ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The basic premise of this scholarly thesis, is to cover some basic ideas of the discipline of architecture by questioning a series of questions. By means of criticality, that is by comparing various contradicting concepts by practitioners, philosophers, and scholars; I hope some issues about architecture can be addressed and explained systematically in the sense from their fundamentality to complexity. I have to admit that comprehensive critiques of the covered issues are not explained in the greatest detail as I would have wished, or some historical materials are not documented in depth. To avoid lengthy description on the history of architecture, I could only insert the historical examples from time to time, or by means of quotations from the historians. I wish the thesis could be understandable by everyone, particularly those without any background in architecture; yet, the fairy short but dense chapters failed to allow the thesis for casual reading. I would like to take this opportunity to apologize for all the imperfections and incompleteness. I hope the attempt of addressing provocative questions for every major topics could stimulate the reader’s own thoughts thus allows the discussion to go on when the chapter ends. I appreciate with my heartfelt thanks for those who spend their time on reading my first attempt in writing a scholarly thesis.

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INTRODUCTION

“The philosophy uses architectural metaphors is clearly the case. That architecture deploys a language that is in part of philosophical is also now commonplace… The question of the relation between philosophy and architecture is both already staged and yet to be addressed in a way that allows for the particularity of the architectural to be maintained. Philosophy has a tendency of reducing the visual arts and architecture to a body of examples. Works are deployed as evidence for a particular argument or as an example of a more generalized movement. What happens when the reductive move is refused and the constraint is having to think the particularity of the architectural? Once this question is posed then a range of other questions follow. All of them are concerned with the philosophy or theoretical problem of addressing particularity.”

Andrew Benjamin, Architectural Philosophy, 2000

In the first chapter, critical issues on the concept of space and the notion of ‘form follows function’ open up the discussion. To start with the concept of space with its disputable and ambivalent nature, allows us to quest for some basic relations between physical and mental space. Following the architectural paradox created by the concept of space, we shall continue our discussion onto the notions that contemporary architectures are taking: the event cities; which Tschumi takes it as a new form of space that “form does not follow function” anymore. Carrying the ideas about concept of space in chapter one, respective projects by Le Corbusier and Constant Nieuwenhuis are discussed in chapter two. As a great deal of architecture and space were explained on the conceptual basis, we shall move forward to some precedent and present practices. Le Corbusier and Constant, a functionalist and anti-functionalist; their projects not only tell the different era of architecture we were and we are being, but also reveal a change of the realization of the medium of architecture along time. Both of them envisioned the city of tomorrow, but how different are these two enemies picture about the future? This question brings us forward to a deep deliberation of utopian thoughts in the last chapter, and we could notice that the idea of utopia awake the world of architecture, and all other disciplines.

In order to maintain a consistency throughout the three chapters, I tried to address provocative questions in each introduction of the chapters, I wish these questions could be a guide that lead to the deliberation of utopian future in the final chapter.
Chapter One: Philosophical Fundamentals of Architecture

Introduction to the chapter:

Analyzing space, has been a topic of interest over centuries. Thinkers have been trying to explain the concept of space from its fundamental roots to totality; revising the nature of space from finite to infinite by absolute mathematical rules; debating the real existence of space in inner mind and external world; establishing its relationship to abstract concept of time and practical practice of creating space; suggesting how a social system produces space and at the same time space produces the society. Space is being interpreted in different approaches, mathematically, philosophically, socially, architecturally, etc; therefore, space does not stay in one defined in one sense; the multiplicity of concepts of space form a language of space, a system in which different interpretations of space are interconnected and combined. In this chapter, we are going to focus on the concepts of space in relation to architecture and urbanism, philosophically and socially. To say so, one might remember that Descartes rejected the Aristotelian and Scholastic traditions, began the discussion of space by thinking about the subject and object. Henri Lefebvre, summarizes the development of the concept of space as following: “The thinking of Descartes was viewed as the decisive point in the working-out of the concept of space, and the key to its mature form. According to most historians of western thoughts, Descartes had bought to an end the Aristotelian tradition which held that space and time were evidence of the senses…. With the advent of Cartesian logic, however, space had entered the realm of the absolute.”

Cartesian logic of space begins with his invention of using algebraic geometry to solve abstract relations in mathematics. On one hand, Concept of space, no longer confined in pure philosophical reasoning or mathematical logics. That remarks the time that space comes crossing the disciplines (constructing a unitary theory of space). On the other hand, however, Lefebvre oppose to the dualism of “Descarte’s res cogitans and res extensa, and the Ego and non-Ego of the Kantians, post-Kantians, and neo-Kantians… Their dualisms is entirely mental, and strips everything which makes for living activity from life, thought and society.” He insists that separating the mental and real space sets up a rationally perfect system, while telling nothing about the body’s relation to the lived experience. Architecturally, in our future discussion, we could notice Bernard Tschumi stressed a concept of “crossprogramming”, in which architecture no longer confines itself in the traditional hierarchy of space,
form and function. Social considerations enters and a new non-hierarchical concept is constructed; events and situations in living experience are considered to be in the dominating role.

As mentioned, there is always a bond between different explanations of space in different domains; arguments and examples in this chapter begin with the focus on how experience of space is explained philosophically and end with the production of space socially. The logic of this approach allows us to understand how the history of architecture changed with the concept of space. Therefore, find out its role in practice through building and city planning, responding the following two individual questions:

1) What is the relationship between a one person’s spatial experience (philosophically) to that architecturally?
2) What interactive influence the real, produced space (architecturally) is affecting the society (socially), and vice versa?

Not only understanding the role of architecture in each respective question, we should be able to understand new interpretations about space (philosophically, socially, architecturally) arise today, therefore resulting a new concept of space, as a whole, is constructed. New elements are added in this new kind of space, and the combined concept tells a new kind of ‘space’. Things therefore no longer stays traditional. The formation of this kind of new belief also tells a shift of concerns about space today. Is that simply just a shift from philosophy to sociology? We will discuss about that in this chapter. At the end, we shall be able to bring the whole idea onwards to the discussion of later chapters, about the utopian cities and their practical possibilities.

CONCEPT OF SPACE

Before we begin the discussion of how different concepts of space being into practice, let us understand and compare Immanuel Kant’s and Henri Lefebvre’s ideas on space, suggested in the 18th century and 21st century respectively.

i) UNDERSTANDING KANT’S NOTION

Kant, in his exposition, he related both time and space to a priori knowledge, this kind of knowledge allows us to have the concept of time and space before we experience them in the external
world. In other words, we are able to tell the world is a phenomena of time and space when we first experience, because, in our minds, we know about time and space already. Knowledge comes before experience. Kant’s idea confronts Hume’s conclusion on experience as the basis of all kinds of knowledge. Knowledge of time and space in Kant’s suggestion is independent of experience, not even rational experience, therefore a prior. Furthermore, there is necessity for us to possess this kind of knowledge in the external world. For all objects in the world, they are identified in space. For Kant, This way of constructing external perception integrates the two, rational and empirical ways in understanding perception. First, sensibility is understood as the traditional empirical way of experience, therefore the intuition (apprehending the given objects by sensory organs). It is a separate from faculty of understanding or determining the objects. Intuitions, sensory impressions; need to be further being to another rational process in order to arrive perception – intellectualizing intuitions (the understanding).

Together with our sensory impression and a prior knowledge, we bring intuitions into a transcendental account. In Kant’s Transcendental Aesthetic, he concludes his argument clearly: “1. Space is not an empirical concept which has been derived from outer experiences. For in order that certain sensations be referred to something outside me (that is, to something in another region of space from that in which I find myself), and similarly in order that I may be able to represent them as outside and alongside one another, and accordingly as not only different but as in different places, the representation of space must be presupposed. The representation of space cannot, therefore, be empirically obtained from the relations of outer appearance. On the contrary, this outer experience is itself possible at all only through that representation. 2. Space is a necessary a priori representation, which underlies all outer intuitions. We can never represent to ourselves the absence of space, though we can quite well think it as empty of objects. It must therefore be regarded as the condition of the possibility of appearances, and not as a determination dependent upon them. It is an a priori representation, which necessarily underlies outer appearances.”

ii) UNDERSTANDING LEFEBVRE’S NOTION

For a very long period of time, concept of space has conceived to be somehow abstract without objects. For Kant, space is an a prior knowledge, a pure knowledge that is detached from objects.
When we mean experience, we have to suppose the condition of having knowledge of space. Still, idea of space does not come from experience; therefore it remains abstract and mental. In that posture, we are able to start distinguishing the different natures of the knowledge of space, perception of space and experience of space. Differentiation can be suggested from their natures, mental (metaphysical consideration of space by philosophers) or real (the space we are experiencing in the social and physical sphere). Similarly, the distinction between mind and matter by Descartes suggested a duality in defining characteristics of space. Generally, the natural, physical space is often suggested to be in opposite to the mental space. Based on the traditional philosophers’ arguments, Lefebvre said, both the natural and mental space should be bonded in relation to the social space. In contrary to the traditional definitions, the dimension of concept of social space transverses a totality; uniting space and objects; inner mind and external, physical and social experience; altogether as the basic understanding of space. With careful examination of social space, we will be able to understand why Lefebvre suggested space cannot be solely considered to be an a prior knowledge.

Social space involves the concept of production. From the nature, we are provided with resources such as raw materials for people to perform social activities, thus to produce. Humans play the part as the labor: to create, work, manufacture; thus to produce. From the start of the productive activity towards its end, a sequence of events are involved and the outcome is governed by various factors (e.g. preconditions of materials, individual ability of workers, co-operation of workers, efficiency of the production process, investment of technology, etc). During the whole process of production, separate procedures are examined individually and collectively. No matter the procedures are small or big, they are all orientated in such a way that a coherent scheme is formed to achieve the goal of production. People, who are behind all the control of these activities, have to organize the whole process according the mentioned pre-dominate factors. And this also counts as an event of intellectual activity. In contrast to the suggestion this kind of “knowledge of production” as another version “goal governing productive activity”, one must notice that the material preconditions and factors play a crucial role instead of the goal. In other words, a goal, usually understood as the ultimate concern of production, is actually dependent on the pre-conditions. An assumed goal cannot be forced to achieve if the pre-conditions factually present another story. To describe space in terms of the same principle, that is to say, to produce space – all kinds of spaces, from small scale to big scale.
By applying the knowledge of production to the production of space, Lefebvre pinpointed why it is wrong to conclude space is only an *a prior* knowledge. First, let us understand the idea of producing space in the sense of production. The produced space can be understood as the ‘product’, while the process of building, engineering and planning as the ‘human activities’. The ‘raw material’ is the nature itself. Then, what is the produced space exactly? Taking a house as a small-scale example, it is ‘produced’ (built) by the builders’ will, in which the organization of the space (how rooms are arranged, what building materials are used, how dimension of the rooms are judged) deal with specific requirements. Under the principle of consumption, a house is an ‘end product’, which has to be consumed by people; and therefore requirements of the house are the primary concerns of how it should be built. The space of the house is strategically arranged and organized. To understand why such organization is applied to that space, one must relate the requirements to the conditions like: What is the nature of that house? What is the budget of the plan? Who are going to live in the house? How many people can accommodate in that space? Is that house purposively designed for certain functions? Where is the location of that house, geographically and nationally? Would the factor of neighborhood also count as one of the consideration during planning? What special considerations have to be taken? All these questions, together, form a general picture about how the area of space should be shaped. By means of production, during the building process, these considerations are taken into account. They are the ‘conditions’ and ‘factors’ during production, from which we could see economical, political, social, individual concerns have been assumed and determined underneath. Humans, take up the role of inputting intellectuality throughout the process. A satisfactory space will be produced according to the collective wills from planner, owner, and engineer. Lefebvre argued, in contrary to Kant’s notion on mental space: “there is no sense in which space can be treated solely as an a prior condition of these institutions and the state which presides over them.”

