RICE UNIVERSITY

SPACES FOR SOUND AND SILENCE FOR THE WESTHAFEN AREA IN BERLIN.

AN ARCHITECTURAL DIALOGUE ON THOUGHT-FRAGMENTS OF PLATO AND WITTGENSTEIN.

by

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A Thesis submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree

Master of Architecture

Houston, Texas
April, 1988
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Two Spaces for the Westhafen in Berlin.

Space 1: Concert Hall for Contemporary Experimental Music.
Space 2: Columbarium for 692 Chamber-tombs.

An Architectural Dialogue on Thought-fragments of Plato and Wittgenstein.

Once more, I said, is there anything beautiful?
Yes.
To which the only opposite is the ugly?
There is no other.
And is there anything good?
There is.
To which the only opposite is the evil?
There is no other.
And there is the acute in sound?
True.
To which the the only opposite is the grave?
There is no other, he said, but that.
Then every opposite has one opposite only and no more?


6.442 So too at death the world does not alter, but comes to an end.

6.4421 Death is not an event in life.

6.4422 If we take eternity to mean not infinite temporal duration but timelessness, then eternal life belongs to those who live in the present.

This project confronts the pervasive understanding of the connection of death and life with an absolute breach.

The architecture consists of two spaces, one for sound and one for absolute silence. The bridge between life and death is an illusion, a loss of final security. Death as an event in life is always present as a delusion.

The sound of cranes, machinery, and ships nearby penetrates the silence of the spaces, conversely sound from the spaces penetrates the noise of the harbor and emanates outward.

The silence is immanent.
According to some previous reflections in the thesis which dealt with Wittgenstein's influence on Adolf Loos, this project intends to explore elementary philosophical questions in terms of space.

Needless to say, architecture can never be taken as "built philosophy", nor does it have the ability to come into a relevant existence as an allegory or symbol incarnating an abstract thought. Cultural relevance, however, as a goal of architecture, of Baukunst [the art of building] can only be achieved if questions raised by philosophy or culture as a whole are not denied. Architecture is questioning. It requires awareness of Zeitgeist and Geistesgeschichte [history of thought] and has the task to seek thoroughly for values (a process of devaluation and reevaluation).

Architecture, I believe, should not be a matter of 'private phantasies', nor of stilistic or utilitarian exercises, or even retreats into obscurities of myth revivals where it faces a complete modern decline and loss of values. Its nature remains public and therefore political. It is subject to a collective culture.

This project focuses on architecture for a city (according to the program of an international architecture exhibit: "Berlin, Denkmal oder Denkmodell?" November 1988). In all its aspects it is consciously subject to issues of metropolis. It takes philosophical thoughts as a starting point and substruction (subtext), unlike my earlier projects which had similar thoughts and questions.
underlaying them but which followed specifically programmatic priorities. At this final phase, elementary existential questions as raised by Plato and Wittgenstein have become the initial disposition and central issue of the working process: architecture as an experiment of which the result is absolutely unknown and has not been expected or even mistaken for a solution.

Plato’s and Wittgenstein’s thoughts not only mark the course of thought in this project but also determine the programmatic juxtaposition of the two spaces. Plato and Wittgenstein seem to be worlds apart and yet they confront us with timeless controversial ideas about death and life which have never been solved in western philosophy. On Plato’s side, death is seen as a fundamental part of life, not as a mere opposite to life but as a matter of dialectical thinking (the classical ‘materialistic symbolism’ or imagery as "the acute in sound" versus the ambiguous "grave" as subject of dialectical duality in Protagoras). On Wittgenstein’s side, death and life are subjects of ultimate breach.

Wittgenstein states this breach according to his logical method and therefore his thoughts appear in the exact opposite position of Plato’s. A closer look at his thinking, however, makes the danger of deceptive interpretations obvious: the breach is stated as an absolute polemical thought to give the significance of death for life even more evidence. Neither Plato nor Wittgenstein provide an answer or conclusion. Wittgenstein must be read further to show how strongly he relates death to life by shifting the values of the
subject from Plato's materialistic imagery to a thoroughly tragic level:

6.44221 Our life has no end in just the way in which our visual field has no limits.

6.44223 Not only is there no guarantee of the temporal immortality of the human soul, that is to say of its eternal survival after death; but, in any case, this assumption completely fails to accomplish the purpose for which it has always been intended. Or is some riddle solved by my surviving for ever? Is not this eternal life itself as much of a riddle as our present life? The solution of the riddle of life in space lies outside space and time. (It is certainly not the solution of any problems of natural science that is required.)

(L.W., Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus. Pp. 233.)

