

Complaining about Architecture

The Case for Concealment in the Face of the (Inevitable) Decline of Theory

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I. Adam's house in paradise? The relation of architecture to need, desire, and complaint.

Filarete's Adam, falling from Paradise after being cast out thanks to his and Eve's acquisition of Knowledge of good and evil, shields himself from rainfall by using his hands to make a gesture akin to the architectural roof. This seeming evidence of shelter's primacy (cf. Maslow) is more complex. It is a gesture, rather than an effective protection. As a gesture, it is a complaint that could be summarized as: "I used to not need shelter! Now I am cast into a wilderness where I have to fend for myself!" In this sign of need (a demand) there is an implicit audience, God, for as yet there is no Other around to listen. This communication situation is different from the one used in Paradise; it is a speech directed to a Void, and the emblem for this is the architectural form, the Tower of Babel, which is both about the multiplicity and conventional basis of human languages AND the Sumerian Bab-El, the Gate of Heaven, where the clouds indicate a boundary with a super-celestial zone AND a condition of catastrophe and ruin. [Historical note: Rykwert got into trouble over the use of this expression; the story is that Gadamer's dislike of this book stung so bitterly that Rykwert would not allow Gadamer's name to be mentioned in his seminars. However, I tend to side with Rykwert, that there is a kind of "house" in Paradise, and that there is retroactively a kind of Paradise in the idea of the house. Gadamer intentionally falsified Vico's ideas in *Truth and Method* in his attempt to present Vico as a phenomenologist, a project also evident in Pérez-Gómez's *Built upon Love*.]

a. Paradise and self-similarity

In Paradise, form is "self-similar" in the sense that it does not "resemble anything" in absentia, going to the heart of the issue of language's competition with Being (eclipsing the object by giving it a name). In Paradise, language had the opposite effect, of "bringing things into being by naming them." This pre-empts the argument that the bottom of Babel's tower alienates humans from being (Heidegger) because of the conventionality of signifiers (that one object has multiple names in multiple languages). This recalls the Whorf-Sapir hypothesis — that words impose their own unique being on things — and its rejection by Chomsky, the neuro-universalist. Self-similarity goes beyond this debate by locating the alienation (bottom of the Tower) at the inside of the materiality of things. This radical interior is related to the Prometheus myth, the radical location of the first human settlements by the logic of divination.

b. Symmetry as folding

In architecture, symmetry is most often identified with a 3-space "perspectival/pictorial" field,

but this is not true chirality. An observer is required to “authenticate” the match of left and right components but is not specifiable. The observer confers symmetry but remains outside of the frame defining it. A stronger form of symmetry is the bonding of presence and absence as co-conditional. Examples are common in topology: the Möbius band, cross-cap, Klein bottle, “interior 8” ... but there is a single form that combines these, following a dynamic protocol given by the Borromean knot. This is the “Boy’s Surface,” named after Werner Boy, a geometrician and student of David Hilbert. The Boy’s Surface is a “three dimensional projection of the real projective plane without singularities.” A simplification is the Borromean knot “revealed” by applying a Gauss Encoding, an over-or-under notation system that shows that three rings are held together by a “fourth ring” that is not physically present. The fold involved is between the visible and the invisible, the present and the non-present, and we can call it properly a “quantum folding.” The symmetry of a quantum fold is a spatial origami done in 3-space that depends on the effectiveness of the Real Projective Plane, a geometry that “cannot distinguish” between a viewer and a viewed, a speaker and language, an individual and a community. This “failure” points to the primacy of error in the production of truth, just as the top of the Tower of Babel — the form of the temple — is based on a condition of commotion, imprecision, and ruin — the form of the labyrinth.

- c. Origami and quantum coincidence (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sj8Sg8qjOg&t=2s> and <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SL2lYcggGpc>)

The ancient problem of the Delian Paradox (how to double a volume) can be solved by origami but not a straight-edge and compass, as can problems involving the square root of 2. ALL problems involving the cube root of 2 can be solved with origami. “The fold” can be defined as whatever can solve problems that, appearing in pictorial space as unsolvable, can be resolved in the Pure Projective Plane. This is not outer-space, but popular culture often represents it as such (cf. *The Day the Earth Stood Still*). In such representations, issues of correction, spatial inversion (cf. Lacan’s extimité), and retroaction always play significant roles. But, the folding indicates the co-presence of the Pure Projective Plane “running alongside” pictorial 3-space with its “primary virtualities.” This co-presence constitutes a “second virtuality” using the architectural principle of the “sistering beam,” a structural chord that, placed alongside a “defective” or “weak” beam, strengthens it through strategic attachments. “Running alongside,” or sistering, is the etymology of the word purloin, which of course explains the use of primary and secondary virtuality in Edgar Allan Poe’s short story about concealment in open view, “The Purloined Letter.” This story is, in a radical way, about origami and quantum coincidence, and it is no accident that the letter’s address is re-written in a *feminine hand*.