Yes, it is true. In Kant’s point of view, he would only agree a pure knowledge without the condition of experience is a prior. Thus, the kind of ‘space’ that Lefebvre suggested could not be understood as a prior; the mentioned sequence of production and conditions are fundamentally the human experience which Kant does not treat as the basis of a prior knowledge. However, Lefebvre conceives them as elements of social space. Therefore, we could notice an obvious distinction between the space that Lefebvre and Kant suggested. Though they both conclude using ‘the concept of space’, they seem like
referring to two kinds of space: one is mentally constructed while the other is physically existing out there in the society. Does this mean that Lefebvre is trying to develop a theory of another kind of space, instead of attacking the traditional belief on space? Lefebvre stressed his stance throughout explanations, about the problematic change of ‘concept of space’. A lived space, rather than the traditionally defined mental or physical space, should be properly understood as ‘space’. Only by understanding Lefebvre’s intention, we could bring forward his arguments and realize the intimate relationship of space with the society. In the past, when ‘space’ (particularly the empiristemologico-philosophical definition) is considered to be in distance with our lived experience, people hardly consider changing ‘space’ help to change our everyday life. With the concept of social space, Lefebvre addressed the importance of bridging the gap of concept of space (in theory) to the spatial experience (in practice). The day when we still adhere to the traditional belief of space, the day we still have the difficulty of bringing theory to everyday practice. With the concept of social space, space is extended to a broad issue; from individual’s will to collective will of society, from abstract mindful concept to real-life experience. It unitarily contains different relationships from all its related disciplines, as long as they can be applied and considered. Our conscious recognition on the concept of space, bring us further to look into our own and worldwide lived problems at the moment; this narrows the gap of theory and practice. To review, Kant clearly defined, without space, we are not able to determine the form of all outside objects. In other words, we cannot Space is always presupposed before we intuit, there is a necessity of the time and space structure in perceiving the world. In Lefebvre’s view, with space, we are able to concern our everyday needs, and spatial practice therefore brings revolutions to our lives. We would have go through our history of activities when we conceive space, because all the past actions tell the history in terms of the pre-dominate conditions of production. In order to change the ‘history of the future’ (the present), we change our present.

THE ARCHITECTURAL PARADOX

Lefebvre successfully established a renewed concept of space systematically. His concept departed from the traditional beliefs of space (philosophically and socially). When we talk about practicing the theories by applying ‘the production of space’, we know we cannot ignore the architectural concerns: from a single building to city planning. Unlike the described notions by Lefebvre about the traditional concepts on space, architecture extensively integrates concerns from different
disciplines. Every time when architecture is injected or challenged with new concepts, we are going to rethink about the discipline of architecture. This time, when production of space is suggested, we are going to redefine, reformulate, and reconsider the concept of architecture. Why such a big influence would occur when Lefebvre’s belief is taken into account? Firstly, as we have noticed, Lefebvre’s concept of space adheres to multi-disciplines. Lefebvre’s intention of confronting the traditional beliefs addresses the similar problem that architecture has been experiencing today— the architectural paradox created by the traditional, indefinite concept of space.

“On the one hand, architecture as a thing of the mind, a dematerialized or conceptual discipline with its typological and morphological variations, and on the other, architecture as an empirical event that concentrates on the senses, on the experience of space.” A distinction can be observed between the theoretical concept of space and the spatial practice in architecture. From the above dialectic argument by Tschumi, the usual understanding towards space has two sides, similar to the previous conclusion by Lefebvre: either mental or physical. For Tschumi, the architectural paradox originated from the wonders of space; and for each side of the argument, theories have been developed to prove their each of them as the essential element of space, therefore further widen the gap between mental and physical space. Lefebvre aims to cover the concept of space in depth, to certain extent, he also tries to provide potential answers to the architectural paradox. That is why, when Lefebvre's belief explores the discipline of architecture, architecture “redefine, reformulate, and reconsider” its discipline. It is an approach of “re-doing” and “re-peating” because it is dependent on the historical context of the paradox. In the discipline of architecture, the concept of space can only be questioned by deconstruction and reconstruction. This is because the role of space in architecture, is both an ingredient (an essential element) of architecture, which is internally embodied in the practice of architecture. Without space, we could not realize architecture by breaking down the architecture in terms of space. On the other hand, space is also an expressive representation of architecture. We build, and therefore we determine the boundaries for space, thus presenting architecture. In other words, in order to approach the central issue of architecture, we cannot escape from the confrontation against the paradox of space, and space is what we are experiencing while we are questioning.

The architectural paradox of space: A paradox that exists within the discipline of architecture, a conceptual dilemma of architecturally defined space. It is called a paradox because of its
nature, which always defies a definition of certainty. Space in architecture cannot be described solely as a 3-dimensional, quantifiable space, an abstract knowledge of mind, or a modeled space in real experience. Yet the quest of essence of architecture, a being that is able to distinguish architecture from other discipline, is not well defined. Due to this paradox, architecture denies to be a discipline that brings its practice parallel to the theories or concepts. That is to say, the way we are now practicing architecture is not trying to put forward theories into practical concerns. Instead, the ambivalent nature of the paradox suggests the approach of removing the limitations of the discipline.

To put it in a simple way, is there a possibility for us to judge the problem of ourselves, with a body of problem? That is why, the architectural paradox creates another problem, the possibility for a solution. Therefore, in order to resolve the paradox, we have to attempt to go beyond the paradox rather than staying inside it. According to Henri Lefevre, his theory of production of space actually questioned the nature of space in totality, therefore it serves as a form of knowledge of assumed space to question the existing knowledge of space in architecture. This process, unavoidably, have to come across the historical context of defined and practiced space in architecture; therefore it is an approach to “redefine, reformulate, and reconsider” space. The nature of this method is reflexive and self-criticizing, it can be expected that contradiction could be resulted from the same material (the space) is compared between the historical context of architectural practice and Lefebvre’s concept of space. Lefebvre’s renewed concept is not going to be adopted by architecture, but applied. To be adopted, that is to say principles are being followed with full obedience; to be applied, that is to say principles being contemplated and matched with certain occasions. When we apply Lefebvre’s concept together with that existing in architecture, as mentioned, the history that the used-to-be concept of space dominates in the historical context has to be taken into account. When we are here to rethink about a renewed concept of space; inevitably, we have to confront against the history, and intolerable and contradicting conclusions might happen during this stage.

To further explain the role of Lefevre’s knowledge about space in architecture, we could move forward a bit more about the difference between ‘adopting’ and ‘applying’. First, we could try assuming an unique approach of space has always been practiced during the development of architecture; which helps architecture to define its own sets of rules to realize space. We simply call it as one kind of spatial
experience. Given the situation like this, we could to try asking a naïve question before Lefebvre's notion is applied: Obviously, there are many commons and connections that we could link up ‘production of space’ with architecture; are we going to adopt Lefebvre’s concept of space and turn it into an architectural ‘production of space’? As suggested space has taken up a fundamental and historical context in architecture, we could deny this question and move forward. Therefore, if we are going to ‘apply’ the theories from Lefebvre in practicing architecture; we are actually going through the process of “redefine, reformulate, and reconsider”. Yet not mentioned earlier, unavoidably, a new set of rules will be generated through the process. And the new set of rules, not only represent how architecture is realized under the principle of ‘production of space’; also, they are the answers that already reconstruct the fundamental concept of space. The concept would not be just a mirror version of Lefebvre’s, because the process of deliberation goes through the historical context of architecture. Considerations on spatial practices and norms were taken into account, challenged or accepted. That is how we go beyond the paradox of space. The paradox of space in architecture – “the impossibility of questioning the nature of space whilst the same time making or experiencing a real space”\(^8\), is now being taken care of.

Therefore, in order to widen the possibilities of ‘what is space’; what we are, and what we should be doing in practicing architecture is to open up new grounds by questioning its present limits. By limits, I here generally refer to all kinds of constraints, traditions, and praxis of architecture. Architecture moves back-and-forth in criticizing its own discipline, aiming to better understand the concept of space, thus theorizing new generated concepts form that. The role of the paradox of space is essential in the recurrent criticism of the discipline of architecture. It provides a counter-reaction in the understanding of space. If we are here now, in the quest to achieve a better understanding towards space; we are aimed to banish the principles that no longer fit the society; and further trace a new form of dwelling and planning of the city. In other words, we are going to transform the old and invent a new scheme of architecture. That is how we bring theories into practice. Then, being situated in the paradox now, we would like to ask ourselves:

1) What will the city like when we take Lefebvre’s theory into practice? (a question pointing to the possible future under a renewed concept of space), and
2) What limits are we facing in architecture now? (a question referring to the conventional norms of architecture)

Let us deal with the first question by projecting we are now practicing the kind of urbanism that space becomes fundamentally social…

The fact happens to us is that, there are infinite possible related situations about one space; also, there are numerous sets of social spaces. How can we come up with a conclusion of all existing possibilities? How can we create a city, from architecture to urban planning, that actually allows the infinite possibilities and actually become an environment of generating possibilities? Though Lefebvre did not make a clear statement on how such a place can be technically structured, he puts forward the question by describing the complex social space as places that ‘intercalated’, ‘combined’, ‘superimposed’. Different places, connected together as a network physically or socially, therefore share a certain similarity in situation with the others. The interconnections among different places, while the apparent separation of spaces (by walls or boundaries) only tell the differences between places but not the social space. “The principle of the interpretation and superimposition of social spaces has one very helpful result, for it means that each fragment of space subjected to analysis masks not just one social relationship but a host of them that analysis can potentially disclose.” This statement tells an concrete, yet abstract description if we try to project the concept in spatial practice; we have to reduce the formulation of social space, from its conceptual basis to a practical basis. In other words, when we try to come up with a substantial suggestion about how the production of space can be performed, we have to first attach the reality (the facts, the constraints, the disciplines) to the conceptual idea. By doing so, realistic concerns become the strings attached to the concept of space, thus a connection of theory and practical concerns is established. Once the past actions and present conditions are taken into account, we are enabled to picture about how our potential city will be. Only with the past, we are able to tell what conditions will affect the future, that is what we mean about ‘the factors are more important that the goal’ in the concept of production. To move our discussion further to the details in the aspect of architecture, we have already reached the second question mentioned before: What limits are we facing in architecture now? In the first chapter, we have discussed the paradox of space, its conceptual dilemma would undoubtedly generate problems in relation to this question. When looking back to the history, we shall be able to notice we are now coming across the postmodern period, and
the beliefs during the modern age were rejected. Therefore, it is time for us to bring our second question upon the relation between the space and the rejected belief of space during modern age – ‘form follows function’.

FUNCTION OF ARCHITECTURE: THE THREEFOLD

“Function opens up the question of the nature of its relationship to form. Again precision is vital. It is not a question of whether there is a relation between these elements, but of the nature of already existent relations. The already present— the inscription of the given – is the operation of repetition.”

“The complete interchangeability of form and function, the loss of traditional, canonic cause-and-effect relationships as sanctified by modernism. Function does not follow form, form does not follow function – or fiction for that matter – however, they certainly interact.”

I) AFTER THE NEO-CLASSICISM

Horatio Greenough, regarded as the first American sculptor, who wrote a book Form and Function which outlined and criticized the functional relationship between architecture and decoration. His idea became influential over the century, particularly in the development of functionalism during modern age.