Are Wittgenstein's thoughts, the modern incarnation of inexorable logic, shifted to a world of mysticism of unsolvable questions and "riddles"? Further reading gives evidence of fundamental contradictions in the Tractatus; Wittgenstein consciously confronts himself with unresolvable existential questions and therefore mysticism and skepticism versus Logical Positivism:

6.44231 How things are in the world is here a matter of complete indifference. God does not reveal himself in the world.

6.44232 It is not how things are in the world that is mystical, but that it exists.

And as if Wittgenstein were overcome with a deep fear of this insight (one needs to recall that Wittgenstein used the numeric index at the beginning of each phrase as an indicator of importance
of each thought for the whole, that means: 6.5 is uncomparatively more important than i. e. 6.44232), he continues:

6.5. When the answer cannot be put into words, neither can the the question be put into words. 

The riddle does not exist.

If a question can be framed at all, it is also possible to answer it."

(L. W., T. L.-P. P. 235)

Being aware of this thought sequence, the implication of a threatening disaster becomes very obvious: the breach of death and life appears as the ultimate point of no return for our thinking. Finally, Plato's "And there is the acute in sound? - To which the only opposite is the grave?" might be seen in a different light. The use of the word "grave" is striking for its simultaneous associations with the terms 'gravity', 'disease', 'tomb', and 'death', together with "the acute in sound" interpreted as physical pain. This links Plato's thought to Wittgenstein's tragic perception of death.

The idea of an ultimately tragic combination of death with life, even if any possible materialistic, positivistic, or existential position of thinking would contradict it, can be clearly seen in Hegel's thoughts where he states: "Der Tod ist das Schrecklichste, und das Tote festzuhalten das, was die groesste Kraft erfordert." ("Death is the most terrifying event and to hold on to the dead [in a sense of an abstract phenomena] is what demands highest strength"). Plato's thought, as well as Wittgenstein's, find its
counterpart in the aphorism of the great German philosopher of Idealism—also quoted by Georges Bataille, who uses Hegel's abstract perception of death, strongly related to physical pain, as an introduction of "Madame Edwarda", a bitter journal about sexual possession and death.

Before I return to the description of my project, I will make one more excursion to related thoughts. Peter Adams Sitney quotes Stan Brakhage in an essay about one of his films:

I was again faced with death as a concept; not watching death as a physical decay, or dealing with the pain of death of a loved one, but with the concept of death as something that man casts into the future by asking, "What is death like?" And the limitation of finding the images for a concept of death only in life itself is a terrible torture, i.e. Wittgenstein's Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus 6.4311: "Death is not an event of life. Death is not lived through. If by eternity is understood not endless temporal duration but timelessness, then he lives eternally who lives in the present. Our life is endless in the way that our visual field is without limit.


It is uncommon to find American intellectuals who show as much concern with this subject matter as Brakhage. A comment on the passage in this context, however, seems superfluous.

Wittgenstein's concern with the matter of metaphysical thinking is totally unexpected within the context of his logical method, and yet it becomes an element of the whole, obeying his methodical rules in an almost threatening way. The polemical nature of these thoughts, still shows a certain transparency, where the tradition of
western dialectical thought shines through, and it provides continuity within the breach. One might cautiously consider the possible presence of God (that is to say, metaphysics) when Wittgenstein writes that God does not reveal himself in the world, because his existence seems to be necessary in order to reveal or not to reveal oneself. To speak about the existence of the world as being mystical, as well as the vague consideration of God’s existence, gives evidence for both the awareness of metaphysical thinking as well as the continuity of dialectics within Wittgenstein’s Logical Positivism.

The project tries to reflect the contradictions in dealing with death, with sound and silence. It is polemical in all parts: construction, materials, dimensions, volumes, spaces, light and dark, sound and silence. It gives clear answers to questions with an ultimate rational of geometry and space according to Wittgenstein’s conviction that if there are questions which can be asked there are answers to them, and that a question to which the answer cannot be given could not be asked (a riddle which does not exist). The answers are not mistaken for solutions (as ideal spaces for specific purposes for example). They are spaces which exist as a confrontation with inevitable questions of our existence. The project does not intend to obscure any of the questions which were raised. It is based on a critical rationalistic concept which leads to spaces for a state of mind as a part of the whole, the city.
It was necessary to disconnect the project from all of the described issues in order to make it a part of the city, one part among numerous others. This process of disconnection also seemed necessary to achieve the purest and most modest spaces I could design.

All personal narratives were to be eliminated in order to make these spaces subordinate to the city and yet autonomous. The continuing purpose of the design was to, first, observe the city in its most secret nature in order to find out how spaces and languages relate. Without this knowledge any attempt seemed to fail.

Peter Masse writes:

The visible city and its petrified structures hide an invisible city, which has been formed out of intellectual crystallizations.


To create elementary spaces and to be aware of the continuity of time and thought, and of the process of crystallization, were critical for this project. At the same time, the breach Wittgenstein wrote about was always there as a secret imperative, and so was the awareness that every attempt of thought and design could be in error, and that continuous time and thought could turn into a nightmare at any moment. And yet integrity of constraints was a command—values of ratio and belief, for example, were to be abandoned when hollow, no matter what the result.