II. Body-loading: numbing, catalepsy, and spatial transgression

The phrase and idea of body-loading does not exist in architectural literature, but it is critical to understanding the relations binding repetition, human drives, demands (expectations; anxiety), and

the negation of the “Promethean” attachment to specific (3-space) location (another way of saying “ubiquity” or the more quantum expression, “non-locality”). Body-loading is a technique of picking pockets. A thief “numbs” a mark’s perception of intimate spaces by repeatedly invading them — touching, waving, etc. When the mark no longer can feel the pick-pocket’s invasions, possessions such as watches, wallets, pens, etc. can be stolen freely. Hermes, the god of thieves, gave away the secret with his own heist of Apollo’s cattle, which he drove backwards to create a palindromic mis-direction, a “false clue.” The false trail appears to be a “natural sign” but is in fact subjectively constructed. Buildings can be thought of as “repetition machines,” producing “numbed spaces” that are taken to be a part of the building’s “natural history” — in other words, the Vitruvian *utilitas*. *Venustas*, ordinarily translated as aesthetic beauty, is actually the “Hermetic operator,” the theft from the midst of *utilitas*, and moreover a theft involving palindromic reversal of “nature.”

- a. Close-up magic of Apollo Robbins (https://www.ted.com/talks/apollo_robbins_the_art_of_misdirection?language=en)

The performance artist Apollo Robbins demonstrates the value of the idea of body loading for architecture by showing how strategic zones of 3-space can be removed through repetition.

- b. Desiccation and tricking the *manes*: seduction’s imposture and passivity’s charade

An ancient paradox: given that the bond between the living and dead was based on location in 3-space, the issue was how to make marriage of a daughter, whose primary allegiance was to the place-based ancestral dead (the *manes*, a combination of *lares* and *penates*, the “household gods”), possible without appearing to be a defection that would bring catastrophe on her family. A RUSE was devised to “numb” this space in the view of the dead. (Compare this to the “divine” audience of Filarete’s complaint.) Numbing took the form of a charade by which a stranger abducted the daughter, who feigned her passivity and inability to resist. We have proof of this procedure in a custom that has survived for over three thousand years! — the carrying of the bride across the threshold of the husband’s house. We have conventionalized the house as “the husband’s” but only recently. In Pericles’ Athens, Greeks were ALREADY debating the status of the wife, as evident in the play *Alcestis*.

- c. Semiosis and eschatology: Paul Wheatley’s geomantic theory of urban origins

The Canadian geographer Paul Wheatley has extended this practice to the universal condition of all urban foundations. He shows evidence that cities in all seven centers of early urban emergence were first burial sites. The task was to “secularize” the physical locations so that ancestral ghosts would not paralyze urban networks involving transactions with strangers. The surprising role of “undertakers” shows how religious notation systems were converted into schemas of financial accounting. But, the case of Rome — particularly in the myth of Curtius — show how the transformation was tied to the theme of desiccation, from the “wet” condition of paralysis by the Promethean relation of divination to 3-space location, to the

“dry” condition of metaphoric substitution, from a “literal (earthly) ground” to an abstract “ground-ing,” from 3-space to a Real Projective Plane, so to speak, where quantum folding (origami) and transference/portability would be possible. This is the essence of the Delian Paradox.

III. Condensation and overdetermination

According to Freud, who is not popular in architecture theory, holds that dream materials are present in a compact, over-determined form; but that we characterize these materials as “content” using metaphor, a strategy of replacing one signifier with another, while retaining a functionality of uncanniness. The uncanny connects the “sistered” functions of perspectival scene-making and the origami of the second virtuality and its quantum effects of “impossibility.” Metaphor and metonymy, however, work “in tension” with each other. Metonymy “slides” its signifiers above the level of the signified(s), while metaphor replaces each signifier with another. The replacement process works within a system of resonance and mirroring, duplicating the over-determination of dream content (a. k. a. the unconscious) with palindromic reversals where each replacement pair guarantees a third value (“eigenform”) that acts at a distance similar to the way a center acts on the circumference of a circle (which is also a palindromic relation between forward motion and inward folding). Replacement operates within a 3-space domain, while the eigenform (de-)locates itself within the Pure Projective Plane, although it is sensed and represented as the uncanny within 3-space.