“Form follows function”, a famous dictum for architecture by Louis Sullivan, later explicitly adopted by many modernists, is not only an influential theory in architecture, but also becomes a fundamental belief of all kinds of designs. Early in 19th century, when aesthetic was still considered as the main factor of shaping the form of buildings, Louis Sullivan argued for the great height and upward characteristics of the tall buildings (later called as the skyscrapers today) as a natural result. During that time, the fact that dramatic need in business transactions and population growth are the confronting problems that Sullivan considered to be the problems that architects bear the responsibility. Therefore inventing a new thinking of using the space, its vertical dimension of nature of height becomes the main idea that Sullivan introduced: “Thus has come about that form of lofty construction
called the ‘modern office building’. It has come in answer to a call, for in it a new grouping of social conditions has found a habitation and a name…This view let me now state, for it brings to the solution of the problem a final, comprehensive formula: All things in nature have a shape, that is to say, a form, an outward semblance, that tells us what they are, that distinguishes them from ourselves and from each other… It is my belief that it is of the very essence of every problem that is contains and suggests its own solution. This I believe to be natural law. Let us examine, then, carefully the elements, let us search out this contained suggestion, this essence of the problem.”

Therefore, the skyscrapers were built as an artistically considered solution to the practical conditions. The outward expression, the interior design and structural spacing should be perceived in the nature as following the needs of tall buildings, spontaneous and natural.

From Louis Sullivan’s article, together with his works (e.g. Wainwright Building (1890), Guaranty Building (1894-1895)) and others of his generation, we could understand how he actually combined his vision in his practices. Steel and stones came along materialistically, with the exterior appearance of the building that reflected the interior spatial function in great height of that time. Though practical needs became the concerns in first priority, still, he put a lot of decorative elements, which are all recognizable from the outward appearance of the buildings. The attempt that Sullivan tried hard to balance the decorations with functional concerns of a building should not be ignored. Ornamentation can be found everywhere: subtle rhythm from the exterior skeleton, ornaments like the hand laid tiles, carved wood pillars, eye-catching sandstones, window plasters, and harmonic color symphony, etc; and all these signify his intention to use organics elements to tell the relationship between architecture and nature. Again, in the same article, he proclaimed: “It is the pervading law of all things organic and inorganic, of all things physical and metaphysical, of all things human and all things superhuman, of all true manifestations of the head, of the heart, of the soul, that the life is recognizable in its expression, that form ever follows function. This is the law.” Sullivan’s adherence to ornamentation, suggested though not necessarily religious, decorative elements are retained to reveals the intimate relationship between architecture and the nature. In great controversy against the belief of Beaux-Arts classicism, where static expression of rich decoration, but not the functions of building, was assigned in formal planning affecting the form; Sullivan’s emphasis on functional values made him the pioneer of his age. Yet, the shadow of Beaux-Arts can be found in the actual treatment of decorative materials by Sullivan,
but they were interpreted in a totally different approach. That is why the decorations start to take up a rather supplementary role in architecture from then on. Modernists, the group of architects and artists in 19th century, adopted “form follows function” and principally dominate the age of machines.

II) THE MODERN AGE

After the born of skyscrapers in Chicago, they rose around in other cities of America. "Along with the imposing new civic and public architecture of the period, skyscrapers reflected the ruling features of the commercial city as they approached maturity under the combined influences of Beaux-Arts principles and the mastery of high-building technology". The rapid growth of populations demanded high-rise architecture to be built, further led to the sophistication of the ‘form follows function’ notion. During the modern age, an era of machines came to birth. Driven by the advancement of machines, the concept of beauty and design was challenged by the idea of new inventions. Various kinds of domestic and industrial machines, new building materials were designed; therefore the shift of machine replacing the human’s role in producing dramatically changed people’s lives under the advancements. The new horizons in technology leads the practice of building to a social engineering of production of houses. Meanwhile, the popularity of machines grew, a concept of machine aesthetic was developed. Machines, were seen to be more than objects that operate and function. Their simplistic yet functionally explicit appearance arouse designers’ interest. During that time, ornaments were discarded, and function of design was emphasized. Furniture, utensils, appliances and materials were not only considered to be functionally beneficial, they were also the best decorative devices at home. Sharing the same principle of machines, things are redesigned to fit people’s needs, and function is the primary concern. For things with same natures, they share standardized inner and outer structure; this reflected how facilitation and efficiency were stressed in the machine age. Standardized dwelling is conceived as a kind of mass production exemplifying the advancement of technology, also an approach to appreciate the beauty of machines. Machine aesthetic lasted til the 1930s, when sophisticated technologies combined with design, industrial design was created.

III) THE POSTMODERN: EVENT CITIES: A NEW URBAN STRATEGY

Architecture, as mentioned, always applies its own constraints to explain or challenge its own discipline. Architects would try to pair up two opposing, might be contradicting elements together; and
come up with a new composition of architectural formulation. ‘Form follows function’, is one of the example that Tschumi cited. “Theoretical architects – as they were called – wanted to confront the binary oppositions of traditional architecture: namely, form versus function, or abstraction versus figuration. However, they also wanted to challenge the implied hierarchies hidden in these dualities, such as, “forms follows functions” and “ornament is subservient to structure.” After the long period of tiem that architecture was being in the belief of this deterministic hierarchy—form follows function, the deconstructivists object the once contradictory, but rather an inseparable connection that we get used to; and developed a non- hierarchical relationship between form and function. That is to say, the connection of ‘form follows what’ or ‘what follows function’ is broken, another kind of relationship is being invented. What Tschimi sees about architecture primarily in focus; is about the actions, the events, and the city movement. To say so, one must not misunderstand the functional value of dwelling is being dismissed; instead, just the link between the traditional cause-and-effect duality between form and function was banished but a new interchangeable relationship is established. The shift of focus is due to the fact that our city changed, we still ask for functional values in architecture; but when the modes of people’s lifestyles change, we do not see the importance of obligation between form and function. “The complete interchangeability of form and function, the loss of traditional, canonic cause-and-effect relationships as sanctified by modernism. Function does not follow form, form does not follow function – or fiction for that matter – however, they certainly interact.” Based on today’s urbanity, the cease of ‘form follows function’ is due to the insertion of the concept of event and movement. Unlike the modern ages, human activities no longer stick to routine actions for survival; like working, studying or living only. People now make use of the urban landscape to perform, to enjoy and to act. The role of architecture, as a form of hybrid art that allows all kinds of arts to be combined or expressed in or within an architectural form, provides the occasions for various events. In the past, we considered the repetition of forms is unavoidable due to the quantitative demands from functional needs. However, forms of architecture no longer stay under he principle of functions. For examples, the Center and Railway Station in Kyoto (1991), as a multifunctional mega-block for commercial, domestic, transformational and cultural uses, fulfils the needs of the city without implementing a single function as a constraint on its structure. Sometimes, the multiple blocks are organized for quantitative need of space; yet sometimes, the selection of materials and their related forms are determined on qualitative functions. In contrast to the traditional practice during 20th century, there are no restrictions on the
orientation of space uses, juxtaposition of different activities combine and intersect each other – crossprogramming. Under this dimension of combing functions and space, a heterogeneity of the relationship between space, event and movement is created, “in which the terms intermingle, combine and implicate one another in the production of a new architectural reality.” Because the possibility of geometric forms of architecture is diverse, and they are now not restricted in any form according to rational functions, freedom of spatial configuration opens up new invention of structures. Whilst, individual relation between the program and space are combined in an unprecedented way, that means new ways of events could also be explored in the newly combined form of space. “The very heterogeneity of the definition of architecture--space, action, and movement--makes it into that event, that place of shock, or that place of the invention of ourselves. The event is the place where the rethinking and reformulation of the different elements of architecture, many of which have resulted in or added to contemporary social inequities, may lead to their solution.”

By reaching such conclusion, we could recognize there are lots of similarities between an event city and Lefebvre’s concept of space. The juxtaposition of space and events, reveals the description of complex social space as places that ‘intercalated’, ‘combined’, ‘superimposed’. The notion that Lefebvre believes in the way that people should live in bring theory into practice, could be reflected from the way that people in event cities create their unprecedented experience of lives in terms of spatial practice. Conceptually, Lefebvre banished the duality opposition of mental and physical space, and a more comprehensive concept of space is formed with the insertion of social consideration. While Tschumi, on the other hand, speaks the similar suggestion by means of practice, the duality opposition of form and function is therefore collapsed and the concept of space is realized in the sense of heterogeneity and free combination. Though Lefebvre and Tschumi did not refer to each other’s belief as reference of their own, particularly in the case of architecture, political stance are not taken into account. Still, one of them lay out a comprehensive theory of space, aimed to bridge theory to practice; while the other actually portray a new logic of space practically in architectural development; their theories and projects serve as excellent examples to be compared. We questioned about the possibility of practicing Lefebvre’s notion of space production previously, and now we could judge through investigations of the event-cities, from their failures and success. Not only we could recognize a trend in today’s era of space is coming up – a playful, eventful and multifunctional city becomes our wish of
achievement; in the next chapter, we shall try to understand how this kind of thought is pushed forward by the group of artists, *Situationist International*; and a more specific project, the New Babylon is cited as the main evident.
Chapter Two: City of Tomorrow:  
A Comparison on Constant’s New Babylon and Le Corbusier’s Dream City

Introduction to the chapter:

Before we come to compare Constant Nieuwenhuis’s New Babylon and Le Corbusier’s theories and some of his projects, we could first lay out some reasons about the value of picking their projects instead of others. Le Corbusier (1887-1965), a Swiss born master architect during the modernism. During the time he developed the Maison-Domino, a new building system is designed for mass production with flexible concrete system on the rigid floors. His designs of villas and houses, the built and unbuilt projects (e.g. Ville Contemporaine), circulated around countries. Afterwards, he further solidified his theorists of “houses as machines to live in” into his architectural projects and town planning schemes. His projects tells how the age of machines influenced architecture for a long period of time. Constant Nieuwenhuis (b.1920), a Dutch artist originally trained as a painter. He was a member of the COBRA group, but he rejected painting during 1953 and started 3-dimensional constructions. He joined the Situationist International (SI) and worked with Guy Debord in developing the theory of unitary urbanism; later came up with an inspiring experimental project—the New Babylon. Constant, more than once, claimed his is in the position of against Le Corbusier, as he argued that the industrial and machine culture should come to an end. He suggested a new form of urbanism should make conscious use of our environmental ambiances by a high-degree of technological automation in our future cities. In the New Babylon, not only a new environment is shaped, a new Babylonian culture is formed. Before we start with comparing the two distinct projects by the two masters, we should first have this concept in mind: Constant regarded the New Babylon neither as an applicable nor utopian project, he treated it as an experiment which allows him and the public to search for a new form of urban territory. On the other hand, Le Corbusier, as an renowned architect, the prototypes, plans and sketches that he made for his ideal cities were considered to be prototypes for a future city. He intentionally drafts his ideas with great details in order to make them possible one day. The difference of attitude between the artist and architecture, not only distinguish how their works are taken: either as an artwork or architectural project; but in a deeper sense, it explains why the two masters developed divergent thinking towards the utopia.
ARCHITECTURE OR DRAWING?: THE MEDIUMS OF EXPRESSION

Previously, we have discussed a few fundamental concepts of architecture, in views from philosophical arguments, historical facts and the latest trend of architectural developments. In “Questions of space”, Bernard Tschumi stressed architecture participates in both mental space and real spatial representation: “There is no way to perform architecture in a book. Words and drawings can only produce ‘paper space’ and not the experience of real space. By definition, paper space is imaginary: it is an image. Yet for those who do not build (whether for circumstantial or ideological reasons -- it does not matter), it seems perfectly normal to be satisfied with the representation of those aspects of architecture which belong to mental constructs – to imagination. Such representations inevitably separate the sensual experience of a real space from the appreciation of rational concepts. Among other things, architecture is a function of both.”