The project has to be seen in a thoroughly critical relationship and
position to Berlin and its atmosphere of Prussian rigidity and discipline. It is neither an individualistic effort of originality opposing the reality of this city, nor is it guided by blind obedience of its tradition. The goal of this design was to investigate extremes—the confrontation of absolute self-reflection and autonomy of space with ultimately impersonal anonymous subordination to the city and its rules.

The two spaces would have succeeded if they have achieved even a small part of the qualities of Anton Webern's "Six Bagatelles for String Quartet, Op. 9" which accompanied the work on this project for a long time.

"Consider what moderation is required to express oneself so briefly," said Schoenberg in a preface to the score to this quartet: "You can stretch every glance out into a poem, every sigh into a novel. But to express a novel in a single gesture, a joy in a breath—such concentration can only be present in proportion to the absence of self-pity."
II THE PROCESS
40 psi \times 48\text{ ft} \text{ press. \& wind force}

Overturning moment \( = \) mom. per box

\( h_p + \) down force + gravity load (small) + downward force

\( \frac{1}{4} \text{ 2,000 psi per sq in} \Rightarrow \text{ concrete stress overturning}

\text{Shear force :}
Projected  
Top # x Area \div 3 \text{ boxes} \div 25,000 \text{ lb per box} \div 2 = \text{ Forces per side}  

HORZ component of \text{ Force per diag}  

\text{ DIAG, Force in steel diag} \div 15,000 \text{ pounds per in}^2 = \text{ Area of diag steel moment}
III THE SITE
IV THE PROJECT

I. An Attempt on Adolf Loos' Mausoleum for Max Dvorak or:


Prologue/Introduction

"Infidelity in the monumentum aere perenius. - An essential disadvantage which has been brought up with the ending of metaphysical thinking, is the following: the individual concentrates himself too severely on his short lifetime and does not receive stronger impetus to build lasting institutions planned for centuries. The individual man is running through too many inner and outer developments to establish himself even lasting for his own lifetime. A completely modern man for instance, who wants to build himself a house, is accompanied by a fear as if he layed the bricks for a mausoleum for his living body."

Friedrich Nietzsche. Menschliches, Allzumenschliches I. (1878); (Human, All Too Human); KSA, vol. 2, pp. 43-44 (from aph. 22).

"What we cannot speak about, we must pass over in silence."
Ludwig Wittgenstein. Tractatus logico-philosophicus.
Provisional Index of Chapters (Draft)

1
Transformation of Adolf Loos (Sub-chapter)
"Who of you guys is frightened by this smoke-stack?"
Andrew Bartle (on a sketch during a presentation of projects in October 1986).

Some Introductory Remarks
Some Thoughts in Advance

2

"This is no architecture for me, I'm afraid. I am missing the doors, an entrance..."
John Heile (on some objects during the final review in the courtyard of Anderson Hall).

Adolf Loos in the Desert, or: How to Transform a Mausoleum into a House, a Cemetery and Finally a City. (An Excursion, Some More Thoughts and No Cure).

3

The Paradox of Houses and Cities of Death.
On Rationalism and Death.
A Torch, a Pile of Plywood, Sheet Metal and a Pot of Tar.
Ready for the Desert.

..........................
1

Transformations of a prefabricated product (can) into primitive architectural elements, architectures and objects.

Sketches, drawings, materials, objects.

5 sticks / forks, rocks on top; wood, burned;
6 tents; plaster;
6 tents; fiber glass;
5 arches; plaster;
4 arches; wood, burned, black oil paint.

2

Transformation of Adolf Loos' mausoleum for Max Dvorak (into a house in the desert).

Sketches, drawings, objects.

2-and 3-dimensional room sequence with smoke-stack; plywood, sheet metal, wire, indian ink, charcoal;

2-d-arch sequence; wax; (destroyed)
2-d-desert-drawings (computer vision syst.);
3

3-d-arch sequence; plywood, burned, wax;

Cell sequence; wood, burned;

Cell sequence with cone; plywood, burned, sheet metal; (destroyed)

Steps, cone and platform; steel, sheet metal, wax, black roof paint;

3

(Row of 13 boxes for the Village (Houston, Texas).

Sketches, drawings.

Site plan; pencil on vellum;

plan, elevations; pencil on vellum.)

4

Border station for Brownsville, Texas.

Notes, sketches, drawings.

Site plan; pencil on vellum;

plan, elevations, sections; pencil on vellum.
What happens, if one decides to transform an architecture of death into something else? Into an attempt of architecture for life maybe?

One immediately touches forgotten but nevertheless crucial and essential issues of architecture, which might lead to hope and despair at the same time. Issues, which might also frighten for the simple reason that they are radical in asking questions and not necessarily leading to answers. If one deals with a monument, why Loos? Why choosing an architecture which seems to be so unspectacular and minor - only a model, never built?