a. The case of dreams and sliding signifiers; from Panofsky to Florensky

Pavel Florensky, a mathematician and geometer, was aware of the role played by the Pure Projective Plane as is evident in his essays on reversed perspective as a spiritual dimension and his book on the irrational in geometry (mnimosti). Mistranslations of мнимости have led many commentators to incorrectly oppose Florenski’s mnimosti to 3-space phenomena, forcing reversed perspective to be a literal inversion of “normal” perspective while remaining within the pictorial domain. However, Florenski’s reversed perspective was doubly and radically reversed. It simultaneously inverted the position of the viewer and the viewed while at the same time reversing the crossing the picture plane. Instead of one action cancelling the other, the uncanny connection between the living world of the worshiper of an icon and the image of the “dead” saint “killed” the worshiper in the same way the Scipio the Younger was made to realize that the dead are really the living ones and the living — those who think they are alive — are really dead (see Macrobius’s translation of this story). This is not just about dream inversions (cf. Florensky’s citation of the “event dream” of the French nobleman, whose narrative ended with the event that provoked it) but the more general issue of how signifiers can slide within metonymy and produce an emergent “metaphoric effect.” For a simulation of the event dream, see <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0AKQSD23GUI>.

b. What is metaphor for architecture?

Building commands us to stay within a “plane” of relationships of spaces, limited to a pictorial/perspectival order (“two things cannot be in the same place at the same time”). Overlap, eclipse, shadowing, etc. maintain this plane. The rule seems to be metonymical, but can metaphor “emerge” within this horizontal order? Folklore, ritual, and every other source of popular culture seems to say that it can, thanks to the “uncanny,” where connection to “other worlds” is established through portals, accessed through passwords or magic formulæ. The key is to avoid “pictorializing” metaphor. As I have long argued, Vico (*The New Science*) is the guide for doing this, but Vico has been misrepresented in architecture theory, so his lessons have been ignored. What might restore them?

c. The Ship of Theseus, from metonymy to metalepsis

When Athenians wished to preserve Theseus’s famous ship, the question arose of how, after many parts were being replaced, it could still be called the ship of Theseus (cf. Rabelais’ story of the caldron of soup in an Inn that had been continuously feeding clientele by adding ingredients with every subtraction of servings). This is the question embedded within the so-called “sorites paradox” — at what point do falling grains of sand become a “pile of sand”? The larger issue is about emergence. The familiar psychology 101 experiment asks students to guess the number of jelly beans in a jar on the lecture’s desk; none get the right answer, but the average of all the wrong answers is almost invariably correct. This is derived from Sir Francis Galton’s analysis of lottery tickets at a county fare, where the prize was given to whoever could guess the correct weight of a cow. Curiously, Lewis Carroll takes up the sorites and formalizes its structure in a series called the Amos Judd puzzles.

d. “One grain more; one hair less” — the significance of sorites

Sorites may seem to be an obscure footnote in a logic text. However, it may point to the more general significance of emergence and exaptation — the way something useless suddenly and unexpectedly becomes useful, giving rise to astonishment based on retroaction (*Nachträglichkeit*), which we experience independently. My contention is that ALL instances of astonishment involve retroaction and, hence, exaptation. Carroll’s puzzles are constructed by inventing passive and active forms of objects and persons (each x is both a container and a contained). Two additional items are added, a “container” that lacks a contained form, and a “contained” that lacks a containing form. These two are found after “cancelling out” the paired items that have been hidden within predications with each other. The orphans connect to provide the answer. Strangely, this same trick is used by Edgar Allan Poe in his construction of “The Purloined Letter.” Are there other cases?

e. Models of folding from Parrhasius to Poe and then to Hitchcock

The story of Parrhasius’s contest with Zeuxis is both famous and instructive. (P. wins by painting a curtain rather than a depiction of a distant scene.) It shows simply and directly how

quantum folding — origami — is related to exaptation. Poe's story involves folding in a classic function, concealment. But, as we move to Hitchcock films, we see that "the story" is dis-/re-located at a meta-level within a collection of films. That is, to tell THE story, we have to watch four or five films (maybe more). This story-in-story logic shows how folding can be "concentric" (metaphoric) as well as sequential (metonymic).