The statement draws a distinguishing line between drawing and architecture, particularly the difference observed from their mediums of expression. Basically, drawing is a piece of art on paper. Its limit of expression is on its flat canvas; but this limit also allows the representation on canvas further interpreted in mental degree. For architecture, it incorporate the use of drawings as a supplementary role, but the method of expression concerns mainly on the 3-dimensional models and real construction. A mental interpretation of architecture is therefore based on real spatial structures, thus a kind of spatial experience. Both drawing come across the metal imagination and realization of expression, but based on the different mediums. We understand the drawing and architecture are not two mediums in opposition, yet they actually share certain common principles in the sea of artistic mediums (basic techniques, aesthetical judgments, knowledge of perspective and topology, etc). Knowledge of drawing can be applied to architecture, that is why the rigid geometric pattern is shared by Le Corbusier and Piet Mondrian. Vice versa, knowledge of architecture can be applied to drawing, that is why the distorted spatial experience by MC Escher is realized and represented on a piece of paper. Drawing and architecture influence each other. Still, they are two distinct mediums because they do not share the same limits in the respective mediums.

Suggested by Piet Mondrian, painting is the least restricted medium of art. Though his life-long profession was a painter, he was regarded as an influential person on modern architecture; supported by modernist architect Le Corbusier. From Mondrian's later paintings, he applied his experience in
cities into his plastic paintings (e.g. New York City, Broadway Boogie Woogie); also, tried to apply abstract art on painting interior space like theater and his studio. Architecture gives people a direct sense of abstractness, while Mondrian’s certainty in painting as the art having the most freedom to express its purity is being doubted. He compared the different mediums of art and painting was concluded as the least restricted art. Mondrian believed painting holds no assumption with forms and articulation with social meanings, and that makes the different why painting is superior to other kinds of art, including architecture. All kinds of arts embody values and transformation of the culture. For traditional arts like classic portraits, they are valuable because they represent the appearance of objects and people in nature. Thus, the picturesque appearance allows the audience to understand the reality through medium of arts. This gives an alternative medium for people to perceive the nature other than direct seeing. The value of arts at that time, is hooked to its content of representation.

Half a century later today, Mark Wigley gave an account on the relationship between drawing, architecture and the experimental project, New Babylon. Uniqueness of New Babylon, being a multidisciplinary experiment, is emphasized. Constant artistically portrayed a new form of city on an architectural framework, but vaulted over the conventional hindrance of understanding architectural models as the dominating form of representation. Early before Constant’s New Babylon architectural prototypes were finished, as an architecture learner, he created compositions with cubic wooden blocks dispersed on flat surface in 1953 to express his thoughts towards architecture and urbanism. They are considered as painting-like sculptural models hanging on walls, stepping on the boundary of dimensionality between drawing and sculpture. It can be noticed these compositions are in a regular sense similar to that recognized from Mondrian’s abstract paintings; showing Mondrian’s evidential influence on his early understanding towards architecture. However, the way that he was trying to bring the pure plasticism of drawing to sculptural-like models is an act of crossing the boundary, from drawing to architecture. As mentioned before, the medium of drawing is on a 2-dimensional surface with that of architecture is 3-dimensional. Importing the sculptural-like models helped Constant to step out from the dead end of pure plastic art in painting. Based on those works, we could notice Constant tried to experiment on different mediums, drawing and architecture. However, when we try to turn our focus to the New Babylon, we could notice Constant no longer stick to the pure plasticism. No more rigid geometries, and rational city planning. (We shall compare the different attitudes of Le Corbusier and
Mondrian and Le Corbusier both believed in a true aesthetic equilibrium between the form of art and expression could set people free, therefore they approached pure geometry in terms of drawing and architecture respectively. However, Constant's belief on unitary urbanism of a situation city oppose to any kind of perfect regulation. Therefore, in the New Babylon, no matter the drawings or the architectural models, no rules or rigid relation are applied the city plan. Because of this, Constant opens up new roles of what architectural drawings and models should play in an experimental project. Drawings no longer represent the appearance of a structure in a supplementary role, but tell the spirit of the structure in a vivid sense, by means of the lines and space in drawing. Lines, colors, perspective are manipulated in the sense that we are able to recognize the cultural spirit of New Babylon through the drawings. In contrast to the human spirit that expressed by Mondrian with pure vertical and horizontal lines and primary colors, Constant not only establishes a totally different approach in expression the spirit of New Babylon; he also advocate a new belief of how freedom should be. And this kind of freedom, is so different from that of Le Corbusier and Mondrian that it could not be restricted by rigid lines and perspectives. The same belief is demonstrated in the models, where different sets of places are no longer planned in precise alignment, a total opposition to Le Corbusier’s architectural models of the ideal villas. Le Corbusier, Mondrian and Constant are sharing the same mediums of expression in their works, but they end up with opposing beliefs. For Constant, furthermore, his atypical belief on spatial representation without precise regulations challenged the formal understanding of architectural drawings. What happens when precise measurement of geometric structures play no dominance in a piece of architecture or a city plan? What contents we aimed to show in architectural drawings and models? Therefore, the roles of drawings and models within the discipline of architecture, also changed under Constant’s belief of the New Babylon.

As Mark Wigley pinpointed, the deliberate quarantine of drawings away from other mediums of New Babylon is portrayed (i.e. models, photographs, text, etc) purposively. “(The drawings)... positioned as secondary, a medium whose strategic effect depends on the appearance of being subordinate but might not be so submissive in the end”\(^{19}\). Apart from the plane canvas form of drawings, the significant influence that drawings exerted on the New Babylon can be further explained by means of ever-overlooked materiality of paper. The New Babylon, therefore, becomes “A new architecture is suspended in a designated liminal zone in which paper has magical power”. Fragile and wild lines on
paper effectively tell the vivid mechanism of an automated city, neither in a sense of predictable paths nor accurate representation from mathematical calculation; spontaneous nature of a city with movement is therefore captured. The drawings are therefore visual persistence of a living city in eye, lively and momentarily. The drawings do not only serve as representation of the city structure, but also allow viewers to devote their imaginary experience of being a self in the city. We can refer to this sense of mentally constructed space, to the notion that Tschumi suggested about drawing and architecture, that drawing allows a high-degree mentally constructed sense of space. Therefore, the drawings of New Babylon primarily convey a strong message of the theme of New Babylon by using the flat surface of paper, lines and colors, but not the 3-dimensional models. Though they do not represent the precise structure of New Babylon, they successfully tells the spirit of New Babylon as a seemingly, non-stopping playground; which cannot be represented by the architectural models. If we attempt to express the same kind of spirit in the structural model of New Babylon, we could realize accurate representation kill the spirit of New Babylon. This resolves why three-dimensional architectural models in the New Babylon; unlike other architectural projects, is not aimed to achieve as a totality or punctuation of representation of the whole project.

According to Mark Wigley, it is believed Constant's New Babylon exploited paper in an expressive sense that fostered a spontaneous system with lines, to the extent that a new sense of space is generated from the space between lines and marks. Comparing the drawings together with the models of the New Babylon, it is obvious that the drawings are not a mechanical reproduction of the models. Instead, the originality and creativity of New Babylon is realized from the medium of papers. Constant used various approaches to experiment how the New Babylon can be expressed on paper. He tried marking the maps with ink, making collages with photographs, pencil sketching; a lot of reworked assemblages in great detail were done. “Constant has illustrated this future illustration (the New Babylon) in numerous maps, maquettes, drawings, and paintings. The maps shows a whole series of linked structures stretching out across the landscape. They exist on various scales, starting with a quasi-European dimension—as, for instance, with the map for the Ruhr area of New Babylon—and continuing with models simulating the development of concrete cities or city districts (Amsterdam, Antwerp, Paris). Sometimes they are set in a completely abstract, neutral background. On other occasions, existing contemporary or historical maps serve as a background.”

That is the reason
that the essence of the New Babylon project, realizes in its way of expression as a collective piece of work of art. The significance of the drawings weigh so much that a new set of rules about the New Babylon is not revealed from what is represented from the drawings (New Babylon Nord (New Babylon North), 1960), but what is demonstrated from the drawings themselves. When the drawings are individually shown, we could imagine about how the New Babylon is from the content of a single drawing. When different drawings, collages, and maps are all shown together, a more comprehensive picture about the New Babylon is generated from all of them. Though the drawings by Constant show, are not mechanical representation of high accuracy, but a shimmering impression with a careful plan of the city framework occurs in our mind. This is due to the high motivation of imagination that the medium of drawing is leading us to, and we are not confined in the concerns of how the appearance or structure, in what length, width and depth. Therefore, based on the drawings, our mental construction of space and association of the images of tells the framework of New Babylon, and which accurate calculation is not needed. The burden of a rigid structure is discarded, that is exactly what a situational city should be. In terms of the method of exploiting the medium, Constant took a double advantage from drawing. Firstly, there has been a programmed configuration about architecture as a discipline, the uses of the models, the drawings, and all kinds of its representation. However, in New Babylon, formal role of drawings in architectural as a representation of structure and form no longer take place. All drawings and paper works are created with originality and expressive elements. The New Babylon, a city of playground sustained by an unsettling atmosphere of dynamism, is therefore expressed with formal medium of drawing but informal way of expression. Its sprit is represented in the drawings, but not its structure. Secondly, the New Babylon is free from the form of architectural constructions in a rigid geometrical patterns, thus avoiding the usual constraints, conventions and norms of forms of architecture. The modernists believed that the architectural spectacle has its rules, and they saw the functions as the rules for the forms. Therefore they seek for a functional approach to achieve what architecture meant to them. However, suggested by Guy Debord and expressed in the New Babylon, “The function of architecture is to present illusory, isolated coherence as a substitute for an urban complexity that is elsewhere. To demystify architecture, it is important to dissolve what is called function and meaning.” The Situationist International are in an extreme opposition to functionalism. “The issue of church construction provides a particularly illuminating instance. Functionalist architects tend to agree to construct churches, thinking -- if they are not stupid deists -- that the church, the edifice
without function within a functional urbanism, can be treated as a free exercise in plastic form. Their error is that they fail to consider the psycho-functional reality of the church. The functionalists, who are the expression of the technological utilitarianism of the era, cannot successfully build a single church if one considers that the cathedral was once the unitary accomplishment of a society that one has to call primitive, given that it was much further embedded than we are in the miserable prehistory of humanity. From the New Babylon, functionalism is totally banished, and a new idea of situation is sought. Constant deliberately concerned on the structural problems of urbanism, therefore he tried to develop a new mode of dwellings and constructions, opposes to the contemporary praxis of architecture. The New Babylon is a complex allows modification and adventures. SI suggested the practice of drifting (derive), which people are grouped randomly and traveled together to explore the urban landscape without purposes. The aim of this experiment is to allow one move from one place to another, experiencing the different urban environments and looking forwards to unexpected encounters. The randomness, playfulness, adventure are what Constant trying to suggest in the New Babylon. That is why, on the level of appearance of the city, rigid rules kill the sprit of a new urban strategy; while on the level of humanity, boredom and uneventful policies and regulations kill the society and people. New Babylon becomes an amazing inventive project, is mainly due to its effort in breaking the formal constraints of architecture, it is an artistic while experimental suggestion of architecture. At this point, we can further understand Constant’s New Babylon has fully departed from the plasticism of Mondrian’s or Le Corbusier’s. The New Babylon, in terms of its expression, is not a system of formal compositional seriality that can be achieved with regular units and zonations. Dynamic city movement is taken into account even on the sketch; it is no longer repressed, but put forward right on the building site, even on a piece of paper.