The simplicity of Adolf Loos' mausoleum is twofold: it is a key for both a reflection on the essential sense of a monument of pessimism in modernity and an investigation on the response of architecture to existential questions of modern man, questions which seemingly have lost importance for the architecture of today. Although it has stressed the monument innumerable times, this architecture has not been able to make the often described and analyzed paralysis and emptiness of modern existence its topic. Instead of this, it has rather been a perfect portrayal of this phenomena, often grotesque without a minimum of "skepsis" about the fundamental conditions of architecture in a present culture, which might be best described (with only few of numerous "post-termini") as Post-Freudianism, Post-Marxism, Post-Technicism, Post-Structuralism and -Positivism. Terms, or better- phenomena which have been summed up within the last fifteen years by only one which, perfectly diluted, stands for all of them - Post-Modernism, an attempt to name the helplessness and to establish oneself with the crisis. This crisis has never been one of style and vocabularies of architecture; it has been evidently more: a loss of meaning and language that corresponds to the present social, psychological and intellectual status and crisis of man.

What then does Adolf Loos' mausoleum mean to all that? Nine sharp-edged rows of black granite ashlars on a square, crowned by a fragment of a stepped pyramid. A massive block with only two perfectly hollowed out holes: one door, one window, - an ultimate enclosed space and time, as the engraved word of Georg Trakl: "Our silence is a black cavern." It appears as the stoney incarnation of the void, which goes far beyond the issue of an early functional purism of other architectures of Adolf Loos.

If one recalls the architects' intellectual environment in Vienna before and after World War I, the circles of Freud, Schoenberg, Hoffmansthal, Trakl, 
Kraus, Kafka, Musil, Wittgenstein, Kokoschka, Schiele, and many others, this granite void begins to make a striking sense. With every thought, every philosophy, which pointed out the enormous decline of values, institutions, and both inner and outer structures of Vienna's pre-war society, Loos' archaic monument of emptiness gains importance and evidence.

If one remembers the motives of Kafka's eternal conditionals, the frightening prison of his language, as well as Hoffmannsthal's paralysis of language or the (later written) brilliant cynical description and analyses of the mental and spiritual vacuum of a society at the edge of its tragic decline and at the end of its political, moral and philosophical values in Musil's "Man without Qualities," one will gain a deeper insight into this mausoleum. It suddenly becomes an architectural manifestation of Wittgenstein's startling conclusion of his "Tractatus logico-philosophicus", based on a logical and elementary-mathematical analysis of the structure of language and its borders: "What we cannot speak about, we must pass over in silence."

And so appears the mausoleum as an ultimate denial of form for form's sake, of an architecture of aestheticism, but also as an denial of any functional reservations. It is the despair of reason about its borders, although it uses strictly logical patterns, the language of Rationalism. And so it approaches intensely Metaphysics. More than the harbinger of functional modernity, it is the literal "Spoken into the Void", which comes along with the archaic and purified monument.

It is also architecture on the edge of abstract thinking and myth. The abstractness of the archaic language creates a most complex simplicity, which goes far beyond any temporal relation. There is an almost frightening totality of time in this precision of geometry: past, present and future lose their importance as categories, disappear as the landmarks of memory and hope, the determination of consciousness and leave man alone in the confusion about the absurdity of death and, even more, life.

There is one question which is left to be asked. Does all this concern the architecture of our days? And if it does, what is the significance for the present, supposing that these conflicts have not been overcome?

The following attempt of a documentary about a transformation
approaches these questions cautiously in order to find answers, more and more questions, paths for an architecture, or precipices perhaps.

I would like to second John Cage, who ended the introductory computer diagram of one of his compositions with a wish for his audience: "Good luck!"
Ludwig Wittgenstein (1889-1951).
LEUM FOR MAX DVORÁK

Vienna

1921

and material possessions of humanity and eternity, the spirit and the supernatural... MAX DVORÁK, Über Genius und den Modernismus, in "Reperitum der Kunstwissenschaften", 1923. These words may serve put as well as an epigraph for Dvořák's critical idealism as they may, for other reasons, for Kokoschka's poetic expressionism and for Lewy's architectonic existentialism (in the borderline experience of architecture that becomes art).

BIBLIOGRAPHY

H. KULKA, Adolf Loos, op cit., 134.
L. MÜNZ, G. Künstler, Der Architekt Adolf Loos, section no. 66, p. 189.
Ernst Koch. Drawing of the façade of the Michaeliskirche, 1792.
"Who of you guys is frightened by this smoke-stack?"
Andrew Bartle (on a sketch during a presentation of projects in October 1986).

Some Thoughts in Advance.

The "architecture nearest to one's heart" for a transformation exercise was chosen within a span of time of fifteen minutes. And now, this was it: a granite block. Black and perfect, like the sum of the accidental post-war crisis at the dawn of modernity. Nearest to the heart? Yes, no doubt. But an architecture to transform, too? There are things in architecture which are done—for all times: things which confront oneself with an almost deep and cold totality of expressiveness, a consciousness of definite borders of insight or even brain capacity concerning last questions of one's existence; questions which architecture had better avoided to stay out of trouble.