IV. Orthography

Gaston Bachelard used the term "orthopsychics" in his scientific essays. It is curiously related to the practices of orthographics in architecture — when the represented object has a graphic correlation with the frame or picture plane. Both have to do with the issue of truth, but not "truth of correspondence" but, rather, truth arising out of the system of representation/discovery. This goes back to Vico's dictum, *verum ipsum factum*, which architecture theorists have consistently misrepresented. Vico, too, was an orthographer with an orthopsychic theory of subjectivity.

a. Relation to the second virtuality: between the two deaths

The secondary virtual is "where truth can be found," and the finding itself plays a role. One such species of this secondary virtuality is the pan-cultural interval between the first, literal, death and a second symbolic death. This defines the period of mourning, as a means of ritually supporting the soul's wandering before an encounter with a final judgment. ALL travel literature relates back to this interval, and what makes travel "authentic" comes from the death trip. In architecture, the form of this interval is the Thesean labyrinth, a fractal involving three sets of folds. If there is an orthographic architecture, this is it.

b. Coincidence of indication and distinction

A non-numerical calculus invented in the 1950s by George Spencer-Brown uses only one symbol, but this symbol represents the idea that every distinction is simultaneously an indication (valuation) with reciprocal consequences. This calculus has been consistently misrepresented by those who have used it philosophically (object-oriented ontology) and architecturally (Patrik Schumacher). Why? Separating indication and distinction obscures the importance of the fact that indication (pointing/framing) is radically ambiguous. It pretends to specify but in fact reflects the influence of the an ideological specification. It is a case of Lacan's "forced choice" situation ("Your money or your life!") where a middle position has been eliminated. The result is "iconic architecture" that is fundamentally a 2-space figure pretending to occupy a 3-space. Orthography is one of the few effective means of critiquing iconic architecture.

c. Bachelard's scientific essays: *dispositif* and astonishment

Bachelard coins and employs the term *dispositif* (apparatus) well before Foucault and

Agamben, neither of whom credit him as a source. In Bachelard's view, apparatus is neither simply the mechanics or methodology of research but the inquiring subject per se, seen only in reflection at the moment of objective encounter. This "moment" is difficult to define in scientific inquiry but a commonplace of folklore, ritual, and subsequent modern modes of literature and art.

- d. The grace of puppets: the neglect of the unconscious in architecture.

Architecture theory consistently avoids the Freudian Lacanian unconscious with its use of Jungian and phenomenological accounts of subjectivity. Even the work of Ernst Cassirer, self-characterized as a phenomenology (for more Hegelian reasons perhaps?) has been avoided. Ultimately, the unconscious's modern form can be traced back to Vico's project for a synthetic cultural model of origins grounded in the co-opposition of metaphor and metonymy, later embodied in linguistics theory (Jacobson). But, Cassirer shows how aphasia models are predated by poetic ones, disproving claims of a neural basis of language.

V. Secondary virtuality and efficient cause

Secondary virtuality differs from "pictorial" virtuality ("virtual reality") in that it shows how effectiveness depends on absence/negation. Yet, there is almost no discussion or reference to secondary virtuality in architecture. Why? Even Aristotle's system of causalities (Efficient, Final, Formal, Material) alludes to the role of absence in its "appendages" of automaton and *tuchē*. I start with Slavoj Žižek's podcast of 2004, (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gBRToxGyKZo>), where he attempts to make a comprehensive list of secondary virtuality's "investments" in the three domains of subjectivity, the Imaginary, the Symbolic, and the Real.

- a. Self-referencing form: Boy's surface (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9gRx66xKXek>)

Geometry provides a materialist account of how self-reference achieves effectiveness through secondary virtuality. The Möbius band, cross-cap, Klein bottle, interior 8, and Borromean knot are combined in the "Boy's surface," a dynamic self-generating and self-intersecting two-dimensional solid that unfolds in a Primary Projective Plane. The function of self-referencing form can be seen more clearly, however, in the way the Borromean knot's three rings depend on the (secondary) virtuality of a fourth ring.