PRACTICAL UTOPIAN PROJECTS VERSUS EXPERIMENTAL ART:
A COMPARISON ON LE CORBUSIER’S UTOPIA AND CONSTANT’S NEW BABYLON

Constant worked on the New Babylon project with great consciousness about it as an experimental art, therefore, he escaped from the constraints of architectural projects. Particularly for utopian projects, the inhabitant and dwellings are all taken into account of how they should be arranged, planned and therefore built. And the significant connection behind all these is that: when they are marked with ‘architectural’ projects, what is planned, should also be applicable and feasible. In the eyes
of the modernists, they believed a static plan of a garden city could create a stable urbanism. During the days of Le Corbusier’s age, as discussed previously, functions were the primarily concerns. Le Corbusier conceived architecture as one of the most urgent needs of people; only those engineers who are capable of producing harmonic for people can be called the builders. Therefore, architectural projects are not only blueprints for a better tomorrow; they bear the builder’s promise in fulfilling people’s needs of shelter, protection and comfort. The similar concept is inherited in utopian projects, because we generally accept the notion that architecture forms the basis of an urban strategy. When we ask for a better city for the future, we are also asking for a strategy that eliminates the social problems or practical needs of people. Back to the 20th century, when a piece of architecture is regarded to be good, its design is functionally driven. For a utopian project, the same concept of function is enlarged to a bigger scale. That is to say, utopian projects have to be functional, therefore practically driven by people’s need. The kind of urbanism that is created is formed with meanings of functions. That is why there were industrial zones, residential zones, and commercial zones appear in a city plan; within the buildings, rooms and floors are leveled according to a permanent mass plan. People who live there would engage in a routine. When comparing this kind of utopian project, together with the New Babylon, we could notice the 20th century approach was trying to resolve the present problems for a better future. The physical context of space is already limited, while the city movement is also confined in the limited space. On the other side, the New Babylon creates a new belief of experimental practices of every individual, and regards the collaboration of the society as a collective art. By means of drifting and situations, Constant tries to breakthrough the limitation of physical space, and extend the landscape to limitless by means of modification of spaces and ambiance. A same place could be multi-functional, its walls and lights can be modified according to one’s preference. Nothing stays stable. Henri Lefebvre once commented on the name of New Babylon – “a provocative name, since in the Protestant tradition Babylon is a figure of evil. New Babylon was to be the figure of good that took the name of the cursed city and transformed itself into the city of the future.” This further tells, Constant positioned the New Babylon as a reflection of an imperfect city. Suggestions in the New Babylon are experiments prior to a possible future. He abandoned the idea of perfection in the name of New Babylon, therefore the idea of being an ‘ideal city’ of perfection is never stressed. Insofar, we could able to notice, New Babylon advocated events and encounters, they cannot be expected and therefore no rules can be applied. Thus, they are rather experiments that occasions occur out of usual habits.
Whether these occasions are big or small, they are not taken into severe consideration. For the idea of being ideal, however, rules and regulations are inescapable. Without them, how can perfection be reached and maintained? We are now in an city of imperfection, in our judgment, perfection can be suggested in different degrees. What do we mean by ideal is a highest degree of perfection is reached. When we talk about utopian city, we usually refer to an ideal city. The reason that I would not regard the New Babylon as an utopian city is that, the distinction of New Babylon as experimental but not perfect has to be noted. “The success of the project (New Babylon) is in the recognition of the failure of the project. The inescapable contradictions in utopia lead to its failure… Art must not be utopian, so it can not be administered for its failure to become real. In that aspect (negatively seen) New Babylon was a very successful project.”

Apart from being a visionary plan of a city, utopian projects bear the promise from the one who drafts the plan. However, in New Babylon, one pointed is stressed by Constant that everyone of us, all the inhabitants to be the visionary architects in our lives. It is everyone’s task to create their own adventures everyday, thus everyone is trying to immerse themselves into the practice of art. Collectively, a New Babylonian culture is therefore formed. That is what Constant means about creating situations and make an eventful life, and individuality and specificity are stressed. The authoritative concept in differentiating the builder and the civilians play no more importance. The old custom that architectural project is directed by one, or a group of people is eliminated.

WHAT ORDER TELLS ABOUT THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN NATURE AND PEOPLE

Do we need order in our city plan? Le Corbusier suggested a coherent scheme of order is needed in our city. “... Le Corbusier – articulated the conceptual duality around which the rest of his work was to revolve: on the one hand the imperative need to satisfy functional requirements through empirical form, and on the other the impulse to use abstract elements to affect the senses and nourish the intellect.” Therefore, his utopian city was planned under this dialectic view of forms with great carefulness and absolute exactness. For examples, in his proposal for a three-million people project in Paris, Ville Contemporaine (1922); he planned for the individual prototypes for building blocks, and came up with concrete ideas on the organization of the whole villa with detailed descriptions on street system, zonation, transportation network, orientation of public and private places. “The city as a whole, patterned in plan like an oriental carpet and four times the area of Manhatthan, consisted of the aforementioned perimeter blocks plus twenty-four sixty-storey cruciform office towers in the center. The
overall double-square plan was shown surrounded by open fields and penetrated by a picturesque park conceived along the lines of Central Park in Manhattan. The densely populated place therefore became topologically organized by block systems along the axis. Later in 1930, he further employed the ideas from Chinese traditional city planning in his project Ville Radieuse. Except the overall strategy of building block were organized in parallel and linear zones, which he recognized it as a trace of Leonardo’s da Vinci’s spread eagle man; a strong systematic and rigid geometrical pattern is manipulated. He related order to its basic elements of lines and their orientation, with a great similarity as Mondrian proclaimed about lines in drawing. First of all, vertical and horizontal lines are the straight lines. They come together as a pair; suggesting a perpendicular relationship. These two mathematical constants form a perfect right angle, which maintains equilibrium. In Le Corbusier’s belief, the vertical and horizontal bear such an absolute geometry that only one vertical and one horizontal can be found in the world. By these straight lines and right angles, space can be determined with exact measurements—volumetrically in height, width and depth. This is how Le Corbusier’s cityscape looks like: An orthogonal road network with perimeter buildings zoned according to their primary functions. To have such a perfectly rational system as the order of a city plan, a totally different system in contrary to the nature is created. There is no absolutely straight line or angle in the chaotic nature. The mountains, coastal lines, tree branches, even the human body; are all arbitrary. Yet, Le Corbusier claimed this contradiction creates the scenario that human learns about spirit of order: talking about realizing the chaos of nature from the perfection of artificial geometry. Therefore, order is needed for us to recognize the nature.

Le Corbusier’s description on this intrinsic need is the due to the experience that we get from nature’s chaotic appearance; in order to express our image of perfection in mind; we create a coherent, rational scheme on geometry. The universe creates us, and its precipitous appearance of imperfect shapes of natural matters, yet not hinders our power of creation; on the contrary, enables us to learn about measurement and exactness; so that we create geometry. By doing so, human 'masters' the nature; not in the sense of conquer, but the sense of harmony. The interactive and revolving relationship between human and the nature, tells a vivid story about appreciation of order enters human mind. Geometry is all about equilibrium of balance and proportion, by maintaining a pure geometric sheltering around us, a zone of protection is set up. Le Corbusier took up pure geometry as an
approach of pursuing higher achievement towards a more perfect order; the better the 'order' we maintain, the more we express our souls freely. Thus, we are inspired by the nature and we create upon nature.

The notion implicitly tells an important message (and this particularly refer to attitude of machine age): People grip the power of building and they endeavor to express their internal feelings towards the external world by means of design. These people, might taken up the role of engineers, architects, or city planners. They become the authoritarians, in the society, and the nature. This conclusion would probably be objected by Constant. “A growing discrepancy can be observed between the standards applied in allocating urban space and the real needs of the community. Town-planners and architects still tend to think in terms of the four functions of the city as defined by Le Corbusier in 1933: living, working, traffic, and recreation. This over-simplification reflects opportunism rather than insight into and appreciation of what people actually want today, with the result that the city is rapidly becoming obsolete. At a time when automation and other technological advances are reducing the demand for manual labour, plans go forward to build working-class districts suitable only for passing the night.”

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Chapter Three: Utopian Projects and its Spirits

Introduction to the chapter:

In the previous chapter, we have discussed about the future cities by Constant and Le Corbusier, their similarities and differences. In this chapter, we are going to look into the topic of utopia with a deep focus: not only by means of architecture (the discipline), but also the views on utopia from other disciplines (i.e. politics, philosophy). By doing so, we can obtain a more comprehensive picture about what utopia is about, and this helps us to pull out some of the related issues about utopian and architecture among all. We could, therefore, deliberate and find out a direct relationship between architecture and utopia, and figure out the role of architecture in utopian thinking. At the end of the chapter, we shall ask ourselves a question: Could architecture take up a significant role in imaging an ideal city, and eventually leads us to a real future of utopia?

GENERAL IDEA of UTOPIA

Utopia is abstract and puzzling. It is neither something we can have a clear picture with the help of visualization nor something that is happening in the present. Its root stays in our imagination rather than the reality. Still, based on one’s living experience, one could give a rough definition about utopia without formal references to discourses or theories. Utopia has always been with everyone of us -- in us and among us, since the time when we have unfulfilled desires about our own living places. And these desires evoke our dream of a better tomorrow.

For every individual, wishes come alongside demands. With these wishes, which commonly project to a better future because of dissatisfaction on the present, the anticipatory idea of utopia unconsciously aggregates and becomes more concrete in our mind. It is not an idea limited to certain kinds of people. With or without professional knowledge, therefore, we can still talk about what Utopia means to us in our own stories. This is the root of utopia in each individual.

UTOPIA as AN IDEAL; NOT ONLY AN IMPROVED VERSION OF THE PRESENT

a) Utopia is not just fulfilling the desires
On the other hand, we can notice most people share common thoughts about utopia. First, all of us are sharing the same piece of land on earth, in the neighborhood societies, with similar living experiences. There are tons of social problems we face together: political segregation, cultural repression, racial discrimination, material imbalance, etc. These are the flaws we are able to recognize without accentuation; we can recognize these imperfections of our place even without considering them in comparison with utopia. We are already choked to death by all these ever-lasting problems. Therefore, from the reality, we gain our lived experience and we project them into utopian thinking as we start to imagine the blueprint of a city of ideal state. The conclusion is many of us share the similar wishes about a place where these kinds of problems no longer exist. However, a city that allows the citizens to release from present social problems, cannot be concluded as the utopia. Basically, solutions to social problems are ways to fulfilling the general public’s desires. That is to say, human needs can be physically or mentally satisfied by means of problems solved. However, as mentioned, utopia is more than that. If we are possible to fulfill all desires that we recognize in the present, the state is not utopian; only if we can point out perfection is reached by doing so. We might think about when the desires aggregate, they combine in a way that utopian thoughts are formed. It seems to us that desires are the basic elements of utopian thinking; and utopia appears to be a scaled-up version of a group of desires. However, if so, then why utopia is not just a place fulfilling all desires, but something more? Let us begin with approaching desires. When we consider about fulfilling desires, we are not just concerning the nature of desire only. As desires, based on all kinds of solutions in reality, they always seek for satisfactions. Desire, itself, could exist without visualization. However, when we try to figure out the methods of fulfilling our desires, this act tells we are recognizing, realizing, and further understanding about our desires. This way of approaching desires involves visualization, it is a step of ‘dealing with desires’ but not ‘finding the inner spirit of desire. We can summarize this brings desires to imaginable matters, in terms of a method of adaptation to reality: through connection of ideas or visualization. In order to realize desires, visualization is required. Without it, we are not able to connect the unimaginable desire together with the reality. And reality, is the source where we find objects and matters (physically and mentally) to solve our unfulfilled desires. As questioned before, utopia does not simply fulfill our desires, why? Its ideal and perfect nature tells, it does not end at the point that a place where realistic problems are solved. The reason of having utopia is not only fulfilling a huge, all people’s commonly shared desire. We can notice something more is out there about utopia. Where
does the “something more” come from? Due to this “something more” (the idea of perfection) already exists in pure fantasy about utopia, therefore it is a kind of spirit inside the original utopian thoughts. We can conclude, the essence of utopian spirit does not include desires as the only kind of ingredients. In precise speaking, we cannot simply agree on spirit of utopia equal to the spirit desires. Therefore, when we approach utopia, we have to ask ourselves this: If utopia is not just about desires, what else?

b) Aim of Utopia

Furthermore, if utopia is not just fulfilling the desires, what is its aim? We shall try to answer this together with the previous question very soon. Before that, we shall ask another fundamental question about nature utopia. As mentioned, utopia is rather an ideal version, instead of a better version of today’s society. To have a society without problems, also means realistic problems are solved. Then, what is the aim to have a city with perfection, achieving more than having all realistic matters solved?