And there was Loos. Like a striking transformation of Stephen Dedalus' statement in James Joyce's Ulysses, "Death? We are dying every day." There was this cube of ultimate granite and also a medium rare steak. For the moment the steak seemed to be easier to handle than this "all and nothing" of an architecture on a five by five meter square with a total height of about seven meters. How would Loos transform his stony impossibility, if he had to do it himself? He would probably rather stick to the steak, too.

One should be able to talk with him, to ask him. Maybe first about the steak.

Why did he consider a centralized space? He is supposed to be a pioneer of modern architecture—and the times of celebration of the beginning and ending of life as the most evident events of existence (of Christian life) belonged to a medieval past. It was also no longer the era for the temples of beauty, reason, and emancipation of man, nor the time for Boullee's megalomaniac monuments for Newton's world view, the omnipotence of
science and technics (Musil, who originally was a military engineer, wrote most critical remarks on both, science and technics in "The Man without qualities"). The belief in God had been destroyed most powerfully by Nietzsche, the "philosopher with the hammer", some eighty years ago. There were also Marx, Feuerbach, and Freud, who proclaimed an ultimate destruction of myths within both political philosophy and the structure of consciousness and psyche. And there was also the machine, the revolution of mechanization, which had taken command decades ago. (Siegfried Giedeon).

Death should no longer have been a secret, but a subject of mere transformation of matter, as it had been proclaimed by the philosophers of a scientific positivism and historical-dialectical materialism in the tradition of Hegel as well as by the thinkers of a metaphysical oriented pessimism (Schopenhauer, Nietzsche).

What was it then, if not a purely anachronistic celebration of death with a secret longing for a transcendental truth? Was it just an unconscious relapse into myth as happened to some painters and architects of Expressionism (a phenomenon which is also well described in "The Man without Qualities") to Hermann Finsterlin and Hans Poelzig for instance? What was the dark emptiness behind the only door and the almost cynical note of a window, which makes the hopeful and dispaired reference to life (facing death every day, as Stephen Dedalus implies) so evident? Was it perhaps even more life than death, which Loos regarded as determined by aphasia?

Even if one tends today to categorize the initial phase of modernity of the 1920's as a period of scientific Positivism, there are numerous indications of skepticism, which illuminate a crisis of modern man. Thinkers as Max Weber left irritating traces of a skepticism concerning the "universal, historical complex of questions" about the source of occidental Rationalism. He wants to know, as Wilhelm Hennis described it, how the world, "at which mercy we are", has developed itself in its frightening reality. And it is the demand of time to resist to this consciousness.

This "heroism" might show a striking parallel to the architecture of Loos' mausoleum. And it explains very well the Nietzsche revival of this time to which quite a few intellectuals as the Berlin sociologist and philosopher Georg Simmel, for instance, succumbed to, when he writes: "the atrophy of
American pragmatism in architecture appears as an almost impossible attempt at the motives of two completely different worlds. But there are phenomena which challenge this comparison and even more: the search for a synthesis of the power of antagonies, contradictions and hidden elements they have in common.

Even if different developments are obvious, it is history and its mutations of architecture, the traces of times, which provide the powerful appearances of purified textures, structures and spaces, which form the types. Former crucial differences of functions, specific languages and meanings become blurred in the course of time, and it is this filtering process that makes the final strength of every architecture visible: its capacity of being the monumental space of memory as a bridge over time to find one's place in the future; it is the capacity to last with an unique autonomy of form and space which has never needed countless phantasies of individuals in their time. If architecture is hope for the future, besides its purpose to carry the ideas of its time, it is the will of man to survive his materialistic destination with his ideas which creates this quality of building. It is also this hope founded on metaphysical thinking which makes myth as a language of collective memory come into life.

But there is no hope without despair and disillusion and vice versa. It is a dialectical principle of both which creates the strength of rationalistic architectures; it is the same inner struggle and contradiction appearing in the easiness of Chirico's bright noon skies of pleasant Italian town squares, where the objects cast deep shadows of death next to life—the signs of the world behind reality, as the modern version of the baroque "memento mori", the presence of death at every moment of life.

But what do the shotgun shacks of Houston have to do with all that, other than that their mere outer appearance of pragmatically reduced space is strikingly like numerous examples of the Grand European tradition of (metaphysical) Rationalism in architecture? (comp. early Neo-Classicism in Germany: David Gilly. Landbaukunst; Greek revival shotgun shacks in New Orleans, Miss.).

The rationalistic attempt of European architecture since the Renaissance (the essential dawn of modernity) has focused on a simplicity of architectural form and space which has been related to the strength of elementary geometry as not only the profound credo of spirit (ratio) but
also as a part of history and tradition of occidental culture. The row of protagonists of this spiritual attitude reaches from Laugier to Gilly, Soane and Schinkel up to Mies van der Rohe and Grassi, Rossi or Ungers in present architecture.