- b. Importance of "The Purloined Letter"

Poe not only realizes the utility/effectiveness of secondary virtuality, he signals that he knows it by putting the purloined letter into a phonetic palindrome: a "card-rack" (spelled backwards as kcardrac). The space that conceals the letter defines the relation of secondary virtuality to ordinary virtuality: that of a failure to realize a "dual" uniting observer and observed. Poe constructs a literary chiasmus to create a sorites "pile" of events, characters, and facts that are

folded by a (Carrollian) set of distributed binary terms arranged around a central pivot or folding–point, the exchange of reward money. This fold functions as an orthographic origami in both the narrative order (telling the story) and the logic of concealment. As a prodigious cipherer, Poe realized the role of exaptation in creating a “coded” knot that would engage the reader at an unconscious level, so it is accurate to say that the letter constructs an “unconscious” of reading.

c. Concealment is primary to architecture

Concealment strategies make the difference between a house and a home (Heim), out of which transgression constructs the uncanny (*unheimlich*) portals to secondary virtuality. This was indispensable for Cyclopien societies “fixed in place” by the location of ancestral spirits in the soil within the house, with the hearth serving the function of the portal. The problem of marriage became the problem of the city (how to establish a civic religion to supplant the multiple religions of constituent clans), and the prytaneum (banquet hall) attests to one attempt to solve the problem architecturally. The problem with this all–male solution has not been addressed by those who have acclaimed the prytaneum as a place where the “whole community came together.” In fact the women’s relation to the manic flame was scuttled in Athens but not Rome. Clan warfare required the conscious adoption of homosexuality as a means of ending violence. Rome’s College of the Vestals, in contrast, preserved the function and structure of the civic flame.

d. And, to everything else: *Vertigo*’s anamorphosis

Hitchcock provided a clear diagram of orthographic virtuality with his story of the metaphoric replacement of a wife by an actress who plays the role of a woman haunted by an ancestor — even the ancient thematic is preserved! Thanks to Hitchcock’s juxtaposition of 3-space projection to the Pure Projective Plane, we get an example of a Boy’s Surface in Hollywood — a self-generating and self-intersecting logic that is realized in a moment of astonishment by the detective Scottie who realizes the “anamorphosis” that has created his desire for a non-existent woman. *Vertigo*’s direct reference to topography (the landscape of San Francisco and environs) signals his awareness that the original scene, where a contract about an “exchange of women” takes place in 3-space and a secondary virtual/anamorphic space, is orthopsychic as well as orthographic. After all, we are told that Scottie is looking to cure his symptom of vertigo.

e. Astonishment

Astonishment is not simple surprise but a moment of epiphany when something predicted to happen comes true, but in a form that would not have been recognizable before this particular moment. Thus, the mystery has structured its own revelation, and *vice versa*.

f. The library fold; the Picasso fold; the lesson of the *zairja* (زايرجة)

A trip to the library; the desired book, supposed to be on the shelf, is not there; undeterred, we look to the left (or right) and are surprised to find a book even more desirable that we have not known about before this moment. This defines the “future anterior” by showing that we cannot “rush” the moment of discovery since the discovery itself has structured the period of loss/concealment. The name of this structuring is “the library.” Or, “the observatory.” Or, “the university.” In other words, any architecture where the building seems to offer resistance to discovery and where astonishment is postponed until a moment where retraction is possible (Libeskind’s Jewish Museum in Berlin).

g. Feminization of the hero of secondary virtuality

One travels through the space of secondary virtuality as a feminized subject. The Lacanian reason for this is that the phallic rule can no longer dictate spatial/temporal distinction. As in Murakami’s *Hard-Boiled Wonderland at the End of the World*, where one’s shadow must be deposited as security at the entrance-gate, secondary virtuality and its project of correction (orthopsychics) must apply to the (feminine) aspect of subjectivity, the Psyche. As in the story of Cupid/Eros and Psyche, a transgression initiates a series of trials, reflected by *Hypnerotomachia Polyphili* but unnecessarily re-masculinized these, depriving Psyche of her reward of astonishment. The clinical subject of psychoanalysis must also wait for this moment, when She will at last release suppressed signifiers once the barriers of primary virtuality (the analyst and analysand sitting in a room as two competing egos) have given way to a “password” that allows the unconscious to pass. This is also the situation of the joke, where one must “get it” without having to fully understand the particulars of the joke; or of education, where “getting it” allows one to go past the master’s teaching. We have all learned from Frascari, but we must in addition push ourselves to “get it,” to go past. We must do this as Psyches, not acolytes.