Let us take a look at the conceptual idea about utopian thinking. Utopia reaches the ideal state. Utopian thinking further develops the idea about utopia as a homeland of commonwealth and harmony among all residents. The city will be a self-contained space with its political and social autonomy. It is also an humanistic enterprise created by human’s own endeavors. It is a perfect city of the future, the tomorrow.

From this statement, a complex structure of utopia is created. Before coming to discuss how could these could be carried out, its concepts are mixed with thoughts related to subjects of harmony, freedom, universality, etc. We can understand a higher degree of concern about desires (not only in relation to fulfilling human needs) is acknowledged; and the subject of issue could not be explained by evident in reality. Harmony, freedom, and universality; all these carry the prefect spirit of knowledge; they are the essences of utopia, and they carry the same kind of abstractness as desire. Therefore, imperfections in reality, allow us to learn about interpret and visualize what the essence of these sprits are about, in the similar way of visualizing desires. They are the qualitative descriptions about the spirits of utopia. Therefore, we shall notice, through achieving utopia, we are trying to approach the inner spirits of utopia. The process that we come along through asking the why we need utopia, we could discover the way we try to achieve utopia is also the way we seek for its spirit. This spirit, is the origin that we ask for ideal rather than the problem-free. This answer, also provides hints about elements of utopia as suggested by the previous question. Still, a precise discussion about this kind of sprit, its relationship with human and utopia, should be discussed.
HUMAN SPIRIT AND UTOPIA

Utopia, the stage of this kind of city emphasizes its extreme perfection. It is more than a compensation of unfulfilled wishes from frustrations of the unfulfilled and it concerns more than a solution of the present. A leap can be notice between a city without problems and a city of perfection. Contemporary problems of the present are eliminated but an ideal city is not therefore formed. Assuming human spirit has no relation to the environment but able to fit in the reality, its high degree of inwardness rises to the contemplation of inclusive truth in itself. Inwardness of human spirit, that is to say, its nature of having a capacity that truth is embraced, internalized. We probe into human spirit; in the same time, we approach truth. However, there is no way for us to directly consider human spirit, similarly in the sense about utopia, everything becomes reality-based after realization. Moreover, we are unconscious about the truth that we are told in the human trait. With the human spirit, it helps us to perceive the evident, and go further deeper to the reality and finally, the truth evolves: a reflexive cycle that we self-efface the uncertainties of truth in human spirit by human spirit. Due to human spirit is not restricted to the reality, it can be explained as a common trait for all people. And therefore, human spirit is a discipline that we find no limitations to explain the differences between individuality and universality. To explain and further question the problem of utopia is not only solving problems of the reality, but also reaching the truth within human spirit, we shall understand some characteristics of utopia in relation to the human spirit, and we will be able to find out why ideas of individuality happen to be universality.

FORMULATION OF UTOPIAN THOUGHTS

The overall dialectic of the formulation of utopia tells its twofold nature: On one hand, utopia is a pure fantasy, a fantasy in our mind. It exists without physical form, therefore we are just able to notice its abstract existence mentally. For the substance inside this fantasy, we are not able to visualize it in terms of image, text, and sound; neither mental imagination nor physical sensations. Its content cannot be described in spoken words. No logic or reason can be applied to this high-degree of abstractness, so that human reasoning cannot help at this level. The only thing we are conscious about is its existence, but our inability to express it explicitly limits us to define the fantasy in deep. Therefore, on the other hand, utopia needs to be imagined. While, imagination always bonds with reality. We become concerned with questions of efficiency. We worry about how to achieve our goals, but the goals
themselves are taken for granted; we fail to ask for the reasons why those goals should be pursued at all. We could, compare this way of thinking to T.W. Adorno and Horkheimer’s thoughts on the nature of reasons – objective and subjective reasoning. The way that people are judging the possibility of utopia using social norms and their personal interests, demonstrates subjective reasoning. The twofold structure of utopian thinking is now inserted with people’s considerations of attaining the utopia (a purpose). This brings them shift their thoughts from the delusive-like fantasy of utopia to a more self-related situation, which is self-beneficial. "This type of reason may be called subjective reason. It is essentially concerned with means and ends, with the adequacy of procedures for purposes more or less taken for granted and supposedly self-explanatory. It attaches little importance to the question whether the purposes as such are reasonable."

We could notice, the later suggestion of a reality-based utopia is grounded on the former one. The pure fantasy is not in the nature of the reality. It is disclosed through concepts that actually have nothing in common with the expression of any kind of imaginable image or reality phenomena. With the fantasy of utopia, we then perceive or imagine a reality-based utopia. We can notice, when pure fantasy brings us forward to an imaginable utopia, it must necessarily clash with a reality that constantly produces suffering. For this reason, it must seek to change reality, to bring reality into line with the fantasy. Utopia must become a practical project. This requires the ability to visualize or imagine the concrete features of utopia, which brings us out of the realm of pure (inward, abstract, contentless) fantasy and into that of concrete imagination, which is always mixed with experience. This further explains the primary potential that utopian thinking draws people to have the idea of attaining a real, existing utopia in the real world.

There is a ‘gravity’ of utopia created, on the platform of mind but not the piece of earth. This kind of gravity is abstract and cross-discipline, created upon the absolute truth of human spirit and the network of humankinds. It is not existing in the sense of physical force, but virtually drawing an underlying connections among two types of human activities: Firstly, events occurred when different disciplines run by people join together in constructing and maintaining a system; secondly, different individuals sharing their own thoughts within one disciplines, or among different disciplines. In utopian thinking, the gravity specifically creates a utopian tradition; that is to say, the same kind of utopian
wishes about an ideal state. And the above two conditions occurs during two distinct periods of achieving utopia: searching for the utopia, and attaining the utopia.

SEARCHING FOR UTOPIA: THE PURE FANTASY

Previously, we have given the explanation on nature and the connection between pure fantasy on utopia and the reality-based utopia. Simply, there are: utopia out of fanaticism and utopia out of realism. In terms of practical concerns, these two approaches tell the subjective intention of an individual about utopia; the former case allow one’s pure imagination to be flourished without considering those hypothetical dilemmas that would actually occur in a reality-based utopia; while the latter one extends its considerations onto the happenings of today and projects them to the future. We could understand, based on the previous argument of human spirit and utopian thoughts, utopia out of fantasy follows the human instinct in a way that is completely unmixed with expereince, and inwardness of human spirit is capable of leading us to find out our wishes with the most truthfulness. Due to the fact that this kind of utopia is not based on reality, it has no system (not any kind that based on the existing disciplines; for example, economics, sociology, etc), not even a kind of system that can be expressed in imagination, which borrows its materials from experience. Also, this kind of utopia is not based on maintenance. Only with the logic of system, something can run smoothly, and therefore maintained. This is a type of utopia that we are not able to imagine, if we try to relate it even with a little of reality. We could categorize this kind of utopia together as a similar kind of human spirit, it involves the truth that we are picturing about an ideal place, but we cannot express it in any terms as its form never exist in realistic or imaginable-realistic sense. The ‘gravity’ we were asked to consider here, is pure as the consideration about utopia stays inside of the mind and spiritual stage. And the harmony created among all individuals by this kind of utopian thinking, exists in the purest term of utopianism. Human spirit is the only “ingredients” coherently bond with this utopian.

SEARCHING FOR UTOPIA: THE MIXED EXPERIENCE IN REALITY

Meanwhile, the other kind of utopian thinking is reality-based. It has something to do with issues including all disciplines that have their own set of rules and theories. We shall notice that, at this stage we are considering about utopia, reality enters. In reality, we have systems and logic about all kinds of matters in our world; and we are able to distinguish them into different disciplines based on the social
structure. Without the contributions of all the disciplines, a prototype of city cannot be imagined and structured. For example, laws and politics, as one discipline, is able to help people understand the administrative system of a place; while city planning, as another discipline, helps people to understand the physical structure of an environment. In the aspect of laws and politics, its completeness by means of the constitutions and regulations is able to tell the governmental hierarchy and the responsibilities of the civilians. Similarly, city planning and other disciplines are able to do the same. All these disciplines group together, deal with different areas about the society and form the basic structure of a place, or a country. They are fundamentally rules, but through execution, they can be enforced. This is a simplified version about a system is established in a place. Utopia, in the same sense, is a place. Do we need the similar kind of system in our utopia? Yes. Theorists and historians told us by putting their efforts in what kind of system fits utopia, and by means of that, we can have a city of perfection. Again, as we discussed earlier, an ideal city is far more than a city without factual problems we are facing. Therefore, in order to achieve all-rounded perfection in utopia, the system in utopia should come to as a whole with all disciplines agreeing each other as a whole. This kind of agreement is the basic element of utopian harmony, however, the purity of utopian spirit no longer stays true. The idea of utopia is now mixed with imagination and it is no longer pure at all. The ‘gravity’ that allows all to relate their thoughts are now connected with realistic facts or matters. And the reality, as the evident; therefore guides the harmonic rule of the pure ‘gravity’. We would have similar kinds of reference about the utopian from the reality, to certain extent, we would conclude our utopia in a sense that can be described, theorized, or expressed. Among people, we ‘communicate’ through the gravitational network of utopian thoughts in the reality-based level; among disciplines, they ‘maintain’ a seemingly perfect structure according to the imperfect standard of reality. To conclude, utopia is leveled down to a reality level in our imagination. Yet, this is the usual mode of imagination that people are able to depict about their utopias in mind, and transformed it into a presentable way to themselves or the others.

ATTAINING UTOPIA

If we try to execute the idea of having utopia, we could foresee utopian is furthered leveled down to facing realistic issues. We shall notice in the present society, when all the disciplines come together, there are flaws and conflicts between themselves and they never agree with each other. For example, dictatorship might allow decisive ease of implementing of law and order, amounting to catastrophe, it
kills social democracy and humanity at the basic level. The social order is therefore reconstructed according to the leadership and obedience, otherwise jeopardizing an effective regimentation. The new social order with multiplicity of classes, therefore, recreates a new mode of production and consumption in the society. Roles of people are different; to the very details of all's lives, people have their entire lifestyles changed due to the massive effects from one or more disciplines. The former ideological gravity we mentioned now transformed with distortion into inharmonic force among people and disciplines, due to the imperfections of systems in reality. The usual characteristic of the gravity cannot give its embodied impetus to bring harmony in this level. As matters rely too much on the reality, the gravity among people and disciplines now shifted towards the evident, and no longer stays in a coherent relationship with human spirit. Conflicts and Disagreements occur.

As Karl Popper suggested, “the Utopian attempt to realize an ideal state, using a blueprint of society, as a whole. is one which demands a strong centralized rule of the few, and which is therefore likely to lead to a dictatorship. This I consider a criticism of the Utopian approach.” The stated example, not in the way of illustrating the utopian thoughts, are telling the attempts, methods, and their consequences in pushing the reality to come into utopia. They both cited dictatorship as a political strategy and criticized its method of approach. The focus is not the utopian thought, but entirely shifted to the concern about leverage in the process of attaining utopia, in the discipline of politics. There are no clues that we can learn about the named gravity here. This is because, as suggested, distortion of gravity occurred when the attention of utopian thoughts is shifted to be realized in reality, and the standard of consideration is based on the imperfect reality.