Contemporary American architecture, where it is not historically related to European ideas, bears its types (the monuments of ordinary and simplicity) from a different consciousness. It has been the pioneer spirit, the will to survive, explore and expand -the frontier- which demanded a pragmatically oriented simplicity of architecture, a simplicity which was initially based on the continuity and adoption of European patterns and structures but was soon related for other reasons than merely following consciously the continuity of cultural tradition.

But architectures surviving time gain new qualities besides their original ones which might disappear with all initial functions or ideas. It is the strength of autonomous forms (types and archetypes) which are carried on because they form the space for new generations and societies with new ideas and needs.

There are times when even such pragmatically built but typologically oriented architectures as shotgun shacks cast shadows of the past which contain the power of memory -a fundamental part of every culture.

Since the conditions of culture, and therefore of architecture, have evidently changed, it has also been the entire system of values in architecture which necessarily has to be questioned. Which are the monuments of our time? -And what are their expressions and their language? If one should regard the prognostic conclusions of modern philosophy or literature as a fundament of the present status of mind or culture, and if one also should regard architecture as part of this culture with the same potential of insight and therefore responsibilities, architecture would immediately cease to pretend that it provides the constructive solutions for the crises of modern societies. It would be the end of post-modern manipulations which either pretend that the problem of contemporary architecture was exclusively the loss of myths, images and vocabularies during the period of Functionalism and Modernism (as historistic or narrative architectures tend to do), or simply pretend that the problem has never existed and that architecture only needs to be connected to anything (technology, science, styles etc.) to continue its
historic role and importance in the present and future. Both understandings might be fundamentally wrong.

The monuments of architecture of these days might walk on crutches. It might be paralysis and fear which build heroic gestures without sense in the middle of the nowhere of our cities, settings of countless fragments for a stage of fake reality and innumerable fake plays at fake places and times.

"There is no truth any longer. Forget about truth in architecture!" Mr. Loos said, when he left 'Steak 'n Egg' - now I remember. He probably knew what he was talking about, I guess. (I thought that I would believe Fellini more than Michael Graves, for some reasons.)
the individual as a result of the hypertrophy of objective culture (the perfect equivalent to Weber’s sober concept of the “disenchantment of the world”) is one reason why the preachers of the most extreme forms of individualism—above all Nietzsche—hate large cities intensely (the city or metropolis appears as the centre of incarnation of modern objectivity), but it is also a reason why precisely these preachers are loved so passionately in large cities, and why the city dweller in particular sees them as heralds and saviors for his unsatisfied longings. “And a dialogue of Max Weber with his wife, reported by Eduard Baumgarten, might even enforce the assumption of this crisis, when Weber asks his wife, “Can you imagine you are a mystic?” Marianne’s answer: “This would certainly be the last I could think of. But can you imagine this of yourself?” The answer: “It might even be possible that I am a mystic. As I have ‘dreamed’ more all my life, than one may allow it oneself, and so I also do not feel really and safely at home anywhere. It is the same, as if I was able (and wished strongly) to escape completely from all.”

Thoughts like these prove the paradoxical attitude of scientists and philosophers towards the Positivism of their era and find their expression there as well as in such architecture as the one of Adolf Loos.

The mausoleum for Max Dvorak is a trap. It is the architecture of doubts and despair much more than the one of positivistic Rationalism, even if it comes along with a language of pure geometry, which here is building an archetype for a collective memory much more than fighting mannerism of the Bourgeois style of this time.

The pure geometry appears as a complete irritation rather than the mission of clarity as a solution—the aspect of absurdity in any rational order in architecture. And it is a built illusion instead of safety, which creates the grotesque order of a “nihil”, an emptiness, as expressed in the frozen perspective views and surrealistic geometries of De Chirico’s places.

It is the “Spoken into the Void”.

Mr. Loos left half the steak and a trace of granite cynicism in the teak-finished interior of the place. I stayed for a little while poking at the rest of my greasy eggs. Another two or three scratches on my napkin. Did he really say anything? I guess he did not.
The Departure of the Poet, 1914. 34 × 16".
Collection Mrs. L. M. Maitland, Brentwood, California
The Eugena of the Hour, 1912. 37 1/2 x 27 1/2". The Gallerie Mattioli Foundation, Milan. Feroldi Collection. See photograph of courtyard adjoining the Brancacci Chapel, Church of the Carmine, Florence, page 58.

Melancholy, 1912(?). 31 x 25". Collection Peter.
"This is no architecture for me, I'm afraid. I am missing the doors, an entrance....."
John Heile (on some objects during the final review in the courtyard of Anderson Hall).

Adolf Loos in the Desert, or: How to Transform a Mausoleum into a House, a Cemetery and Finally a City. (An Excursion, Some More Thoughts and No Cure).

