings of the studio with those I did for the Master Thesis and was in this manner able to dive deep into the subject matter.

**Aspect 2: the relationship between the theme of the studio and the subject/case study chosen by the student within this framework (location/object)**

The subject case to study was chosen after the visit of the location, initial research into Hong Kong as a place and the wider cultural context was done before. In trying to define the essence of the experience and in collaboration with the studio mentors the subjects of Sublime and Heterotopia where chosen in order that they best reflected the current situation of Hong Kong. Subsequently these themes where explored in the Master Thesis project and are intricately interwoven with the research and the design of the design studio.

**Aspect 3: the relationship between the methodical line of approach of the studio and the method chosen by the student in this framework**

The methodology of the studio is heavily reliant on theoretical, mostly, literature study. Up unto the P2 there was very little designing to speak of. The idea is to arrive at different concepts trough unexpected initial develop-
Aspect4: the relationship between the project and the wider social context

Before conducting the site visit different aspects of the cultural and sociological but also political aspects were explored in weekly seminars which were presided by specific reading and guided by external specialists.

The focus of the design itself is to question current norms of scale and the experience of a singular place.

Morphological aspects dictate on a very real level the behavior of people, by changing or affecting those, can a single gesture resonate on multiple scale levels in the same way? Thus, the aim is to no longer think of a wider or closer scale but on all scales simultaneous. This is done by the concept of Heterotopia. An intervention poses different interior exterior conditions, by trying to incorporate these conditions into the conditions themselves a scalable concept is defined which would transcend scale.

Effecting not only directly a specific region of Hong Kong but also the wider development of the Pearl River Delta and taking in hypothetical migration patterns from China it leaves very few context unaffected."