RELATING UTOPIA AND ARCHITECTURE

After all, what is the relationship of utopia and architecture? Concluded from the above, we could notice architecture has with no difference in nature when comparing with the others; it is also a discipline. A discipline that we rely on the reality, particularly on the context of space. If so, does this mean that architecture, as a medium that we fond of using it in representing how the utopia looks like, is not able to help us in understanding utopia? And, as architecture is itself as a discipline, when we are trying to apply it onto the consideration of attaining utopia, what conflicts would suggest? How to break the
limitations of architecture, and avoid the constraints of its medium confining us to suggest a utopia that is no more than a reality-based utopia? Before searching for the answers of these questions, it is a good start for us to understand the main characteristics and conflicts among architecture and utopia by Elizabeth Grosz, where time and space of two domains are elaborated with a philosophical sense. The rest of the chapter, concerns the kind of utopian thinking relies on classification of disciplines, connection with the reality, and practical suggestions about achieving utopia.

UNDERSTANDING BERGSON’s and GROSZ’s IDEA ON DURATION

We are all living on the same earth, and the utopia happens to be a place where we live in the future. There are two main elements we have to recognize before we go on our discussion: the difference about time and the different about space between our present situation and the future utopia. The reality we are currently encountering is the present, and the place we understand as our home is the earth. For utopia, it is usually projected as reality-based, maybe in enclosed form surrounded by sea or high up in the sky, its appearance tells the well protected autonomy, and it should be situation in the future if we have to point it out on the timeline of “past, present and future”. We conceive these beliefs as normal and reasonable. However, when we try to compare the nature of the “present reality” and the “future utopia”, there are conflicts and paradoxes.

Grosz opens a paradoxical discussion about utopia by applying Henri Bergson’s idea on duration. First of all, every duration (a precise qualitative presentation of time) happens once and cannot be repeated. The reason that we use duration to describe (but not differentiate) time is that: duration remarks the qualitative differences of every unique rhythm of time. Every duration, it is indivisible and continuous itself. When all durations come together, they participate in a simultaneous way. This whole event never repeats itself and keep going on. On the other side, however, time is often described as divisible, in a conceptual sense of a timeline. This is where the concept of spatiality enters into time: the method of reducing time in discrete units is quantitative and it is usually represented in digital units or numeric symbols. That means, indivisible duration is transformed to a divisible system, using a method of mathematical reduction. Therefore, we can differentiate time by telling the distinction between past and the present. The past and the present co-exist, because every past have to follow every present;
that is the way that the present carries a past. The past is therefore a virtuality of the present, where we cannot access.

Grosz explained we live in the present, but the past live in time. We cannot recollect the past only if we place ourselves in it. In other words, the past has no actuality due to its vituality. The past exists but it is not in the same state as the present. Based on this, future, is therefore assumed to have no actuality, too. We are engaging the only existing, the present. Therefore, what actually determines the future is the present and the past. The potentials in the past and the present are what will happen in the future. We connect the future together with the past in flow because we have the past telling the conditions. The past allows the possible future. Together, we have the notion of time and it can be applied in the utopian.

Therefore, Grosz conclues, utopian discourses tried to tell utopia is a projection of the future, but in fact it is a mixed indetermination between the past and the present. The future cannot be controlled by the present directly as the understood relationship of co-existing present and the past. Within the utopian mode, Grosz suggested, we cannot seek for the future (since it has no future in itself): “a future in which time will cease to be a relevant factor, and movement, change, and becoming remain impossible.”

To interpret Grsoz’s ideas in extension with the previous discussion about spirit of utopia, I would agree utopia (in terms of human spirit) cannot be concluded as an event of the future, the pure truth that utopia is rendering should also be put into consideration. Although truth is not yet explained fully in our time, but we assume truth stays the same for eternity. Precisely, the factor of time should not be taken account in describing truth, as its nature does not tells the existence of time (the kind of time in the sense of reality, qualitatively and quantitatively). The reason that utopia is always appeared to be a city from “tomorrow” is that the perceiver (can be any individual of us) is engaged in depicting the utopia on the basis of reality. Therefore, the past, present and the future; all these “counting” methods are applied. The problem is that, we are not able to carry on the procedure of locating the perfect ideal without the sense of time. That is to say, we are not able to reach our sprit in without other medium of thoughts. We can get closer and closer to human spirit, through searching and deliberating the nature of our ideals, but we can never come in contact with it together with our cognitive consciousness.
Moreover, utopia, in its nature, bears a strong and intense potential to invite us to go beyond the limitations: the obstacles that walled our spirits among us, the desires that bounded by the realities. That is why we understand the roots of utopia from our desires, and dissatisfactions. Though they are not in the same degree of potential inviting people to breakthrough limitations, rather in a less extent, they carry the sense of what utopia hints about perfection. Due to the fact of staying in the reality (where the present and the past suggest), to our limitations in recognizing the uncertainty of occurrence, we recognize utopia as future. When the impossibility of reaching the pure human spirit remains, we are not able to reach a pure recognition of utopia. Therefore, we can only choose the route of understanding utopia with the basis of the reality. And this reality, could unavoidably involves the element of time. Utopian thinking is in the sense about its apparent agreement of “ideal for future”. Instead, it is dependent of the past and the present rather than the future. These conflicts are the values of utopian thinking. We understand that human spirit bears no time limit; at the mean while, the true utopian does so, too. The sense of “future” is only a tool for us to describe the ever-lasting perfection of utopia. And our desire allows us to picture this ideal situation in an “appear-to-known” time frame in our understanding, the future. Through the process that we deliberate about utopia, we thought we are imagining how the future should be; in fact, we are reviewing what we happens and what happened (the present and the past). With the present, it is the time that we are conscious about our physical existence, a sort of presence of mind together with body. It is also a crucial time for us to be conscious about our human spirit by carrying different kind of human activities. Therefore, during the process of projecting ourselves to the “future” where utopia is located, we are in the state that we are able to review the present, the past; and get in touch with our human spirit in a closer sense.

While considering human spirits as the ultimate unitary of all people; utopian thinking becomes a powerful tool. It wraps up our projections of future in a constructive and self-reflexive way – a diagnostic tool telling how strong is our sense to change our city, in terms of realistic changes in society. But this also, at the same time, depicts how we conceive the history. Given that we are not solely concerned on the final achievement of utopia, that means not fully departed from the gravity that utopian thoughts created, these acts reflect our spiritual thinking at the same time. The value of having utopian thinking, thus, not solely lies on the argument between the possible goal ahead, its hidden strength forces us to
reconfigure how the present and the past are. Far from being a pure fantasy, it accounts the successes and failures of modern society during the process of thinking about utopia.

UNDERSTANDING GROSZ’s IDEA ON UTOPIA-PLACE

Early in 16th century, Thomas More’s equivocal pun on Utopia (1516) with the Greek roots, “outopia” (no-place) and “eutopia” (good-place) inquire us about the non-practical and non-realistic truths of such an ideal world. In “Embodied Utopia”, Elizabeth Grosz elaborated Sir Thomas More’s pun on Utopia by suggesting her own interpretation: “The utopic is beyond a conception of space or place because the utopic, ironically, cannot be regarded as topological at all. It does not conform to a logic of spatiality.” Based on More’s description, Grosz suggested utopia is a good place (because of its ideal perfection) but no place (its topologically non-existence). Her argument is inspiring but the proofs are weak to be convincible. First, she rests her arguments on the superficial concept of space in architecture, which remains topological in the discipline: the division, allocation and orientation of space. She equates the idea of “no place” to be “not topological” without further elaboration.

THE ROLE of ARCHITECTURE (as a discipline) IN UTOPIA

There are two main confusions noticed here: What is the reason that utopia needed to be a topologically existing place? And why architecture is still described to be a domain that manipulates or produces spaces; geographically and spatially? Insofar, we have discussed this type of understanding towards architecture is an imbalance when physical spatial experience, mental abstract space, socially dependent space of production are all taken into the consideration of architecture. If architecture is a discipline that only worries about the control of shaping, modeling, manipulating space, it could be regarded as the logic of spatial mechanism. We could recall the former discussion about concept of space in the first chapter: even for space, its fundamental nature does not confines to either mental or physical; so does architecture! By limiting the role of architecture in utopian thoughts, we are negligent in considering the utopia is a “place that only exists in reality” (a topologically existing place), therefore the origin of utopian thoughts (the “pure utopian fantasy”) is ignored. Once the origin is not considered with significance, we fall into the track of “attaining utopia with practical concerns”. That is why, the role of the discipline of architecture here, is claimed to be a tool in considering the possibility of a “no place”
in reality. This reveals a contemplation of a reality-based utopia (Ironically, Grosz stressed that the utopia with its temporal characteristic of duration, is beyond of space and place.). The obsession of utopia is shifted from its ideal perfection to the practical infeasibility, therefore leading Grosz to try applying rules from the reality customs to a possible utopia, and this possible utopia is seen to the ‘utopia’. We could observe from Grosz’s conclusion “architecture is doubted to be capable of constructing a better future” that she is trying to stick to the idea of attaining the utopia. The result is that, the abstract utopian fantasy is seen to be an imaginable place only, but not a conception of an ideal. Moreover, it ignores the significance of propulsion that both the fantasy and reality-based utopia are drawing all the disciplines to break their limits and boundaries, as utopia is not a subject of single concern. In other words, if architecture still stay in the concept spatial manipulation, it is limited to show the reality about how space can be constructed, but in no way of achieving the realization of a renewed concept of space (which social, philosophical, political, architectural concerns are collectively considered in Lefebvre’s view). In further, this set up an obstacle to approach or realize the spirit of ideal (which should be a departure from practical concerns, but a totally conceptual, mental idea of utopia). It might be true that when architecture is grounded on spatiality, there is possibility that architecture cannot find its places to tell the temporal movement of time and space. However, this statement should be fundamentally redefined, as it obscures the basic understanding towards the ‘new architecture’, the newly defined architecture.

However, though I am not agreeing on the idea that Grosz is trying to state, we are not trying to simply concludes the opposite that architecture is in control of constructing the better future stay true. To establish a direct link between utopia and architecture, we have to first notice the role of architecture in utopia. Architecture, as a discipline, enforces its rules on designing a better building, also a better environment. To continue the discussion, one must remember that in the previous chapters, space (regarded as the most fundamental concern of architecture) is now introduced as “crossprogramming”, while city planning is introduced together with events and situations. A new attempt for architecture, in the 21st century, has to be recognized. Bernard Tschmi cited some of his recent projects in the decade to illustrate the notion “event-cities”; by which architecture comes to a new form that form no longer follows functions, the traditional constraints done by functions on space play no more importance. Instead of asking the capacity of architecture in suggest the better future, I found the questions
suggested by Bernard Tschumi help leading us to search for the answer: “Can a new urban strategy encourage a new type of architecture? Reciprocally, can one invent an architecture capable of generating a new urban lifestyle? ...The whole scheme is conceived as a strategy, a game, so that concept and realization, function and finance interact in such a way that the complex programmatic mechanisms coincide with the conceptual clarity of the built image.” All these questions, concludes the new age that architecture is facing today.