I forgot to mention that I took West Gray that time to get home after breakfast. I do this every once in a while to get order into my thoughts which happens for some reasons just on streets like West Gray -passing the shotgun shacks on the edge of Downtown as slowly as I can. These pragmatic and archaic architectures appear as a definite and restrictive order of life which is so similar to the order of the mausoleum: a noble simplicity which forces one into resistance against the last and ultimate isolation in death, the fatal theme of Loos' mausoleum, which comes along dialectically with the hope for surrendering this fate.

The monotony of every single shotgun shack, and rather piles or rows of them, forces one to the hope for escape from this isolation, too. And suddenly, these shapes, these primitive containers, begin to live: dirty curs, noisy children, cars, laundry, t. v. screems -the potential signs of urban life in the middle of the paralysis of shapes. It seems as if these shags live from the longing for escape and are accompanied by the fear that any other lasting installation one might build would be the laying of the bricks for a mausoleum for one's living body.

There are times a car feels much more comfortable than any house. It keeps one moving away from the brickstone tombs, where one spends half of one's life, even if one does not know one's destination.

To enforce the comparison of an European rationalistic tradition with
The thought of building a house in the desert was fascinating. It was like building a house in the city, a strikingly similar purpose. Building into the silent void of a desert is like building into the noisy void of a city—sometimes there are moments when crowds and masses suddenly bear a frightening silence which makes one feel like being exposed to the absolute. This paradoxical phenomena can be also found in the most absurd forms of cities—cities of death, where a crucial conflict of architecture becomes visible: the contradiction of static matter, gravity, as the fundamental nature of building and the easy despair when thinking of anti-gravity at the point of ultimate existential reasoning—death. (Cities of the death will be of some interest later in this text, since the mausoleum in the desert will raise some questions of similarities, identities and antagonyes of houses in cities and deserts in reality and one’s thoughts).

Being torn between the chains of memory and the desire to escape, man faces the unknown end and therefore creates ambiguous expressions in monuments of despair, monsters of stone, as a promise of both the memories of immanence and uncertain hopes for transcendental eternity. But there is also another side of the consciousness of immateriality in death, leading to the dispersal of gravity and creating languages of anti-static architecture, which is strongly related to metaphysical thinking. (Comp. tombs of ancient and primitive culture—Germanic and Indian traditions).

The theme of antagonism of gravity and anti-gravity has been carried both intellectually and mythologically in the tradition of rationalistic
Max Weber im Gespräch mit Ernst Toller (1917).
architecture of death in Western Europe and has created entire cities of shades. These cities of the dead have always expanded their atmosphere into the cities of the living -to leave that kind of atmosphere of city to which James Joyce referred: "...we are dying every day." The architecture of four centuries has been a mirror of the consciousness of death which is still carried on in the present. (Comp. W.S. Burroughs, The Cities of the Red Night.)

"Die Mauern stehn / Sprachlos und kalt, im Wind / Klirren die Fahnen [The walls stand / Mute and cold, in the wind / The banners creak]," a verse of Friedrich Hoelderlin's poem "Hailie des Lebens," quoted by Aldo Rossi in his Scientific Autobiography, might show the importance of pessimism and the strong commitment of Rationalism to the reception of death in architecture, a reception which has also been concerned with the loss of language as the consequence of pondering death. Shakespeare's "Though talk'est of nothing" in Hamlet, is embedded in this (modern) understanding of the absence of language when man faces questions brought up by death. There also is the reason for Nietzsche's pessimism of culture as well as the stony void of Friedrich Gilly's Monument for Frederic the Great or Adolf Loos' mausoleum; even Mies van der Rohe's New National Gallery at Berlin is much more the confession of metaphysical thinking in its shape of a giant tomb than a commitment to the positivistic credo of form determined by function. (comp. Fritz Neumeyer on the influence of Guardino Guardini's (metaphysical) philosophy in the work of Mies van der Rohe in Mies van der Rohe. Das kunstlose Wort. Gedanken zur Baukunst., Berlin 1986).

Recalling the evidence of light and shadow for architecture makes one possibly leave the city and move to the desert, to the void. It is in the desert where one might rediscover the elementary conditions of architecture in the city.

The muteness of the empty landscape evokes all kinds of paralyzing questions leading nowhere, questions which have to be surrendered step by step, even if these steps appear as the helpless attempt of making not more than a couple of inches within eternities, walking with the crutches of one's brain along a seemingly never ending road in the desert where the only phenomena to observe is the shadow of oneself and one's crutches.
Far away, on the left side of the road, was the mausoleum on the top of a hill. I knew there was nothing inside but desert, the quintessential desert. Thoughts of elementary logic which would not help: "1. The world is all that is the case. 1/1.1 The world is the totality of facts, not of things. 1.1/1.11 The world is determined by the facts, and by their being all the facts. 1.11/1.12 For the totality of facts determines what is the case, and also whatever is not the case. 1.12/1.13 The facts in logical space are the world. 1.13/1.2 The world divides into facts. 1.2/1.21 Each item can be the case or not the case while everything else remains the same. 1.21". Ludwig Wittgenstein. *Prototranscatus*. (p. 41). The end of individual truth at the point of despaired logic.