Feminism should regard secondary virtuality as a primary domain of political action. “Passivity” is not weakness or submission but, rather, the willingness to endure difficulty and confrontation. The ideal feminist operating within secondary virtuality is Greta Thunberg, who seems to be the literal embodiment of what up to know has been called “toxic masculinity.”

h. Coincidence of the temple and the labyrinth

Emblems from the past teach this lesson: the labyrinth and temple are co-determinative and retroactively revisionary. The “Table of Cebes,” cited by Vico as an inspiration for his *New Science*, is the same as the Tower of Babel, which is the same as the *Mons Delectus*, the labyrinth as a mountain surmounted by a temple. In retracing this form, we get to the story of the birth of Athena from Zeus’s skull, a complex but easy to decode metaphor that accounts

for the usefulness of citadels by both religion and the military. Athena is born fully armed; her position is such that it allows the “disorientation” of the clans in the city below; a break from the fixation of Hestia, the hearth. The story is universal and architectural.

i. Zairja

The zairja was an actual computer invented around the 11c. through the collaboration of Jewish, Arabic, and Christian mystics. Some zairas had moving mechanical parts, others were graphs used to combine astrological observations with alphabets, numbers, and rhetorical sets. The zairja worked in reverse compared to modern computers, in that it found, for any single effect, “as many causes as possible,” in effect seeing any object or act as a convergence of many possible “worlds.” The Catalan mystic Ramón Llull adopted the zairja to his own system of “emancipatory meditation,” a discovery protocol that was popular for over three hundred years and taught at the University of Paris until Jesuits had it removed from the curriculum.

1. How to make a zairja

A zairja can be as simple as a list of topics. Each “session” involves randomly combining any two topics to produce a third hybrid topic, and then taking that topic to another on the list. This is the same idea as the Dadaists’ dictum, “to take something, do something to it, then do something to it again.” The advantage of the list is that many participants can be involved, with combining operations that span across multiple player lists.

2. Zairjas already exist

Almost any involvement of aleatory techniques or juxtapositions result in a “zairja mentality.” Julio Cortázar’s novel, *Hopscotch*, used a Medieval practice of recombining chapters in alternative or random orders. The performance/installation artist Francis Alÿs constructs landscape-scale zairjas that are performative and political.

j. The ersatz/ansatz method

There is a surprising method invented by mathematicians that applies to “zairja thinking.” In the face of a seemingly unsolvable problem, mathematicians invent a completely bogus theorem and apply it to the data. The results are expected to be, quite obviously, “wrong,” but some results will be less wrong than others, and occasionally a “success” will be scores. Since there is no apparent reason for the success, the experiment is restructured and tried again, with another examination of the unexpected success scores. Note that the ersatz/ansatz method (*Ansatz* is the word for “getting lucky” but it also has to do with “getting it” in the case of “getting a joke” and “getting the point” in education) relates directly to the idea that perspectival virtuality conceals the truth, and that methods operating entirely within the first

virtuality will not be able to solve problems in 3-space. The ersatz/ansatz method address the situation of the “dual” formed, by the Real Projective Plane, out of the viewer and the viewed.

- k. The extreme limit is to be found throughout.

In a remarkable book, *The Trouble with Pleasure*, Aaron Schuster compares Lacan's and Deleuze's agreement about psychosis to a forgotten chapter in Norbert Wiener's famous book on cybernetics, written in 1948, where Wiener compares the limits of the computer to the human brain's striving to reach a point of breakdown. The point of failure is not some arbitrary technological limit but, rather, something that works like an internal teleology. In other words, the brain and the computer are already seeking a way to fail, even in the earliest stages. Even their attempts to circumvent or avoid failure are already conditioning them in relation to this “outer limit.” Wiener points out that the human brain resembles a computer not in any structural or mechanical way, but in the “short runs” where the dynamic relation of proper functioning to breakdown can be observed. This compares in an interesting way to the Freudian subject that is radically and permanently sick, something that humanists cannot tolerate (cf. Gadamer's book on health). Phenomenology and Jungian psychology go wrong whenever they promote “models for healthy living” or utopian collective dreams; they are simply ignoring the powerful potential of the margin, something that has been evident in human history and thought since the days of Heraclitus.

- l. Case studies: Calvino and Perec, a logic of lipograms and what is missing in architecture.

For unknown reasons, architects have not developed any consistent theory of the lipogram, despite these excellent examples. “Body loading” creates human lipograms, but the logic of the missing element abounds in folklore and art of all kinds. So why isn't it a hot topic? What is a courtyard other than a lipogram? Don't graves constitute places upon which we should not tread? A fascinating film to watch in this regard is *Frantz*, a French-German film by François Ozon, 2016. This film reminds us that the lipogram is present every time a pronoun is either not “filled” by a proper noun or is “filled by mistake.” What are rooms — what are houses and buildings — other than pronouns that are either not filled or filled by mistake?