THE ROLE of ARCHITECTURE (as a discipline) FROM OTHER DISCIPLINES’ POV

What about other disciplines tell architecture about its role in utopia? Vincent Geoghegan, a historic politician of utopianism, notes the urban paradise as an “indirect form of utopian impulse”. He said, “Visionary architects have in turn sought through their designs to build the perfect environment for humanity... None the less, there is clearly a modern role for self-consciously visionary planning and architecture, either directly as part of a general democratic planning/political process, or indirectly – as Robert Fishman reveals in his discussion of Filarete, Ledoux and Le Corbusier – through the provision of brilliant, if unrealizable, models which can act as a stimulant on the planning/political process.” This statement, first of all, rests its argument on proof of political intention and consciousness of architects and planners in their practice. Also, it spells out a strong sense of architecture as a supplementary role in “presenting” an urban paradise with political focus underneath, while roles of architect and planner become the unavoidable authorians at this point.

To illustrate this sense in a greater emphasis, creation of a new environmental paradise in terms in architecture is therefore a process of political execution, an act to achieve a political vision. It could be a part of revolution, a part of reform to a better future. Vincent Geoghengan’s method of investigation is a review of the happened, the analysis is based on the effect that these “utopian projects” might/have created; therefore, a conclusion of planning as notation of political act is reached. It is reasonable to explain the effects that urban planning, particularly the utopian planning could create, however, the role of architecture and the proclaimed intention of architect about utopia fall into the sub-dominate roles, and the focus goes to the final outcome (political achievement of having such a place). The discipline, architecture, plays sub-dominate significance in leading to utopic wish here. To defend the role of architecture with its aesthetic specificity in utopia as suggested, does not refer to a
denial on the possible mighty power that architect owns as a planner (as discussed in the previous chapter). At the same time, we are not even to disapprove a city planning could lead to transformation in political changes. But, bringing the attention back to architecture, from its origin to utopian thoughts, we have to realize the aesthetic achievement in terms of designing the city is a form of expressing the inner spirit of utopia. Thus, from the point of view of politician, we can first understood, the role that architecture is not punctuated in the first priority. And secondly, the city design is considered to be functionally benefit to the government and law execution.

SPIRIT OF SEARCHING FOR UTOPIA (20th CENTURY ARCHITECTS)

For architecture, this connection is flourished with the typical sense that architecture tells a spatial concept of place. The reason that the three architects mentioned by Robert Fishman, took an atypical approach in recognizing this connection; they did not normally follow the path of revolutionary change progressively; as Fishman suggested, their impersonal power from isolation encouraged them to jump over steps – creating a newly born city, with abandonment of all traditions but implementation of reforms. The characteristic gap that utopia is only a pure fantasy is therefore narrowed with the intrepidity, while not a kind of ignorance from the reality. This grasp brings the pure fantasy comes closer to be approachable with possibility of transforming the imaginative to the real. Things left with doubts are our inability to execute, while the ever-query of true humanity could not conjunct with the ever-prefect utopia.

From Vincent Geoghegan’s quote, he mentioned a historian in urban planning, Robert Fishman, whom I would like to quote from his comprehensive account on utopian cities. Robert Fishman, in his “Urban Utopias in the Twentieth Century”, tried to figure out the deep under motivation and passion of three greatest architects in planning their utopias and quest for their achievements: “In attempting to create a new urban order, must he repress precisely that complexity, diversity, and individuality which are the city’s highest achievements?” This question not only pinpointed the role or architect, as one individual, but employing one’s own ideas on a city-scale plan. Would one’s belief in a better livelihood become a universally approved norm? Moreover, we can refer this question back to the political intention of architects, based on the three greatest architects, Howard, Frank, and Le Corbusier.
Fishman explained the success of these three architects with respect to one specific factor: Imaginary power with isolation. Though it seems to be a lonely contest that one engages in the pursuit of a revolutionary, while harmonic city between the ground and the sky; all of them gained impersonal power from architecture with confidence of changing history. Fishman concludes with “The ideal city is the genre of the outsider who travels at one leap from complete powerlessness to imaginary omnipotence.” This kind of confidence, my suggestion to further elaborate in terms of the characteristics of utopia, shares the common idea that individuality could happen to be universality. There is no communication or comprise needed for a synchronization of ideas among people, as we are all lived on the same earth, there is a gravity of utopia created, on the platform of mind but not the piece of earth. From this, we could notice, how utopic thoughts and architecture project direct and substantial effects on each other.

In regard of the relationship and alternate role of architecture in politics, we could notice everything starts in terms of principle of hope in seeing the social changes of every individual, as the same time, it is inevitable that the power struggle in reality is expected by everyone. Assuming the existence of utopian mechanism, its perfection carries the place to run ever. That means, no matter what kind of socialist theory we take from the present and apply as a new system, or even we incorporate different systems together; they are from the present, they are not applicable. This is because unexpected outcomes can never be anticipated by the own rules of the same discipline. To explain, a comparison can be made by taking technological advancements. We could never foresee what influences that industrialization bought to the modern age and what people further desire for. Once after machines were invented, the market of job employment and role of workers changed with time. The lack of prediction is a main factor that tells perfection of city could never come true. The same happened in architecture, its chain relationship with social effects and political changes adversely take up the more important concern once we have utopian thoughts in mind.

That is why, role of architecture never considered to be in superiority in achieving utopia. Quoting from Robert Fishman, “Howard, Wright, and Le Corbusier were not interested in making existing cities more profitable or in building “model” tenements to replace the old ones. These views might have been expected to have attracted the sympathetic attention of the Marxian socialists who then controlled the most powerful European movements for social change.” Even architecture inherent in its nature of
discipline by allowing to a visual system of utopia-like to be modeled, however, the scenarios and
event that will happen in the place are not able to be told. In order to the dilemma that crossing
disciplines brings unavoidable difficulties that architecture could protect itself by its own rules.

Early in the beginning of 20th century, Ebenezer Howard believed in organic cooperation among
people brings domestic comfort, changing the town and also the social structure, providing pragmatic
benefits to communities. This might be true, but it is also true that the mentioned unforeseen
possibilities could void this expectation. The uncontrollable could no longer be purely reasoned on its
original disciplines, but perfection of utopia requires a simultaneous, ideal system, just like a biosphere
with self-regulations. In the reality, we can neither tell we are on the way to utopia, or way out. That is
why, when we come to practice of utopia, we starts with uncertainties, we end up with the lost of
ingredients of humanity: once a discipline could no longer defend solely its own by resolving and
reasoning all the problems caused in relation with it, flaws will be found in between of different
disciplines. Robert Fishman “the three ideal cities were certainly “utopias”, but not in the pejorative
sense of begin vague, impossible dreams. Rather they come under Karl Mannheim’s classic definition
of utopia as a coherent program for action arising out of thought that “transcends the immediate
situation,” a program whose realization would “break the bonds” of the established society.”

Therefore, people from different disciplines could share the harmonious utopian thoughts, of the
interests of all different kinds with an agreement based on the fundamental goods of human beings and
societies. A “climate” of utopia is therefore created, with our mind projection of an ideal city together
with activists’ endeavor during revolutionary attempts throughout our history. Individual units from all
professions are consciously and unconsciously fall into the historical context of how ideas and events
aggregate to become a preconscious utopic thoughts. Utopia thinking is submerged in different
spectacles that different individuals envision; it is applied, implied and furthermore, practiced. Days of
our lives therefore created under the dream of utopia, but maintained upon the eventful encounters.
It is extended. Since our ideas, if clear and distinct when carefully attended to, must be accurate, matter itself must have extension as a definitional or essential characteristic of matter is that it is "extended" in three directions. He rejects hardness, weight, color, and other familiar properties as definitional of matter, on the grounds that if we think carefully about our idea of matter, we see that we could have had the idea of matter without having the idea of hardness, weight, and so on. For instance, we can imagine a world in which material objects moved away at the slightest touch, so that we never came to have an idea of hardness; yet we would still be able to have the idea of matter. So the idea of hardness is not essential to the idea of matter: if X is essential to Y, then it is impossible to be or have Y without also having X. The only characteristic that our idea of matter must have, according to Descartes, is that it is extended. Since our ideas, if clear and distinct when carefully attended to, must be accurate, matter itself must have extension as its essence: what it is to be matter is to be extended." Ibid., p102

The paradox of space is explained in detail by Bernard Tschumi, 1990 in "Questions of Space: Lectures of Architecture," p254

Nietzsche is just beginning – and only with great difficulty at that. As for philosophical thought and thought about space and time, it is split. On the one hand we have the philosophy of time, of duration, itself broken up into partial considerations and emphases: historical time, social time, mental time, and so on. On the other hand we have epistemological thought, which constructs an abstract space and cogitates about themselves comfortably enough within the terms of mental (and therefore neo-Kantian or neo-Cartesian) space, thereby demonstrating that 'theoretical practice' is already nothing more than the egocentric thinking of specialized Western intellectuals – and indeed may soon be nothing more than an entirely separated, schizoid consciousness."

The aim of this book is to detonate this state of affairs. More specifically, apropos of space, it aims to foster confrontation between those do not govern it, treating them not as isolated theses or hypotheses, as 'thoughts' to be put under the microscope, but rather as prefigurations lying at the threshold of modernity." Ibid., p39,40, 24


Sarah Bradford Landau and Carl W. Condit, Rise of the New York Skyscraper: 1865-1913, p191

Bernard Tschumi, Architecture and Disjunction, p258


NOTES

3 "Such a system can have neither materiality nor loose ends: it is a 'perfect' system whose rationality is supposed, when subjected to mental scrutiny, to be self-evident....In seeking to understand the three moments of social space, it might help to consider the body. All the more so inasmuch as the relationship to space of a 'subject' who is a member of a group or society implies his relationship to his own body and vice versa. Confrontation of the theses and hypotheses of Hegel, Marx and Nietzsche is just beginning – and only with great difficulty at that. As for philosophical thought and thought about space and time, it is split. On the one hand we have the philosophy of time, of duration, itself broken up into partial considerations and emphases: historical time, social time, mental time, and so on. On the other hand we have epistemological thought, which constructs an abstract space and cogitates about themselves comfortably enough within the terms of mental (and therefore neo-Kantian or neo-Cartesian) space, thereby demonstrating that 'theoretical practice' is already nothing more than the egocentric thinking of specialized Western intellectuals – and indeed may soon be nothing more than an entirely separated, schizoid consciousness."

5 At the base of Descartes's world system is the distinction between mind and matter (or "corporeal substance")—between the stuff that thinks and the stuff that fills up space (I. 48). Ultimately, everything (except God) is made of these two substances, or (as in the case of numbers) is understood in terms of them. As he explains in I. 53 and II. 4 and 11, Descartes believes that the defining or essential characteristic of matter is that it is "extended" in three directions. He rejects hardness, weight, color, and other familiar properties as definitional of matter, on the grounds that if we think carefully about our idea of matter, we see that we could have had the idea of matter without having the idea of hardness, weight, and so on. For instance, we can imagine a world in which material objects moved away at the slightest touch, so that we never came to have an idea of hardness; yet we would still have our idea of matter. So the idea of hardness is not essential to the idea of matter: if X is essential to Y, then it is impossible to be or have Y without also having X. The only characteristic that our idea of matter must have, according to Descartes, is that it is extended. Since our ideas, if clear and distinct when carefully attended to, must be accurate, matter itself must have extension as its essence: what it is to be matter is to be extended." Ibid., p102
6 Henri Lefebvre. (translated by Donald Nicholson-Smith) ,The Production of Space, p77
7 Bernard Tschumi, Architecture and Disjunction, p83
8 The paradox of space is explained in detail by Bernard Tschumi, 1990 in “Questions of Space: Lectures of Architecture”
9 Ibid., p88
10 Andrew Benjamin. Architectural Philosophy: repetition, function, alterity, p7
11 Ibid., p254
13 Sarah Bradford Landau and Carl W. Condit, Rise of the New York Skyscraper: 1865-1913, p191
14 Bernard Tschumi, Architecture and Disjunction, p251
15 Ibid., p254
17 Bernard Tschumi, Architecture and Disjunction, p258
21 Guy Debord, “Critique of Separation”, 1961
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