For hours I was not able to do anything—no particular reasons. There was the same impression I had the first time thinking of transforming this tomb—nothing to add, nothing to subtract and probably nothing to transform either. It was simply listlessness which finally made me do at least something on the other side of the road. Loos on the left, a pile of trash on the right.

A number of drawings or better: scratches which had preceded every thought on the 'Loos dilemma'; no drawings in the real sense of the word; more notes; written notes like cartoons, caricatures of simple houses and tombs. Not able to make even one of these drawings three-dimensional. Perhaps because I thought that the spatial appearance of Loos' mausoleum was almost a trap. Did not really exist. Material which could not be touched, which was not real, more like drawings of traps.
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Architecture of death:

J. Ph. Aries. *In the Hour of our Death*.


Sweet, metal
Wood
Figur 1: Raum für die Aufführung neuer Musik
Figur 2: Raum für 340 (?) Urnengräber
17 Anmerkungen zum Projekt.

"83 6.442 Wie auch beim Tod die Welt sich nicht sendert[,] sondern aufhoert.

83 6.4421 Der Tod ist kein Ereignis des Lebens. 6.4311(1) a

75 6.5 Zu einer Antwort, die man nicht aussprechen 6.5 kann, kann man auch die Frage nicht aus-

 sprechen.
Das Rätsel gibt es nicht.
Wenn sich eine Frage überhaupt stellen lasst[,] so kann sie auch beantwortet werden.

Ludwig Wittgenstein, Logisch-Philosophische Abhandlung

1 Dieses Projekt handelt ueber die vorlaufige
Beziehungslösigkeit eines gewählten Ortes zu zwei Obekten.

2 Dieser Ort bedingt weder Bestimmung noch Architektur der beiden Objekte.

3 Die beiden Raumobjekte [Räume] sind zunächst an jedem anderen Ort denkbar.

4 Die Architektur bestimmt den gewählten Ort neu (und nicht umgekehrt) - mit ihrem Maßstab, ihrer Sprache oder Un-Sprache, der Geometrie. [Darin liegt ein Teil ihrer
eigenlichen Bestimmung].


[...]

beide Objekte [geben die Antwort]
6 Diese Architektur ist nach ubeu die Bezeichnung einer Funktion oder deren Verkörperung [die Funktion selbst], sondern ubeu Leere.

7 Weder ist die Fortschreibung einer bereits vorhandenen Sprache, noch die Synthese mit einer solchen Anliegen dieses Projektes.


9 Wenn in der Monumentalitaet der Raumfiguren uberreugt Mythos liegt, ist dieser allenhalben der bestaendiger Falschung Illusion [die bestaendige Falschung des Todes als Ereignis des Lebens].

10 Nicht nur verneinen die beiden Raume [in ihrem Wesen] oertliche und zeitliche Bedingtheit und Bezoegenheit, sie sind darueberhinaus Leere-schaffende Objekte [vergessene/verlorene Objekte; lost objects].

11 Die Raume sind im eigentlichen Sinne ganz un-zeitliche und un-zeitgemasse [Fragmente].

12 Die Absolutheit der Raume und ihrer Geometrie ist erschuttert.

13 Diese Architektur schweigt, wo weder gefragt noch geantwortet werden kann.

14 Im fragmentarischen Moment dieser Architektur liegt der Bezug zum Wesen der Stadt [des modernen Stadtlebens].

15 Eine Fortsetzung gleicher oder aehnlicher Raume ist denkbar.

16 Das Projekt ist eine Architektur fuer Stille und Klang [an einem ansich laermorfuellen Ort].


Ein Schluess eine meine Projektbeschreibung an.
Christopher Logico - Philosophers
be dedicated to the memory of my friend
David H. Pietsch

Motto:

and anything a man knows, anything he has heard merely heard,
rumbling and passing,
Can be said in three words:
Ruminations

with Jagger: "You're out of time"

S. Burleigh
"In the madhouse of the soul
and nowhere else."

How come they let all you longhairs in
here tonight? What's the problem,
This is 7:30 - can't you afford a

an old man had a heart attack in Magathan
he died while he was sheets these things"
L. A. Annen: Look Stranger, 1936
Since the external disorder, the extravagant

The Baroque frontiers, the Surrealist
dote
What can truth treasure or heart bless
But a hollow strictness.
The role of rational is not an accidental phenomenon, but a fundamental principle of art. The idea of the rational in art is not merely theoretical, but a real one. It is the concept of reality in its possible limits. The rational aspect of art is essential in understanding the nature of art. The artistic process is an exploitation of the limits of reality.